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POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the Action Irish

Vol. 8, No. 4

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER, 1983

IRISH UNITY CONFERENCE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

(see Unity Conference Below)

**WRITE YOUR UAP ACTION LETTERS NOW!
REMEMBER! AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT AND BIG BUSINESS YOUR PERSONAL LETTER REPRESENTS THE VIEWS OF ONE THOUSAND AMERICANS.**

UNITY CONFERENCE

by John Finucane

Irish-American unity, often sought and more often elusive, has a bright future, thanks to the efforts of the participants in the recent Irish-American Unity Conference, held in Chicago (July 15-17th). Those who hunger for Ireland's freedom will soon be heard in a single, loud, and clear voice.

In attendance were 237 leaders from 30 states representing 617 organizations with a total membership of 1.225 million and a potential 5.3 million voters. Many of the organizations represented have a large membership, including: the AOH in America, the Irish American Labor Coalition, the PEC, Irish Northern Aid, the United Societies of Illinois, the United Irish Societies of Detroit, and the Emerald Society, Fire Dept. of New York City. Other organizations present were: Yiddish Sons of Erin, the Irish Forum of San Francisco, the American Irish Congress, the Gaelic League, and many more. The south was well represented with delegates in attendance from Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, Georgia, So. Carolina, Washington, D.C. and Florida.

Regional conferences are being planned. It is expected that these meetings will involve many more of the over 3,000 Irish-American organizations in the United States. A site selection team is being picked to arrange a National Convention which will take place next year prior to the U.S. Presidential election.

James Delaney, the Texas entrepreneur, who proved to be an outstanding leader and organizer, declared the Conference a great success. In his opening remarks Delaney called the Conference, "An historic attempt to unite Irish Americans and to put forward a common policy on the reunification of Ireland". Delaney further stated, "We will seek to bring the unification of Ireland closer, by formulating a strong Irish American voice with the main objective of putting pressure on the U.S., British and Irish governments to come up with a solution to the Irish problem. There is a growing realization in Irish American circles of the economic and political clout that 40 million Irish can carry both in the United States and on the Irish question".

Seven committees were formed to implement the activities of the Conference: Political Action, chaired by Paul O'Dwyer; Economic Development, chaired by James Delaney; Education, chaired by John Finucane; Publicity, chaired by James Shannon; Human Rights, chaired by Professor Charles Rice; Direct Aid chaired by Nick Murphy and Cultural, chaired by Liam Murphy.

A national display of Irish American support for the con-

(Continued on Overleaf)

NEWS BITS

by Andy Prior

NEW YORK TIMES GUILTY OF MISLEADING THE PUBLIC in its reporting of the acquittal in November, 1982 of five men (Freedom Five) charged with trying to smuggle guns to the IRA (National News Council 6/83). Congratulations to the American Irish Unity Committee who filed the complaint against *The New York Times*. For a complete transcript of the Council's findings write: Ray Quinn, AIUC, 175 Fifth Ave., Suite 1104, New York, NY 10010. (Ed. note. One must wonder how much of the *TIMES* reporting is misleading!...)

"A strange and rather cheering letter appeared in the Belfast Telegraph last month from an ex-RUC man now living in the Republic. Charles Forbes wrote from Longford that he was a Protestant who had served ten years in the RUC, most of it in the Special Branch in Portadown. He said he and his wife — a Northern Protestant from a Unionist background had moved to Longford in 1964. In 19 years there, he had not seen one instance of discrimination against Protestants — unlike his time in Portadown, when he remembered shops and factories refusing to employ Catholics. Indeed he had nothing but praise for his Catholic neighbors, and strongly challenged Rev. Ian

(Continued on Overleaf)

ANOTHER UAP VICTORY

In a recent issue of the PEC National Newsletter, under the byline, Offensive Situations, we reported that the Friehoffer Baking Co., Syracuse, N.Y. came out with a new product, *Paddy's Irish Soda Bread* which was deemed to be offensive by many PEC members. We initiated a UAP letter-writing campaign. We are proud to announce the Friehoffer Baking Company has since changed the name to *Patrick's Irish Soda Bread*. We say "thank you" to Friehoffer's and to you, the proud Irish-Americans who took the time to write. It is your efforts that made this UAP victory possible.

(Ed. Note. It should be well-noted that prior to the inception of the United Action Program (UAP), the Irish-American community did not have available a mechanism by which it could collectively, in a united and organized manner, on a national or state level, protest through the letter-writing medium. Since UAP's inception, we have had a number of significant victories. There are many tougher and bigger battles ahead concerning offensive situations on a larger scale such as the TV and newspaper industries. As our membership in UAP grows which will give it more clout, we will be able to take on the bigger opponents of the Irish-American community. **We must never take anything for granted.** There were many years of frustration prior to UAP. We must continue to write the requested UAP Action Letters. Once we slack off the enemy will again rear its ugly head.)

RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER FOR UAP TODAY.
(please use Newsletter Subscription form on Page 3)

PEC ESSAY COMPETITION WINNERS

by Bob Loughman

The American Irish National Political Education Committee, has awarded two bonds to the essay competition winners at Albertus Magnus High School, Bardonia, N.Y. The topic was "Divided Ireland".

The first prize winner was Meredith Hladik of New City, N.Y. Opening with the poetry of William B. Yeats and relying primarily on the writings of Nobel Peace Prize winner, Sean McBride, Miss Hladik referenced the prime issues in a divided Ireland.

Second prize was awarded to Regina Fogarty of Orangeburg, N.Y. Ms. Fogarty demonstrated a strong knowledge of Irish history presenting an in depth study of the Irish-English conflict. Her question of U.S. involvement in other countries and silence on Ireland was an excellent conclusion.

The competition was an outgrowth of "Concerns Week" directed by Sister Cecelia of the Albertus Magnus Campus Ministry. Sister Cecilia arranged for talks on human rights in Ireland, El Salvador, prisons and other pertinent topics of human concern. John Finucane, chairman of the AINPEC, wishes to thank the faculty, especially Mrs. Diane Gasparrine, who encouraged the students to participate in the essay competition. Each participating student received a short History of Ireland as a token of appreciation for their time, effort and excellent essays.

OFFENSIVE SITUATION

Again, we must call upon our readers for help. An alert member has informed the PEC that at least one Pickwick Village Card & Gift Store, which is a chain of stores, is selling "IRISHMEN KNOW THE POWER OF POSITIVE DRINKING" bumper stickers.

We urge our readers to write the following letter to the manufacturer:

address & date

Moderne Card Company, Inc.
3855 Lincoln Avenue
Chicago, Ill. 60613

Dear Sir:

As an American of Irish extraction, I find your "IRISHMEN KNOW THE POWER OF POSITIVE DRINKING" bumper stickers to be extremely offensive and degrading. I urge your company to discontinue the manufacture of these bumper stickers and any other items such as St. Patrick's Day greeting cards, that debase the Irish image. Further, I urge that your company recall all the bumper stickers in question. Until such time, I will no longer purchase any of your company's products.

Both American Greetings and Hallmark have cooperated with the Irish-American community. I look forward to the same cooperation from Moderne Card Company.

Sincerely,
signature

(Ed. Note: We would like to thank Gail Redmond of New Jersey for bringing this matter to the attention of the PEC.)

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P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923

Editor.....John J. Finucane

IMPORTANT REMINDER!

We wish to remind those of you have not yet responded to the PEC's recent Financial Appeal, to please do so at this time. As you are aware, the important work of the PEC depends entirely on donations. Please make checks or money orders payable to: National PEC, and mail to P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923.

IRISH IN BRITISH JAILS

By Andy Prior

British discrimination against the Irish does not, it has recently become apparent, end with the usually long sentences handed out by British courts. Cardinal O Fiaich, Archbishop of Armagh, has accused the British Home Office of discrimination against Irish prisoners. He has called for the repatriation of Irish political prisoners in Britain to serve their sentences in Ireland. "Every British soldier convicted of crimes in N.I. has been taken immediately to a prison near his home in Britain", he said recently.

Approximately all of the Irish political prisoners in British prisons (about 65 presently) are "Special Category A" which means that they are the subject of maximum security measures. Officially, their escape would be a "danger to the State, the public or the police."

When moving within the prison, Category A convicts are always escorted by two guards, moving from block to block a dog and a handler are added. During visits, the Deputy Governor of the prison and two wardens are present and relatives must communicate through a wire mesh screen. Due to their high security status, they are often not allowed recreational or educational facilities.

Unlike other Category A prisoners the Irish convicts are forced to submit to even stricter measures. These include regular strip searches and "ghosting" — sudden, unannounced transfers from one prison to another. Because of these measures, many of the Irish now held in English jails are refusing visits. But those families who do travel to England often find it extremely difficult to make their planned visits.

Visiting relatives estimate the cost of traveling to England as about one thousand dollars each time. Often, the money and effort is wasted since prisoners have been transferred to another part of the country and the information on where they are is so closely guarded that even relatives cannot be told.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act is also used in an apparent effort to harrass relatives. In February three relatives of Irish political prisoners were detained so long under the PTA at their ports of entry, that by the time they were released they had missed their arranged visits.

Due to the constant transfers, relatives do not know what to expect when they travel to England. The Prison administration at each institution interpret prison regulations to accommodate their own arrangements so that there is often no consistency in visiting rights.

It is believed by relatives that the statutory right for Category A prisoners is one half hour visit a month. In some prisons this right is applied so strictly that if a relative misses the time they are allowed by the prison they are not allowed in at all.

The British Home Office excuse for not repatriating these prisoners is that the N.I. office has refused to accept transfer of these prisoners to the maximum security H Blocks of the Maze prison at Long Kesh. Exercising it's usual British double standard, the N.I. office has accepted all of the loyalist prisoners convicted in Scotland on arms charges. Even the British soldiers convicted of the brutal "pitchfork" murders in Co. Fermanagh were immediately jailed in England where they could be close to their families.

FROM THE EDITOR

Once upon a time there lived a sleeping giant called China. Nations stepped on it, walked over it, and kicked it around. Then came World War II. That nation's mortal enemy, Japan, then made the mistake of rousing the sleeping giant. Once roused, it shook itself, snorted, saw its own great strength and began to lash about and breathe fire. Ever since then the world has looked on it with respect and even fear.

In the United States lies another sleeping giant — the Irish American community. It seems that England, which has feared Irish-American unity since the Famine of the 1840's, has played the part of Japan and has awakened this other sleeping giant.

In being so, Irish-American history has been made. It means that suddenly the Irish-American community has at hand for the first time one of the most powerful political machines in American politics. We have gained a potential five million Irish-American voters. Enough votes, to have swung the last four presidential elections.

This is the result of the recent Unity Conference which took place in Chicago, Ill. Taking part were 237 delegates who were determined to establish a platform which would in no way jeopardize our position on a united Ireland. In this they succeeded.

Now that the machine is in place, the next most important element is capable leadership. Without capable leadership too much would be lost. We have found that leadership in the person of James Delaney, a millionaire real estate developer from Texas. This was already made evident in the fact that he was able to draw together so many different groups which cover the entire spectrum of Irish-American activity.

As Mr. Delaney pointed out, what lies ahead now is the formidable task of making this machine work. We should remember that it is not his task alone, but also, yours and mine. (Ed. Note: see UAP Action Letter.)

**KEEP UP-TO-DATE ON THE
IRISH-AMERICAN UNITY
CONFERENCE. READ THE
POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER.**

(Newsletter Subscription Form Below)

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

Join the action and information flow. Subscribe to the bi-monthly Political Education Committee National Newsletter. Send your name and address and a check for \$8.00 to: National PEC, PO Box 16, Garnerville, NY 10923.

YES, please enroll me the following name person for a one year subscription of the bi-monthly PEC National Newsletter. Enclosed, please find my check for \$_____ Date _____

Signature _____

Name (print) _____

Address _____

THE ATTACK ON IRISH NORTHERN AID

by A. R. Doyle

The PEC's educational efforts are designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of views on the subject of Northern Ireland, from left to right, militant to pacifist, informed and less informed. We are beholden to no other group, domestic or foreign, and seek to cooperate with anyone seeking the same ultimate goal, reunification of Ireland and an end to the injustice of British rule in Northern Ireland.

The British have long aimed at discrediting and "criminalizing" the nationalist opponents of their rule in Northern Ireland, as they had done previously in what is now the Republic of Ireland. With the shameful cooperation of our own government that effort has been extended to the United States. It is now clear that, among other manifestations of this policy, there is a campaign underway, orchestrated at the highest levels, to destroy one of the most vigorous American organizations opposing British rule, that is Irish Northern Aid (INA). INA provides assistance to the relatives of political prisoners in Ireland and England. INA has been falsely accused of supplying arms to the IRA. This charge has never been documented.

Whether or not we agree with all aspects of INA's policies, we recognize that we are all ultimately aimed at convincing the American public that any broad-based support for the end of British rule in Ireland is "extreme" and "disreputable". It is part of Mrs. Thatcher's criminalization policy. Make no mistake, that kind of propaganda can be very effective with Irish Americans who are generally socially conservative people — not to mention the impact on the public at large. This policy must be exposed since it will not stand the light of day.

We call upon you, the Action Irish, to recognize and speak up against this plan of intimidation of which INA is now the principal target, as well as being the lever by which they hope to frighten us — and to deflect us from our aims. Unfortunately, the British government has found only too willing accomplices in the Anglophile State Department and at the highest levels of our government whose highest moral principle in foreign policy seems to be to oppose what they call "terrorism". Do not be intimidated by the righteous rhetoric from these sources which imply that *the entire problem* is violence by the IRA or nationalists and, by implication, that support for the end of British rule is support of terrorism and violence.

The PEC advocates a democratic system in Ireland and works for this through the free, democratic system in our country. This cannot be said of our opponents with their secret government deals, torture, plastic bullets, internment, censorship, Diplock Courts, and whole discriminatory system of Northern Ireland. The attack on INA must be resisted by all of us. United we stand — divided we fall!

GIVE A GIFT OF THE PEC NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

EDUCATE A FRIEND

If you would like to educate someone on the truth about the troubles in Ireland, forward their name and we will send them the PEC Information Package. **PLEASE USE COUPON BELOW.** Mail to: National PEC, PO Box 16, Garnerville, NY 10923.

Please send free PEC Information Package to:

Name _____

(print)

Address _____

POLICY STATEMENT

(Continued from other side of Overleaf)

- in supporting American legislation that will facilitate Irish national and economic development such as:

The *Biaggi Bill* would authorize U.S. Foreign Aid to Ireland once the British leave, and the country is reunited.

The *Gilman Bill* calls on the U.S. to cut off all military aid to England which may be used for the oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland.

The *Ottinger Bill* calls on the U.S. to ban American companies in Northern Ireland from discriminating against Catholics.

NEWS BITS (Continued from Page 1)

Paisley and John Taylor to substantiate their recent charges in the European Parliament of discrimination against Protestants in the South. He went on, "If Northern Ireland people are alleged to be realists, then let them invoke some of their realism that, somewhere in the future, they will have to make an accommodation with Irishmen and women of different religious beliefs and try to live normal lives as Irish people. Why wait until the day a ballot box produces a united Ireland?" He for one was "confident that we Irish are a people capable of great compassion and generosity towards each other. I have no fear for the future of myself and my fellow Protestants, only great hope and confidence." (Fortnight 6/83).

Relatives of many prisoners are alleging that harassment of Irish political prisoners in British jails has been considerably stepped up in recent weeks. At least one man has been severely beaten by wardens, while several others have had mail confiscated and visits disrupted because of sudden transfers from prison to prison. (Irish Post 7/9/83)...Despite exhortations from the whole British, Irish, Catholic, Protestant and Unionist establishment, 102,000 people voted for Sein Fein in the June elections. Sein Fein received nearly 40,000 votes more than they got in last October's Assembly election, and 12,000 more than they themselves were aiming for. Gerry Adams of Sein Fein was elected in Belfast and John Hume of the SDLP was returned to office in Derry. (Fortnight 6/83)...Sein Fein has scored another political triumph in West Belfast, Alex Maskey, a former internee, has won the Belfast City Council by-election with a decisive margin over the SDLP. This is Sein Fein's first seat on the Belfast City Council. (Irish Post 7/9/83).

The Ulster Defense Association, the largest Protestant paramilitary organization, has called for the IRA to declare a permanent ceasefire and for Sein Fein and the SDLP to take up their seats in the N.I. Assembly to seek a political solution. The UDA further stated that if "Catholic" representatives continued to portray a united Ireland or nothing attitude, "then we are left with no alternative than to singlemindedly prepare ourselves, both psychologically and physically, for the final and seemingly inevitable conflict. (Irish News 7/2/83).

The Northern Ireland Bishops have called for, in a joint statement, the end of the use of plastic bullets. The Bishops felt that in light of the many innocent people killed by the bullets, their continued use is "morally indefensible" and that there can't be one law for the security forces and another for the public. (Irish Post 7/9/83)... Greater London Council leader, Ken Livingstone has recently declared that the role British politicians like himself ought to be playing as regards Ireland was tackling the mechanics of withdrawal and letting the Irish in Ireland run their own country. He added that despite the vilification and press hysteria aroused by his comments on Ireland, he has been told privately by many politicians, businessmen and other people that they agree with him. (Irish Post 7/16/83).

Third Annual IRISH SOLIDARITY DAY RALLY Sunday, September 25, 1983 at 2 p.m. Dag Hammarskjold Plaza

(47th St. & 1st Ave.)

PURPOSE: To peacefully demonstrate Irish-American support for the reunification of Ireland and Irish Human Rights.

This GREAT event is part of a National Day (September 25th) of Irish Solidarity as called for by the American-Irish Unity Conference. Similar events will be conducted throughout the United States. It is planned to be the greatest display of Irish-American Solidarity ever. Please be sure that you and your family are part of this historic event! **Let us show America that we care!**

Sponsoring organizations include: The American Irish Ad Hoc Committee; The National Political Education Committee; Emerald Society; Fire Department, City of NY; Irish-American Labor Coalition; Irish Northern Aid; Grand Council, Emerald Societies; Ancient Order of Hibernians in America; Labor Unions; Council of Gaelic Societies; American-Irish Congress; Clan Na Gael; Irish County Organizations; and many, many more.

UNITY CONFERENCE (Continued from Page 1)

ference and its objectives was called for. The date selected is September 25, 1983 and will be called "Irish Solidarity Day." All organizations have been asked to make sure their states conduct an event. Organizations are asked to work together. It is planned that a common message, for the media, will be delivered at each event. Therefore, all event organizers planning an Irish Solidarity Day event are asked to forward this information to James Delaney, Chairman, Irish-American Unity Conference, 583 Spencer Lane, San Antonio, Texas 78201. This is to insure that the common message is made available to all participating groups, coalitions, etc.

Mr. Delaney stated that hundreds of thousands of dollars must be raised annually in order that the Conference be able to function properly and professionally. Fund raising activities and membership information is being prepared. For further information, please write: IAUG, P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, NY 10923. (Below see unity Conference policy statement).

(Ed. Note: James Delaney will be the Special Guest at the PEC's Eight Annual Dance on September 25, 1983. (see particulars page 4).

POLICY STATEMENT

of
IRISH UNITY CONFERENCE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
July 15-17, 1983

I BELIEVE

- in the political reunification of Ireland as a top priority,
- in the right of the Irish in Ireland to determine their own national destiny,
- in supporting American political candidates who will bring American pressure on England to withdraw its troops from Irish soil,
- that the British-generated Ulster problem is a danger to the Anglo-American alliance, and

(Continued on other side of Overleaf)

VICTORY AT BUNKER HILL

by John McCormack

A birthday party for queen Elizabeth to be held June 12th on the grounds of the Boston Naval Shipyard was scuttled by the Charlestown Irish-American community under the leadership of PEC Regional Director Kevin Murphy, a twenty three year old dynamo.

The highlight of this celebration, sponsored by the English Union of Metropolitan Boston was to be a parade by "Her Majesty's" 10th Regiment. Adding insult to injury was the scheduling of these gala events to coincide with Boston's Bunker Hill Day Parade which honors the Americans who fought against British Tyranny during the American Revolution.

Upon learning of the upcoming birthday celebration from the June 5th, 1983 *Boston Herald*, Kevin Murphy along with fellow Charlestownian, John Hurley sprang into action organizing a telephone and letter writing campaign to prevent this offensive event from occurring on U.S. Government property. The target of this campaign was Hugh Giney, Superintendent of the Navy Yard and issuer of the permit for the event.

Mr. Murphy tried to enlist the assistance of U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas, Naval Secretary John Lehman and other local officials to no avail. In the end it was the united action of Boston's Irish American community working together which brought about the June 7, 1983 cancellation of the "Salute to the queen."

It should also be noted that the Union Jack that was flying over the Bunker Hill Museum in the Boston Navy Yard was removed and replaced with the Liberty Tree flag, the official flag of Charlestown.

(Ed. Note: We wish to commend Kevin Murphy, PEC Director, for his continued outstanding leadership and organizing abilities. He is a credit to the Irish-American community. We also wish to commend Mr. John Hurley and all the proud Irish-Americans who participated in this letter-writing/telephone campaign.)

UAP ACTION LETTER

The success of the Irish-American Unity Conference was not by chance. It is the result of an extraordinary effort on the part of James Delaney, a second-generation Irish-American. Through the Conference, he successfully brought together 237 Irish-American leaders representing a potential 5 million voters. Through his efforts, we now have an Irish-American "political machine" that if well-supported and participated in, will bring about the reunification of Ireland. Such a massive undertaking will require great moral strength and support.

Like most leaders, Mr. Delaney will want to know he has the support of the Irish-American community. Therefore, we ask that all members write him. Please write or type your own letter along the lines suggested below. If for any reason this is not possible, simply rewrite our letter below on your own stationery. Please urge all Irish-American organizations of which you are a member to do the same on their organization letterhead. Your letters will prove to be very important to Mr. Delaney and the Unity Conference when he is called upon by the media, elected officials, and others, to demonstrate real support. Because of the time and expense involved in responding to your letters, we ask that you do not request a reply from Mr. Delaney. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

address & date

Mr. James Delaney, Chairman
Irish-American Unity Conference
583 Spencer Lane, San Antonio, TX, 78201

Dear Mr. Delaney:

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to you for your efforts to unite the Irish-American community in working for the cause of a United Ireland. I fully support the aims and objectives of the Irish American Unity Conference. A reply is not necessary.

Respectfully, signature

PEC EIGHTH ANNUAL DANCE

JAMES DELANEY, chairman, Irish American Unity Conference, will be the **Special Guest** at the National Political Education Committee's Eighth Annual Dance. Honored Guest are: **Catherine McDougall** (Rockland County Legislator who introduced the famous **BARCLAY BANK RESOLUTION**); **Denis Mulcahy** (of Project Children); and **Patricia Dwyer** (Chairperson, Rockland County A.O.H. Fies (1980 thru 1983). This event will take place September 17, 1983 at St. Catharine's, Blauvelt, NY

(Rockland County, NY) commencing at 9 p.m. Music will be provided by the True Celts. Admission is \$12.50 per person (\$125.00 per table of ten). **Please make early reservations** as a sell out is expected. Food, Beer, Sets-ups, Soda Bread, Tea and Coffee will be provided — BYOB.

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL: 914-947-2998, 914-359-0036, or 914-354-2473. Make your reservations today!

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