



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Sacred Heart University
DigitalCommons@SHU

American Irish Newsletter

The Irish American Community Collections

10-2000

American Irish Newsletter - October 2000

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews



Part of the [European Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Other American Studies Commons](#), and the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC, "American Irish Newsletter - October 2000" (2000).
American Irish Newsletter. 9.
https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews/9

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the The Irish American Community Collections at DigitalCommons@SHU. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Irish Newsletter by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@SHU. For more information, please contact santoro-dillond@sacredheart.edu.



AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 25, Number 10

October 2000

PEC Supports Candidate 2000 Questionnaire

THE PEC URGES members to participate in the **Campaign 2000 Candidate Questionnaire** project.

PEC member **Ed Walsh** says the project's purpose is to initiate dialogue between candidates, elected officials, and activists who wish to see their elected officials take an informed, supportive position on the Mitchell Agreement.

Deanna Willerer, spokesperson for the IAUC, which is spearheading this campaign, explains that the "project is an indispensable tool in revealing the [American Irish] community as vocal and active and ensuring that our next representatives reflect our concerns on Ireland.

Project organizers plan to use representatives' responses to the

seven-point questionnaire to help them determine which representatives are supportive and which ones need to be educated about the peace process.

Organizers will use representatives' responses as points of reference over the next few years when looking for support on bills and policies that support the Mitchell Agreement and ensure peace and justice in Ireland.

Walsh and other organizers would like you to photocopy the questionnaire (*Turn to Page 5*) and send it to candidates for the House of Representatives in your district (*See Action Request, Page 8*).

Please forward copies of your representative's response by regular mail to the PEC at 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980.

Internet Ink:

Half On-line, Half Not

By Ed Dzitko, *Webmaster*

THE RESULTS of the PEC's July 2000 Webmaster survey are split down the middle: half of the respondents do not have access to email or the Internet and half do.

The PEC is grateful to members who returned the survey, renewed membership, and made donations. The PEC depends on members' financial and moral support to continue its work.

A member from Bay Shore, New York writes: "In my opinion, you are one of the few organizations (of any persuasion) which ALWAYS does everything right. You operate with impressive professionalism, admirable restraint, and a clear sense of what you are and where you are going. The *Newsletter* is timely, accurate, well-written, and always helpful."

Those with Internet and email access say they would visit an on-line *Newsletter*, would subscribe to an email Action Request and press release service, and would visit a members-only section of the Web site. Many say they enjoy the new format.

Those without computer access say they would cease participation in the PEC if the *Newsletter* were available solely on-line.

We will keep members' comments and concerns in mind as we adjust to our ever-changing political and financial climate and continue to provide you with the best in news, analysis, and action on the North. Contact *Newsletter* editor **Sandy Carlson** with stories and thoughts on what you want from your *Newsletter*.

Are You Seeing Double?

IF YOU HAVE difficulty reading the PEC Web site because you see double images, then try updating your browser.

Visit netscape.com to download **Communicator 4.7** or higher. You can also visit msn.com to download **Internet Explorer 4.0** or higher.

Either option should provide you with crystal-clear viewing. We urge you to keep the PEC informed of any difficulty you have with our Web site.

| | |
|--|---|
| INSIDE | |
| Peace Process Update | 2 |
| From the North | 3 |
| Newsbits | 4 |
| Campaign 2000 Candidate Questionnaire | 5 |
| Will Britain Get Away With Murder? | 6 |
| Will Britain Get Away With Murder? (continued) | 7 |
| Action Requests | 8 |

Our View: No Peace with the old Police

"ALL THIS talk of peace is good, but it makes people want to forget what the RUC have done." So says Diane Hamill when she discusses the 1997 loyalist murder of her brother, Robert Hamill, under the gaze of the RUC (See Story, Pages 6-7).

Her comments are a fit reminder of the number of outstanding questions that Britain and its agents must answer if Ireland is to achieve a lasting peace. Britain must assure the Irish and, indeed, the international community overseeing the peace process that Britain recognizes it has compromised the quality of democracy at every level of Northern society in a vain effort to contain a civil conflict rather than resolve it. Britain must show it is acting in good faith to resolve this abuse of democracy.

We must be assured that Britain will punish the perpetrators of murders such as Robert Hamill's and will exclude them from participation in a new policing service. If police officers are representatives of the rule of law, then they must live up to that rule. It's not enough to forgive and forget about police officers who carry a private agenda of terrorism. Any policing system is inherently political because it represents the laws born of a political system. The politics of any police officer in Ireland must represent the politics of democracy. Sectarian thugs don't have the intellectual discipline for such an enterprise and must, therefore, be removed from service in the new police force.

Indeed, with "all this talk of peace" it is easy to forget that many questions about the RUC and every other aspect of democracy in Ireland remain unanswered. Only with the diligence of such women as Diane Hamill, her family, and concerned people around the world will answers be found. We know the British won't come clean on their own.

Peace Process Update

August 11

THE UFF ATTACKS the home of a senior citizen and stages a show of strength on the loyalist Shankill Road. It fires shots at the RUC and renews its threat to shoot Catholics who it claims are driving Protestants from their homes (The Housing Executive reports that the opposite is true.).

August 16

The UDA attacks Catholics in Larne, County Antrim.

August 21

The UVF murders two men as a loyalist feud erupts into open warfare. The dead men had links with the UDA and were well known in the Shankill area. Loyalists attack the offices of the UDP and the PUP, fronts for the paramilitary UDA and the UVF, respectively.

August 22

Northern Secretary **Peter Mandelson** returns UFF leader **Johnny Adair** to prison following a report that Adair was responsible for last weekend's violence. Mandelson makes the move because he says the loyalist feud could derail the peace process if it were to spread to Catholic areas.

August 23

The UDA murders a 21-year-old man in Belfast as the loyalist feud intensifies, but Mandelson says the loyalist cease-fires remain unbroken "in the round," describing the wave of killings as the "unlawful activity" of "individuals." Meanwhile, a British army and RUC raid on farm buildings in County Down turns up hit lists targeting 80 nationalists.

August 30

The loyalist feud spills over into nationalist areas as loyalists using British army weapons attack Catholic homes and torch a Catholic pub. The UVF seriously injure an 11-year-old girl in Derry as it attacks her home. SDLP leader **John Hume** says he will resign from the Northern Ireland Assembly.

(continued on Page 8)

American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC

*A non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization
founded 1975*

National President John J. Finucane
Membership/Subsription Coordinator Loretta Fitzgibbons
Recording Secretary Kathy Regan
Financial Secretary Tom Sheridan
Newsletter Editor Sandy Carlson
Webmaster Edward Dzitko

Newsletter Mailing Address:

Five Woods Way, Woodbury, CT 06798

PEC & Newsletter Email Address: aipec@homestead.com

National Headquarters

54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980

(914) 947-2726 Fax (914) 947-2599

PEC Web Site Address: <http://aipec.homestead.com>

Supported in part by the Emerald Society,
NYC Fire Department

STATE DIRECTORS: Jack O'Brien, 11109 Belton St., Upper Marlboro, MARYLAND 20772-(301)336-5187; Leah Curtin, Hibernian Life, 790 Cleveland Ave., Ste. 221, St. Paul, MINNESOTA 55116-(612)690-3888; Kathy Regan, 7 Ballint Dr., Apt 714, Yonkers, NEW YORK 10710-(914)395-1995; Frank O'Day, 21 Pierce Ln., Madison, CONNECTICUT 06443-(203)245-4739; Bob West, 683 Walnut Rd., Wauconda, ILLINOIS 60084-(847)526-6520; Terry Deem Reilly, 1123 Clarkson, Denver, COLORADO 80218-(303)837-9443; Ned A. Delaney, 1211 El Grande St., Lafayette, INDIANA 47905-(317)474-2546; Larry Doyle, 2036 Calhoun, Bellevue, NEBRASKA 68005-(402)292-5291; Kathy Whitford, 15910 Lucille Dr., Cleveland, OHIO 44111-(216) 251-7551; Paul D. McGuigan, 7607-8th Ave., NW, #201, Seattle, WASHINGTON 98117 - (206) 782-5567; Nancy Love, 14151/2 Grand Ave., Racine, WISCONSIN 53402 - (414) 633-4085; Dr. John T. Glessen, 1107 Ironwood Dr., Coeur D'Alene, IDAHO 83814 - (208) 667-7459; Hal Cousins, 905 Shalimar Dr., Del City, OKLAHOMA 73115 - (405) 677-3623; Elizabeth McElligott, 7747 E. Dale Ln., Scottsdale, ARIZONA 85262 - (602)585-3602; Robert J. Fuhrer, 1901 Rio Canyon Ct. #202, Las Vegas, NEVADA 89128-(702) 255-9619; Mary Holford, 6555 Tam O'Shanter Dr., San Jose, CALIFORNIA, 95120-(408) 268-4548
GREAT HUNGER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR: Frank Morris, Jr., 821 Briarwood Ln, Camp Hill, PA 17011-(717) 737-7013
NATIONAL ORGANIZER: Pete Foley, 3615 Greystone Ave., Bronx, NY 10463 - (718) 884-2220

Pressure Mounts for Independent Investigation into Collusion Claims

RECENT events raise serious concerns about Britain's investigations into the loyalist murders of Northern Ireland civil rights attorneys Pat Finucane in 1989 and Rosemary Nelson in 1999. Human rights campaigners are concerned that Britain's investigations into the murders are deliberately ignoring mounting evidence that Britain willfully failed to protect the lives of the lawyers.

Appearing in Sept. on ITV's *Most Wanted* television program, Norfolk deputy police chief **Colin Port**, who heads the inquiry into Nelson's death, ruled out an investigation into British collusion with loyalists—a concern among many human rights advocates.

Commenting on the possibility of collusion, Port said there was "nothing at all" to substantiate such charges. However, he added that a "rogue element" might have colluded with loyalists in the killing and that his team would investigate that possibility.

Port's refusal to take seriously the possibility of widespread collusion flies in the face of the difficulties the team has met in its work. During the program, the officer confirmed his team is partly made up of RUC officers operating out of Lurgan barracks, the station from which most of the death threats against Nelson emanated. He added that nationalists have refused to cooperate with the investigators.

"Local people know that the investigation team is made up of members of the RUC," said **Dara O'Hagan**, Upper Bann Sinn Fein Assembly member. "They will not cooperate with the investigation because they have no faith in the RUC. Many are also fearful because they don't know where their statements will end up or how they will be used."

Workers at the Jefferson Smurfit factory in Lurgan confirm they will continue to refuse to cooperate with

the team. About 150 workers were on shift duty at the factory on the weekend of the murder. The factory is a mile from the Nelson home, and many workers would have driven or walked past her house. In May, eight detectives visited the factory; 62 workers refused to cooperate, saying they had no confidence in the team because it included RUC members.

"Rosemary had raised her difficulties as high as Downing Street," said **Padraigin Drinan**, human rights solicitor and member of the **Justice for Rosemary Nelson** campaign. "Nothing was done. She was given no security, and she was killed. What is essential to any investigation is to work out why she was targeted for death. That is why there is more than ever a need to set-up an independent judicial inquiry into Rosemary's murder."

The campaign wants answers to the following questions: Why was a British military helicopter flying above the Nelson home at the time the bomb was likely planted? Have the RUC officers who issued death threats been questioned as part of the investigation? Why have they not faced charges?

"The British government cannot continue to ignore the call for the truth about the planning and murder of Rosemary," says **Robbie McVeigh**, spokesperson for the campaign. "In life, the British government failed to protect Rosemary Nelson. In death, they are failing to give her justice." He added: "If the British government had set up such an inquiry into Finucane's 1989 murder, Rosemary could be celebrating her birthday next Monday with her family and friends."

Also in early Sept., a key prosecution witness in the case against loyalist double agent **William Stobie**, charged in connection with Finucane's murder, signed himself into a mental hospital. The implications for the trial against

Stobie, the former UDA quartermaster and RUC agent who supplied and disposed of the weapons used to kill Finucane, could be devastating.

This development follows the Director of Public Prosecution's earlier decision to reduce murder charges against Stobie to the charge of aiding and procuring. By law, anyone facing a murder charge cannot be offered a plea bargaining deal. The reduction of charges clears the way for the DPP to broker a deal that would keep secret Britain's role in collusion.

A similar tactic was used in relation to **Brian Nelson**, a double agent who helped set up the Finucane killing. On the eve of his trial, Nelson accepted a deal in which the most serious charges against him were dropped. Nelson pleaded guilty to a number of lesser charges and served five years in jail.

Meanwhile, detectives working for the Stevens Inquiry into collusion mounted a raid on the British Army Headquarters at Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn and recovered classified intelligence documents. A number of these relate to the killing of Finucane and the role of British military intelligence in assisting with the murder.

At the core of the Stevens investigation are the activities of the Force Research Unit and the role of Brian Nelson, who provided the murderers with information and photos to carry out the Finucane killing. There are suggestions that at some point during the 1980s, British intelligence made a deliberate decision to employ the UDA/UFF rather than the SAS to carry out attacks on specific targets and provided them with the necessary resources to do so.

These latest developments will add to the pressure on Britain to hold full, independent public inquiries into the deaths of Finucane, Nelson, and others.

Newsbits

AN HONORS graduate accused of possessing 400 security force montages of IRA suspects was alleged in court yesterday to be a member of the outlawed Orange Volunteer Force. A crown lawyer told the high court in Belfast that the OVF was made up of people claiming to be Orangemen and who had set up the organization to take on the likes of the Real IRA. Bail was refused by **Justice Sheil**, who referred to police concerns about the OVF and that the organization's activities were on-going. (*Irish News* 8/2/00)

A government official who witnessed the man who transported the bomb that exploded on Parnell Street in May 1974 has claimed that his statement to the police was altered, according to a report in the *Sunday Business Post*. Thirty-three people were killed in three bombings in Dublin and Monaghan on May 17, 1974....In two typed versions of his statement obtained by **Justice Hamilton** from Garda files, the date of his interview in Store Street is inaccurately recorded as May 18, 1974, a day after the bombing. A second statement, which the official states he never made, is dated May 27, 1974. According to the witness, he could not have made this statement as he worked as a rent collector for Dublin Corporation and would have spent the day collecting the weekly rents. The first statement wrongly records that the witness saw a man and woman in a vehicle. "I never saw a woman in the car, and I never said that I saw a woman," the witness said. In the second version..., it is stated that he had suggested that "I would not know this man again." However, the witness insists that he would have clearly remembered the man in the green car. "For weeks I was waiting for the Garda to come back to me to prepare an Identikit or take part in an identity parade. I believe I am probably

the only person to see the bomber and, more particularly, speak with him." (*RM Dist.* 9/5/00)

The mother of **Roisin McAliskey** last night launched a stinging attack on the British government after learning the Osnabruck bomb suspect no longer faces prosecution. The crown prosecution service ruled yesterday there was not enough evidence to justify trying McAliskey for the 1996 attack on the British army barracks in Germany....Former Mid-Ulster MP **Bernadette McAliskey** said no one had the "decency" to inform her or her daughter of the decision. "After you have wrongfully imprisoned someone and endangered their life and that of their unborn child, you might have the decency to tell them," she said. (*Irish News* 7/19/00)

Lawmakers around the world are calling for government protection of human rights lawyers following the murders of Northern civil rights attorneys Rosemary Nelson last year and Pat Finucane in 1989. Congressman **Chris Smith** made the amendment during the ninth session of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe held in Bucharest mid-July. Representatives from Europe, the US, and Canada heard the congressman demand that governments "hold accountable persons" responsible for threatening human rights attorneys. His proposals were included in the final document, which will be known as the Bucharest Declaration. (*Irish News* 7/21/00)

The families of three IRA members killed by the SAS are demanding a full independent inquiry into "shoot to kill" allegations surrounding their deaths. Dennis Brown, Jackie Mailey, and Jim Mulvenna were shot by soldiers as they prepared to firebomb a post office in north Belfast. A Protestant civilian, William Hanna, was also killed by security forces as he walked to his

home close to the attack on June 21, 1978. At the time, the army claimed the men were challenged at the post office and there was an exchange of fire—a claim vehemently denied by the men's families. At a press conference in west Belfast yesterday, relatives of the three IRA men and supporters launched a drive to find the truth about the events of that night. **Geraldine Keenan**, the sister of Dennis Brown, said the families did not dispute the men were involved in IRA activity at the time of their deaths, but relatives want to know why security forces did not arrest the men if they knew about the unarmed IRA operation beforehand. (*Irish News* 6/22/00)

The decision to award Paratrooper **Lee Clegg** £25,000 back pay for his time in jail has been condemned. Corporal Clegg—cleared of charges related to killing two teen-agers—received the reimbursement for pay and pension lost while jailed for the murder of Karen Reilly in Sept. 1990. Clegg, then a private, was released from prison in 1995 after serving two years behind bars for shooting on the teens' stolen car. (*Irish News* 8/5/00)

Britain has been urged to issue a formal public apology to the Birmingham Six for their years in prison. Group members **Johnny Walker** and **Hugh Callaghan** have demanded that the government apologize to remove all suspicion hanging over their innocence....A spokeswoman at Downing Street said she was not aware of any request being made for such a public apology. She said the prime minister expressed his regret about all miscarriages of justice in a letter to the Guildford Four, but no decision on a public apology to the Six was likely until a formal request was made. (*Irish News* 7/16/00)

Campaign 2000 Candidate Questionnaire on American Irish Issues

American Foreign Policy Toward Ireland

The current Administration has made the Irish Peace Process an American foreign policy priority. This has included direct participation in the peace process and the appointment of special peace envoy Sen. George Mitchell.

- 1. As an elected official, would you support the practice of high-level involvement in the Irish peace process? Would you maintain a positive, even-handed policy toward all the parties involved in the peace process by defending the practice of granting unrestricted US travel visas to all participants?**

The MacBride Principles

The MacBride Principles have proven to be an effective and positive way for Americans to ensure that US dollars do not subsidize discrimination in the North of Ireland. The principles not only have the unified support of Irish-Americans but also have been enshrined in US law.

- 2. As an elected Representative, would you actively support the MacBride Principles and be diligent when it comes to certifying that all recipients of US assets (given through the International Fund For Ireland) were in compliance with the MacBride Principles of Economic Justice?**

Policing in the Northern Ireland

One of the basic iniquities in Northern Ireland that has been accounted by various human rights groups is the lack of a legitimate police service representing both communities in the North of Ireland. The Mitchell Agreement instituted the Independent Commission on Policing (Patten Commission), which published its recommendations in Jan. 2000.

US law now mandates that before there is any US training of the RUC (the current police force), the President must certify that none of the officers involved has been guilty of human rights violations.

- 3. Would you use your office to help bring about the "new beginning in policing in Northern Ireland," as called for in the Patten Commission recommendations? Would you actively demand such certification?**

Human Rights

The American Irish and international human rights organizations around the world have called for independent investigations into the murders of human rights lawyers Patrick Finucane and Rosemary Nelson, as well as many other civilians. Overwhelming evidence of collusion between the loyalist forces that carried out the murders and the RUC officers who have been charged with investigating these murders has fueled these calls.

- 4. Would you lend your voice to these calls?**

Deportees

The INS has suspended deportation for a small number of individuals who had served time in prison for political offences in Northern Ireland. Many are married to American citizens, have children who were born in the US, and lead exemplary lives. Any deportation of these individuals would mean the forced deportation of their American families as well.

- 5. As an elected representative, would you encourage the INS and the Department of Justice to end all proceedings against these individuals and grant them permanent US residency?**

Visits to Ireland

Many representatives have visited Ireland on fact-finding tours and as international observers.

- 6. As an elected representative, would you travel to Ireland to show US commitment to the peace process and meet with all parties in the peace process?**

Visas

Over the last 12 years, visa programs have opened the doors of this country to people of many lands, including Ireland.

- 7. Would you continue to support legislation--such as, the Schumer and Walsh visas--to allow individuals to legally obtain access to the US?**

New Book :

Unfinished Business Asks, Will Britain Get Away With Murder?

IN HIS NEW BOOK, *Unfinished Business: State Killings and the Quest for Truth*, leading Irish academic **Bill Rolston** focuses on 23 cases of state involvement in killings associated with the conflict in Northern Ireland. Relatives and others who have campaigned over the killings tell the stories. In an extract from the book, **Diane Hamill** tells the moving story of the death of her brother, Robert, in Portadown three years ago, and of the continuing campaign for justice.

"It was April 27, 1997. I was working up in a nursing home in Carnlough and I had my mummy and my brother John up staying with me.

"It was lovely in the countryside. I was working nights, and about six o'clock in the morning, mummy came to the nursing home and said Robert had been hurt. I thought it couldn't be our Robert, for our Robert was over six foot and well-built. She said: "Diane, there were 30 of them, and the police just stood there and let it happen."

"What had happened was, about half one that morning, he was making his way back from St. Patrick's Hall in the center of the town with my cousins Joanne and Siobhan and Siobhan's husband, Gregory. They had to go through the center of Portadown. They had phoned for a taxi, but there were no taxis. As they came down to a junction, they could see there were a couple of lads hanging about, but they could see there was an RUC Land Rover parked at the top of the street, so they felt safe to go on ahead.

"As they got to the junction, the boys were attacked. The police have told us the figures range from 40 to 50 of them, male and female. They pulled the boys and beat the boys, and they concentrated on Robert. We were

hoping that he was knocked out with the first blow, for he was beat about the head.

"The police didn't get out of the vehicle. People coming out of Catholic pubs some two hundred yards away tried to get the boys away from them, and still the cops stayed in the vehicle.

"One of the fellows actually came out of the pub and opened the door of the Land Rover and pulled one of the cops out and said: 'You sat and watched this happening.' The cop got back into the jeep again....

"The ambulance came--I don't honestly know how long after, but that was the first first-aid he got. At that point, the cops got out because they saw the ambulances coming. I think one of them approached Siobhan and said: 'Turn him on his side.' Siobhan hadn't a clue what to do.

"The cops never even fired a bullet in the air; they never did anything. We found out later, about 10 minutes after Robert went down the road, a fellow had come out of the same club and seen the crowd. He approached the RUC vehicle and said: 'They are coming out of St. Patrick's Hall and there is a crowd here. You had better watch out.'

"They never came up the road to stop people coming down. What scares me most is that those people, 30 or 40 of them, knew they would get away with doing something within 15 yards of the police....

"Twelve days after he was hurt, I decided I would go back to work, and that was the Thursday [he died].

"In their first coverage, the newspapers picked up the police statements. Then, gradually over the days, their statements changed because we were talking to the newspapers and

giving our side of what happened.

"The girls actually gave a statement to the *Irish News* before Robert died and told how the police had stayed there. So the RUC had to change their story. The very last statement they released said it was an unprovoked sectarian attack.

"After Robert died, the media were down in our house the next morning. They wanted daddy to talk. He wasn't going to do it, but we wanted to get the story across. Other people might have told them to clear off, but I knew from the day Robert was hurt that if you wanted to get anything done, you had to use these people like they use us. Daddy sat down and I just jumped in beside him in case he broke down. I remember him telling them they jumped on his head.

"I just thought about the police not helping him and I thought, "You pigs, you aren't getting away with this.

"So I went to Rosemary Nelson [the human rights lawyer whom loyalists killed in 1999], and she was for us straight away. She just knew straight away what to do. They can't deny the fact that they were there and that he was attacked 15 yards away from where they were and that they didn't do anything at all. All they had to do was stick one arm out of the jeep and fire a bullet in the air. They had no excuse whatsoever.

"We started to gather petitions to get the officers suspended. Over a few weeks, we collected 20,000 signatures; we could have got a lot more if we had gone berserk on it, but I thought 20,000 was enough. We met [then Northern Secretary] **Mo Mowlam** a couple of times, but she never did anything. The officers were never suspended....

"I had never had any dealing with

the cops. I didn't know how malicious they could be, how they could trick and twist. Within days of Robert's attack, I knew they couldn't be trusted at all. We had asked about video evidence for there are four banks and building societies around the junction where he was attacked. They told us there was nothing, only the vehicle on one of them. I don't actually know where the video evidence is.

"They waited so long before they arrested anyone, there was no forensic evidence left. A couple of days after Robert had died, there were six fellows lifted and charged with murder. That was May. In Oct., three of them were released. Then in Nov., they let two more go....There is one fellow still in jail, **Mark Hobson**; he has had five different hearings....

"We had put flowers on the lamppost where he had died every day for a month after he died, and everything was totally destroyed. Mummy wanted us to do it, but she was getting upset. We wanted to defy them, but it was just tearing her apart. We stopped that June, but it was his birthday on the twelfth of Sept., and we did it then, but they pulled them down again....

"On July 13, 1997, I had to go to town, myself and my boyfriend. He had told me not to go, but me being me, I went ahead. He pointed out some flowers on the pole. We thought, 'Imagine someone thinking of him now a couple of months down the line!' We went over. There was a card stuck beside the flowers and it read, 'For the Portadown Six Heroes.' That's how evil they were: someone had actually sat down and thought of that.

"There was a white hankie there and I had no idea what it was for until the following Sunday. We live near a

loyalist area and there was a fellow shouting over to us, pretending to pull someone to the ground and kick their face. He was shouting, 'Did you get the white hankie to wipe your tears away? Did you'se get it?'

"We have tried publicity, the petition, and the Irish government. It's been over a year-and-a-half; but we don't seem to be getting anywhere; so we have decided on a private prosecution.

"We think there is bound to be enough evidence there to prosecute everyone--those involved, the RUC officers. They were duty-bound to act, but they didn't do it. They could have at least protected him or helped him, but I believe they decided not to do it. They knew rightly Robert was a Catholic because of where he was walking.

"We have discussed a private prosecution with [civil rights attorney] **Mike Mansfield**. He is going to do it, but he is really busy.

"It's a matter of waiting for Hobson's trial to finish and for the DPP to decide whether there is going to be any disciplinary action against the RUC officers....

"I met a fellow who works with [British Labor Party back bencher] **Kevin McNamara**, and he is helping us word the parliamentary questions to be asked, but there is nothing really much happening at the minute.

"With these cases, it's so political, it depends on the atmosphere at the time whether people actually take an interest in you.

"There were things that happened in Robert's case and the media said to me, if anything happens let me know and I would let them know, but they didn't report it.

"This Patten Commission which has been set up, my brother wrote to them, but we got a letter back from an official in Oct. [1998], and they refused to look at it because it was *sub judice*. It's not *sub judice* for the cops haven't been charged with anything. At a public meeting with the Patten Commission later, I again asked for a private meeting. This time we got one. Ideally, I would like the RUC to face criminal charges....

"There is not another police force in the world who would get away with this. They are the best-equipped police force in Europe, but they wouldn't do a thing to save our Robert's life.

"If we had not stood up and said this was wrong, they would probably not have given us as much hassle.

"They hate us for some reason. I do feel hated by the RUC. I would never regret doing what I do. I'm glad they hate me, I want them to hate me for then I know that I'm having an effect on them--you know, actually getting somewhere. Robert was worth too much to let it go.

"Sometimes you get really exhausted and down and you think, oh my God, how are you going to go on with this. But you just go on, you have to. I think they are hoping we will just give up on this and go away, but we can't.

"All this talk of peace is good, but it makes people want to forget what the RUC have done. That Patten commission are supposed to investigate the RUC, but they don't want to hear. How can you learn from the past if you're not told what they have done?"

To order, contact
Irish Books and Media, Inc.,
(612) 871-3505
(Say you're making a PEC order.)

To Join or to Renew Your Membership in the AIEF-PEC

- New Membership \$25 **Membership Renewal** \$25
- Senior Citizen \$20 Student \$10
- Additional Tax-deductible Donation \$ _____
- Tax-deductible Donation Only** \$ _____ **Total** \$ _____

Members receive the monthly *American Irish Newsletter*.

Name _____

Address _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Phone Number () _____

Email Address _____

Make checks payable to AIEF-PEC
 Mail to 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980
 For information, call (800) 777-6807

American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC
 54 South Liberty Drive
 Stony Point, NY 10980

Non-Profit Organ.
 US Postage Paid
 Leesburg, FL
 Permit No. 1040

Address Correction Service

Action Requests

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

Contact: **Your Representative**, 2244 Rayburn Office Building, Washington, DC, 20515-3010

Message: I have enclosed a Campaign 2000 Candidate Questionnaire, and I would appreciate your addressing the points in it as soon as possible. Concerned Americans will expect to see their elected representatives take an active role in furthering the Irish peace process, and we want to ensure that our representatives understand the issues involved in it. If you require further information to complete the questionnaire, please forward them to the American Irish PEC, 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980; Tele. 914-947-2726; Fax 914-947-2599; email aipec@homestead.com

Contact: **Vice-president Al Gore**, P.O. Box 18237, Washington, DC 20036; Tele. 615-340-2000; Fax 615-340-3295; Web site <http://www.algore2000.com>

Message: I urge you to offer a detailed statement of your position on the Irish peace process and how you would continue to support it if you were elected President next month. Although I realize you have stated your support for the peace process in general terms, I expect you to issue a statement focusing on the issues of fair employment legislation, visas, policing, foreign policy, and human rights.

**Renew Membership
 in the AIEF-PEC
 Stay on top
 of the Peace Process**

(continued from Page 2)

September 8

As loyalists enter into "exploratory talks" in a bid to end the feud between the UDA and the UVF, violence continues with a series of attacks in Belfast's Shankill Road and Crumlin Road areas yesterday. The House of Representatives' Committee on International Relations unanimously passes House Resolution 547, which calls for the full implementation of the Patten Report. The 20 representatives in attendance praise the resolution, which Congressman **Richard Neal** had introduced.

September 9

Mandelson says he is considering an amendment to the Police Bill currently before the British parliament to allow Britain to boost Catholic numbers in the new Northern police force by recruiting Southern Irish officers as well as constables from Britain and elsewhere. Mandelson also publishes his decision on the flying of the Union Jack in the North, which states that the British flag must be flown on specified government buildings for 17 designated days of the year. Mandelson's order will go for discussion to the Belfast Assembly and to the British Parliament for approval. The draft legislation, if enacted, would result in the Union Jack's flying over buildings where Sinn Fein's education and health departments are housed—something which Sinn Fein's ministers **Martin McGuinness** and **Bairbre de Brun** have so far refused.