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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 26, Number 10

October 2001

Will Murderers Remain in Army?

(Sept. 3) – HUMAN rights campaigners marked with an hour-long silent vigil the ninth anniversary of two Scots Guards' murder of Peter McBride in north Belfast. The theme of the vigil was "Nine Years of Shame" and was intended to highlight the fact that Guardsmen **Mark Wright** and **James Fisher** remain in the British army nine years after murdering McBride.

The McBride family has judicially reviewed the decisions of two separate army boards to allow Wright and Fisher to remain in the British army. The decision on the second judicial review is expected soon.

McBride's mother, Jeanie, said, "It's nine years since Peter was taken from us. Who would have believed nine years ago that the two men convicted in a court of law of his murder would have been allowed to remain in the British army? [Northern Secretary] **John Reid** was one of many who played a disgraceful role in this whole affair. He refused to meet me while Minister of State for the Armed Forces but met with campaigners for the Guardsmen and expressed 'concern' that they were even in prison.

"Prime Minister **Tony Blair** allowed his senior ministers to sit on army boards and rubber stamp these decisions. Have they no shame, no compassion, no sense of injustice? For Peter's sake, my family will pursue this until justice is done. If needs be, we will travel to Germany and let the German people know that convicted murderers, armed and dangerous, are in their country. The past nine years have been nine years of shame, but we will continue if it takes another nine years."

On Sept. 4, supporters of the McBride family handed in

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Britons Wish to See End of Union

THE *GUARDIAN* newspaper has published a survey revealing that only one in four Britons believe that the North should remain within the United Kingdom.

The poll reveals that 41 percent of Britons surveyed believe Ireland should be united, and only 26 percent believe that it should remain a part of Britain. The polling agency interviewed by telephone 1,004 adults across Britain.

The poll suggests that there is no sympathy among the British public for the unionist position that the IRA's stance on decommissioning is the cause of the current problems. Indeed, the poll reveals that the British do not blame republicans appreciably more than unionists for the current state of the peace process. Some 64 percent blame both sides equally, whereas 3 percent thought unionists to blame and 5 percent blamed republicans.

An overwhelming majority of people in the Republic also support Irish unity. Nevertheless, **Jeffrey Donaldson** of the UUP remains undaunted, saying the only views that count are those of the people in the North.

Writing in the *Guardian*, he claims: "Far from being upset by the poll, unionists will draw comfort from the constitutional and political reality that under the principle of consent, their future in the union will be determined by the people of Northern Ireland themselves, voting in a real poll."

In an editorial, the newspaper concedes that the poll will be "heartbreaking news to unionists. Their whole world is built on the perception of themselves as UK citizens, even as Brits, who by some irrelevant fluke of geography happen to be located across the Irish Sea.

"They are, in the cliché, more British than the British. They wave the flag, speak reverentially of the crown and cling to customs that vanished from the place they still think of as "the mainland" in the '50s. To enter the head offices of the UUP is to see the Britain of a bygone era: portraits of the Queen Mum on the staircase. Now they hear, via an opinion poll, that the feelings are not mutual, that most of us do not want them."

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Our View: Ignoring Violence Is Easier than Establishing Peace

AS POLITICAL leaders faced a Sept. 23 deadline to get the peace process back on track, loyalist violence consumed the headlines and the attention of nationalist leaders. As usual, unionist leaders remained mute on loyalist terror and Northern Secretary **John Reid** promised to keep the loyalist cease-fire under review. The peace process is merely a shopworn set of new clothes for the status quo in Northern Ireland.

Reid said in early Sept. that he thought a few UDA screwballs were responsible for the terror but that he would wait for evidence of a "systematic breakdown" in the cease-fire before he would take action. Action, we presume, would amount to the administrative detail of filing paperwork with the government stating that the cease-fire was over.

A systematic breakdown, we presume, means that all the UDA screwballs are engaged in violence and that the chief of the UDA screwballs has issued a statement to the media saying it was over.

Reid refers to loyalist attempts to stop political progress through intimidation and other forms of violence as if it were an administrative detail. For him it is. He is not the subject of a terror campaign. He does not live near a peace line area. Indeed, he is an outsider, a bureaucrat filing papers under the protection of her majesty's armed forces. Northern Ireland is not real to him.

So long as somebody in the North is inflicting political violence on somebody else, the political landscape remains unchanged and the power brokers don't have to consider changing their ways, mending their ways, or looking for a new line of work. The politicians and the bureaucrats and the military can sleepwalk through the blood in the streets.

Peace Process Update

August 7

SDLP leader **John Hume** says the British and Irish governments' proposals to save the peace process represent a "boost" for the process, but his party withholds its endorsement for the policing proposals. The party says Britain must resolve a number of issues before the SDLP will take its seats on the new policing board. These include lateral entry into the new force for members of the Irish police force, the fate of the full- and part-time reserves, and publication of the revised plan for implementing the Patten proposals. SDLP deputy leader **Seamus Mallon** insists this strand of the proposals package remains incomplete until the plan is revealed.

August 8

Sinn Fein calls the proposals the Irish and British governments issued to the pro-Agreement parties in an effort to save the Mitchell Agreement "a basis for progress if the governments have the will to proceed." Party president **Gerry Adams** calls on the British government to publish its revised plans setting out how it will put in place the new policing arrangements and how it will reform the criminal justice system. He also urges the Ulster Unionist Party to fill the position of first minister and to end its "unlawful veto" on the North-South institutions.

August 9

The IRA confirms it is cooperating with the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning. It issues a statement saying, "As a result of these discussions [with the IICD], we can confirm that the IRA leadership has agreed a scheme with the IICD which will put IRA arms completely and verifiably beyond use." The IICD announced the IRA's proposal to cooperate Aug. 7.

August 10

Britain suspends devolved government for 24 hours. It brings down the Belfast Assembly, the power-sharing

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American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC

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From the North: Parties Scramble to Douse Light of Sinn Fein's Victories

By Robert Heatley, *co-founder of the campaign for Democracy, a predominantly Protestant organization, Belfast, Northern Ireland*

WHEN the Westminster and district council elections a few months ago resulted in Sinn Fein's emerging as the largest party of nationalism in the North, Irish politics changed instantly.

Establishment parties in the South—Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, and Labor—became paranoid at the prospect of Sinn Fein's increasing representation in the Dail, the South's parliament.

No doubt, this prospect disturbed Britain even more, and Sinn Fein's opponents set in motion a series of events in an attempt to crush the republican party. Where the arrest of alleged IRA men in Columbia fits in remains uncertain, but it helped the aforementioned practitioners in their change of direction.

Supposedly, pro-Agreement UUPers could not believe their luck in getting a propagandist's bonanza. Sinn Fein had become isolated, they declaimed, recognizing that unionists' *bete noire*, the so-called pan-nationalist front, had received at least a severe wounding.

This could not have happened had it not been for the SDLP's agreeing to accept policing edicts from Britain, which had torn the guts out of the Patten reforms.

One of the major reasons for the SDLP's turnabout was a purely party-political one, as deputy party leader **Seamus Mallon** expressed in the Sept. 10 *Irish Times*: "Mr. Mallon said that the SDLP would not follow in the 'slipstream' of any other party in any future negotiations."

Smarting from reverses in the recent elections, he felt like flexing his muscles and decided to put SDLP interests ahead of the national one. Joining the policing board, it would seem, had that as its justification.

The UUP's present leadership is itching to do the same thing, but leader **David Trimble**, Downing Street's front-man, is weak from his attempt to force Britain's decommissioning strategy on republicans.

By elevating decommissioning the way that Trimble did—at Britain's behest—he merely provided the Mitchell Agreement's rejectionists with the rope with which they now threaten to hang him. He was advised about that, but he would not listen. Now his chief opponents within the UUP will not allow him to nominate representatives to the policing board until he receives guarantees that Britain will jettison its current inadequate edict and reinstate the "full integrity" of the RUC.

Thus it came about that, while the barbarities were taking place at the Holy Cross Primary School, Trimble found himself closeted with DUP leader **Ian Paisley** at Stormont discussing the feasibility of a pan-unionist front to achieve that objective. We saw this coming, and we have written a letter to Belfast's *Irish News* asking the SDLP how it can see the policing board as a channel for the full implementation of Patten—especially as Sinn Fein will not be on the board.

Whether or not the UUP signs up to the new policing board will make no difference to this problem. If it goes in, so will the DUP. The SDLP is trying to kid the electorate that this will be a productive way to proceed. It is offering the public years of wrangling when it is Britain's sole responsibility to implement reforms that the Patten Commission saw as indispensable. As of now, however, the SDLP is the only party that has bought Downing Street's latest pig in a poke.

Finally, we must write about the loyalist picketing of Holy Cross Primary School in north Belfast. The event shows the face of unionism/loyalism unashamedly bare, but some would have us see it otherwise.

Britain's media ploy is the old one of ascribing the behavior to two Irish tribes in conflict—the adjective backward is sometimes used, though more often it is implied. British governments, now or in the past, have nothing whatsoever to do with the sordid goings on, according to this argument. The ethos of the place has nothing to do with British rule.

Thus the Northern Ireland Office's new security spokeswoman, a soft-spoken **Ms. Kennedy** (whom no-one here has heard of before) told the world of her inability to comprehend that anyone could treat schoolgirls in such a barbaric way. (If Ms. Kennedy knows so little about the North, why did Downing Street send her here?)

Simply put, these events are the outcome of Britain's partitioning Ireland in the 1920s *on sectarian grounds* and thereafter using sectarianism to copper-fasten British rule in the North.

The conduit is clear. It starts with Britain through to respectable (compliant) unionism, which is sensitive to extreme (disobedient) unionism, which, in turn, is guardedly uncritical of paramilitary unionism. That is how 1,000 UDA men can parade along the Shankill Road, 100 of them masked, without Britain's turning its head. All of that tolerance leads directly to the spate of bombs the same men have been slinging at Catholics since the beginning of the year and, of course, to the events at the Holy Cross Primary School.

Newsbits

"IT IS CLEAR that many Fianna Fail activists and supporters in Mayo and elsewhere in the west of Ireland are demoralized by the failure of their party hierarchy to address local and regional concerns," says Sinn Fein candidate for Mayo and party Ard Chomhairle member **Vincent Wood**. He was commenting on the recent defection of Ballaghaderreen-based **Paul Whelan** to Sinn Fein from the governing Fianna Fail party. "Paul Whelan was very clear as to why he left Fianna Fail," said Wood. "He said that Fianna Fail had abandoned the west of Ireland. Many in Fianna Fail, including those in local leadership positions, are saying much the same and it must be difficult for their local public representatives to explain why the west has been so neglected." (RM Dist. 8/17/01)

The Police Ombudsman has launched an investigation into reports that the RUC knew of the Omagh bombing days before the attack by dissident Republican militarists in 1998. The decision to launch an investigation follows reports that a double-agent tipped off the RUC's Special Branch 48 hours in advance about the location of the bomb materials destined for Omagh, and the identity of one of those involved in the attack. It has also been alleged that Special Branch and 26-County police were informed in advance about the car used to transport the bomb to Omagh. (RM Dist. 8/17/01)

Human rights campaigners have described the British government's decision not to appeal a landmark European court ruling into investigations of the shooting of republicans as "very significant." The government had six months to appeal the unanimous ruling by the European Court of Human Rights, which judged that investigations into a number of

killings, including the deaths of 10 IRA Volunteers, had violated Article 2 of the Human Rights Convention, which guarantees the right to life. Committee for the Administration of Justice spokesman **Paul Mageean** said he believed the decision would pave the way for a revised inquest system in the North. He said contentious areas that required change included the compulsion of witnesses and the jury's ability to deliver verdicts at inquests. (RM Dist. 8/8/01)

A dispute has broken out over claims that one of the three Irish men arrested in Colombia was Sinn Fein's representative in Cuba. According to the BBC, the Cuban foreign ministry said that one of those arrested in Colombia, **Niall Connolly** from Dublin, was the legal representative for Sinn Fein in Latin America and had lived in Cuba for the past five years. According to the BBC, the Cuban foreign ministry spokeswoman said that, as far as they were concerned, Sinn Fein was a legal political party in both Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland and that Connolly was its legal representative. She would give no further details but said there was no connection between any work he did in Cuba and anything he may be suspected of doing in Colombia. However, Sinn Féin has said that Connolly was never the party's Latin American representative....Earlier, the United States warned that the IRA could face penalties from Washington if it is established that the group has had connections with the FARC guerrilla movement. The three men have been accused of training FARC guerrillas. State Dept. spokesman **Philip Reeker** noted that both the FARC and the IRA had been designated as foreign terrorist organizations by the US. However, the designation had been removed from

the IRA because it had adhered to its cease-fire since 1997 and had stressed its commitment to peace. Reeker said that President **Bush's** Administration would regard any links between the IRA and the FARC as troubling. The three men have denied any links with the two groups and have claimed they were in Colombia as journalists. Earlier reports that the men had tested positive for traces of explosives and drugs and that officials had video tape evidence of them training the FARC have subsequently proved to be untrue. (IAIS 8/17/01)

The committee set up two years ago under the Mitchell Agreement to review the Offences Against the State Acts (OASAs) and the existence of the Special Criminal Court (SCC), delivered its interim report last week to the Oireachtas and UN Human Rights Committee. To the amazement of those concerned with human rights, the committee failed to reach a unanimous recommendation to disband the Special Court but in a majority report recommended it be retained. The committee's recommendations, with some small qualifications to the effect that the necessity for the court be kept under continual review, must present some embarrassment to the government, which is committed under the Agreement to dismantling the extraordinary judicial powers of the OASAs....There has been repeated international condemnation of the continued existence of the Special Court since 1993, when Ireland was first examined by the UN Human Rights Committee in Geneva. This committee has been unequivocal in its recommendation that the existence of the Special Court and the use of the OASAs offended the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was ratified by the state in 1989. (RM Dist. 8/14/01)

Top-down Policing Plan Fails to Satisfy Demands for Police Accountability

BRITAIN'S 75-page plan to implement policing reforms falls short of the Patten Commission's recommendations--themselves a compromise on nationalist demands for a fully accountable, democratic police force.

A Patten Commission member, the Pat Finucane Center, and Sinn Fein, have rejected what Northern Secretary **John Reid** has called "a blueprint for change," but the SDLP and the Irish government have supported it.

Meanwhile, the UUP has withheld its response to the plan, and the DUP has proposed a unionist alliance that would offer even fewer changes to the present form of policing in the North.

Patten Commissioner **Gerard Lynch**, president of John Jay College in New York, said the plan does "not go the whole way." Lynch said the Patten Commission had hoped that its recommendations would be taken "as a whole" to indicate "an actual new beginning" to policing in the North.

"I had hoped the revised implementation plan would go the extra step, to give the police authority more autonomy, and to require that all members of the RUC be required to take the new human rights oath, and not just the new recruits," said Lynch.

"People cannot be expected to join the police while key human rights questions remain unresolved" the human rights group The Pat Finucane Center said in response to Britain's revised plan to reform policing in the North. The group said it could not recommend that people join the new police service because Britain has not addressed several human rights concerns.

"As the situation stands at present, the institutional factors that have led to human rights abuses in the past have not been adequately dealt with. In the absence of adequate change a fair-minded person joining the police would still have little or no impact on the type of policing experienced by the community" said a Center spokesperson.

The Center objects to Britain's plan to allow serving officers to continue to serve without having to take the new human rights oath and its partial dissolution of the Special Branch into CID.

Further, the Center also objects to the plan's providing for the chief constable to set policy in consultation with the Police Board, not the other way round.

The Center is concerned the plan could exclude some republicans and loyalists from the Police Board and district partnerships because of past political offenses, thereby limiting the range of political opinion the board will reflect.

Also, the plan relegates the District Policing Partnerships to a consultative role. This means that, ultimately, the force would remain unaccountable to the local community.

It allows the plastic bullet to remain in the force's arsenal, even if new recruits are to be prevented from using them for two years. If the force remains unaccountable, there is a real danger that they will be used again, the center said.

The plan also gives the secretary of state the power to veto any inquiry ordered by the Police Board.

It provides no mechanism for inquiries into instances of human rights abuse in the past or for dealing with human rights abusers currently serving in the force.

Sinn Fein shares these objections and adds the following to its list: restrictions on the legal powers of the ombudsman to operate in a full, impartial and independent manner as proposed in Patten; the plan's failure to address nationalist claims that the RUC Special Branch remains "an unaccountable force within a force;" and inclusion of the RUC's name in the title of the new police force.

Sinn Fein claims the code's remaining unpublished and Britain's appointing former Diplock Court Judge Lord Justice **McDermott** to oversee undercover policing will not inspire nationalist confidence in the accountability mechanisms.

The republican party condemns the role of the chief constable and Special Branch in assessing the security threat, which determines the pace security is scaled down.

Sinn Fein also condemns the plan's failure to begin phasing out the full-time reserve over three years. It is also dissatisfied with the implementation of plans to expand the part-time reserve and lack of detail on how nationalist and republican recruits will be enticed to join the force.

Sinn Fein said that in light of these concerns, it would not be making appointments to the policing board. As a result, republicans will not be represented on both the North-South bodies or the Policing Board. Sinn Fein's seats will then go into the d'hondt system, meaning one Ulster Unionist and one DUP member will fill these seats, provided these parties sign up to the new board.

Lynch expressed his hope that Patten might still be implemented in full. "I really hope that some modifications could still be made to make it even stronger and to really implement the full Patten," he said, adding, "the Secretary of State did say that this was the full Patten but I think we could go further for it to be the dynamic new model for policing that we had hoped for."

Cease-fire Loyalists Continue to Kill and Injure Catholics

THIS year has seen intense loyalist violence against Catholics, and loyalists have promised to escalate this campaign in response to Sinn Fein's electoral success and loyalist disaffection with the peace process.

Unionists, including UUP leader and former first minister **David Trimble**, do not condemn loyalist violence or call on Britain to end it. Unionist silence suggests complicity. It is particularly menacing when unionists insist that the IRA hand in its weapons but unionists refuse to support even marginal changes to policing in the North.

Indeed, nationalists could be forgiven for suspecting that unionists, whether or not they have accepted the Mitchell Agreement, are pursuing a goal of politically and militarily disarming nationalists in the hope of maintaining power. After all, why wouldn't a political leader in a democracy insist on an end to politically-driven violence, even from its supporters?

Northern Secretary **John Reid** owes nationalists an explanation for his failure to investigate loyalist violence, declare the UDA in breach of its cease-fire, and protect nationalist citizens. We urge members to contact the British Embassy and insist that Reid take action on loyalist violence (See Action Request, Page 8).

Consider the following.

There have been hundreds of loyalist gun and bomb attacks on Catholics, but Reid has said that the UDA is maintaining its cease-fire or that another review is underway.

"Nationalists across the North do not need daily reviews of the UDA position to know the reality of the situation, said Sinn Fein's **Conor Murphy**.

In Aug., a loyalist gang of five men beat 16-year-old **Colleen Burns** as

she walked along Clifton Street in north Belfast. The attackers threatened to abduct her and take her into the loyalist Shankill.

The gang ran away when a passing RUC patrol disturbed it, but not before stealing Burns's jewelry.

The same day, two other Catholic schoolgirls had been the focus of a loyalist mob attack in north Belfast. **Mary Jo Harvey** and **Ursula Lawlor** had been picking up a prescription from a pharmacy when loyalists surrounded the shop.

The mob, armed with iron bars and cudgels, surrounded the shop moments after a confrontation with loyalist youths during which the two girls had been punched and kicked. The girls sought refuge in the pharmacy, but a hostile crowd quickly surrounded it.

Fearing for his daughter's safety, **James Harvey** attempted to rescue the trapped girls; the mob beat him.

Earlier in the week, loyalists shot Catholic schoolboy **James Doran** in the back with a pellet gun as he walked home in north Belfast.

Also during the summer, Catholic youths in or near their homes in north Belfast suffered injuries from loyalist bomb attacks. Catholics throughout the North have been subject to bomb attacks, threatening letters containing bullets, and other forms of harassment.

Meanwhile, in the Short Strand district of east Belfast, loyalists beat 17-year-old **Anthony Quinn** as they attempted to abduct him.

Hours earlier, Short Strand teenager **Joseph Brown** was injured when loyalists drove a car at speed at him.

Loyalist violence over the summer is nothing new, however. There has been on average one loyalist attack on nationalists every day this year. These

attacks have included more than 75 bombings--mostly pipe bomb attacks.

There have been more than 20 gun attacks, and loyalists have shot dead three people. The UDA shot dead John McCormick on June 23, before he was due to give evidence about a gun attack in which the UDA shot a girl during the loyalist feud last year. In July, loyalists killed Ciaran Cummings in a drive-by shooting. Three weeks later, loyalists shot dead Gavin Brett outside a GAA club in North Belfast because they thought he was Catholic.

There have been five reported abduction attempts, including two attempts within hours of the Brett killing. There have been more than 50 reported loyalist mob attacks, including attacks on individual Catholics as well as incursions often involving hundreds of loyalists into nationalist estates.

In April, a loyalist mob beat to death Thomas Lowry in the mistaken belief he was a Catholic. Days later loyalists beat and left for dead Mary Campbell.

The night before Brett's funeral, loyalists attempted to abduct a Church of Ireland sexton where the funeral was to take place. Loyalists thought he was Catholic.

There have been more than 30 attacks on Catholic homes, schools, churches, and businesses. The most recent has been the assault on children and parents traveling to Holy Cross Primary School in Ardoyne.

There have been more than a dozen cases of intimidation. On July 10, loyalists forced their way into the home of Geraldine Ewing and ordered the family out. Ewing died of heart attack just hours later.

Almost half of all attacks have been in Belfast. Other vulnerable nationalist areas include Larne, Coleraine, Ballymena and Ballynahinch.

Anniversary of Child's Death Recalls Brutality of Plastic Bullets

FOLLOWING Britain's publishing its implementation plan on policing reform, the Police Federation released a statement defending the use of plastic bullets.

"We question the necessity to again raise the issue of plastic baton rounds when it is already the case that their use is only ordered when there is a serious risk of loss of life or serious injury," the Aug. 1 statement said.

The Federation's comments came almost 12 years to the day after the RUC killed 15-year-old Seamus Duffy with a plastic bullet. The plastic bullet that hit Seamus crushed his heart and tore a four-inch laceration in his left lung. The boy died Aug. 9, 1989.

The RUC fired the plastic bullet at Duffy when he was returning home from an internment night bonfire in the New Lodge area of north Belfast. There was no rioting.

Immediately after his death, the RUC said it would appoint a "top policeman" to investigate the exact circumstances of the death because it believed that Seamus did not die as a result of being hit by a plastic bullet.

At the same time, then-Northern Secretary Peter Brooke made a public statement on plastic bullets in which he preempted any inquiry. He said, "There are no grounds for suggesting their use last night was other than in accordance with the law."

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Executive, and the all-Ireland Ministerial Council to avoid a new Assembly election in defiance of international democratic standards. The temporary suspension gives politicians a further six weeks to try to negotiate a way out of the peace process deadlock. This is the second time in 18 months that the British have suspended devolved government.

August 12

Sinn Fein warns that Britain's suspension of the Assembly could jeopardize the IRA's offer to put its weapons beyond use.

August 14

Following the UUP's rejection of both the Irish and British governments' proposal to save the peace process, the IRA's proposal to disarm, and the UUP's setting up of further preconditions before it will move on the peace process, the IRA withdraws its proposal to put weapons beyond use. The British government sets Sept. 23 as the next deadline to resolve the issues of demilitarization, policing reform, judicial reform, and decommissioning.

August 16

Irish Prime Minister **Bertie Ahern** and Hume meet in Dublin to discuss the implementation of the Mitchell Agreement and Britain's implementation plan on policing reform.

August 17

Northern Secretary **John Reid** calls the British government's 75-page implementation plan for reforming policing a "blueprint for positive change." Sinn Fein says the British government's implementation plan on policing fails to meet nationalist demands. Party chairman **Mitchel McLaughlin** says, "It does not constitute a genuine attempt to bridge the gap between republican and nationalist aspirations for a proper and consensual approach to

policing. Key issues which need to be resolved have not been resolved." Areas the party remains unhappy with include limits on mounting inquiries, powers of appointments to the policing boards, powers of the ombudsman, changes to the Special Branch, and protection for human rights abusers and informers.

August 20

The SDLP is the first party to endorse the policing implementation plan. Hume says the party will "respond positively" to an invitation to join the new policing board and will encourage people from all sections of the community to join the new police service. The Irish government also accepts the plan.

August 21

Patten Commission member **Gerard Lynch**, president of John Jay College in New York, expresses disappointment that the British government's recently-published revised plan to implement the 175 recommendations of the Commission "do not go the whole way."

August 22

The anti-Agreement Democratic Unionist Party announces plans to have Sinn Fein expelled from Northern Ireland's power-sharing government over the three suspected republicans facing charges of training Marxist guerrillas in Colombia. Loyalists warn that they will step up their terror campaign after leaving a pipe bomb at a constituency office of Sinn Fein's **Martin McGuinness**.

August 23

Responding to DUP claims that unionists could secure a different policing plan if they united and opposed the current proposals, the British government insists that a unionist boycott of the board overseeing the changes will not alter police reform in Northern Ireland. Loyalists leave bombs at nationalist venues across the North.

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Action Requests

*Please take the actions recommended below.
Mention that you are a PEC member.*

Contact: Prime Minister Tony Blair, 10 Downing St., London, England; email Hon_Tony_Blair@441718399044.iddd.tpc.int

Message: I urge you to immediately dismiss from service in the British army Guardsmen **Mark Wright** and **James Fisher**. These men remain in the army despite their being convicted of the murder of Belfast teen Peter McBride nine years ago. Surely, convicted murderers must not be allowed to represent the law.

Contact: **Les Rodgers**, Chairman, Northern Ireland Police Federation, RUC Garnerville, Garnerville Rd., Belfast BT4 2NX, Northern Ireland; tele. 44-28-9076-0831; fax 44-28-9076-1367; email Office@policefed-ni.org.uk

Message: I urge you to find an alternative to plastic bullets as a form of crowd control in Northern Ireland. Plastic bullets are the subject of official abuse and have caused the death and injury of several citizens there over the past two decades.

Contact: **Sir Christopher Meyer**, KCMG, British Ambassador, 3100 Massachusetts Ave., Washington DC, 20008

Message: I urge you to use your good offices to see that Northern Ireland Secretary of State **John Reid** acknowledges the breakdown of the loyalist cease-fire and takes immediate action to end loyalist terrorism.

**We extend our sympathy and support
to the men, women, and children
who have suffered or died
as a result of the Sept. 11
massacres
in New York,
the District of Columbia, and
Pennsylvania.
May God help us
restore peace and safety and justice.**

(continued from Page 1)

a petition with more than a thousand names, including many people prominent in public life, to the German Foreign Ministry and the German Ministry of Defense, protesting the stationing on German soil of soldiers convicted of murder. Wright and Fisher are based at a British Army base in Munster in northern Germany. (See Action Request, *This Page*).

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Seamus Duffy did not pose "a serious risk" to any member of the RUC when he was murdered by colleagues of those who issued the above statement. It is appropriate to remind the Federation of this on his anniversary.

The Pat Finucane Center in Derry and the PEC urge members to remind the Police Federation that plastic bullets are the subject of official abuse, and citizens suffer and die as a result of their use and abuse (See Action Request, *This Page*).