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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 25, Number 8

August 2000

Amnesty Slams Britain's Human Rights Record in North

AMNESTY International's latest annual human rights report has slammed Britain's failure to uphold basic human rights, despite the Mitchell Agreement.

"The human rights situation in Northern Ireland still gave cause for concern and some areas appeared to have become more polarized, in particular during the marching season," the 2000 report states.

The report gives a detailed breakdown of the human rights in more than 140 countries in 1999. It documents that armed political groups in Northern Ireland carried out seven killings, 73 punishment shootings, and 133 punishment beatings—including some of children under 16.

Amnesty is concerned also with proposed new legislation, including the Terrorism Bill and the Freedom of Information Bill, which "appeared to restrict further the rights to freedom of expression and association."

Amnesty welcomes many of the Oct. 1999 Patten Report's recommendations on policing reform in Northern Ireland, but the organization also identifies several omissions. It urges Britain to address the RUC's past abusive practices and to establish

further mechanisms to ensure police accountability. Amnesty calls for units within the RUC associated with patterns of human rights violations to be "disbanded."

Amnesty also urges a thorough review of covert operations and the establishment of a civilian body to oversee intelligence agencies and covert operations.

In May 1999, Amnesty submitted comments to the Criminal Justice Review. The human rights organization called for international human rights standards to be incorporated into all aspects of the criminal justice system, raised concerns about the failure to prosecute members of the British forces involved in killings or assaults, and urged reforms in procedures for appointing the judiciary.

In its 2000 report, Amnesty also notes its concern that the team appointed to investigate the killing of Rosemary Nelson is not sufficiently independent of the RUC. The human rights group also says that police investigations into Rosemary Nelson's complaints of the RUC's intimidation and harassment have not been thorough and impartial.

In Dec., Amnesty joined five other

human rights organizations in urging the British authorities to establish an independent inquiry into all the circumstances of her death.

Last year Amnesty continued to urge the British government to institute an independent judicial inquiry into the 1989 killing of Belfast lawyer Patrick Finucane, says the report.

The Independent Commission for Police Complaints said in its annual report that in 1998 it had received 36 complaints alleging police misconduct against 15 lawyers, Amnesty noted.

Amnesty also noted that of the six people charged in connection with the death of Robert Hamill, who died in 1997 after a loyalist crowd beat him, Marc Hobson was the only person brought to trial. In March he was acquitted of murder and sentenced to four years' imprisonment for "affray." The Director of Public Prosecutions decided not to prosecute four RUC personnel who were at the scene but merely looked on.

Amnesty International did not make clear the action they are taking on this issue, but they did complain that "the Independent Commission on Policing failed to recommend a mechanism to deal with the legacy of past human rights abuses."

Contact Amnesty at amnesty.org.uk/library/annrep.shtml for a copy of the report.

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**Renew Membership
in the AIEF-PEC**

**Stay on top
of the Peace Process**

Our View: See Action Requests, Page 8

THIS month's Newsletter includes stories that could have been written last year, five years ago, 15 years ago. They concern state human rights abuses in the North, RUC brutality, the Orange Order's blockheaded insistence on marching through nationalist areas, a High Court justice's all but dismissing the murderous intentions of a loyalist who petrol-bombed the home of three small boys....

Other stories must be current. They concern British Prime Minister Tony Blair's apologizing, by way of a Kennedy, for the miscarriage of justice involving the Guildford Four; the IRA's participation in an inspection of its weapons dumps, and Congress's ongoing involvement in monitoring the progress of the Irish peace process. None of these things would have come about five or 15 years ago. They are the result of the hard work of people in the US and other countries, of international human rights groups, and, especially, the people who have insisted on better lives for themselves in the North.

Such achievements begin with small steps--a letter, a phone call, an email message to an elected official or other opinion maker. Now such small steps are easier than ever. If you have Internet access, you need only log onto the PEC's Web site, click on Action Requests, click on the email address of the letter recipient, and copy and paste the message into the body of your message. You can look back at previous Action Requests to be sure you have sent them all and that the recipient has responded to you. You can copy PEC press releases and send them to your local media. You can show that peace in Ireland is an issue that matters to you and other Americans. You can insist that your voice be heard. Visit our Web site or turn to Page 8.

Peace Process Update

May 30

FORMER director of US drug enforcement and ex-New York State police chief **Tom Constantine** will oversee changes to the RUC. Constantine says that as Oversight Commissioner he will measure "how policing reforms are implemented against the legislation that was passed." However, the Patten Report recommended that the Oversight Commissioner monitor the implementation of Patten's actual proposals—not the British legislation, which contains a diluted version of Patten's recommendations.

May 31

British Labor Party back-bencher **Kevin McNamara** calls on the British government to take the policing bill back to the drawing board because he says the proposed legislation falls short of Patten's recommendations. The loyalist Progressive Unionist Party blames mainstream unionist politicians' failure to provide meaningful leadership for the rising support for loyalist paramilitary groups.

June 1

The DUP boycotts the meeting of the Assembly, the first since Britain reestablished power sharing. This week, **Gerald Lynch**, president of John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, says the Policing Bill represents a cherry-picking of the Patten Report. "All of the 175 recommendations in the Patten Report should be implemented," Lynch says. "I am concerned at the diluting of the powers of the Ombudsman, the weakening of the Police Board and its powers, and with any attempt to change the name of the new police service back to some rendition of the RUC", Lynch says. "I am very worried that the British government is backing away from its commitment to implement Patten. This is not the understanding that members of the Commission thought we had."

(continued on Page 7)

American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC

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Arms Inspectors Examine IRA Weapons Dumps

(June 26) - Martti Ahtisaari and Cyril Ramaphosa report on their inspection of IRA weapons dumps

THIS report is being issued following our appointment as arms inspectors on May 6, 2000 and our first inspection of IRA weapons dumps.

We accepted our appointment on the basis of terms of reference set out in a joint statement issued by [British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Taoiseach Bertie Ahern] and the statement by the leadership of the IRA on May 6, 2000.

In its statement of May 6, the IRA leadership pledged to initiate a process that will completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use in the context of the statement made by the two governments on May 5, 2000.

Besides undertaking to resume contact with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD), the IRA leadership agreed to put in place within weeks a confidence-building measure to confirm that their weapons remain secure.

We see our mandate as being the inspection of the contents of a number of IRA arms dumps, reporting to the IICD that we have done so, and reinspecting these dumps regularly to ensure that the weapons have remained secure.

In preparing for the first inspection visit, we were briefed by the British prime minister, the Irish foreign minister, the British secretary of state, and the commissioners of the IICD.

We also consulted most of the parties that have endorsed the [Mitchell Agreement]. In addition, we consulted independent specialists in the field of arms control, who had previously participated in arms inspections elsewhere and had expertise in the area of verification.

The purpose of these consultations was to help us develop credible methods for inspection and verification.

We have now carried out our first inspection. We inspected a number of arms dumps. The arms dumps held a substantial amount of military material [sic], including explosives and related equipment, as well as weapons and other material [sic].

We observed that the weapons and explosives were safely and adequately stored. We have ensured that the weapons and explosives cannot be used without our detection.

We are satisfied with the cooperation extended to us by the IRA to ensure a credible and verifiable inspection. All our requests were satisfactorily met.

We plan to reinspect the arms dumps on a regular basis to ensure that the weapons have remained secure.

The process that led to the first inspection visit and the way in which it was carried out make us believe that this is a genuine effort by the IRA to advance the peace process.

IRA Supports Peace Process

(JUNE 26) - On May 6 the leadership of the IRA announced an unprecedented initiative which had the effect of breaking the impasse at that time in the peace process.

In our statements we made it clear that our initiative was in the context of a series of commitments made by the two governments, especially the British government.

We announced that we would: resume contact with the IICD (Independent International Commission on Decommissioning) and put in place a confidence-building measure.

We now wish to confirm that we have reestablished contact with the IICD and that a number of arms dumps have been examined by the two agreed parties.

These dumps contained a substantial amount of material including weapons, explosives and other equipment. The leadership of the IRA have consistently sought to enhance the peace process. This initiative demonstrates once more our commitment to securing a just and lasting peace.

Please return your survey from the July Newsletter. Help us help you make a difference.

Newsbits

THE POLICE Federation has called for a restriction on information being given to any new policing board because the body will include Sinn Fein. In a speech yesterday in which federation chairman **Les Rodgers** said the RUC felt "used and abused by all shades of political opinion," he raised particular fears over the role of republican politicians in new policing structures. He said he was "acutely aware that at least two members" of the police board will have "very direct terrorist associations." Patten recommended replacing the existing Police Authority with a policing board to monitor the new service and to include local politicians, with an estimated two Sinn Fein members. "The new socially and politically inclusive arrangements are the result of the democratic process and therefore difficult for the federation to object to constitutionally," Rodgers said. "Instead we will trust that our chief constable will take a sure-footed and pragmatic approach as to what he will share with such a board...." (*Irish News* 6/14/00)

Param Cumaraswamy, the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, once again raised his concerns about the cases of Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson on the floor of the [United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva this year]. Cumaraswamy... said that only a "judicial commission of inquiry can get to the truth of what really happened and the circumstances occurring prior to the murder [of Pat Finucane] in 1989 and put to rest all doubts and suspicions." In relation to the murder of Rosemary Nelson, the Special Rapporteur expressed his concern "over the extent and thoroughness of the investigation" into the complaints made by Rosemary against RUC officers. He also said he viewed "with concern" the delay in the

murder investigation and, although he acknowledged that it was unlike an ordinary murder investigation, he expressed his hope that it could be expedited. (*Just News* 4/00)

Dramatic film footage of the 1916 Easter Rising...is expected to sell for IR£100,000 when it is auctioned this week. The newsreel, which was taken by a freelance cameraman, captures the violent battle between republican rebels and the British army in the center of Dublin that left nearly 500 people dead....The film is due to go under the hammer at Dublin's Whyte's auctioneers on Saturday....Fears that the newsreels could go to an overseas buyer have led to calls for the Irish government to buy the footage.... **Liam Wylie**, head of collections at the IFA, said that although it had the only purpose-built premises in the country for storing film, the archive would not be bidding because it could not afford them. (*Irish News* 6/5/00)

Once again, the British government has come under the spotlight of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg....On Tuesday, the Court gave its ruling on two cases brought by two former republican POWs, **Gerard Magee** and **Liam Averill**. In the case of Magee, the Court found the British government in unequivocal breach of one of the most important articles of the European Convention on Human Rights. It ruled that [Magee] was denied a fair trial because he was refused access to a solicitor during the interviews [in 1988] that led to his conviction....The only evidence used by a Diplock court in 1991 to convict Magee was his statement. The statement was beaten out of him during the 48-hours during which he was denied access to legal advice. He then appealed his conviction, but this was dismissed by the Six-County Court of Appeal in 1994. He then lodged an application with the ECHR but served most of his

10-year sentence. Magee's solicitor said: "This decision, taken in conjunction with the European Court's decision in the case of Murray, raises the prospect that any conviction over the last 12 years based on confessions obtained in Castlereagh or Gough Barracks in the absence of a solicitor will be open to challenge on the basis that they are unsafe and in breach of the right to a fair trial." In the case of Averill, the court ruled that his basic human rights had also been violated because he had been refused access to a solicitor during the first 24 hours of questioning. (*RM Dist.* 6/8/00)

The outraged family of the **Quinn brothers** last night condemned Northern Ireland's top judge for comments made as he cleared a man of murder. **Garfield Gilmour**...was convicted of the manslaughter of Richard, Mark, and Jason at the court of appeal in Belfast yesterday. The children were killed in a petrol bomb attack on their Ballymoney home on July 12, 1998 during that year's Drumcree standoff. Making his ruling, Lord Chief Justice Sir **Robert Carswell** said petrol bombing houses was regrettably common but only rarely were people injured and most caused only minor fires. He said it would be difficult to be certain Gilmour intended the attack to cause any more than "a blaze which might do some damage" and intimidate the occupants into moving house. "There is not sufficient evidence to conclude that the appellant (Gilmour) was aware that the petrol was contained in an unusually large bottle which might be expected to cause a larger conflagration and result in greater danger to the occupants," the judge added. But the boys' uncle, **Frankie Quinn**, was incensed by his comments. "The judge should have been there that night. He wouldn't have said what he said. They didn't throw an ordinary petrol bomb, they threw in a gallon of petrol...." (*Irish News* 6/6/00)

American Irish History: *American Irish Define American Television*

By Kevin P. Murphy, Massachusetts

SINCE its introduction into the American home, television has been a major part of modern American life.

Throughout its history, American Irish men and women have played a huge role in this entertainment field.

From the early 1950s to the early 1970s, the *Ed Sullivan Show* was the showcase of American entertainment. Sullivan introduced America to the likes of Elvis, the Beatles, Barbra Streisand, Patsy Cline, Motown musicians, and others. To millions of Americans, Sunday nights meant watching Ed Sullivan; Sullivan became a primary shaper of American pop culture during this period.

The pioneers of American TV talk shows in the 1960s and 1970s were Steve Allen in the 1950s and Mike Douglas, whose real name was Michael O'Dowd. American Irishman Merv Griffin also created breakthroughs in talk shows. In the field of

comedy, Lucille Ball's brilliant programs ruled American TV from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Actor Carroll O'Connor's portrayal of Archie Bunker in *All in the Family* challenged American ideas of race and equality in the 1970s. His portrayal of a Southern US police chief in *In the Heat of the Night* was another thought-provoking show.

Nobody could forget Jackie Gleason and Art Carney in *The Honeymooners*, the model for TV comedy since the program debuted in the 1950s.

Today, Rosie O'Donnell and Conan O'Brien have very popular shows on American TV. Regis Philbin hosts the popular *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* quiz show that—like the talk show mogul's ties—has become a national fad. If the program is not a cultural masterpiece, it has, at least, breathed life into ABC's ratings.

Behind the scenes, writer David E. Kelley has assumed the role of creating America's most popular and highly rated TV shows, such as *The Practice* and *Ally McBeal*.

In TV journalism, Tom Brokaw often boasts of his Irish heritage. Further, his book *The Greatest Generation* has commemorated the Americans of the World War II generation who helped shape the modern world by their sacrifice, vision, and spirit.

Letter to the Editor

RESPONDING to Kevin P. Murphy's June 6 history article, PEC member Francis H. Corden writes:

Kevin P. Murphy wrote of Patrick C. Keely in the American Irish History section. There are errors. Archbishop Hughes was not a Cardinal. The architect for St. Patrick's was one Renwick.

Murphy omitted the former St. Joseph's Cathedral in Hartford, Conn., as Keely's best finished work. The cathedral burned on Dec. 31, 1956.

Keely designed other cathedrals—for example, Sacred Heart in Rochester, New York, and SS Peter and Paul in Providence, Rhode Island. A Jesuit church in Boston, the Immaculate Conception, was a masterpiece. Mr. Keely designed about 600 parish churches, among which is St. John Cantius in Chicago, Illinois.

Murphy could not have mentioned all of Keely's churches as it was not necessary and most likely unknown, but obvious errors detract from his work.

Congress Calls for all of Patten Reforms

CONGRESS has issued a letter to Northern Secretary Peter Mandelson urging him to fully implement the Patten Report's recommendations on police reform in the North. Publication of the letter coincides with publication of the Police Authority of Northern Ireland's (PANI) report of 4,222 complaints against the RUC in 1998-99.

According to PANI's Annual Report, 1,778 of these complaints were for assault and a further 646 complaints were for officers' "incivility" (sectarian abuse). Neglect of duty accounted for 508 complaints and "oppressive conduct and harassment," for a further 498.

PANI points to a 24% drop from the 5,545 complaints received for 1997-98, citing the "improved security situation" and "better health and safety standards."

Last year there were 30 proven cases of "irregularity re evidence" and of perjury, an increase on the 1997-98 total of 22. "Corrupt practices" were also up, with the RUC admitting to six cases in 1998-99, compared to four the year before.

Regarding controversial issues surrounding the activities of the RUC over the past 18 months, the Authority criticizes UN Special Rapporteur Param Kumaraswamy for his report into RUC harassment and intimidation of lawyers.

(continued on Page 7)

Orange Marches Challenge Northern Peace

Compiled by Sandy Carlson, *Editor*

CHAIRPERSON of the House International Relations Committee **Ben Gilman** is calling for international observers to monitor this year's sectarian marches in the North. At the same time, some prominent Orangemen are urging the Protestant organization to reconsider its confrontational approach, but other Orange leaders are urging loyalists to be confrontational in nationalist areas.

Gilman says the marches threaten the peace process: "These marches should be eliminated in their entirety since they undermine the intentions of the [Mitchell] Agreement by insulting Catholics and inciting civil unrest. If this goal cannot be met at the present, then the marches should be closely monitored by the international community to deter the possibility of any violence.

"On the heels of the reestablishment of the power-sharing government in the north of Ireland, there is an expectation that the terms of the [Mitchell] Agreement will be completed quickly, including the realization of a comprehensive program of human rights legislation," Gilman notes (*See Action Request Page 8*).

Gilman has joined an array of American groups and international human rights organizations--among them Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch--in denouncing these marches as sectarian and as impediments to the reconciliation envisaged in the Mitchell Agreement.

Gilman says the House International Relations Committee supports the work of international observers and urges other qualified people to contribute in a similar way to help bring about reconciliation in Ireland.

Northern Ireland First Minister **David Trimble** urged the Orange

Order in mid-June to rethink its "self-defeating" opposition to the Parades Commission.

In a meeting of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, the Order voted against dropping its ban on contact with the Parades Commission, however. The Order would not even discuss the contentious Drumcree parade with the Commission.

Saying the vote was regrettable, Trimble commented, "I quite understand the annoyance with regards to the Parades Commission when it came into existence; I thought it was a mistake myself," but the Order should now "consider how best to advance their own case and their own position."

In a further development, a prominent member of the Order, one of eight who resigned from its education committee in June, hit out at the Order's leadership. Presbyterian minister Rev. **Brian Kennaway** and his colleagues had been involved in promoting the Order to the public.

Kennaway told the *Belfast Telegraph* there was a "total lack of direction" in an Order that he said was "going nowhere." He said: "The Order is in crisis and the only ones who won't acknowledge it are its leaders."

Conflicts between the Order and nationalists and the RUC marked the beginning of the marching season in early July. Minor scuffles broke out in Portadown, where Orange supporters have been confronting police and British troops blocking the entrance to the nationalist Garvaghy Road.

Hundreds of Orangemen took part in a march to Drumcree church, ahead of the annual parade on July 9 to commemorate the Battle of the Somme. The marchers handed letters

of protest to the RUC over a decision to ban them from the Garvaghy Road. The Parades Commission later banned the parade from the Garvaghy Road.

In early July, there were reports that members of the neo-Nazi group Combat 18 were planning to join loyalist extremists later at Drumcree. *The Observer* claimed that members from Lancashire would be staying with members of the Loyalist Volunteer Force in Portadown during the height of the marching season.

Refusing to engage nationalists in a dialogue about the Drumcree march, Orange leaders instead called on loyalists to come out on the streets in a show of strength.

Portadown District Master **Harold Gracey** told a 2000-strong crowd July 2 that the security forces would be hard-pressed to contain such widespread protests.

Earlier that day there had been skirmishes between loyalists and the RUC near the church. Camera crews were attacked and people were injured, including a 13-year-old boy. The RUC made no arrests.

Gracey said: "This battle is not about Drumcree, it's about the Orange Order, it's about the Protestant people. If they don't get up off their bellies before it's too late, this country will be gone."

His comments followed an address by Orangeman **Mark Harbison**, who told the assembled Orangemen: "The war begins today." Speaking "on behalf of loyalists," he added, "If we are to achieve our objectives in this beloved province then we must do it in a position of strength."

Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition spokesman **Joe Duffy** labeled Gracey's rallying cry an "act of desperation."

(continued from Page 5)

The Authority claims **Cumaraswamy** "uncovered little or no supporting evidence" for his claim that police routinely harassed lawyers and often "identified [lawyers] with the cause of their clients."

The report congratulates RUC Chief Constable **Ronnie Flanagan** on his "bold, imaginative and entirely novel actions" in conducting the inquiry into the murder of Rosemary Nelson and exonerates the RUC from any charges of misconduct in the case of Robert Hamill.

Meanwhile, however, 122 Representatives signed a letter to

Mandelson urging him not to "dilute or alter" the Patten's recommendations for police reform (*See Action Request, Page 8*).

The unprecedented level of support for the letter Congressman **Richard Neal** has written indicates the resolve in Washington to see Patten's recommendations fully implemented. "In the spirit of the Mitchell Agreement, it (Patten) must be implemented in full" the letter says.

"In the coming days, we urge you to consider the words of Chris Patten, the architect of the report, who advised 'in the strongest terms against cherry-

picking from this report.'" The letter concludes, "We share his belief that 'the recommendations represent a package which must be implemented comprehensively if Northern Ireland is to have the policing arrangements it needs.'"

In late June, Congress announced it would hold hearings into the implementation of the Patten Report.

The chairman of the house subcommittee on human rights, **Chris Smith**, reminded people that the Patten recommendations are "a floor, not a ceiling" for police reform.

(continued from Page 2)

June 2

A coalition of unionists elects the DUP's **Sammy Wilson** as lord mayor of Belfast for a second term. Ulster Unionists claim that Sinn Féin ministers are in breach of the Mitchell Agreement because the republicans refuse to fly the Union Jack flag from their government departments.

June 5

Troop levels in Northern Ireland will reach a 30-year low as more soldiers, including the Parachute Regiment, withdraw from the North. Sinn Féin member **Cathal Crumley** is elected Lord Mayor of Derry, the first Sinn Féin member to be elected mayor of a major Irish city since hunger striker Terence MacSwiney became Lord Mayor of Cork in 1920.

June 6

British Prime Minister **Tony Blair** apologizes to the Guildford Four for the miscarriage of justice that caused the three innocent men and one woman to spend 15 years in prison. Blair sends his apology to Courtney Kennedy Hill, daughter of assassinated US attorney-general Robert Kennedy, niece of President John F. Kennedy, and wife of Paul Hill, one of the Guildford Four.

June 7

Following the policing bill's second reading in the House of Commons, Sinn Féin leader **Gerry Adams** says, "The British Secretary of State is reported today as claiming that his Police Bill is 'all about balance and negotiation,' but the Police Bill should have been about implementing the Patten report. The reality is that, in its current draft, the Police Bill requires at least 75 changes to bring it into line with the 175 recommendations that came from the Patten Commission."

June 8

First Minister **David Trimble** and Deputy First Minister

Seamus Mallon take sanctions against DUP ministers Peter Robinson and Nigel Dodds for their attitude toward Assembly business. The DUP members say they might rotate the posts around other party members to stop pro-Agreement parties from taking them.

June 15

Saying he is "wedded" to the Patten Commission's recommendations for police reform and has not diluted them, Northern Secretary **Peter Mandelson** tells the *Irish News*, "Patten approached his work as an exercise in political conflict resolution. I share that aim but I also have a responsibility for ensuring that the legislative framework for the new model police service is one that actually works."

June 16

The North-South Ministerial Council meets in Dublin for the first time and discusses the impact of Special European Union programs that promote reconciliation, regional development, and cross-border cooperation.

June 21

The UFF vows to shoot any nationalist seen in loyalist areas of north and west Belfast, claiming nationalists are intimidating Protestants out of their homes. The Housing Executive says there have been no complaints of intimidation from Protestants, though 21 Catholic families in these areas have complained of Protestant intimidation.

June 26

The IRA confirms that the arms inspectors have examined a number of IRA arms dumps.

July 4

DUP leader **Ian Paisley** and regional development minister **Peter Robinson** table a motion claiming Sinn Féin is unfit to serve in government because, the men claim, it is linked to the IRA.

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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 support Rep. Richard Neal's calling on Northern Ireland Secretary of State Peter Mandelson to fully implement the Patten Report's recommendations on policing reform in the North. Britain's draft policing bill for Northern Ireland does not adequately address the problems that beset the RUC, and the bill will not create a cross-community police service. Please add your name to the growing list of representatives who wish to see peace with justice in Northern Ireland.

Contact: **Congressman Ben Gilman**, 2449 Rayburn Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-3776, email: ben@mail.house.gov

Message: I support your calling on international observers to monitor the marching season in Northern Ireland this summer. As a key player in formulating the Mitchell Agreement, the US should play a part in monitoring these contentious sectarian parades. Please see that the US play a part in monitoring the marches.

Internet Ink: Clicks Mean Growth

By Ed Dzitko, Webmaster

ON OUR HIGHWAYS and byways, traffic is never a good thing, but on the Internet, traffic is a desired commodity.

Organizations are constantly seeking to drive more traffic to their Internet sites. A popular way to gain visitors is through **banner exchange** programs.

We've joined four--*Hit Exchange*, one of the Web's largest networks; *Ireland Bpath*, featuring Irish organizations; *USA Banner Swaps*, featuring American organizations; and *Interchange Ireland*, featuring Ireland-related web sites. **Now we need your help.**

As a member of the exchanges, we agree to show the banners of others within the network in exchange for AIEF-PEC banner displays on their sites. That alone can expose our organization to thousands of individuals we might not otherwise reach. We can reach more.

When visiting the AIEF-PEC Web site, click on any banner advertisement you see to visit another site. Then use your browser's back button to return and click on another. The exchange you use will register your clicks, and the AIEF-PEC banner will gain more displays on other sites.

Traffic to the AIEF-PEC site continues to increase, and you can help this organization grow even more. **Each time you click on the banners we display, you invite someone to join the AIEF-PEC.** We encourage your support as we make the information superhighway another road to peace in Ireland.