



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Sacred Heart University
DigitalCommons@SHU

American Irish Newsletter

The Irish American Community Collections

1-2000

American Irish Newsletter - January 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 - January 2000" (2000).
American Irish Newsletter. 1.
https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews/1

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 1

January 2000

Will Mitchell Deal Repeat Sunningdale's History?

THE NEW cross-border structures formalized Dec. 13 mirror many of the proposals agreed in the Sunningdale negotiations of Dec., 1973. The following article outlines the main features of attempts to expand cross-border cooperation, then and now.

The Sunningdale Agreement

- Council of Ireland with "executive and harmonizing functions" and a consultative assembly with "advisory and review functions" consisting of 60 members elected on a proportional representation basis, half from the executive and half from the Dail

Proposed Areas of Cooperation

- Areas of cooperation were to include: the EEC, natural resources and the environment, agriculture, trade and industry, tourism and culture, and electricity generation

Proposed Areas of Further Cooperation

- Law and order and policing, including a joint law enforcement commission of British and Irish jurists

Area of Actual Cooperation

- The trial of scheduled (Troubles-related) offenses in the jurisdiction in which a suspect is apprehended, regardless of the location of the alleged crime

Source: *Irish News* 12/14/99

The Mitchell Agreement

- North-south Ministerial Council to "bring together those with executive responsibilities" in the North and the Republic to "develop consultation, cooperation and action within the island of Ireland;" includes the first and deputy first ministers, taoiseach, and other ministers

Areas of Cooperation

- Six cross-border bodies: inland waterways, language, food safety, aquaculture and marine matters, trade and business development, special EU programs

Areas of Further Cooperation

- Transportation, agriculture, education, health, environment, and tourism
- Council to consult on matters of mutual interest and "make determined efforts" to agree on common policies the bodies will implement
- Each side to remain accountable to the Assembly and Oireachtas separately
- Any further development by agreement in the council and endorsement by each parliament

South Gives up North

LESS than an hour after the Irish and British governments formally established the cross-border bodies Dec. 2, Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern signed into law key changes to the Irish constitution.

Language expression an aspiration for unity through consent replaces Articles 2 and 3, the Republic's former constitutional claim on Northern Ireland. The new articles also confer on anyone born on the island of Ireland the right to Irish nationality and give special recognition to Irish emigrants and descendants.

The Irish government has said it will not change the articles back, should Stormont fail.

The Irish electorate approved the changes in May, 1998, pending full implementation of the Mitchell Agreement, when it approved the Agreement.

Ahern had been hesitant about what will happen if the final drive for peace fails and urged everyone to take a more optimistic view.

The Irish prime minister said: "If it all goes wrong, the two governments will have to take stock and try to construct the way forward and would have to take on board where the blame lies."

INSIDE

Peace Process Update	2
From the North	3
Newsbits	4
American Irish History	5
Author Wins Access to Loyalists' Papers	6
St. Patrick's Day Stamp Campaign Begins	7
Action Requests	8

Political Forums

Candidate Email Addresses

Great Hunger Links

Action Requests

Irish Libraries

PEC Archive

<http://www.homestead.com/aiepc>

Our View

Republicans Continue Work of 1916

IRISH revolutionary, educationalist, and poet Patrick Pearse said before the 1916 Rising he led that future generations of Irish people would complete the transformation of Ireland that he and his peers began. His prediction that a democratic transformation of Ireland would take generations of painstaking work was correct.

Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams and his party have worked for decades to transform an Ireland riven with British-instigated sectarianism, discrimination, and human rights abuses into a workable, just political system free of British involvement. Indeed, Sinn Fein's call for a "just and lasting peace" echoes Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, in which the 16th president called for a "just and lasting peace" to heal the divisions that nearly destroyed this nation. That was a slow, painful process, too.

The chief danger of calling for a just and lasting peace is the constant threat of the assassin. There have been attempts on Adams's life, the British murdered Pearse, and a reactionary assassinated Lincoln. Clearly, demanding equality because you believe with your life that it is worth fighting for requires courage.

The same kind of courage drove the men and woman who forged this nation from their wits and a desire to be free drove Irish republicans to accept the terms of the Mitchell Agreement and work with the decommissioning body. Their willingness to do so reflects a considerable amount of discipline, intelligence, and dignity.

Now we must have the courage to protect freedom by holding it to a meaningful standard of democracy. The PEC encourages you to continue your support for the Irish peace process by supporting our efforts and, especially, the efforts of visionary politicians such as Adams and his party.

Peace Process Update

November 15

The peace process is poised for a breakthrough as the IRA proposes to work with the decommissioning body and expresses its support for Sinn Fein's role in the peace process. Likewise, Sinn Fein proposes a statement expressing its abhorrence of political violence. In exchange, the nomination of Executive ministers and members of the cross-border bodies is set for the first week in Dec. In early Jan., the decommissioning body will issue a report on the status of IRA decommissioning; in late Jan., the body will issue a follow-up report. The success of the plan depends on the UUP's approval of it.

November 19

Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble says he is confident his party will accept Mitchell's proposals to achieve decommissioning and devolution. The UUP will vote on the proposals Nov. 27; Trimble hopes to win the support of a large majority of his party.

November 20

UUP deputy chief whip Derek Hussey resigns his position as a protest against Trimble's support of the latest Mitchell deal. British courts rule that the IRA cease-fire is intact.

November 24

The UFF declines appointing an arms interlocutor.

November 26

On the eve of the UUP's vote on the latest agreement, Trimble says, "If we say no, there will be no decommissioning and no Stormont government. All the gains we have secured for unionism in the Agreement will be lost and the pain we endured will have been for nothing."

November 27

Sixty percent of the UUP leadership votes in tentative favor of the latest peace deal. Trimble promises to resign as party leader if the IRA does not disarm. The UUP agrees to meet again in Feb., 2000, to determine whether it

(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/Subscription Coordinator Loretta Fitzgibbons
Recording Secretary Kathy Regan
Financial Secretary Tom Sheridan
Newsletter Editor Sandy Carlson

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://www.homestead.com/aipec>

Supported in part by the Emerald Society,
NYC Fire Department

STATE DIRECTORS: Jack O'Brien, 11109 Belton St., Upper Marlboro, MARYLAND 20772-(301)336-5167; Leah Curtin, Hibernian Life, 790 Cleveland Ave., Ste. 221, St. Paul, MINNESOTA 55116-(612)690-3888; Kathy Regan, 7 Balint 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. Giesen, 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. Fuhrel, 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

From the North

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

ON NOVEMBER 29, 19 months after the signing of the Mitchell Agreement and after 601 days of tortuous negotiations, the Ulster Unionist Party finally accepted its obligations and allowed the cross-party, inclusive, responsibility-sharing executive to be set up at Stormont.

Within days of ministers being nominated under the complicated d'Hondt system, the British and Irish governments activated six cross-border bodies, and the British handed over devolutionary power to the Assembly. Further, the IRA appointed an interlocutor to the decommissioning body.

To get to this point, David Trimble yet again had to step outside the terms of both the Mitchell Agreement and the review recommendations. In doing so, he created yet another hostage to fortune. Trimble's apologists explained that he had no other option, and even Sinn Fein had some understanding for that viewpoint.

However, in violation of the Mitchell review's conclusions, meticulously crafted to stay within the terms of the Agreement, Trimble, under pressure from the Ulster Unionist Council, set a new deadline for the IRA to hand over its arms. Failure to meet this new unilaterally-imposed deadline would, unionists threatened, result in the UUP's withdrawing from the Executive, threatening the gains of the entire peace process.

Republicans are not alone in seeing that this stance could make decommissioning more difficult to achieve. Given that British government tactics have been to play for

incremental steps forward, the threat might not actually materialize in Feb.; but it does, as Sinn Fein negotiator and Education Minister Martin McGuinness put it, take us forward into uncertainty. The maneuvers that got us to this point illustrate the fragility of the whole process, insofar as it depended on UUP compliance.

Despite the new precondition and a post-dated resignation letter to the UUP in the event of IRA non-compliance, Trimble secured only a 58 percent backing for his position of ditching the "no guns, no government" policy. Worse still, under the Mitchell Agreement, there are three ways in which votes must be taken in the Assembly. For the election of the first and the joint-first ministers, each of the designated communities, unionist and nationalist, has to return a greater than 50 percent vote in its favor on a joint ticket.

This posed a big problem when the SDLP's Seamus Mallon wished to resume his post as joint first minister. Trimble would have had to go up for re-election as well, but he could not because of a danger that he would not get sufficient support from unionists in the Assembly. The British secretary of state had to bend the standing order rules to head off such an eventuality. In the Assembly, anti-Agreement unionists hold as many seats as the UUP, which has 29. With only a 58 percent backing from within his party, Trimble continually faces the possibility of defections from his Assembly group.

The danger is that a log-jammed Assembly could lead to its being mothballed, making inoperable the other institutions. For those who

wish to see politics replace armed conflict but who are also determined that top-to-bottom reform of the six counties is delivered, the situation is complex. In the opinion of nationalists and republicans, the British Northern Ireland Office has already acquired a reputation for placating unionists although, until quite recently, these two players were clearly acting, through the UUP, in concert.

Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams recently issued a warning to London of the danger to the whole process of allowing current UUP difficulties to entice it to make more concessions to unionism in the hope of getting a further incremental gain. Apart from its role in the cross-border institutions, the Assembly is merely a glorified county council, the purse strings of which 10 Downing Street still holds. The colonial grip is intact.

The primary reason for taking seriously the unionist rejectionist threat to the Assembly is the fact that other potentially more worthwhile Agreement institutions depend on it. Meanwhile, the powers-that-be in England, Ireland and—presumably—America have been working to ensure that the Ulster Unionist Council vote in Feb. cement Trimble's leadership. Whatever happens to the Assembly, the British government cannot backtrack.

The British must now implement the Patten recommendations on police reform, improved to meet the criticisms of bodies such as the Belfast-based human rights group Committee on the Administration of Justice. Britain's strategy papers for demilitarization and the way in which justice is administered are overdue, and the British must publish them. The message must be unambiguous. On democratic reforms, there is no going back.

Newsbits

A LOYALIST said to have been living in a dream world when he confessed to four sectarian murders lost his appeal yesterday. Gary Quinn (35), from Drummard Crescent, Lisburn, County Antrim, claimed that when he made the confessions he was suffering from false memory syndrome as a result of having been shot in the head. Quinn was shot by the UDR in 1990—seven years before he walked into Lisburn RUC station and confessed to the murders and a long list of paramilitary crimes. During his appeal last Sept., Quinn's lawyer said he had been suffering from confabulation—a condition where a man believed he had done an act when in reality others had done it and told him the details. In yesterday's reserved judgment in the appeal court in Belfast, Lord Justice Campbell said it was "remarkable that a person could recall so many different incidents unless he was present and played a part in them." (*Irish News* 11/20/99)

News that 300 British Army security files on nationalists appeared in a loyalist paramilitary cache has heightened concern that security force collusion with loyalists is continuing in tandem with peace talks. Three dark forces long entwined in a campaign of sectarian violence against Catholics—Orangeism, loyalism and the Crown—were exposed at once last week by the disturbing find at Stonyford Orange Hall in County Antrim. Photographs, names, and personal details of up to 300 nationalist and republican families gathered by the British Army and RUC were in the hands of the loyalist paramilitary Orange Volunteers, apparently using the Orange Hall as a base. The documents, which covered families living in Belfast and South Armagh, were clearly to be used in a campaign of sectarian violence. Although a week has passed since the

find, controversially none of those named on the documents has been told of the threat against them by the RUC. Six loyalists being questioned in connection with the find come from counties Antrim and Derry. Three have already been charged, including twin brothers, Paul Arthur and Mervyn John Armstrong, both university students from Islandreagh, Dunadry, who were charged with possession of a VZ58 assault rifle and ammunition. Paul Armstrong is also charged with the possession of the documents. A third man was charged with conspiracy and with membership of the Orange Volunteer Force. Stuart Alexander Wilson from Gelnavy became the second man ever to be charged with membership of the OVF. Sinn Fein Assembly member Conor Murphy called on British Security Minister Adam Ingram to give an immediate explanation to the public. He said the find "underscores again the level of collusion which exists between loyalist death squads and the British Army/RUC....Meanwhile, three loyalists in the Shankill area of Belfast were arrested on Wednesday morning by London Metropolitan detectives, members of the Stevens' team investigating the murder of Belfast solicitor Pat Finucane in 1989. The three men were arrested in dawn raids and taken to Gough Barracks for questioning. A loyalist spokesperson, John White, condemned the arrests as [intended] "merely to placate republicanism." White has lodged a formal complaint with the RUC and described the arrests as part of an "ongoing campaign of police harassment against loyalists." (*RM Dist.* 11/5/99)

Loyalist dissidents the LVF are being linked to the machete attack on a Catholic man in the nationalist Short Strand area of Belfast. Michael O'Hara head of the area's residents

group last night said he believed he was targeted at random in Wednesday's 11.30 PM attack....The *Irish News* has learned the "on-cease-fire" LVF may be linked to the attack. O'Hara did not attribute the attack to any organization, but did hit out at a number of unionist politicians whipping people into a frenzy."...O'Hara's brother John—a married 41-year-old with five children—was murdered in a sectarian gun attack by the UFF in April 1991. (*Irish News* 11/11/99)

Gardai last night rounded angrily on claims in a book that a member of the force betrayed two senior RUC officers to an IRA ambush. Senior gardai told the *Irish News* they believed there was no truth in the claim, made in a book on south Armagh by English journalist Toby Harnden. Harnden is the former Ireland correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*. His book *Bandit Country* will be published next week. In it Harnden claims Chief Superintendent Harry Breen and Superintendent Bob Buchanan were shot dead in an IRA ambush in 1989 after a Dundalk-based garda passed on information to paramilitaries. He also alleges that "Garda X," whom authorities know, was also involved in money laundering. The two RUC men were murdered on the Edenappa Road in South Armagh's Gap of the North after attending a meeting at Dundalk Garda station. Chief Supt. Breen was the most senior RUC officer killed in the troubles. But Garda sources were last night skeptical of the claim. They argued that the force's members have been in the vanguard of attempts to prevent IRA attacks. A Garda spokeswoman said: "We have cooperated fully with the RUC investigation into this matter.

(*Irish News* 11/3/99)

American Irish History: *Cosgrove Revolutionizes Sanitation Practices*

By Kevin P. Murphy, *Massachusetts*

THE SON OF Irish immigrants, James Cosgrove was an American Irishman who played a key role in curbing malaria in the Southern US in the 1890s and revolutionizing sanitation practices in this country. His ideas improved health standards throughout this country.

Cosgrove was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on Aug. 28, 1861. His parents were natives of Bally Connell, County Cavan, Ireland. They had fled British rule to start a new life for their family.

The Cosgrove family became prominent merchants in Charleston, where there was a thriving Irish immigrant community. The family

also went into the insurance business, and James became one of the most successful insurance and real estate agents in the city.

Then, in the 1890s, South Carolina suffered an epidemic of malaria that mosquitoes transmitted. Many died. James became interested in finding a solution to this health problem that was causing panic in Charleston.

He petitioned the city's officials to drain the swamps to prevent mosquitoes from breeding. Though the state legislature refused to support Cosgrove's plan, his efforts caused malaria deaths in the state to drop by 75 percent over five years and led to the formation of the State Sanitary Commission.

In 1900, Cosgrove was elected to the South Carolina legislature. As a result of Cosgrove's ideas, thousands of acres of South Carolina swamps were converted into parks, farms, and even towns.

States such as Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida copied Cosgrove's lifesaving ideas that changed the landscape of many southern states. Indeed, Cosgrove's ideas revolutionized modern health and engineering practices, thereby improving the quality of life throughout the country.

Source: *Library of Edward Kelley, Boston.*

Kumpf's Book Sheds Light on Troubles of *Children of Belfast*

By Ed Dzitko, *Connecticut*

FRANK McCourt tells us a humorous tale about growing up poverty-stricken in Ireland in his book, *Angela's Ashes*. Nuala O'Faolain talks of a woman redefining gender boundaries in a loving, compassionate manner as she grows up in Ireland in *Are You Somebody?* In his book, Boulder, Col., photographer Tom Quinn Kumpf combines elements of both types of memoir to present a book of a different appeal. *Children of Belfast: Reclaiming Their Place Among the Stones* emphasizes innocence lost while living amid conflict in Northern Ireland.

Skeptical at first, I approached Kumpf's book with caution. What, after all, could children possibly know and understand of the troubles that have

plagued Ireland for decades, but more specifically in their short lives—from three to 20 years?

After considering all that my young daughter has done and learned and observed in the past year, I adjusted my thinking and considered that I could possibly learn something from *Children*. I was pleasantly surprised as I thumbed through Kumpf's pages.

Accompanying 58 poignant photographs of Catholic and Protestant youngsters—in parks lined with iron fences; amid the ruins of a church; throwing stones across a peace line; trying, amid British soldiers, to peer through the sight on a rifle—are poignant words in 17 essays.

It's not that Kumpf's writing is particularly complex or deep. It is, in fact, rather basic. The thoughts of the children struck me, along with his images of the way they behaved when he first approached, when they circled around the charred remains of a stolen car, when they explained what had happened to those who had stolen the car.

Kumpf's book puts the Northern conflict on another level—out of the political arena and into the eyes of children, eyes that have seen more than they should for their years. It is ultimately optimistic and moving.

To order, contact
Irish Books & Media, Inc.
800-229-3505

Say you're making a PEC order

RUC Harasses Lawyers

AN AMERICAN investigative legal team has claimed that RUC officers have threatened two lawyers in the North since loyalists killed civil rights attorney Rosemary Nelson last March.

The **Lawyers Committee for Human Rights** has published two reports alleging intimidation against defense attorneys, including Nelson. The committee has given details of the latest threats—including the identities of the officers alleged to have made them—to the Belfast-based Committee for the Administration of Justice (CAJ), which plans to ask Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the chief constable, to launch a formal investigation.

James Brosnahan, one of the group, said: "We had hoped that after the murder of Rosemary Nelson, those few officers who frighten lawyers by making threats would have learned a lesson and stopped. However, the practice appears to be continuing.... Police officers and others must be taught that a good legal system depends on lawyers who are not afraid to do their jobs. Lawyers represent clients, not issues."

The American group met with Flanagan, Nuala O'Loan, the new police ombudsman designate; Colin Port, the deputy chief constable of Norfolk who is leading the Nelson murder inquiry; and John Stevens, the next commissioner of the Metropolitan police, who has reopened the investigation into UFF's 1989 murder of Belfast lawyer Pat Finucane.

Meanwhile, the **American Bar Association**—representing 300,000 lawyers—has called for the RUC to be removed from the Rosemary Nelson murder hunt. The legal group has backed calls for independent inquiries into both Nelson's and Finucane's murders.

Author Wins Access to Loyalists' Papers

AUTHOR Sean McPhilemy and his publisher Roberts Rinehart won a victory in late Nov. in their defense against the \$100 million libel suit by the Portadown-based car dealers and developers David and Albert Prentice.

McPhelimy's book, *The Committee, Political Assassination in Northern Ireland*, names the Prentices as members of a loyalist murder group comprised of RUC, businessmen, lawyers, Protestant ministers, British soldiers, and loyalist murderers.

Judge Geoffrey M. Alprin of the Washington, D.C., Superior Court granted a motion to compel production of documents and sworn answers from the Prentices and their companies.

The Prentices must produce every paper involving every litigation, arbitration, investigation, prosecution, or proceeding involving either of the brothers or their companies. The brothers must also produce all documents relating to tax investigations of themselves or their companies and all documents relating to anti-Catholic discrimination proceedings the Fair Employment Commission has brought against them.

Earlier this year, the court denied the Prentices' motion to force McPhilemy to produce his notes and files. The Prentice brothers must now choose to allow a rigorous examination of their financial dealings or end their legal pursuit of McPhelimy.

Evidence of Cover-up Emerges in Finucane Case

THE BELFAST-based human rights organization Committee on the Administration of Justice has called for a full public inquiry into the loyalist murder of Belfast lawyer Pat Finucane. The group is concerned the British authorities have gone to great lengths to prevent information about the murder from coming into the public domain. The CAJ reports the following.

Since Finucane's murder in 1989, human rights groups around the world have expressed concern that loyalists colluded with British armed forces to kill the civil rights attorney. Last Nov., the CAJ submitted an update of its 1998 submission to the Criminal Justice Review, established under the terms of the Mitchell Agreement to conduct a wide-ranging review of the criminal justice system. The Finucane murder—and Britain's failure to prosecute anyone for it—was an issue the CAJ raised in its submission.

In its update, the CAJ pointed out that there have been many developments in the Finucane case since 1998. For example, last June William Stobie was charged with the murder. He admitted he was a police agent at the time of the murder and had provided the police with advance warning that a murder was about to take place, but the RUC did nothing to prevent it. Further, he claimed that, despite giving the police detailed information about the movements of the murderers and their weapons in the days after the murder, the RUC failed to intervene.

Other startling revelations last year relate to decisions that the Director of Public Prosecutions took shortly after the murder. Illegal arms were found in Stobie's house in 1989. Stobie was arrested and failed to provide any explanation of why he had

(continued on Page 7)

St. Patrick's Day Stamp Campaign Begins

THERE is a renewed effort among the American Irish to see the United States Postal Service issue a St. Patrick's Day stamp. PEC member **Tom Culhane** reports that he has received a letter in support of this stamp from the White House. The letter states that the Clinton Administration has notified the USPS of its support for the St. Patrick's Day stamp proposal.

Culhane points out that the holiday has been celebrated in this country since Gen. George Washington celebrated it at Valley Forge; clearly, this holiday is historically and culturally relevant and worthy of a stamp. (Please complete the *Action Request* on Page 8 to support this campaign.)

(continued from Page 6)

the weapons. The matter went to trial. Stobie claims that his lawyers then alerted the DPP's representative that Stobie was an informer. The DPP aborted the case, offering no evidence against Stobie. In the North, however, under the Emergency Provisions Act, you are presumed guilty if illegal arms are found on your premises unless you can establish your innocence.

The DPP decided not to prosecute Stobie in 1990, too. Stobie was arrested and questioned about the murder in Sept. that year, and he confessed to his role in the murder. The DPP dropped the case seven days after it dropped its arm charges against Stobie. When Stobie applied for bail early last year, the court was misled about what had occurred during his arrest in 1991. The DPP's representative said he had denied involvement in the murder, although Stobie had confessed his role to the police.

Nationalist Group: RUC Must be Accountable

A GROUP of nationalist families whose relatives the RUC killed are adding their voices to others who have expressed growing concern about flaws in the 1999 Patten Commission report on policing reform in the North.

Survivors and Victims for Equality (Save) was launched in Belfast in Dec. to highlight what it believes are fundamental flaws in the Patten report.

Sinn Fein, the Roman Catholic Church, the PEC, congressmen, and human rights groups expressed their concern when the commission published its report last year that the suggested reforms would not root out the anti-nationalist sectarianism that has plagued the force since its inception.

A central concern of Save and others is the Commission's failure to recom-

mend that RUC officers responsible for past abuses of human rights be removed from the force.

Save spokesperson Rosemary Rooney, who lost her brother when an undercover policeman shot him dead in April, 1991, said that RUC officers guilty of human rights abuses must account for their crimes. "This does not mean that the people who killed our relatives should stand trial for what they did—we don't want to see them in prison—but equally we don't want to see them rewarded either. For us, being rewarded means that these individuals would continue to be anonymous and would be allowed to join the new police service."

In Nov., 1999, the families met with the Human Right Commission to state their case for the first time.

Bill Links Human Rights to Police Training

CONGRESS scored another victory last Nov. for human rights protections in Northern Ireland.

Now, the President will determine which RUC officers participate in training programs in the US, according to a bill that Congress passed in mid-Nov. last year.

The bill aims to bar from training with a federal agency officers "who have committed or condoned violations of internationally recognized human rights."

Chris Smith, chairman of the International Operations and Human Rights subcommittee, proposed the amendment that will apply to any future Northern Ireland police force.

Training programs must also "advance the peace process"

and include reports on the numbers and rank of officers, the duration and location of training, and the curriculum of each program.

Rep. Smith said it was the first time the government had acted against the RUC's abuse of human rights.

"We are driven by a genuine concern for the safety of defense attorneys and others mistreated by the RUC," he said. "We hope our approach will be duplicated and implemented by the British government as they proceed with their reforms of policing in Northern Ireland."

Smith pointed out that Patten report into RUC reform had failed to recommend a system to "rid the force of those who have committed acts of abuse and violence."

Action Requests

Please make the telephone calls or write the letters below. Mention that you are a PEC member.

Contact: Likely Democratic presidential contenders **Al Gore**, P.O. Box 24837, Nashville, TN 37202; and **Bill Bradley**, 395 Pleasant Valley Way, W. Orange, NJ 07052; and likely Republican presidential contender **George Bush**, Bush for President, P.O. Box 1902, Austin, TX 78767-1902

Message: As a member of the American Irish PEC, I would like to know how, should you be elected President, you would continue US support for and involvement in the Irish peace process. I will look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Contact: **Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee**, US Postal Service, Room 5301, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, DC 20260-2420

Message: I support calls for the Stamp Committee to issue a commemorative stamp marking St. Patrick's Day. The USPS has issued stamps in honor of Cinco de Mayo, Kwanza, and the Chinese New Year, and a St. Patrick's Day stamp is a logical addition to this series. There are, after all, at least 40 million Americans claiming Irish descent. Further, St. Patrick's Day in the US is as old as the country itself. General George Washington celebrated the holiday at Valley Forge and at his Morristown, NJ, headquarters in 1780. This holiday is an integral part of American culture and deserves a stamp.

(continued from Page 2)

November 27

the review of the peace process; this tactic of delaying a final decision on the deal worries republicans, who point out a UUP review of the peace process is outside the terms of the Mitchell Agreement.

November 29

SDLP deputy leader Seamus Mallon resumes his role as Deputy First Minister of the new Northern Assembly. The 108 members of the Assembly nominate the 10 Ministers in the new power-sharing Executive.

November 30

The measures giving effect to devolved government in Northern Ireland pass with an overwhelming majority all stages in Britain's House of Commons.

December 2

The Executive begins work. The IRA appoints an interlocutor to the decommissioning commission. The British and Irish governments exchange letters establishing cross-border bodies. Meanwhile, the *Irish News* reports that the Catholic Church, like Sinn Fein, believes the Patten Commission report on policing in the North does not suggest adequate reforms. New articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution take effect.

December 3

Mandelson says the pro-Agreement parties will not profit from the IRA's cooperation with the decommissioning body if they do not make political progress.

December 5

An IRA member meets with the decommissioning body. Three days later, the UVF says the IRA must surrender arms before it will consider decommissioning.

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

- ☐ New Membership \$25 ☐ **Membership Renewal** \$25
☐ Senior Citizen \$20 ☐ Student \$10
☐ Additional Donation \$ _____
☐ **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 Dr.
Stony Point, NY 10980

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

Address Correction Requested