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## American Irish Newsletter - February - March 1981

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

# NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Published By Rockland County A.O.H., P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923 FEB.—MAR.  
In cooperation with the Emerald Society, Fire Department, N.Y.C. 1981

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO DIVISION I, FLORIDA STATE AOH. THE PEC ACKNOWLEDGES THEIR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE PUBLICATION OF THIS ISSUE.**

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REV. IAN PAISLEY HAS ACCEPTED AN INVITATION FOR THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN. (THIS INFORMATION WAS RECEIVED DIRECTLY FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN'S INAUGURATION COMMITTEE BY THE PEC).

## NEWS BITS

JOHN J. FINUCANE

Pro-British loyalists murder H-Block campaigners Ronnie Bunting and Noel Lyttle (Irish People 10/25)...TD Neil Blaney challenged PM Charles Haughey "to come off the fence" and to say what side he is on (Donegal Times 10/17)...Humphrey Atkins, Northern Ireland Secretary of State, said of the hunger strikers, "*If the prisoners choose to try to starve themselves to death they may well die. If they do die, so be it*" (AP 10/27)...Ulster Defense Association claimed responsibility for the murders of 4 leading Irish nationalists campaigning for special privileges for imprisoned terrorists - it would use every means available to eliminate those who posed a threat (NY Times 10/80). The legal UDA is alleged to have murdered more than 700 nationalists.

Father Patrick Fell relocated to Parkhurst, Isle of Wight, with suspected tuberculosis (Irish Echo 11/1)...Amnesty International researching the operation of Northern Ireland's non-jury courts, set up to try people charged with *politically motivated* offenses-(AI Matchbox 11/80)...RUC appeals to President-elect Ronald Reagan for weapons (WRKL-NY 11/5)...Sile DeValera, TD, member European Parliament, attacks British PM Margaret Thatcher for her lack of compassion on the H-Block issue (Irish World 11/8)...Most armed robberies in Ireland and subsequent murders are the work of freelancers and not the IRA (Irish Post 10/25)...Former British PM James Callaghan and Attorney General, Sam Silkin, knew of the torture of prisoners taking place at Castlereagh and Gough Barracks in No. Ireland (Irish Post 10/25)...Patrick Hackett, a "blanket protestor" in England demanding political status was placed in solitary confinement. British authorities removed his artificial leg and arm (An Phoblact 11/24)...Northern Ireland Office acknowledges there is a loyalist violence campaign (Derry Journal 11/7)...Alliance Party calls on President-elect Reagan to withdraw the ban on the sale of weapons to RUC (Derry Journal 11/7).

It is clear the British Government could have "avoided the hunger strike" by granting the blanket protestors a casual concession the right to wear their own clothes - Biaggi urges Carter to act on hunger strike (Irish Echo 11/8)...Loyalists unite against blanket protestors from para-militaries to church leaders (An Phoblact 11/8)...British soldier commits suicide (Republican News 11/8)...It is very well for Humphrey Atkins, the Northern Ireland Office and sections of the British media to refer to the prisoners as murderers, but that isn't how they are seen by most Irish people, some British people, and a wide section of international opinion (Irish Post 11/1)...UDA gunmen shoot 4 in eight days - (Forkhill) for no apparent reason British soldiers shoot down two young Armagh men (An Phoblact 11/8)...Ex-British soldier fast in London over H-Block (Irish Echo 11/22)...Fr. Desmond Wilson, Belfast, blast the Catholic Church in northeast Ireland for being unmindful of the poor, geared only to holding on to its property and controlling its Catholics through education and its hold on their morals and emotions. Fr. Wilson told of a social revolution as Catholics began to think for themselves and emerge from "their terrible subservience to the clergy" (National Catholic Reporter 10/24)...Political Education Committee keeps the flame alive on the north through its Newsletter (Irish Times 10/13)...Political Education Committee Rockland County A.O.H. rally supporting hunger strikers draws large crowd and a significant number of elected officials (WRKL 11/24)...Tir Conaill Gaels GAA in London unanimously supports the 5 demands of the H-Block hunger strikers. The GAA pointed out that 4 of the hunger strikers are members of the GAA and that 100 of the blanket protestors are members (Irish Post 11/29)...Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip arrived at the Brussels opera house to the boos of Irish Republican Army supporters (Journal News 11/25)...Political debate and activity among students in Northern Ireland were virtually impossible because of the *continuous threat* of violence from the paramilitary organizations and *harassment* from the British Army (Guardian.12/6).

## MAILGRAM BANK

The most effective lobbying method, outside of being present in Washington, is the *MAILGRAM BANK*. Just how does the Mailgram Bank work? Individuals are designated as Mailgram Bank Captains (MBC). Individuals will give the captain (MBC) authority to send a mailgram which will be charged directly to the consenting individual's telephone bill. The MBC will also be part of a nation wide telephone chain. When a critical issue arises on the Irish question, pre-selected individuals will prepare the message and determine to who the mailgram will be sent. The message will then be transmitted via telephone chain to the MBC or their alternates. The MBC (captain) will then send the mailgram(s) on behalf of those participating in the Mail Bank.

There is no limit to how many individuals a captain can represent. A mailgram cost \$3.20 for 50 words which will cover any message. If you authorize 3 mailgrams a year, your cost will be only \$9.60. What a cheap price to pay to help our brothers and sisters!

If you feel you would like to be a Mailgram Bank Captain, please send your name and address to: Michael Ducey, Director Mailgram Bank, Political Education Committee, AOH, 13 Post Brook Road S, West Milford, N.J. 07480.

## NEW PEC's FORMED

Chula Vista, CA — Chairman John B. Reynolds  
Ocean County, NJ — Chairman Ed McGrath  
Oakland, NJ — Chairman Arthur White

Austin, Texas — Chairman Kevin O'Connell  
San Antonio, Texas — Chairman James P. Lavelle

## BRITISH GUARANTEE

JAMES F. CLARKE

The admission by the Ulster Defense Association that they murdered IRA sympathizers (NY Times 10/30/80) has finally brought to the surface a chance to illustrate the underlying causes for such violence.

First of all, are the victims IRA sympathizers? Ronald Bunting, the Protestant son of an Ian Paisley confidant, took a political position which was nationalist in viewpoint. Noel Lyttle, also a Protestant, politically was a nationalist. Miriam Daly, a Catholic professor of Economics at Queens University, Belfast, also professed a Nationalistic political point of view. John Turnly, a Protestant political leader, advocated a united Ireland as a political goal. The fact is that these people were murdered for their political beliefs and the UDA tries to justify the murders by claiming IRA sympathy.

What gives rise to such political murders? The UDA is a legal organization which has been murdering people for their political beliefs since 1969. The reason for these murders can be found in the Guarantee that is extended by the British Government to the *artificially created* majority in Northern Ireland. This Guarantee is enforced by having the British Army patrol Catholic ghettos; by having members of the UDA and other loyalist para-militaries on the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the national police force, and on the Ulster Defense Regiment, the local auxiliary British Army unit in Northern Ireland.

While the British Government continually extends the Guarantee, radical, bigoted loyalist to the Crown politicians can openly persist in their bigotry in the political arena and this same Guarantee allows loyalist to the Crown para-military groups, such as the UDA, to continue their campaign of political murder without fear of castigation because they are legal.

These murders laid to rest the notion that religion is the cause and the perpetuator of the violence and illustrates why Catholics cannot accept the Northern Ireland state under British control. That three out of four of the victims were Protestant has sharpened the understanding of Northern Ireland as a British political problem. John Hume of the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) and Prime Minister Charles Haughey of the Irish Republic have repeatedly stated that the British Guarantee extended to so-called loyalists to remain part of the United Kingdom is divisive and unjustified.

## DID YOU FORGET YOUR CONTRIBUTION

The Political Education Committee wishes to thank our many readers who responded so generously to our financial appeal. We remind those of you who still have not forwarded your contribution to please do so at this time. Without your financial and moral support we are nothing. Please make checks payable to: PEC-AOH and send to the Political Education Committee A.O.H., 14 Hester Place, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923.

## OUR READERS RESPOND

The PEC welcomes comments from our readers. Below is one of the many comments we have received.

"I consider the PEC the greatest force for the unification of Ireland that has been born in my lifetime. My own efforts have been going on for thirty four years and I suddenly see this great possibility of fruition.

Sean Twomey  
Cliffside Park, NJ

## LOCAL JUSTICE

Is our N.Y.S. Government giving our people a fair shake in the administration of justice? We say no! We place the blame on the Executive Mansion in Albany, and the N.Y.S. Board of Parole (political appointees of the governor). We are specifically concerned about the denial of parole and continued incarceration of Mel Patrick Lynch and Dominic Byrne (released December 1, 1980). They were involved in the alleged kidnapping of Samuel Bronfman, Jr. Arrested August 17, 1975, subsequently *tried and acquitted of kidnapping*, but convicted of Grand Larceny. Lynch and Byrne's sentences were 4 to 12 and 3 to 9 years respectively. (*Ed. note: Governor Hugh Carey's Office, in responding to Nicholas Mancuso, President of the 10,000 member NYC Uniformed Firefighters Association, advised that one of the primary reasons the Parole Board denied Lynch parole was that he kidnapped his victim.*)

We are of the opinion that Lynch and Byrne have long since repaid their debt to society. Yet, Lynch remains incarcerated, while the Parole Board daily releases recidivist criminals convicted of violent crimes.

We have learned from the Parole Officers Emerald Society that it is *highly unusual* for a person to be denied parole after having served the minimum portion of his sentence if there is no prior criminal history, and no violence involved in the crime for which he is incarcerated as is the case with Mel Lynch. Yet Lynch, was denied parole in July, 1979, and ordered held 2 more years to "meet the Board" again in July, 1981. Lynch has now served 5 years and 5 months.....almost 1½ years in excess of his minimum sentence of 4 years!!

After making extensive inquiries into Lynch's past, we compiled a profile of an excellent past history. It is our understanding that he was a qualified and eligible candidate for parole release, and cannot understand why the Parole Board should have denied him his freedom. This is particularly puzzling in light of the fact that the Parole Board was aware that he is now permanently disabled.

The action of the N.Y.S. Parole Board is all the more puzzling in view of the recent case reported in the N.Y. Daily News in which the Parole Board okayed the release of the rapist of 5 women, having only served the minimum portion of a *plea-bargained* sentence, and with the Parole Board explaining that it needed room in the jails!!

We are just as concerned about the victims of real crimes as we are about the denial of justice in the case of Lynch. We intend to speak out against lenient treatment and parole releases that are blatantly out of tune with the crime and the nature of the offense. This "double standard" of justice by the Parole Board frees dangerous recidivist criminals to prey on society, but keeps Lynch incarcerated solely because they belong to the *wrong ethnic group* politically speaking.

We have, therefore, formed an Ad Hoc Committee to protest this matter of parole denial for Lynch. The Committee is endorsed by the N.Y.C. Firefighters Union, the National A.O.H. which is represented through the P.E.C. and the Grand Council of the United Emerald Societies.

At a recent meeting the Committee agreed to carry this protest directly to Albany. The Committee will meet with committee member Assemblyman Sean Patrick Walsh, and other legislators for a live news conference to be called by Assemblyman Walsh and Lynch's attorney, Dennis Schlenker. Present at the meeting were Assemblyman Sean Walsh, Dennis Schlenker, present attorney for Lynch, and Lynch's former attorney Walter Higgins. Also in attendance were many former NYFD co-workers, representatives of various Emerald societies, clergy, family, friends and 4 of the original jurors who expressed dismay and shock that Lynch was still incarcerated. The 4 jurors, who will be making the trip to Albany, stated that it was their intention, and that of the other jurors at the time of the trial, that a light sentence be given both Lynch and Byrne. Dennis Schlenker informed the committee that Lynch *has served the longest sentence in N.Y.S. for a grand larceny charge.*

*We urge you to write to Governor Hugh Carey, Executive Chamber, Albany, N.Y. 12223. State your support for the Committee for Justice for Mel Lynch. Don't allow this opportunity to demonstrate Irish-American unity to pass us by.*

## HUNGER STRIKE OVER

MICHAEL DUCEY

On October 27, 7 male blanket protestors from the H-Blocks commenced a hunger strike "to the end". They were eventually joined by 40 more protestors which included 3 women and 7 members of the Protestant UDA. The hunger strikers were demanding political status and an end to torture. PEC sources indicate that in order to end the hunger strike, the British Government promised to concede the 5 demands of the strikers. Negotiations would begin within a few days. That was December 18, 1980. As of January 9, 1981, as could be expected, the British Government reneged on their promise creating a situation for a new hunger strike. As usual the American news media has withheld this information from the public. Do not be misled to believe that torture is no longer being used against the nationalist (*Republican*) minority.

For the information of our readers, the PEC recently published a pamphlet written by Professor David Lowry (*The English System of Injustice in Northern Ireland*) which concludes that the vast majority of all the young men and women who were on the blanket protest are innocent of any charges - that young republicans are being lifted off the streets and sent to prison because of their potential as future members of the IRA. Columnist Jack McKinney, Philadelphia Daily News, called Dr. Lowry's article "by far the fairest resume of the injustices in Northern Ireland". The Catholic League for Civil and Human Rights, with the permission of the PEC, reproduced the article as an insert in their monthly newsletter. Congressman Hamilton Fish entered the article in the Congressional Record. For a free copy of Dr. Lowry's article, write to Patrick O'Neill, Information Director, Political Education Committee AOH-ESFDNY, 1941 68th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11204.

THE NATIONAL PEC WISHES TO THANK ALL THE STATE AND LOCAL PECs FOR THEIR EXCEPTIONAL EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS THAT WERE ON HUNGER STRIKE. THEIR ACTIVITIES ARE TOO MANY TO MENTION

### ACTION LETTER

RAY O'CONNOR (*PEC Florida State A.O.H.*)

On November 29, 1980, syndicated columnist Jack Anderson wrote that one of the first foreign policy problems that President Elect Ronald Reagan will have to come to grips with is whether or not to reverse Jimmy Carter's hands-off policy toward Ulster. He further stated that Reagan will take office at a time when tension is building and the conflict could once again explode in a crescendo of violence.

**WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO TO HELP DIRECT RONALD REAGAN TOWARDS THE PATH OF REVERSING CARTER'S HANDS OF POLICY?** We must continue to demonstrate our solidarity in support for the reunification of Ireland. We must write to President Elect Reagan to make sure he is aware of our determined concern. Below is a sample letter that you may use as a guide or simply *rewrite* as your letter on your own stationery. Please reproduce this action letter for distribution to your family, relatives, friends, etc.

Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear President Reagan:

Congratulations and may God bless you in your new position as President of the United States.

I respectfully request that you: do not alter American foreign policy as it pertains to human rights; that you actively support the reunification of Ireland; and that you call upon Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to remove the guarantee of Northern Ireland's union with Britain and that she isolate and make illegal the bigoted and murderous Ulster Defense Association and the Rev. Ian Paisley.

Sincerely  
signature \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DO YOUR SHARE

TO HAVE THE BI-MONTHLY PEC NEWSLETTER SENT TO YOUR HOME (FREE), PLEASE FORWARD YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO THE POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 16, GARNERVILLE, N.Y. 10923, ATTENTION: CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT.