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American Irish Newsletter - September 1995

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 20, Number 9

September 1995

Dole Must Support the Peace Process

As we go to print, Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas has more than tripled his support among Republican members of Congress in his bid for the Republican presidential nomination. The numbers include a growing number of conservative freshman.

Dole has collected 82 endorsements, more than double Phil Gramm's total. Dole seems to be the front-runner for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination. The July 19 issue of *The Hill* reported that, "[a]lthough 139 Republicans have yet to stake out a position, Dole's growing congressional support gives him a likely advantage in fund raising and mobilizing voters in local counties, where members are often catalysts."

Dole has publicly accepted former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher's endorsement at the same time he has refused to endorse the English-Irish peace process and has ignored American-Irish issues and voters. Has Thatcher's endorsement improved Dole's standing among his conservative colleagues in Washington?

PEC members have been contacting Dole's campaign office to try to find out why he hasn't supported a process that could lead to Irish unity, freedom, and self-determination after 800 years of English oppression. Dole has ignored us.

Dole has treated the peace process like a non-issue and American-Irish voters like a non-lobby at the same time he has accepted the support of a foreign politician whose bigotry and injustices and human rights violations are well-documented throughout the western world.

He has already raised \$13.2 million for his campaign--more than twice that of his rivals in the second quarter of this year. Does Thatcher's support make Dole a worthwhile investment for some Washington Republicans? If Dole wins the presidential nomination, he could become our next president--and he could disrupt the US role in the peace process.

Last month, PEC asked you to write to Dole and encourage him to support the peace process. We must intensify this campaign by writing to Dole's congressional supporters as well as himself. Below is a list of senators who have endorsed Dole's presidential nomination campaign. (Next month, we'll print the names of the representatives supporting Dole.) If these men and women represent you, please write and encourage them to pressure Dole to support the English-Irish peace process. If your senator is not on this list, please write to Senator Dole again. *We must act now and insist our rights and interests be respected by this likely contender for the White House.*

Robert Bennett (UT)	Hank Brown (CO)	Conrad Burns (MT)
John Chafee (RI)	Thad Cochran (MS)	William Cohen (ME)
Alfonse D'Amato (NY)	Pete Domenici (NM)	Lauch Faircloth (NC)
Charles Grassley (IA)	Judd Gregg (NH)	Nancy Kassebaum (KS)
Dirk Kempthorne (ID)	Frank Murkowski (AK)	Don Nickles (OK)
Bob Packwood (OR)	Alan Simpson (WY)	Strom Thurmond (SC)
	John Warner (VA)	

See Action Requests on Page 6

Remember: Send in
Your Raffle Tickets
by the October 10 deadline!

Newsbits by Kathy Regan

British ministers have been meeting with Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness since the White House Investment Conference in May. "We are encouraged by these continuing contacts and the high level of dialogue between British ministers and Sinn Fein. Since Sinn Fein announced the end of the 'exploratory stage' of bilateral talks with the British government, continued contacts with Sinn Fein remain essential in order to avoid misunderstandings and to move the peace process forward." (*Richard C. Holbrooke, Assistant Sec. of State for European and Canadian Affairs, before the International Relations Committee, US House of Reps., July 28, 1995*)

Queen's University in Belfast awarded an honorary doctorate to Joyce McCartan of the Lower Ormeau Rd. She has been active for many years in promoting cross-community schemes, despite suffering the loss of 13 relatives through violence in the north. She was responsible for raising initial funding to set up a women's information center and youth training scheme in her area. (*Irish Emigrant, July 17, 1995*)

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OUR VIEW

PEC has been working hard to raise funds for our campaign in support of the English-Irish peace process. We desperately need members' donations to continue educating politicians, the public and the media about the peace process.

Many Americans believe the conflict in Ireland is over and that the British and Irish governments have achieved peace. PEC member Julian Jones Prewitt of Tennessee writes,

Dear PEC,

... I'm sorry to have delayed my membership dues. With the talks between the Unionists and Nationalists, the meeting with President Clinton and Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams, and the recent losses in local elections of the Tories and the gains made by the Labor Party, it seemingly spelled out a unification of the Emerald Isle. But I--like many others--shouldn't count the eggs 'fore they are hatched....take too much for granted.

We can't afford to be too optimistic. On this first anniversary of the IRA ceasefire, the peace process is in a deadlock caused by Britain's insistence that the IRA "decommission"--i.e., surrender--their weapons before Sinn Fein can participate in talks. As we have said before, the issue is not the IRA but Britain's refusal to face democratic changes in its relationship with Ireland. Only by keeping the pressure on politicians and the media can we ensure that US political pressure on Britain for progress continue.

This is an enormous task that depends on your continued, generous financial support. Please support our efforts by making monthly donations to PEC, buying raffle tickets, and encouraging your friends and associates to join or support us.

Offensive Situations

by Paul Newman, New York

Tara Circle is an Irish-American cultural center that is trying to make its home in the very beautiful town of Briarcliff Manor, New York. Thanks to our members, PEC is a member of Tara.

Unfortunately, a small group of noisy residents, the Residents for the Future of Briarcliff Manor, have stonewalled this every step of the way. They say Irish-Americans should realize their coming to Briarcliff Manor will affect the "quality of life" there, according to Tara Circle's attorneys. Some locals say Irish-Americans will bring crime and alcohol abuse to the area and thus lower property values, etc.

While the residents do have a legitimate right to be concerned about development in their area, many have shown their bigotry in public statements at town hall meetings.

Members of the American Irish Association of Westchester, who have spoken on behalf of Tara Circle at public meetings, have been told, "Go back and build in the Bronx, Scarsdale--anywhere but in Briarcliff Manor," and

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American Ireland Education Foundation, Inc.

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GREAT HUNGER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR: Frank Morris, Jr., 821 Briarwood Ln, Camp Hill, PA 17011-(717) 737-7013

NATIONAL ORGANIZER: Pete Foley, 3177 Villa Ave. #3H, Bronx, NY 10468-(718)933-7196

**Supported in part by the Emerald Society
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"No Croke Park and drunks wanted here." They were asked, "Why don't you Irish build in Ireland?" Tara Circle has been referred to as "an organization whose major thing is party-ing." I was at one of those meetings. Believe me, I thought I was back in the 1850s.

Please write the following letter of support (in your own words) to Edward A. Sheeran, President, The Tara Circle, Inc., 150 Lodge Road, Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510. Fax (914) 941-3829.

Dear Mr. Sheeran:

I support the establishment of Tara Circle in Briarcliff Manor, New York. Tara Circle will be a lasting tribute to Irish-Americans' contribution to the US. I also fully oppose the bigotry Tara Circle has faced in Briarcliff Manor. Sincerely,

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

From the North

by Kate Campbell, *Community Activist, West Belfast*

Since the IRA called a ceasefire last year, Britain has mounted a world-wide publicity campaign to promote the myths that they are treating nationalists and unionists equally, that there is peace in the north, and that civil rights issues have been resolved.

The Northern Ireland Office has even spent 500,000 pounds on advertising to persuade us in the north that these myths are true. But we know better; the administration of the law is the litmus test of what has changed.

In July, nationalists held a peaceful picket at Belfast City Hall to call for all-party talks. They sat in the road; eight people were arrested. So much for civil rights. A week before, loyalists blocked all the routes to Larne for two days. There were no arrests. So much for equality of treatment by the state. So much for peace.

In 1976, Britain gave up all pretence that it cared about how its role in Ireland was perceived when it derogated from the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The north became the testing ground for British army officer Frank Kitson's counter-insurgency theories. Every aspect of life--from the funding of community groups to the layout of housing developments--was treated as

part of a military project.

The concept of rights vanished. For example, Section 42 of the employment act meant that a person could be dismissed from his/her job on the grounds of "security." The grounds for dismissal would not be divulged, so no appeal was possible. The avenues of justice were closed down. Suspects no longer had a right to silence. Inquest rules were altered so that the full circumstances of how a person died might never be revealed. Being innocent of a crime was no protection against a fabricated "confession" being extracted in torture centers like Castlereagh. Judges in no-jury Diplock courts often accepted these confessions without question, so conviction rates were abnormally high.

Nationalists find no improvements in rights since the ceasefire. The unacknowledged war, the British tell us, was the reason for the emergency legislation, for the imprisonment of thousands of men and women, and for the effective disenfranchisement of northern nationalists. Britain promised an imaginative response to a ceasefire; we're still waiting for signs of it.

Stoical exasperation has replaced last year's cautious optimism--and Britain appears to be cynically

confident that the stoicism can be relied on to outweigh the exasperation. It's a very dangerous gamble to take. The most worrying feature of the present situation is the capacity of everyone in the north not to be shocked by British duplicity and intransigence.

Even the international community seems to be immune to Britain's brutality in Ireland. Eleven months after the ceasefire, the UN issued a report criticizing Britain's human rights record in the north, yet the media in Ireland and abroad ignored it.

Not long before the UN issued the report, two members of the Royal Irish Regiment (RIR) were found guilty for acting as couriers for the loyalist paramilitary UVF. One soldier was found guilty of conspiracy to murder, also. Judge Pringle said, "Unfortunately, it's not a pleasant job I have to sentence men who have up to now served their country with distinction."

In July, a Diplock court sentenced a 27-year-old nationalist to life imprisonment for murder, based on the evidence two unnamed men gave anonymously. One was a member of the RIR and the other, a member of a UVF-linked political party.

This political inertia is frightening. What is more frightening is that the British think the international community doesn't care anymore.

"NORTHERN IRELAND"-- TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

A few members have said they object to our using the term "Northern Ireland" because it is the name the British assigned to an illegitimately formed political entity. The PEC agrees. We use "Northern Ireland" to avoid confusing readers who might not be familiar with the other names for the north. We want politicians and journalists who read our Newsletter to understand we object to the status of "Northern Ireland" as a part of the British empire. We do not intend to confer legitimacy on partition by using the term.

New Director of Operations and Editor-in-Chief

Sandy Carlson is now our Director of Operations at the National Office and Editor-in-Chief of the Newsletter. Sandy has been involved with PEC since 1988, when she began searching for information about Ireland that she did not discover on her first trip to Ireland--on a bus tour around the Republic with 40 other Americans.

She has lived, worked, and studied in Cork, Belfast, Dublin, and Connecticut, since then. She studied for her bachelor's degree in English and journalism, in part, at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown and for her master's degree in Anglo-Irish literature at University College, Dublin. Before that, Sandy volunteered with the Between organization in Cork for more than a year. She helped manage the office and organize holidays for children of republican and loyalist prisoners.

While living in Ireland, she broadened PEC's contacts with community workers and politicians in loyalist and republican areas and worked as a freelance journalist. The insight and knowledge she brings to PEC were nearly lost in October 1993, when the UFF opened fire on the black taxi in which she was a passenger. She escaped physical injury, though, and is with PEC Tuesday through Friday, 9 to 5.

Newsbits *cont. from page 1*

Loyalists have been driving Catholics from their homes in Glengormley, a Protestant and Catholic housing estate in north Belfast. Residents in other parts of north Belfast say they are being forced out of their homes by sectarian gangs. (*Analysis*, July 13, 1995)

The University of Ulster will award President Clinton an honorary degree in recognition of his contribution to the peace process when he visits Belfast in December. (*Irish Emigrant* July 17, 1995)

The British government wants to negotiate with Dublin, the SDLP, and the unionists in order to reach a settlement without Sinn Fein, saying the SDLP can represent the views of Sinn Fein. At the same time they will not allow elected representatives of the population to negotiate, they invite a cardinal, a church moderator, and other unelected people to discuss what should be done.... Now it is more important than ever for those who voted for Sinn Fein to take a court case against the British administration. The right of voters to be heard through their elected representatives is clearly laid down in European Union statements, United Nations statements, even British statements. If challenged before the United Nations, the European Union or international courts, the British would have to concede that they are violating international law, their own law, and human rights conventions by preventing elected representatives from being heard. This is not a matter for a political party only; it is a matter for all who voted for that party. (*Andersonstown News*, July 29, 1995)

After denouncing the British approach to planning economic and social revival for most of the deprived areas of Belfast, Sinn Fein has been drawn into formal contact with the key economic agencies drafting a regeneration policy. The party expects to be involved in the completion of a new development strategy for north and west Belfast. (*Irish Times*, August 7, 1995)

GREAT HUNGER PROCLAMATION

Last month the Newsletter encouraged members to have their town and county governments pass resolutions recognizing the Great Hunger. This proclamation is a great educational tool. Elected officials and your community will have to think about the impact of the Great Hunger on Ireland as well as the US once you propose it.

Send copies of approved resolutions to the editors of your local news media and PEC so we can inform members. These activities will help win public support for our efforts to obtain the English government's apology for the Great Hunger and reinforce the peace process by encouraging Britain to accept responsibility for many of Ireland's current political problems. PEC recommends you use the version below.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, 1995 marks the 150th anniversary of Ireland's "Great Hunger" and numerous Irish people in (name of your jurisdiction) will be commemorating the famine; and

WHEREAS, many residents of (your jurisdiction) can trace their descent from Ireland, many from the time of the Great Hunger; and

WHEREAS, the Great Hunger was a calamity of staggering proportions in which up to two million Irish died of starvation and related diseases while those in power [or use the wording "the English government"], who could have prevented much of the suffering, were indifferent; and

WHEREAS, no fewer than two million Irish fled Ireland for North America, South America, Europe and Australia at the time of the Great Hunger; and

WHEREAS, before the Great Hunger, the population of Ireland was approximately eight million, but by 1850 was approximately four million. Thus the 150th anniversary of the Great Hunger will commemorate the first known instance in written history during which a country's population was literally halved by a single event;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the (name of government body) hereby recognizes the 150th anniversary of IRELAND'S GREAT HUNGER to be commemorated from 1995 through 2000, and sympathizes with the Irish diaspora in (name of your jurisdiction) and throughout the world who live with its legacy.

California PEC Commemorates Great Hunger

California PEC State Director **Mary Holford** reports there are a number of Great Hunger activities planned in Santa Clara County:

PEC member **Dale Warner**, who hosts a weekly TV show, is presenting an ongoing series about the Great Hunger. Call (408) 923-5839 for information.

Mary Holford and Maria Farrell are presenting Great Hunger lectures at the Hedge School of Almaden, San Jose. One lecture focused on the "Coffin Ships" that brought many Irish emigrants to America. Call (408) 927-7925. The Hedge School is also conducting an essay contest on the Great Hunger for students in grades 9-12. Call (408) 927-7925 for information.

Sondra Greene and Maureen Golden of the Golden Greene School of Irish Dance, have presented recitals of jigs, reels, and hornpipes throughout the Santa Clara Valley. PEC members **Tommy and Laura Holford** have danced at schools and talked about the Great Hunger after the performance. Call Sondra at (408) 723-3540 for information. This is a good way to introduce the Great Hunger in schools.

PEC member **Kelly Cole** has visited public libraries in San Jose to request more books about the Great Hunger and Irish history.

PETITION:
THAT the BRITISH GOVERNMENT
APOLOGIZE for IRELAND'S GREAT HUNGER

Mr. Prime Minister:

ONE-HUNDRED, FIFTY YEARS have passed since Ireland's Great Hunger (The "Famine"). We believe the British government should apologize for its cruel policies at the time, which caused the death and forced exile of millions of Irish people in the 1840s.

BRITAIN'S APOLOGY will greatly assist the current English-Irish peace process by helping to heal the legacy of pain and anger the Irish people and the Irish diaspora continue to experience.

NAME

ADDRESS

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Return to:

American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC, 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980, USA 914-947-2726, fax 914-947-2599
ghpet2.pm4

On March 6, 1995, CAJ published a pamphlet to coincide with Parliamentary debates on the renewal of emergency legislation. After 6 months [now 12] without paramilitary violence, the pamphlet argued, emergency law should be abolished.

In fact, Northern Ireland has never been without special powers. The current version of this legislation is contained in the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1991 (EPA) and the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989 (PTA).

Abolish Northern Ireland's Special Laws

by Michael Ritchie

(Reprinted from Just News, published by

Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) in Northern Ireland.)

Given that two of the main protagonists in the armed conflict have called complete ceasefires in the past six [now 12] months, the debate on the legitimacy of the emergency legislation currently in force takes on an even greater urgency.

International law states that emergency measures are valid only if they can be shown to be strictly necessary and proportionate to the scale of emergency. That emergency legislation is still in place [12] months after the ceasefire is totally unacceptable. Even before the ceasefire, the CAJ argued that excessive state powers were unwarranted and counter-productive in the search for peace. Given that the government's own justification about the need to combat the "terrorist threat" has disappeared, emergency legislation must disappear also. Adequate powers exist under the Police and Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989 which is the relevant ordinary legislation. These should now be relied on.

Among the most repressive powers contained in the EPA and PTA are:

- stop, question and search powers
- house searches
- detention and interrogations
- non-jury Diplock courts
- exclusion orders

This summary explores these powers very briefly.

Stop, Question and Search

Ss 19(6) and 23 of the EPA

empower members of the security forces to stop, question and search anyone in public without any suspicion. Harassment has arisen from the exercise by soldiers and police officers of these wide powers, often in an offensive manner. There are countless reports of people being asked to remove items of clothing, including shoes and socks, and being asked personal questions which have no security implications. With fewer patrols and checkpoints, these powers are less relevant, even from a security viewpoint. They are an affront to human rights and create, rather than defuse, tension.

House Searches

Ss 16, 19 and 21 of the EPA give extensive powers to the security forces to enter and search private premises. There is no judicial control over how these powers are used. They are an invasion of privacy and family life. They allow for occupants of the house to be kept in one room during the search, a form of arrest. The powers are used arbitrarily. There are adequate search powers under ordinary legislation that require police officers to obtain a judicial warrant.

Detention and Interrogation

S 14 of the PTA allows 7-day detention. This power requires a derogation from its international obligations. Now that violence has halted, the basis for the derogation has disappeared. The 7 day power can therefore no longer be used.

A range of EPA powers governs

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the interrogation centers. Of particular concern are ss 44 and 45 which allow secret arrests and denial of legal access. Though the regime has been characterized by physical and psychological ill-treatment, there is no electronic recording of interrogations as called for by even the government's own advisers.

Non-jury Diplock Trial

For 22 years, trials for paramilitary-related offenses specified in s 1 and schedule 1 EPA have taken place in non-jury courts. In these Diplock courts, s 11 EPA lowers the admissibility standard for confessions extracted under the regime outlined above. Diplock judges have been remarkably unwilling to accept that police officers physically ill-treat people during interrogations. They have presided over the courts with scant regard for international human rights standards. The right to trial by jury should be re-established immediately.

Exclusion Orders

Part II and Schedule 2 of the PTA allow people to be prohibited from entering either the whole of the UK or the island of Britain. This provides the British government with a system of internal exile, supposedly for use against those involved in "terrorism." The power does not allow excludées to know the evidence against them. Nor do they have a proper right of appeal. Exclusion orders have been used to stifle political debate and pressurize people to become informers.

Wanted!

We need no-nonsense people who are willing to call or write their political leaders in support of a united Ireland. If you are one of those special people, please contact:

**American Ireland
Education Foundation-PEC**
54 South Liberty Drive, Suite 401
Stony Point, NY 10980
(914) 947-2726

Published Sept. 1995 by PEC-AIEF

BELFAST MARCHES: a Kind of Political Dialogue

by Sandy Carlson

Political marches and street protests in Northern Ireland have replaced talks during the peace process impasse. As the British and Irish governments settle into an acceptable level of talks about peace talks--cucumber sandwich diplomacy--the people whose lives are affected by this absence of meaningful, inclusive dialogue, express their politics in the streets. This seems to be where the "peace process" began more than 25 years ago, when civil rights activists took to the streets to demand equal treatment for all citizens.

Not until 1993 were nationalists permitted to march to Belfast's city hall. The "permit" came after years of campaigning for the right to march where unionists had demonstrated for years. This was really a campaign for equal political treatment.

In 1994, nationalists again marched to the city center--this time to commemorate the anniversary of internment. However, this was their first time marching down Royal Avenue, Belfast's main thoroughfare. Equality of treatment, it seemed, was on its way. We were joyful.

I participated in and reported on both marches. The mixed sensations of joy and absurdity struck me on both occasions. After all, we were merely marching down the center of the roads we walked along and lived beside. Yet, this political gesture demonstrating nationalists' belief in their right to have a say in how life is lived and governed along those streets created a problem for loyalists and the RUC (police).

In 1993, loyalists along Donegall Pass shouted abuse and tossed bottles at us from behind the walls between their ghetto and the streets we dared to pass along. The RUC stood stony as statues against those walls.

In 1994, the RUC attempted to provoke a confrontation with north Belfast's nationalists when they tried to return up the New Lodge Road.

Although the RUC presence was minimal in the city center, they were in force to divert us away from the New Lodge and up Clifton Street, which borders part of the loyalist Shankill district.

The RUC had wanted us to return home via an alley, as if we were dirty rats, rather than along our agreed, permitted, marching route. Little, it seemed, had changed on the other side of the wall in 25 years.

Drummers beat their drums steadily as a Sinn Fein councillor discussed the matter with the RUC. A British soldier fired a plastic bullet over our heads. Nobody moved: we might be shot or we might be damned, but we weren't slinking down any alley.

Eventually, Sinn Fein peacefully negotiated a settlement with the RUC: we'd walk down a road beside the alley. We went home peacefully, for the organizers reached a solution that upheld the dignity we marched in celebration of in the first place.

In 1995, both nationalists and loyalists have been demonstrating in the streets during the loyalist and republican ceasefires. Some commentators have said that the street protests play into the hands of the British, who would like the world to see that people in Northern Ireland are incapable of democratic dialogue, that they really crave confrontation and need to be governed by reasonable "outsiders"--the British. They suggest the British are waiting for the waiting to put an end to the ceasefires, as the frustrated and disenfranchised take to the streets to express their political dominance--as in the case of the Orange marches--or to object to injustice--as in the case of nationalist protests against the release of killer soldier Lee Clegg.

I believe there's a more generous way to look at the street activity, however. *The people of Northern Ireland refuse to accept the isolation*

and neglect that have come with an (un)acceptable level of peace talks. They will not accept a political vacuum and refuse to be chased down any political alleys. The northern Irish people have taken to the streets to remind the world they are starving for peace and democracy. This is Ireland's 20th century Great Hunger.

During a conflict between nationalists and loyalists over an Orange parade route through a nationalist area, Northern Secretary Patrick Mayhew said "he would not intervene, that the two sides could work out a solution." (*New York Times*, July 11, 1995) On one occasion, nationalists and loyalists did sort out a compromise on an Orange march route. We wonder whether Mayhew can appreciate the irony of his statement--that he has no place in Ireland.

New Book: Leon Uris's **REDEMPTION**

In Leon Uris's most recent novel, *Redemption*, the Larkin family continue their struggle for Ireland's independence.

Redemption is the sequel to *Trinity* (1975). "After 20 years of reflection, I realized the meaning of the Easter Rising had not been fully expressed in *Trinity*," Uris says. "I wanted to explain what it meant for the human race."

Uris says the Rising redeemed Ireland: "...as small as it was..., it was monumental in what man had to say about ...freedom--that is, the realization that freedom is not going to be given to you, it has to be earned."

Redemption, the result of five years' work, explains human relationships in greater depth than *Trinity*, which, nonetheless, has been a great success as well as a great influence on Irish activists--including republican hunger striker Bobby Sands.

Redemption is available from the PEC for \$25.00 plus \$2.50 postage and handling. **New York residents, add sales tax.** To charge, call (914) 947-2726.

Action Requests

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

1. Hon. (Senator's name)

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3121

Message: Because you support Sen. Bob Dole's nomination for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination, I urge you to press him to publicly support the English-Irish peace process.

The peace process is a serious concern of American-Irish voters and must not be ignored.

2. Dole for President

810 First Street, NE, Suite 30
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 414-6400

Message: I urge you to publicly support the English-Irish peace process, a major concern of many American voters.

3. Don't forget!

Please send a monthly donation to support PEC.

CAMPAIGN for BRITAIN'S APOLOGY INTENSIFIES

by Frank Morris, *Great Hunger Awareness Campaign Director, Pennsylvania*

We've intensified the campaign for Britain's apology for Ireland's Great Hunger since we asked members to write to British Ambassador Robin Renwick in July. We asked Britain to apologize to the Irish people for the cruel policies that caused the death and exile of millions of Irish in the 1840s. Now we're petitioning the British prime minister to acknowledge Britain's responsibility for the Great Hunger.

Once the British accept responsibility for neglecting the needs of the Irish people in the 1840s, we hope they will acknowledge their partiality in Irish affairs, and, therefore, accept the need for an impartial negotiator to broker the current peace process.

It is painful to contemplate the choice between starvation and emigration that absentee landlords left our ancestors. It is also painful to recall that crops other than potatoes were raised in abundance during the so-called "Famine" but were transported to England under armed guard. However, peace can begin only when past wrongs and animosities are recognized and confined to history and new attitudes and actions move people toward peace. In looking forward to a new millennium, we urge the British government to acknowledge past abuses and to apologize to the Irish people for their neglect during the "Famine."

The petition in this newsletter is for you--in America, Ireland, England, and elsewhere--to photocopy and have signed. (If you do not have access to a photocopier, use the original and we will send you more.) By soliciting as many signatures as possible, you help educate a wide audience about Britain's obligations in Ireland at the same time you pressure the British to behave responsibly. Get friends to help you. *Progress depends on your support, so please circulate and return the petition to us at our address on the form.*

State Directors Appointed

PEC is happy to announce the appointment of **Mary Holford** as **PEC California State Director**. Mary can be contacted at 6555 Tam O'Shanter Drive, San Jose, California 95120. Her telephone number is (408) 268-4548.

PEC is also pleased to announce **Sean Kane's** appointment as **New Jersey State Director**. Sean was our Director of Operations in the National Office. He can be reached at 40 Boston Avenue, Hillside, New Jersey 07205. Telephone (908) 354-1976.

California and New Jersey members are urged to contact Mary and Sean.

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Members receive the monthly *American Irish Newsletter*.

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