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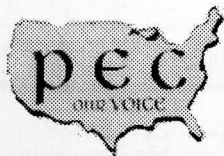
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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 26, Number 1

January 2001

From the North: Clinton Boosts Peace Process

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

IN TERMS of giving a boost to an ailing peace process resulting from British and unionist chicanery, the visit of President **Bill Clinton** and Senator **Hilary** was an undisputed success.

That does not mean that Ireland achieved an instant solution to the roadblocks that stand in its way. Far from it. We will see the impact of the visit only in the weeks to come. Most of the current speculation may turn out to be unfounded.

This says that the blockages still remain. If this is so, then it will not be for the want of the President's trying. The meetings in Dundalk and Belfast gave the Irish people an opportunity to demonstrate the great affection they have for the Clintons as a result of the First Family's efforts.

The President was able to point out that the Mitchell Agreement is good not only for Ireland but also for Britain, something London was obviously in need of remembering.

The key meeting of the visit was the one that took place in London at the end of the Clintons' stay. This included British Prime Minister **Tony Blair** and the President. The question is now: will this result in Britain's instructing First Minister **David Trimble**, who is also the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, to remove his arbitrary ban on Sinn Fein Stormont Executive members' attending North-South Council meetings? Another question: Will Trimble make it clear to the Ulster Unionist Council meeting in Jan. that Britain will not sanction a further suspension of Mitchell Agreement institutions?

In other words, will the collusive pro-Ulster Unionist Party's stalling strategy of the latest proconsul, **Peter Mandelson**, be abandoned and the serious work of implementation be got underway?

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PEC Resolution: Peace is the Priority in 2001

THE PEC URGES members to make the following New Year's Resolutions as we make peace in Ireland the priority in 2001

- ☐ Renew membership in the AIEF-PEC;
- ☐ Complete all Action Requests in the monthly *Newsletter*;
- ☐ Insist on a response to all Action Requests;
- ☐ Notify the PEC about the responses you receive;
- ☐ Contact your Representatives and Senators and make sure they know peace in Ireland is a priority for you in 2001;
- ☐ Contact the White House and let the President know you expect him to continue the positive role of the Administration in the Irish peace process;
- ☐ Notify the PEC about offensive situations and other matters that concern you
- ☐ Visit our Web site at <http://aipec.homestead.com> to complete Action Requests, read articles, and correspond with the *Newsletter* editor; and
- ☐ Encourage friends and family to support the peace and make peace in Ireland a priority for 2001

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Our View:

Peace is the Priority in 2001

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton's decision to visit Northern Ireland for a third time before the end of his second term and his suggestion that he might stay involved in the peace process even when he was out of office encourages us to believe that politics from the ground up can work.

The peace process itself is the result of grass-roots agitation from the civil rights movement of the late 1960s through the IRA's campaigns through the growth of Sinn Fein as a political force and, in the US, through the development of organized activism among concerned Americans. Ordinary people got the ball rolling. Extraordinary people--Gerry Adams, Gerry Kelly, Bill Clinton, George Mitchell, Al Gore, to name a few--jumped on and have kept it going. Ordinary people in Ireland and the US got the most powerful nation in the world to say peace must be a priority in Ireland.

In doing so, American and Irish leaders have cut through the mumbo jumbo of British propaganda and British statecraft, not to mention British bureaucracy-building. In doing so, American and Irish leaders have discovered that peace in Ireland is a prize worth having. Clinton's willingness to stay involved suggests that his interest goes beyond the political moment--he could claim the Mitchell Agreement as a breakthrough and move on to another chapter in his memoirs, after all. His interest suggests he cares about succeeding for the sake of the success.

Here Clinton is providing a role model for ordinary citizens to stay involved in the Irish peace process and insist on the settlement we have been demanding over the past three decades: a just, lasting, democratic peace. Stay with us and insist on peace as a priority for 2001.

Peace Process Update

November 13

ARGUING that First Minister **David Trimble** is working toward stalling the Assembly, Sinn Fein leader **Gerry Adams** urges Trimble to lift the sanctions against the republican party.

November 15

Challenging the sanctions, Sinn Fein mounts legal action against the British and Irish governments and Trimble. The Police Bill passes the House of Lords on its third and final reading.

November 21

The Police Bill passes the Commons, becoming law Nov. 22.

November 22

A scheduled meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council is cancelled as a legal challenge to Ulster Unionist sanctions against Sinn Fein ministers gets the go-ahead. Northern Ireland Education minister **Martin McGuinness** was due to meet his Republic of Ireland counterpart on Friday in the latest of a series of cross-border meetings. A spokesman for McGuinness says the minister will contact Republic of Ireland education minister **Michael Woods** by phone to discuss how best to maintain the momentum of ongoing North-South cooperation in the education sector. Adams calls the Police Bill a wasted opportunity, and Deputy First Minister **Seamus Mallon** says the British government will have to clarify parts of the Bill before his party will recommend that nationalists join the reconstituted police force.

November 23

Mallon tells the American Chamber of Commerce in Dublin that President **Bill Clinton's** visiting the North for a third time would help "steady nerves" and shore up the peace process. "He has a unique ability to focus minds, steady nerves and encourage agreement. Those are the qualities needed to overcome our current difficulties," Mallon says. Paying tribute to Clinton's role in the peace process, Mallon

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American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC

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Thank You, President Clinton

PRESIDENT **Bill Clinton** told the Irish to stay with the peace process during his visit to Ireland mid-Dec. He said his efforts to aid the peace process had been "an honor." Taoiseach **Bertie Ahern** credited American investment with building the Celtic tiger economy, praising the part he said the President had played in this revival. On the North, Ahern said the President had helped political opponents overcome mistrust. "America's record as an honest broker

and plain speaker helped us all to forge an historic compromise in the [Mitchell A]greement. That settlement should rightly be regarded as part of your legacy as peacemaker, and we will never forget it in this country."

The President said, "I believe America has, in some tiny way, repaid this nation and its people for the massive gifts that your people have given us over so many years...." Clinton ended by referring to those engaged in the peace process: "Good luck. Stay with it. God bless you."

(continued from Page 1)

Already, the UUP and other elements of unionism are putting their constructions on the President's words. For the unionists, with their tunnel vision, the main focus of the speech is the need for the IRA to decommission its weaponry. By sticking to this position they are merely singing from the same hymn sheet as the proconsul.

Here is what Mandelson had to say in a newspaper article headlined "Secretary of State blames IRA for deadlock": "The adverse unionist reaction to Sinn Fein has been sparked by the IRA's failure to engage seriously with the de Chastelain Commission." There you have it, the usual apologies for unionism, the politics of which are identical with those of the colonial power.

Alas, for these people, the President agreed with others who saw the matter as more complex than that. Even the *Irish Times*, which is editorially sympathetic to unionism, sees the matter differently in its interpretation of Clinton's remarks. In an article headlined "Clinton visit puts onus on Blair to begin North moves," it draws attention to the President's prescription for ending the deadlock, the sequence of moves being crucially important.

First, Britain must implement the Patten Report, and *on that basis* [emphasis ours], leaders of every part of the community must commit to making the new police service work.

Note, despite the subsequent UUP spin, Clinton did not say make the Police Act work. That was not Patten; it was Westminster.

Second, security normalization. Nationalists and Republicans have proven that what has been going on is not normalization but rationalization, especially in South Armagh. Northern Ireland is like what Americans might call a currant cookie with armed-police and British Army bases speckled throughout the six counties.

Third, arms (paramilitary arms are what is implied) must be put beyond use. The sequence of events, which has to be reciprocated in some way along the way, has not seemed to cause any consternation for nationalists and mainstream republicans although, judging by their body language, the noses of most unionists have been put out of joint.

More important, Mandelson's thesis has been well and truly rubbished. Sinn Fein has been saying all along that the current crises in the peace process are the result of the British government's failure to honor commitments it made with the IRA as a result of the Hillsborough accord in May 2000.

As a result of the President's latest intervention, the agreement reached then seems to have been reactivated. We can but wait and see.

Another significant aspect of the President's valedictory visit in Ireland is that he has put an end, we hope, to Britain's tactic of hiding and dodging

behind the UUP and its spin-doctoring— encapsulated in the words of Mandelson: "it's all because of the two (Irish) sides failing to agree." Clinton has highlighted the British government as the *main player*.

Aside from the politics, this Clinton visit was a very emotional one. The common people of Ireland almost universally love the Clintons. The rapport is amazing; this is perhaps not much appreciated back in the Clintons' homeland. Most Irish people hope the Clintons will remain involved, in some way, in the struggle for peace and democracy in Northern Ireland.

However, while on this occasion the anti-Agreement Unionists considered it politic to behave with a certain amount of decorum during the President's visit to Stormont for meetings with the parties, it is rumored that the DUP, for instance, had **Bush-Cheney** labels tucked away discreetly behind their lapels. They are expecting the incumbent of the White House to take up a more pro-British—that is, Ulster Unionist—stance in relation to Irish matters. It is possible, of course, that these expectations could turn out to be unmet.

The American Irish community could have a big say in that. If the Bush-Cheney regime were to revert to considering the matter as an internal one for the British, then that would be a good outcome for unionism in general, perpetuating the ongoing conflicts.

Newsbits

A FORMER member of the British Army's covert Force Research Unit (FRU) charged under the Official Secrets Act in the belief that he was the whistle-blower known as **Martin Ingram** will not be prosecuted, it has emerged this week. The London Metropolitan Police abandoned the prosecution of the former FRU operative as he emerged as a key witness in the Stevens investigation. The charges had followed a series of newspaper articles exposing the FRU's collusion with loyalist death squads in the killing of Irish nationalists and republicans. *The Sunday Times* journalist **Liam Clarke**, at the center of the media revelations, was also facing charges, but the investigation has been stopped. Earlier this year, the British Ministry of Defense (MoD) secured a series of gagging orders against *The Sunday Times*, preventing further revelations by Ingram appearing in print....In its haste to silence Ingram, the MoD had inadvertently identified a possible witness for the Stevens team. The Ingram suspect was available and willing to talk to the Stevens team. The London Metropolitan Police, which had pursued Ingram with such vigor, could hardly deny access to their colleagues' investigating the killing of Pat Finucane. Ingram was not only able to tell the Stevens team what to look for but also where to look. The FRU kept secret documents detailing their dealings and the records were stored in Thiepval barracks. Having gained access to the so-called secret books, the Stevens team could link specific FRU operatives with particular lines of inquiry and request them for interview. A number of former FRU operatives are expected to be arrested and questioned by Stevens.
(RM Dist. 12/7/00)

Two British soldiers convicted of the murder in 1992 of a Belfast teenager are to be allowed to remain in the British army. Scots Guardsmen **Mark Wright** and **James Fisher** each served six years of a life sentence for the murder of 18-year-old Peter McBride. The Ministry of Defense confirmed the decision to allow them to stay in the army today. (IAIS 11/24/00)

Pages [of a diary of a paratrooper who opened fire on Bloody Sunday] forwarded to the Saville Inquiry by the Dublin government in Sept. carried a description of an operation in Divis Flats in west Belfast in which soldiers G and F "ran a man bent double between them into the plating of a pig." A pig is slang for an armored personnel carrier. Referring to the material, Counsel to the inquiry **Christopher Clarke QC** said: "He was knocked out but then revived, and thrown into the back of the pig where he was electrocuted in some way, castrated, sliced in the face with a knife and generally kicked and beaten. The statement then goes on to assert that his body was taken to the Shankill and dumped to await his fate."
(IAIS 11/13/00)

Professor **Tom Constantine**, former head of the US Drug Enforcement Agency, has been appointed by the British government to provide an independent oversight of the implementation of the Patten report reforms and to produce reports on progress. He said reforms had to be taken in steps to reach the final goal, including the issue of representation of the community in the new police service. Speaking during a visit to Belfast, Constantine said: "For all of the things you want to do in changing the police agency, seven to 10 years is a reasonable projection. I would think if everyone stays committed to it and if

there is enough money, 10 years from now the policing service and the community reaction to it could be unrecognizable from what it is today." (RM Dist. 12/4/00)

The US said this evening that in an effort to promote the peace process in Ireland it would not deport nine American Irishmen once prosecuted for their role in the Irish struggle but now resident with families in the US. The deportations were sought because the men had not answered positively when immigration authorities asked if they had criminal convictions. The Justice Department directed the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to terminate the deportation proceedings at the request of Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright**....President **Bill Clinton**, who leaves tonight for a three-day trip to Dublin, Belfast, and London, said he strongly supported halting the deportations. "While in no way approving or condoning their past criminal acts, I believe that removing the threat of deportation for these individuals will contribute to the peace process in Northern Ireland," Clinton said in a statement. He said the decision was consistent with steps taken by Britain to release prisoners in the North and to reintegrate them into society as part of a process of reconciliation. An Administration official said the decision to drop deportation proceedings would allow the men to stay in the US indefinitely, though they cannot become permanent residents because of what was described as their "past criminal activity." The official said it would help the peace process by reinforcing the notion that positive things were happening to benefit people who used to be engaged in the conflict.
(RM Dist. 12/11/00)

American Irish History: Fitzpatrick Forges Treaties with Native Americans

By Dr. Roger McGrath (Reprinted from *The American Irish*, published by AIEF, Inc.)

ONE DAY IN 1835 in southwestern Montana, a Mountain Man galloped his horse across a clearing. Close behind him came a band of Blackfeet warriors intent on his scalp.

The Mountain Man urged his horse onward but came suddenly to a 40-foot high bluff overlooking the Yellowstone River. In a desperate move, he raced his horse over the cliff and dropped into the river. The fall caused his rifle to discharge an errant round through his left wrist and hand.

Despite the wound, he swam the river, reloaded his rifle, and killed two of his Blackfeet pursuers. The persistent Blackfeet, whom the British encouraged to attack American fur trappers, followed his trail; but after several days they gave up the chase. The lone Mountain Man had beaten them at their own game. Because the Mountain Man's hand would remain disfigured from the bullet wound, the Indians knew him as Broken Hand.

Broken Hand was the greatest of the American Mountain Men, that extraordinary group of courageous and independent characters who roamed the American West trapping beaver during the 1820s and 1830s. His real name was Thomas Fitzpatrick, and he had been born in County Cavan, Ireland, in 1799. The Fitzpatrick family had once been great landowners but had lost everything during the Cromwellian Confiscation.

(continued from Page 2)

adds: "Right from the early days, his interest in our process has been matched only by the depth of his understanding of our problems. I can put it no more clearly than this: without him, this peace process would never have happened." Meanwhile, Ireland's Foreign Minister **Brian Cowen** says unionist sanctions against Sinn Féin are not furthering the peace process. Trimble continues to refuse to nominate Sinn Féin ministers to attend meetings of the North-South Ministerial Council.

November 24

The Irish and British prime ministers meet for two hours to discuss the peace process. Deputy Prime Minister **Mary Harney** voices disapproval of unionist sanctions, saying Trimble's refusal to authorize Sinn Féin's attendance at cross-border meetings is incompatible with the Mitchell Agreement.

November 25

Irish Prime Minister **Bertie Ahern** says he will not recommend that nationalists join the police force outlined in Britain's Police Bill for Northern Ireland.

Before he was 17, Fitzpatrick immigrated to the US. Over the next 30 years, he was quartermaster of the Missouri Legion. He trapped nearly every beaver stream of the West and was a partner in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He fought in the battle of Pierre's Hole. He guided the first overland emigrants to Oregon and California and the first missionaries to the Northwest. He was pathfinder for John C. Fremont and served as guide for Col. Stephen Kearny and the Army of the West during the Mexican War. For Kearny he carried secret dispatches to Washington, DC.

Fremont, Kearny, and other prominent Westerners were effusive in their praise of Fitzpatrick. So were Indian leaders. Recognizing this, Congress appointed Fitzpatrick in 1846 as Indian agent for the tribes of the High Plains.

As Indian agent, Fitzpatrick advised the US Army on the construction of forts and trails and held regular councils with various tribes. He negotiated the famous Indian treaty, the Treaty of Fort Laramie. Broken Hand maintained peace among the various tribes, although many of them were enemies.

After surviving Indian battles, grizzly attacks, and blizzards, Fitzpatrick died at 55 of pneumonia while in Washington, DC, to discuss an Indian treaty. The US honored him by burying him in the Congressional Cemetery.

November 27

The White House announces that Clinton will return to Ireland mid-Dec.

December 5

The IRA issues a statement suggesting it might resume contact with the decommissioning body, contact it ceased in June because it said the Police Bill diverged from the Patten report and British demilitarization in the North was too slow. The IRA statement, which the decommissioning body welcomes, says: "We remain prepared to initiate a process which would completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use and to do so in a way to avoid risk to the public and misappropriation by others and to ensure maximum public confidence."

December 9

Sinn Féin says it believes the loyalist Ulster Defense Association murdered Gary Moore and tried to murder **Paul Scullian** in Belfast earlier this week. It also believes the security forces colluded in the attack on Scullian Sinn Féin assembly member **Gerry Kelly** says accusations that the IRA was responsible for the killing of Protestant Trevor Kell last Tuesday led to reprisal attacks that resulted in the killing of Moore and the injuring of Scullian.

IRA: Decommissioning is a 'Necessary Step'

The following is the full text of the IRA's Dec. 5 statement.

THE LEADERSHIP of *Oglaigh na hEireann* [the IRA] want to reiterate our commitment to the resolution of the issue of arms and our view that this is a necessary step in a genuine peace process.

We remain prepared to initiate a process which would completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use and to do so in a way to avoid risk to the public and misappropriation by others and to ensure maximum public confidence.

On May 6 in a considered statement we provided a clear and reasonable context in which this could take place.

It cannot and will not happen on terms dictated by the British government or the unionists. A British military/securocrat agenda will not work and should have no part in a genuine peace process.

In May we also gave a number of undertakings which were premised on the speedy and full implementation of

the [Mitchell] Agreement and other commitments made by the two governments.

The British government for its part committed itself to:

- * the implementation of Patten;
- * to progressively take all the necessary steps to demilitarize the situation;
- * to deal with matters relating to human rights, equality, and justice; and
- * to resolve issues which remain outstanding at this stage in the development of the peace process.

The British government has not honored these commitments.

The IRA reestablished contact with the IICD and put in place a confidence-building measure that entailed the inspection of a number of our arms dumps by agreed third parties.

We have since facilitated a further inspection of these arms dumps. Immediately after this **Cyril Ramaphosa** and **Martti Ahtisaari**,

the two agreed third parties, affirmed their conviction in the IRA's commitment to the peace process. After this reinspection, attempts by the leadership of the Ulster Unionists, to set more preconditions on political progress has only served to compound the impasse.

We have not broken off contact with the IICD, and we remain committed to discussions with them on the basis we have set out.

The British government's approach to demilitarization and their refusal to address the [Mitchell] Agreement's requirements for a new beginning to policing and other matters represents a failure by them to honor their commitments.

The political responsibility for advancing the current situation clearly lies with **Tony Blair** who must honor all commitments.

The IRA has honored its commitments and will continue to do so.

P. O'Neill.

New Book

American Irish Novel Explores Romance in Conflict

AMERICAN IRISH novelist **Monty Miles** discusses her recently-published work of fiction, *Reasonable Maniacs*, and why she set the work in the Northern conflict.

What inspired you to write Reasonable Maniacs?

Outrage at the brutality of British rule in Northern Ireland. I wanted to present Irish republicans as something other than terrorists. They are the "reasonable maniacs."

A work of contemporary fiction, the novel brings to light the side of Northern Ireland's conflict the British government spends millions of dollars a year to prevent Americans from seeing, the side revealing the behavior of the British military in its ruthless war against Catholics. The book chronicles the existence of people under siege leading up to the 1994 cease-fires.

I also wanted to capture a female perspective on war.

Over and over, we see war stories written by men. Few books on Northern Ireland's troubles are told through the eyes of an American woman. I took my experiences from living in Belfast and infused them into a romantic plot.

Quickly I learned men relate to war in a physical, almost sports-like manner; in war, women suffer blows to the heart. They lose their sons, they lose their husbands and fathers, and they're left to go on.

Men are prepared to fight, but women have true courage. They clean up the mess in the men's wake.

As the character Reason says in my novel: "The true meaning of war is death. It's terrifying and loud and there's blood and there are screams and then...the hideous silence ...and somewhere in that silence there's supposed to be victory. But I only heard what had been lost. The souls of the dead set loose in the night..."

Letters to the Editor

SEVERAL years back, Father McManus called for a boycott of Ford products because of hiring practices in the North of Ireland. In essence, they were anti-Catholic. Do you know if this situation has changed?

PEC member **Robert McGuire**, Nov. 22

[*Editor's Note: Readers with information for Mr. McGuire please contact the Newsletter mailing address.*]

ATTACHED is a recent IAUC press release regarding the Criminal Justice Review conducted pursuant to the [Mitchell] Agreement....The British government has written to us saying that it will not implement changes until April, 2001, so much lobbying on these issues remains.

Tom Fox, Oct. 23

[*Editor's Note: Excerpts of the release follow. Visit the IAUC's Web site, <http://www.iauc.org>, for the complete text.*]

The IAUC has filed comments with the British government's Criminal Justice Review Group (CJRG) and called for greater nationalist representation on the bench and among prosecutors in Northern Ireland.

The IAUC urges the following changes to the criminal justice system in the North:

- *Requiring a clear code of ethics for judges;
- *Requiring judges and prosecutors to disclose membership in organizations such as the Orange Order;

What is the connection between political conflict and romance?

Using a theme of war and partition, I made not only Ireland, but also relationships, the battleground. The character Wilder loves his country and he loves Reason, but the two are adversarial and irreconcilable. He can have one but not both.

Reason has two loves, Wilder and Cain, and must find her peace with one or the other. Cain wages a war between love and loathing. He is consumed by hatred for a father and a country that brutalized him. Kieran falls in love with a woman who can destroy him.

All four wrestle with morality, and finding morality amidst violence is a war in itself. As Ireland fights its duality and seeks peace, so do my characters.

*Liberating prosecutors from their current complete dependence on the Royal Ulster Constabulary to conduct investigations;

*Shifting the balance of decision-making power from the RUC to prosecutors;

*Using community restorative justice programs, with respect for human rights and due process; and

*Revoking emergency laws and non-jury Diplock courts.

[THE FOLLOWING letter appeared in the *Asbury Park Press*.] You might want to alert your readers. Unfortunately, Irish bashing is alive and well in the US. Can you imagine any other ethnic group tolerating this?

I enjoy the PEC Newsletter immensely.

PEC member **Kathleen Fearon**, Dec. 4

[*Editor's Note: The following letter to the editor appeared in the Your Views column of the Nov. 4 Asbury Park Press.*]

On Oct. 28, the Civil Service test for police officers was given at numerous sites around the state. Young people from all walks of life came to these sites to take the written examination for a career in law enforcement.

One of the questions in this examination was, in basis, the following: It is St. Patrick's Day and you are a police officer on patrol. You have already processed four driving while intoxicated arrests earlier in your shift. You come upon a young female stopped at a blinking yellow light. The

(continued on Page 8)

Has Ireland taught you how to create characters?

In Belfast, the characters create themselves. All you have to do is listen. Republicans are resilient and cynical and romantic—and they have an indefatigable (remarkable) will to resist subjugation. As for the loyalists, their intransigence and sanctimony make for many a plot.

Why is the North a fitting setting for your novel?

It's passionate, it's poignant, it's inspiring and daunting, and it's gorgeous.

Reasonable Maniacs by Monty Miles, Writer's Club Press, 648 pages, \$29.95

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Action Requests

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

Contact: **Commissioner Janice Mintz**, Director of Personnel (NJ Civil Service Commission), 44 South Clinton Avenue, P.O. Box 317, Trenton, NJ 08625-0317

Message: I have learned that the New Jersey Civil Service Commission's employment test for prospective police officers asks a question about how to handle a drunken woman committing a traffic offense on St. Patrick's Day. I urge you to reword the question to exclude the reference to St. Patrick's Day. The question demeans all Irish persons, all Americans of Irish descent, all Irish-American law-enforcement personnel, and the patron saint of Ireland. Certainly, the racial profiling implicit in this question has no place on a civil service exam. I will look forward to hearing about what action you will take on this matter.

Contact: **President George W. Bush**, The White House, Washington, DC, 20500, phone 202-456-1111; fax 202-456-2461; email president@whitehouse.gov

Message: I urge you to keep President Bill Clinton involved in the ongoing Irish peace process. His knowledge of this crisis and experience with this process makes him an invaluable player in the resolution of the conflict in Ireland.

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question then goes on to ask how you would basically handle this, another arrest of a drunken Irish person on St. Patrick's Day.

As an American of Irish decent, a law enforcement officer, and president of the Order of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh of the Jersey Shore, I was appalled at learning that this was a question on a state-administered employment examination. This question demeans all Irish persons, all Americans of Irish descent, all Irish-American law-enforcement personnel, and the patron saint of Ireland.

You would think with everything going on in this state today, when all law enforcement personnel are being asked to be more ethnically diverse and sensitive, that the New Jersey Civil Service Commission would be more aware than to let a question like this appear in its examination.

I find it intolerable that, in this day and age, the first association a person has on the road to becoming a police officer is this type of ethnically insulting and biased question. I guess the Irish are just supposed to smile and shrug their shoulders and brush it off. But I, for one, am appalled [See Action Request, this page].

Kenneth B. Coyle

Bradley Beach President of the Order of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh of the Jersey Shore

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