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THE AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the Action Irish

Vol. 10, No. 3

JUNE/JULY, 1985

NATIONALISTS FEAR JOINT BRITISH/IRISH RULE A SELLOUT

by Fr. Desmond Wilson

(The author, a Belfast Social Worker, is an official and highly respected representative of the nationalist community).

There is a deep suspicion that the British and Irish governments are planning something for the north of Ireland. The fear is that what they are planning will be, as always, to the benefit of the British government and to the detriment of the Irish people, especially those living in the north. There is no doubt in the minds of the Irish that the British government will betray any of the parties concerned if it suits them to do so.

Nationalist fear that any changes will be cosmetic and designed to deceive public opinion, particularly American public opinion. For the first time nationalists will be permitted to hang Irish street signs, fly Irish flags over their homes, and to conduct classes on the Irish language without "visits" by the RUC and military. While this is going on, the old repressions will continue. They will instead be beaten by Irish police rather than British police (RUC) and military.

This is the meaning of the present British willingness to recognize the identity of the "two traditions" in the north. In a strange, even weird, way, the present revival of interest in Irish culture is giving the British government the way out of its difficulties, by allowing it to give some cultural freedoms while making certain that *all* control

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NEWS BITS

by Andy Prior

Sinn Fein, considered the political wing of the Provisional IRA, has just won control of the Nationalist community represented in the Belfast district council by winning seven seats, one more than that held by the SDLP, the more moderate Nationalist party. Overall, Sinn Fein won seats in 17 out of 26 district councils in local government elections held throughout N.I. on May 15th. With all but two seats yet undecided Sinn Fein has won 58 seats and 11.8 percent of the popular vote an increase over their showing in last year's elections. The Rev. Ian Paisley, head of the extremist Democratic Unionist Party, has vowed along with the leader of the other mainline Unionist party to block Sinn Fein councillors as much as possible, (N.Y. Times & Daily News 5/17/85.

Geraldine Ferraro, the recent Democratic candidate for vice-president, has called for an end to convictions in N.I.'s courts on uncorroborated testimony of police informers. Mrs. Ferraro had just attended a trial in Belfast of 25 defendants charged on an informer's testimony. She told a news conference in Dublin that the informer system as practiced in N.I. is "unacceptable". It is expected that Mrs. Ferraro will run for a N.Y. Senate seat in 1987. (A.P. 5/5/85) ... The AFL-CIO Executive Committee has given its support to the concurrent resolution that calls on Pres. Reagan to appoint a special envoy to N.I. (Irish American Unity Conference 5/10/85).

"For the first time, Irish people have been arrested and deported. A group of more than 30 young Irish people were held at Boston Airport after they arrived with holiday visas." Immigration officials felt that they did not have enough cash in their possession to finance a vacation. The youths were detained until seats on return flights to Dublin were available. A number of Irish youth with expired three month visas are being deported in California. The U.S. Embassy in Dublin has been ordered to tighten up on the issuing of vacation visas. It is estimated that there are

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THE CASE OF JOSEPH DOHERTY — POLITICIZING U.S. JUSTICE

by Albert Doyle

Joseph Doherty is a 30 year old Belfast man. He was a member of the Irish Republican Army and in the course of his I.R.A. activities in 1980 he was involved in a battle with Special Air Service (SAS) British forces in which a member of the SAS was killed. Joe Doherty has spent the greater part of his adult life in internment and prison for his Republican activities. Subsequent to the 1980 incident he was arrested, tried in the **non-jury** Diplock Court system, convicted and while awaiting sentencing, escaped from Crumlin Road prison. He fled to the United States where he resided until his arrest in 1983.

Many consider Doherty to be a soldier engaged in an armed

(Continued on Page 2)

now about 50,000 young people from the Republic working illegally in the U.S. When Pres. Reagan was in Ireland last year, the Taoiseach, Dr. Fitzgerald, requested that Irish immigrant's position be legalized and that a reasonable flow of Irish youth be allowed into the U.S. The President expressed surprise that restrictions existed. Clearly, he wasn't aware that, for more than twenty years, immigration from Ireland has been confined to a trickle. But, instead of the situation being eased, there is now a crackdown. (Irish Post 4/27/85).

One woman at Armagh prison was subjected to 10 strip searches in March it was recently revealed in the British Parliament. In all 59 strip searches were carried out on 35 different women in that month. **No prohibited articles were found during these searches.** (Irish Times 4/20/85) ... The former Presidential can-

(Continued on Page 5)

conflict to rid his country of foreign occupation. The Thatcher government of Britain considers Joseph Doherty to be a criminal and a terrorist. These issues were presented squarely to the U.S. judicial system when, after his arrest, the British government brought legal proceedings to have Doherty extradited to Britain. In support of their case they produced a number of witnesses, including British officials. Doherty, ably represented by New York lawyers, Mary Pike and Steve Somerstein, testified on his own behalf. He was also supported by expert testimony of Hon. Sean MacBride, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, Father Desmond Wilson and author Tim Pat Coogan. The British lost.

The press, which had paid little or no attention to the trial, and taking their cue from apoplectic British Tory politicians, fumed in denunciation of the decision of U.S. District Court Judge John Sprizzo. With suspiciously uniform style, editorial outrage poured forth from many newspapers across the U.S. including the *New York Times*, the *New York Daily News*, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Wall Street Journal*. In the best tradition of "shoot the messenger" logic they called for changes in the law. Ignored in all this was the fact that Judge Sprizzo's decision was a perfectly correct interpretation of U.S. law and the U.K.-U.S. extradition treaty, including the precedents set in earlier cases. Also forgotten was Joe Doherty who is still in prison, but not by those in the federal bureaucracy who seem always eager to do the wishes of Britain with regard to Irish issues. They then pressed deportation proceedings against Doherty, opposed bail, instituted an appeal against bail granted by the Immigration Court and are threatening to begin another extradition proceeding, even if it means changing the rules retroactively.

Most recently they have brought an unprecedented legal proceeding seeking to overturn Judge Sprizzo's decision **despite lack of any legal authority or precedent** for appeal in such cases. They are pursuing Doherty with a Cromwellian zeal not seen in the cases of the most flagrant of ordinary criminals. Why?

The American Irish are familiar with the theories of British Army Brigadier Frank Kitson in his book about combatting insurgency, advocating that the criminal justice system be manipulated as a political tool to "dispose of unwanted members of society". Irish nationalists in Northern Ireland are well aware of the working out of Brig. Kitson's theories in the Diplock Court and "Supergrass" systems. What is shocking to Americans is the realization that similar extreme measures are being used by our own officials against our people at the behest of the British government! They have consistently pursued such defendants to extraordinary lengths. For example, after losing a case similar to Doherty's (the case of Desmond Mackin) they instituted an appeal against all legal precedent (and were slapped down by the Court of Appeals); they held Michael O'Rourke in poor prison conditions for five years while his minor visa violation case was being heard. In opposing bail for Joe Doherty and others they have alleged that they are threats to U.S. national security — a patent absurdity. This vindictive record is not one that Americans should be proud of — but few are aware of it. It is up to us to make our fellow Americans understand what our own government is doing in support of the intransigent Tory government of Margaret Thatcher — politicizing U.S. Justice.

OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS

by John J. Finucane

Our last issue's "Offensive Situations" discussed offensive St. Patrick's Day drinking promotions by Anheuser Busch (Budwieser) and Hallmark that degrade the Irish image. We also stated we would write both companies requesting they correct these situations and, depending on their responses, we would suggest a course of action to be taken.

As of this writing we have had a positive response only from Hallmark. They indicated they are removing the offensive cards according to the catalog numbers provided by our members. Anheuser Busch has not responded.

Anheuser Busch's St. Patrick's season Budwieser promotional displays tied the Irish in with drinking. These displays that were found on or near large stacks of Budwieser included; Irish spoken here, This McBuds for you, Shamrocks, and silly leprachauns.

We urge you to write the letter below in your own words using our letter as a guide, or simply rewrite our letter on your own stationery. Have friends and organizations do the same.

President, Anheuser-Busch
One Busch Plaza, St. Louis, MO. 63118

your address & date

Dear Sir:

As an American of Irish heritage and a member of the National Political Education Committee, I am deeply offended by your company's St. Patrick's Day Budwieser beer promotional items which degrade the Irish image. I urge you to discontinue completely the reference to things Irish for such advertising.

If your company fails to cooperate with this simple request, I will be forced to boycott all of your products. An action I will not enjoy.

Respectfully,

POWER OF THE PEN

by John J. Finucane

In the last two issues of the *American Irish Newsletter* we asked our members to write to both the *New York Times* and Edward Koch, Mayor of New York City. The letter to the *Times* complained of censorship through unfair coverage of the war in the north of Ireland — a pro-British bias. The Action Letter to Mayor Koch asked that he support N.Y.C. Councilman Sal Albanese's Intro. No. 878 providing for the divestiture of City pension funds from American companies doing business in the North and who discriminate against nationalists.

It should be noted that in both cases and *subsequent* to our Action Letter requests, there has been a considerable degree of success, particularly with the *N.Y. Times*. The *Times* has had a noticeable and welcome change in some of its reporting on Northern Ireland. It has questioned the North's judicial system and has reported extensively on Britain's "shoot to kill" policy against Republican *suspects*. This information has been published in newspapers throughout the U.S. via the *Times* wire service. Mayor Koch, who has publicly called for a British withdrawal, has since come out in support of NYC Comptroller Harrison Goldin's resolution which is similar to Councilman Albanese's. We hope that Mayor Koch will go one step further and support Councilman Albanese's Intro. No. 878 which is binding. New York City residents should again write to Mr. Koch requesting that he support Mr. Albanese's resolution.

This article's intent is to stress the importance of *organized* letter-writing campaigns and the effectiveness of our Action Letter Program which is already well established and in place. Its effectiveness can only increase as our membership growth continues and more members participate in these writing campaigns. Hopefully, all members will soon participate.

Again, we thank you the letter-writer. You are the one that makes things happen. Without your letters there cannot be progress. We urge all participants to continue writing. Those of you not yet responding to the Action Letter requests, we ask you to do so as your letter will add a lot of clout. Remember! One letter to a national figure concerning a national issue represents the views of one thousand people!

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founded in 1976

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Editor John J. Finucane
Assistant Editor Andy Prior

FROM THE EDITOR

Moderate American Irish have become "media shut-outs". That is, those respectable Americans of Irish heritage who share the opinion of *Cardinal John J. O'Connor* of New York, in opposing British government oppression and all forms of violence, who are working through the American democratic process to end British colonialism in Ireland, **do not exist**. The media have knowingly shut us out by not reporting on the positive objectives and activities of activist American Irish organizations such as the PEC, IAUC and others. The purpose of the media shut-out is to deny our organizations the credibility that comes with positive media coverage, thereby slowing effective American Irish political and economic unity. As always the one who benefits from the deception on the part of the media is the British government.

The media is not alone in this subtle form of censorship. They have the full support and help of many top American government officials who regularly abuse their power through the different branches of our government. Because of this they must assume the responsibility for and will be held accountable for much of the suffering and death in Ireland. These "representatives" of our American democracy care less about justice. Their only concern is to maintain the status quo no matter what happens to innocent men, women and children.

The media will continue to keep us as **media shut-outs** for as long as we permit it. There are ways immediately available to us to counter this censorship. The American Irish, by the hundreds of thousands, need a common means of communication to keep them informed. We suggest the PEC's *American Irish Newsletter*. May we also suggest that when you give a gift to someone of Irish heritage (birthdays, Mother's Day, Christmas, etc.), make the gift a subscription to the *American Irish Newsletter*. A little of the truth will never hurt. We also recommend advertising which the PEC has already utilized. Advertising, while expensive, can be very effective but only *if it is consistent*. Advertising greatly enhances credibility. Last, but not least, give critical financial support to the American Irish organization(s) of your choice.

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Vol. 10, No. 3

SHORT'S UPDATE

by Joe Farrell (PEC, Pennsylvania)

The Short Brothers aircraft company of Belfast and its Loyalist workforce continue to operate as the happy recipients of a multi-million dollar U.S. Air Force contract. And the Air Force continues to slough off complaints about the subsidy of blatant anti-Catholic discrimination that this represents.

In a recent letter to an Illinois congressman, the Air Force assured him Short Brothers has "implemented an affirmative action program" and that, according to the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Agency's most recent report, "has produced a trebling in the hiring of Catholics by the firm." The Air Force adds that it understands Short's has acquired part of the DeLorean works in West Belfast "to build these aircraft."

The Irish National Caucus has reviewed this F.E.A. report as well as other statements and the F.E.A.; it finds that the improvements shown by Short's are slight to the point of insignificance. The most recent report on Short's was published in November, 1983. No further reports have been issued to date, although Short's is supposed to be providing the F.E.A. with complete hiring figures every six months. The significance of "trebling" depends on what number is being tripled. The apparent reference was to the percentage of the total hired that were Catholic during the period covered by the report (which is unstated but presumably the previous six months). Of the relatively small number of hirees for the period, fifteen per cent were Catholic. The claim that the hiring of Catholics was trebled apparently comes from comparing this with the proportion of Catholics in the total work force, which even the F.E.A. reported was about five percent. Of course, the population of Belfast is close to forty per cent Catholic, so even if the workforce were fifteen per cent Catholic, it would still be grossly imbalanced. However, not only is it not, but, at the rate of hiring reported, it wouldn't become even that for many years into the future. This is because the actual number of Catholics Short's hired into their 6300 man workforce was 35.

The hiring of 35 Catholics, puffed by the Air Force as representing an important change in the employment situation at Short's, would mean the workforce has become .0552 Catholic, rather than .0500.

Short's has stated that it will open a facility in the DeLorean works where, presumably, a larger proportion of Catholics would be likely to be hired. However, while the Air Force states that the facility will be "to build these aircraft" the Chairman of Short's said it would employ 100-200 — again, too few to have an impact on overall production or on the proportion of Catholics, even if the facility employed all Catholics, which it certainly wouldn't. In any case, it hasn't been started yet.

The F.E.A. report does show that the number of Catholics hired was proportional to the number applying — Catholics were about fifteen per cent of all applicants, as well as of those hired. This was easy for Short's to do when it only needed to hire 35. The critical question is why so few Catholics applied, given the rampant unemployment in the Nationalist areas of Belfast. According to Rita Mullan (INC), Catholics who have visited the East Belfast plant report an extremely intimidating atmosphere — Orange slogans are often displayed and workers and supervisors openly profess Loyalist militancy. Since the Air Force controversy began, the displays are cleaned up only when an inspection is coming. Obviously, these are things that could not exist without management's complicity.

The fact that Short's is not flooded with Catholic applicants, but gets them only in numbers that can be dealt with without causing significant change, suggests that these things are presently the most important in maintaining its nearly all Loyalist workforce. In any case, barring any sudden change, it seems clear that its Loyalist workforce is being maintained.

NATIONAL POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Founded in 1975

ESSENTIAL READING

NOTHING BUT THE SAME OLD STORY:

The History of the Roots of Anti-Irish Racism)

By Liz Curtis

A review of the above entitled book, published by London Against Racism, and written primarily by Liz Curtis.

HUMAN CHIMPANZEES

by Sean McGuffin

That's what Charles Kingsley called the Irish. The writer, who is best known for his book "The Waterbabies" which portrayed the plight of small children used as chimneysweeps, was on a visit to the Emerald Isle in 1860. He was most distressed that the Irish were white. "To see white chimpanzees is terrible; it would not be so bad if they were black, you wouldn't notice them so much," he wrote to his wife.

Kingsley the 'humanitarian' was not alone, of course. This excellent book traces the roots of anti-Irish prejudice and racism from the earliest times right up to the present. As Ken Livingstone, Chairman of the Greater London Council says, "the racism and the conditions that the Irish community face today are deeply rooted in British colonial history." And he makes a good point. "Although it has varied in degree, anti-Irish sentiment is directly linked to Irish resistance to English rule in Ireland."

In other words, while the Irish were prepared to be docile and obedient, they could be regarded in a patronizing manner as 'amusing', 'loquacious', 'happy drunks'. Just like the Blacks, they 'had rhythm', 'all their wars were merry and their weddings sad.'

Once the Irish had the temerity to protest the yoke however it was a different story. They became, in British eyes, 'Teagues' (robbers), 'Paddies', 'thick Micks'. Worse still, they were 'barbarians', 'savages', 'psychopathic killers' and 'bestial murderers'. Early British historians, included bigots such as Gerald of Wales, Edmund Campion and Edmund Spenser, (author of 'The Faerie Queen', who described the Irish thus:

they steal, they are cruel and bloody, full of revenge and delighting in deadly execution, licentiousness, swearers and blasphemers, common ravishers of women and murderers of children (etc etc).

EDUCATE SOMEONE

Send us the name of someone (a friend, politician, editor, etc.), you would like to educate on the war in northeast Ireland. We will send them our free information package on "Northern Ireland". If you would like us to acknowledge that it was sent on your behalf, please print your name on line at bottom of coupon. Write: NPEC, Two North Liberty Dr., Stony Point, N.Y. 10980 or Call 1 (914) 947-2726.

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Later historians were no better. The 18th century saw 36 editions of David Hume's influential "History of England" which lauded the motherland for her 'civilization' and berated the Irish as 'savages who should be exterminated'. 'Cromwell's only mistake was that he didn't kill enough of the Irish.' Thomas Babington Macaulay concurred. So did the 'great' Thomas Carlyle, who described Ireland as a 'human swinery', a 'vast suppuration' and a 'black howling Babel of superstitious savages.'

Every Irish leader, from Wolfe Tone to Daniel O'Connell, to Charles Stewart Parnell was vilified in the Tory Press. Popular cartoonists, from the 17th century to the present day portray the Irish as ape-like, violent, murderous and stupid. They are the butt of ethnic jokes. The victims of discrimination based on racist stereotypes. And why is this?

The answer is very simple. As Jean Paul Sartre said, How can an elite of usurpers, aware of their mediocrity, establish their privileges? By one means only: debasing the colonized to exalt themselves, denying the title of humanity to the natives, and defining them simply as absences of qualities — animals, not humans. This does not prove hard to do, for the system of Imperialism deprives them of everything.

In the past the apologists would have us believe that the English were in Ireland on a 'civilizing mission' to 'keep our hands from hellish crime, and gently raise us from the slime', today they try to exploit the same myth. British soldiers are in Ireland to keep the warring Irish factions apart?

Profusely illustrated and very reasonably priced, this book provides an excellent overview of British racism, particularly as it has been and is applied towards the Irish, as well as sections showing the parallels between the British treatment of the Irish and their treatment of the African slaves and the Indians under the Raj.

(Sean McGuffin, the author of several books including "Internment" and "The Guineapigs," presently resides in San Francisco, Ca. A former resident of Belfast, he was interned in 1971. He is a member of the Association for Legal Justice and Amnesty International. He has been a college lecturer, legal editor, journalist and is currently studying law. He is a graduate of Queens University, Belfast.)

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PEC TENTH ANNIVERSARY TESTIMONIAL DANCE
September 14, 1985, Rockland Co., NY
(full details, honored guests, etc. in next issue)

NEWS BITS

(Continued from Page 1)

didate, Rev. Jesse Jackson, has said that he will consider visiting N.I. later this year. (Irish Post 4/27/85) ... "The trustees of the N.Y.C. employment retirement system unanimously approved a program recommended by Comptroller Harrison Goldin to combat economic discrimination against Catholics in northeast Ireland. (IAUC 5/3/85).

The Ulster Volunteer Force, a Protestant-Unionist paramilitary group, has produced from its midst a new supergrass informer. William "Budgie" Allen has given details of a plot to murder a Roman Catholic in retaliation for the killing of a UVF man by the Provos. Allen said he was drinking in a social club and he discussed with the defendants a plan to hi-jack a taxi, then pick up a Catholic in a republican area and take him to the Shankill to be killed. Asked by the prosecutor whom they planned to kill, Allen replied: "Anyone, just a Catholic." (Belfast Telegraph 5/3/85).

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

Dear Members,

In the last issue of the *American Irish Newsletter* (Vol. 10, No. 2) we included our once-a-year financial appeal. The PEC depends very much on these donations to carry out its **most important** programs which are designed to inform the **uninformed** — those who are the most important. The donations also help defray the increasing expense of running our office which is very important and necessary to our continued expansion and survival. To date, the contributions have been fair, but far from what is needed if we are to continue to grow. While our operating cost have increased, your donations have not.

We urge all of you who have not yet forwarded your annual donation to please do so at this time. We urge those of you who did not plan to make a contribution to please reconsider. All donations will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

To those of you who have already contributed, we say again, Thank you!

In American Irish unity,
John J. Finucane
President

AN APPEARANCE OF REFORM

by Jonathan L. Wray, PEC Indianapolis

When the first steps of protest echoed in the streets of Northern Ireland in 1968, the issue that brought people to the streets was housing. Wholesale discrimination against Catholics was constantly present in every element of the British administration of the North, and the allocation and provision of housing was no different. Prior to the Dungannon protest march in August 1968, British administration of the housing system had largely remained hidden from international attention. This was a system designed around political affiliation rather than physical need, with available housing going to whomever the Loyalists favored at the time; so long as it wasn't a Catholic.

In August of 1968 Austin Currie, a local Nationalist MP, occupied a house in the village of Dungannon. The house in question had been allocated to the young, single, Protestant secretary of a Loyalist council member over a waiting list of large Catholic families. The ensuing protest march against this allocation proved to be a catalyst for many other marches addressing other issues, and soon the streets were filled with Irish men and women who shared a common dream of equity and justice in their homeland. True to history, the British responded with military might and political manipulation.

Having faced such "troubles" from the Irish for hundreds of years, they knew that it would be necessary to present policies and programs that would create an appearance of reform, but that would not lessen their grip on the administration of social services in the North. This grip had always allowed them an effective mechanism to quell dissention, and this was particularly true with respect to housing. Rent strikes and tenant disputes had plagued them since they first invaded Ireland, and they too often fueled rebellion. Housing was not a subject they wished examined too closely, so they were quick to respond.

A uniform system of housing implemented in early 1968 had placed the authority for the provision and allocation of housing under 60 some odd local councils overseen by a central board. No matter that it had been legislated prior to the outbreak of protest, or that it would have the effect of consolidating Loyalist control over housing in local areas, this was "brand new radical reform" intended to assist those being discriminated against.

Finding this to be a system unpleasant to the international

public eye and unwieldy as a weapon of social control, in 1972 James Callaghan, then the British Home Secretary, instituted even more "radical reform": the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). The NIHE replaced the local councils and assumed control over the allocation and provision of housing throughout the six counties. Coupled with the Payment of Debts Act of 1971, which permitted the housing authority to garnishee the social security benefits or public wages of any tenant behind in rent, the NIHE allowed them to tighten their administrative control, lessen the impact of any localized protests, and increase their ability to wield social services as a military weapon.

By 1974 over 20% of the housing stock in Northern Ireland was statutorily unfit compared to 7% in England and Wales. In all, 35% of the total housing stock required some form of remedial action with 172,000 dwellings deficient in one way or another. Some 600,000 people were living in inadequate housing. In Belfast, the most industrialized city in Ireland, 50% of the dwellings were unfit for human habitation and only 15% of all available housing was sound.

Now 15 years old, the NIHE continues its policy of third class housing for second class citizens. More sophisticated, the provision of housing is growing distinctly military in form. British security forces are attached to the Belfast Development Office where the NIHE forwards all of its building plans. Reinforced pavements in Poleglass able to stand the weight of armored cars, high "security walls" in plans for development of the Lower Falls and Roden street in West Belfast, removal of a group of houses in a Ardoyne development; these are the tangible British replies to housing discrimination in the North. Historically comfortable with manipulation and coercion rather than humanitarian social reform, they never heard the agonized cries from Dungannon.

If the international media were to return for a look at the housing conditions in the "radically reformed" Northern Ireland, they might be impressed by indestructable streets and impenetrable walls. However, chances are that they wouldn't notice the tired faces of the families along those streets and over those walls. Slumlords rarely allow their tenants to complain.

(Jonathan Wray is a Social Worker with a state-wide social service agency who has written on social services in the North for some time. This is his first article for PEC.)

ACTION LETTER

by Albert Doyle

American Irish who actively support the reunification of Ireland are truly determined people. They are under intense and often subtle negative pressures by three governments, the United Kingdom, Ireland and the United States (at the urging of the other two). A highly organized, government-financed propaganda campaign depicts decent, freedom-loving people as radicals and supporters of violence when they support justice. We know that the weight of "official" disapproval is effective to dilute the resolve of many. In addition, the establishment media lends itself to this campaign of intimidation. There is a virtual blackout of anti-partition views, sometimes motivated by hostility to our views, sometimes through British manipulation (as in the Joe Doherty case), but often through plain ignorance of the facts.

We ask you to write to your local newspapers to bring this situation to their attention and as an appeal for fair play. Instead of targeting a specific paper we are asking you, our faithful writers, to add the address of *your local newspaper* (usually found on the editorial page) to the suggested letter below. Please write the letter in your own words, or copy it as is on your own stationery. Also, urge your family, friends, and organizations to do the same. Do not underestimate the power of your letter (see Editor's comments on page 3).

Editor
Your local Newspaper

Your address and date

Dear Sir,

As an American and a member of the National Political Education Committee (NPEC), who supports the reunification of Ireland, I am disturbed that newspaper coverage of events in Northern Ireland is usually superficial and often reflects pro-British propaganda themes. Many large organizations such as the NPEC and the Irish American Unity Conference, which work solely through the American democratic process to end British rule in Ireland, have become media shut-outs. Without media coverage they are effectively "buried", which is not in the interest of a full presentation of all views.

I urge you to give coverage to these organizations and to seek out in-depth reports. Excellent background information is available from the NPEC at; Malloy Building, Two North Liberty Dr., Stony Point, NY 10980.

Sincerely,
Signature

WRITE YOUR ACTION LETTERS!

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SELLOUT

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over finance, defense, personal security, jobs, and housing remains safely in the hands of those unionists loyal to Britain.

The willingness of the Irish government *under Garret Fitzgerald*, Ireland's Prime Minister, to agree to this kind of internal pseudo-cultural solution to the problem of British oppression and violence in Ireland and Irish reaction to it, is to make many nationalists and republicans unwilling to concede to the Dublin government any right to negotiate on their behalf. For generations it has been assumed that such a right exists, that the Dublin government does indeed have the function of working out a deal between the British and themselves. Nowadays all is being questioned and it is being said openly for the first time that no such right exists for any government unless it has received a mandate from those people in the north who have suffered most. The British government, the southern parties, and the churches, made it quite clear long ago, however, that if the people elected Sinn Fein as their spokespersons, they would remain as unheard as ever they had been under the British. The British had said, unless you vote Unionist you will not be heard; now the government in Dublin, the other Irish parties and the churches gave the same message loudly and clearly. Unless you vote SDLP you will not be heard.

However, 43% of the catholics who voted, voted for Sinn Fein, and it is this fact that puts the question of Dublin's right to negotiate for northern Nationalists in the melting pot. The people in Dublin have no mandate from 43% of the people they claim to represent!

This unsatisfactory situation points in a number of directions for future governments in Dublin. Either obtain a new mandate from the people in the north to negotiate on their behalf, or recognize Sinn Fein's right to speak for the 43% who voted for them. The latter would seem to be the logical and reasonable course. The present political establishments in Dublin and London however, do not act according to either logic or reason. They act upon what they see as their over-riding need to destroy Sinn Fein whom they see as their prime enemy.

In this aim both Dublin and London are in accord. In order to get the support of American public opinion the struggle between the republicans and the British government is *misrepresented* as one between good, democratic government and "international terrorism". For many people in Ireland it was not at all clear for many years why the British added "international terrorism" to its list of spurious reasons for holding on to military bases in Ireland. Then it dawned upon them that the Americans had some interesting law or other which, while it did not allow them to help a government struggling against **Internal** terrorism, it did allow them to help governments fighting against **international** terrorism. So, if the British want American help in fighting against its opponents in Ireland it has to represent the situation as a struggle against international terrorism.

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