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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 24, Number 9

September 1999

Englishman Questions History's Importance

By an Anonymous Letter Writer to the PEC's Web Site

I AM ABSOLUTELY fascinated by your inclusion on your site of the quote [identifying your organizations achievements]: "...Secured an acknowledgment from the current British government that the British government caused the Great Hunger of 1845-50 in Ireland and failed to alleviate conditions of hunger and suffering, thus causing widespread death and emigration...." I [am] absolutely amazed that you find that this is a cause worthy of more than footnote in history. Must we now have people atoning for every sin of every country in history? We may as well give up current politics whilst we rake through the past for all of the sins of our forebears and find ever more reasons to hate each other.

The problems in Northern Ireland, the hatred felt by Catholics and Protestants for each other, is built upon a continual raking over of historical sores. Think about the consequences of this [in another] region, ...[such as] the Balkans....The hatred and bloodshed there have the same basic root causes as are found in Ireland. Everyone keeps raking up the past and using it to justify the hatred of today....I might add that, like most English people, I have absolutely no wish for England to retain Northern Ireland, in fact quite the opposite.

The PEC's response:

...The PEC... embarked on its Great Hunger Apology campaign in the hope that an honest discussion of Anglo-Irish history, and especially the benchmark of the Great Hunger, would promote an honest discussion of current Anglo-Irish politics. Clearly, the animosity that exists between nationalists and unionists has its basis in a shared history that each group reads quite differently. We hope that by asking how a group of people arrived at its present situation, we can derive a clear understanding of the present and how to transform it into something worthwhile....Our Great Hunger campaign was intended to play a part in shaping Ireland's future, not in recreating the past. Historically, Britain has pretended to the role of benign intercessor, rather than antagonist, in Ireland. Our intention was for Britain to acknowledge that it has been partisan. We succeeded in doing that. It is the PEC's belief...that, once the people ...of Ireland realize that they are best suited to determine their future,...conflict will end because the Irish people will have taken control [of] their destiny.

Coors Brewing Co. Promotes Partition

COORS Brewing Company promotes the partition of Ireland on a T-shirt that is available at the company's web site, among other places, reports Nevada PEC State Director **Bob Fuhrel**.

The T-shirt boasts a map of Ireland on which the six counties of Northern Ireland are a lighter shade of green than the rest of the island.

"It's not much of an improvement from the original shirt, which left the six counties off entirely," Fuhrel says, adding that the American Irish should not "buy Coors products until the company gets it right and realizes that Ireland is one nation. The company should not try to get Americans to accept Britain's partition of Ireland by portraying it on their shirts."

Coors sells its products—particularly its pseudo-Irish St. Killian's Red—at American Irish festivals every year. PEC members are therefore in a good position to pressure the company to accurately reflect Irish culture by presenting a map of Ireland that is not partitioned. **Contact Coors** in Golden, Colorado, at **800-642-6116**. Urge the company to revise its T-shirt to reflect a united Ireland; tell the company you will not purchase its products until it does so.

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Our View: *Cancel Parades*

IN EARLY August, Orangemen throughout the North said they intended to protest a parade of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in the predominantly Protestant County Down town of Kilkeel. The Order claimed that the AOH parade organizers intended their march to cause trouble in the town and offend unionists. The Orange Order's claim that no good could come of a nationalist parade in a unionist area mirrored the persistent claims of nationalists that unionist parades in nationalist areas could be explosive.

The Parades Commission has suggested that marchers have no right to march so long as their parades bring the threat of violence. Though the commission has spent much money and time to address the civil right of a group's appearing in public, it has done little to allay anybody's fears that it can mesh a group's right to march with other citizens' right to not be trampled by political opponents.

Why not suspend the right to march until democracy is established? If the paramilitaries could suspend military action, surely marchers could skip a few parades. Marchers have contributed nothing to the peace process. Instead, they have undermined the confidence of one group in the other and diverted attention from the important issue of democratic government in the North. The British government should suspend all marches until the Executive and Assembly are up and running. By that time, perhaps groups whose identities are vested in being contentious will find a meaningful way to participate in society.

American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC

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Peace Process Update

July 16

UUP LEADER and Northern Ireland First Minister David Trimble is under pressure to resign as first minister. Referring to all politicians in the North, British Prime Minister Tony Blair says, "If these people do not learn to build trust and to recognize the pain and injustice on the other side as well as their own, then normal politics in Northern Ireland will never root and there will never be peace." President **Bill Clinton** vows to stay involved with the process.

July 17

The *Irish News* reports that some republicans are concerned that the IRA's two-year-old cease-fire has been for naught. The UVF-connected Progressive Unionist Party says it will review its attitude to the peace process.

July 18

An opinion poll shows that 70 percent of people in the North believe the Executive should have started work.

July 19

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern says the May 2000 decommissioning deadline might be difficult for paramilitary groups, but it still holds.

July 20

Blair appoints former US Sen. George Mitchell, who brokered the peace process, to oversee its review. The review, set to begin Sept. 6, will focus on three agreed aspects of the Agreement: implementing an inclusive power-sharing executive; decommissioning paramilitary weapons by May 2000; determining the manner of the weapons hand-over, as determined by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning.

July 21

The IRA issues a statement reiterating its support for the peace process and its refusal yet to decommission. Later, Sinn Fein says the IRA will not meet the May 2000 decommissioning deadline.

August 1

Following a murder in North Belfast, the Irish government says it believes the IRA's cease-fire remains intact.

August 2

The *Financial Times* claims that a preliminary Patten Commission report into policing in the North says the final report will recommend that the RUC recruit more Catholics and increase the size of the force. Currently the RUC has

(continued on Page 8)

From the North

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

WITH their boycotting of the Assembly at the end of June, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), and its leader, David Trimble, flung the peace process into what could turn out to be its terminal crisis. The UUP has capitulated to the rejectionists in its ranks and their allies, both British and Irish. The tactic of this alliance is to prolong the non-implementation of the Mitchell Agreement in the hope that it can wreck the deal.

Large segments of unionism have now demonstrated, without a modicum of doubt, that they cannot live with the dispensations contained in the 1998 Mitchell Agreement. These would require unionists to share on a 50:50 basis with nationalists very limited powers in a new Executive. Unionists would have to cooperate with the Dublin government in respect of Irish cross-border bodies, anodyne at present, but capable of strengthening. Unionists would have to participate in reforming the Irish six-county segment of the United Kingdom in a way that could lead to the nationalist community's achieving equal status with unionists in democratic, civil, and human rights.

It is understandable that turkeys don't welcome Christmas, but it is not understandable why the British government has allowed—and is allowing—these turkeys to set the pace of democratic change. A positive response to the triggering of the d'Hondt procedure on June 30 (albeit several months late) from the UUP would have moved matters onward and enabled the cross-border bodies to begin functioning. However, by boycotting the Assembly, unionists bought themselves some time to achieve their goal of finally wrecking

the peace process. The UUP now hopes that between now and Sept./Oct., when a review of the (non) implementation of the accord is due to take place under the renewed auspices of former US Sen. George Mitchell, one of two things will have happened that will rescue the party from its predicament.

Goal One: Frustration at unionism's continual stalling will have caused significant sections of a divided republican movement to write off the accord and return to the paramilitary option. Goal Two: If it does not achieve Goal One, then the unionists, despite George Mitchell's stipulation that the review will be brief and focussed on implementation, will widen the scope of the review into a renegotiation of the Agreement itself. In this way, they hope to prolong the stalemate until May 2000.

It might seem preposterous to assert that large sections of unionism, British and Irish, would actually prefer war to real changes in the Orange/unionist status quo, as it has been for more than 70 years, but people and movements can be judged only on their actions; the resistance of the aforementioned elements to any form of real change and accommodation with the legitimate aspirations of the nationalist community speaks volumes.

The behavior of even so-called moderates in the UUP has been explicitly obstructive and destructive, picking up on every incident that they can find to seek the exclusion of Sinn Fein from the process and thereby the republican political party's destruction. It does not worry the UUP in the least if even a largish rump section of republicanism might return to military

operations. The upper echelons of unionism have been relatively unscathed (indeed, some have prospered) in the previous 30 years of war that have effected disproportionately the working-class communities of both sides.

We hope—and there are grounds for believing—that the political sagacity of republicans nowadays is such as not to oblige the unionists by delivering to them through frustration their desired Goal One short-term outcome to the present impasse.

With respect to Goal Two, which unionists desire, it is up to the British government not to allow it to happen. The UUP is hoping that procrastination at this stage will either result in the achievement of Goal One or that the SDLP will find itself in an invidious position. The UUP deliberately misinterprets the Mitchell Agreement as saying that it is the sole responsibility of Sinn Fein to have achieved the total disarmament of the IRA by May 2000. If this has not happened, it suggests Sinn Fein will have breached the Agreement and, therefore, the constitutionalist SDLP will have no moral justification for opposing the exclusion of Sinn Fein from the Executive. The Executive would then become: UUP 4, SDLP 4 and DUP 2—a clear unionist majority. Unionists would thus preserve the status quo, at least for a while.

All of this scheming is nonsense, of course, but from unionists' point of view, it wards off the evil day when they will have to co-exist with nationalists the basis of equality. Only the British government can bring its Northern Ireland surrogates to their senses and prevent them from prolonging this totally unnecessary agony.

Newsbits

FOUR months into the hunt for Rosemary Nelson's killers, investigators have yet to make an arrest but insist they are pursuing "a number of lines of inquiry." The English officer leading the hunt, Deputy Chief Constable of Norfolk Constabulary Colin Port, has renewed his appeal for information on the Lurgan solicitor's murder. He also detailed the efforts involved so far in the investigation: 3,000 interviews, 1,000 statements, 3,000 lines of investigation. While this search goes on, the controversy that has dogged the case continues....Port says that, while focusing on his prime goal of catching the killers, he has also endeavored to overcome claims of nationalist reluctance to cooperate with the inquiry. This has seen a string of moves, including the introduction of additional non-RUC from police forces in Britain. A computer system has been set up to which the RUC does not have access. Asked how...a team could work effectively when half of it does not have access to all the facts, Port said, "Clearly it's difficult, but in any inquiry there is information which isn't made privy to all of the investigative teams because this is particularly sensitive." (*Irish News* 7/21/99)

[T]he Bloody Sunday Inquiry has put off the start of its hearings by six months. The delay has been caused by the legal dispute over whether or not British paratroopers called to give evidence can remain anonymous. A spokesman for the inquiry confirmed that the proceedings into the shooting of 13 civil rights protestors in Derry in 1972 would now begin next March instead of this Sept. The spokesman said that the decision to delay the tribunal was also taken because of the progress of the evidence gathering. (RM Dist. 7/16/99)

Using a specially-equipped tower near England's west coast as part of its

intelligence war in Ireland, the British government listened to all international calls from Ireland for 10 years, the British media reported....The tower, now for sale, was closed in 1998 when a change in Ireland's communications system rendered it obsolete. The hi-tech white "Electronic Test Facility" included eight floors of advanced electronic equipment and three floors of aerial galleries. These were used to sort the thousands of communications passing through every hour. Computers automatically sorted data and voice communications according to key words and subjects of interest. Telephone calls could be targeted according to the numbers dialed or by identifying the voice of the speaker. Since the early 1990s, the British electronic spy agency GCHQ and its American counterpart, NSA, have developed sophisticated libraries of voice profiles to use in scanning international telephone messages. (*RM Dist. 7/16/99*)

The largest Orange rally of the marching season in Northern Ireland has gotten under way at Belfast's Ormeau Park....The banning of the Ballynafeigh Lodge march along the nationalist Ormeau Road resulted in the staging of today's rally in the nearby park as a mark of solidarityThe RUC and British troops sealed off the Ormeau Bridge as part of a big security operation. [RUC] Superintendent Steven Grange said that the operation would be scaled down as soon as the parade finished. Throughout the night, soldiers put up razor wire along the park's perimeter. Around half five this morning, 20 army lorries, diggers, and Land Rovers moved onto the Ormeau embankment. The vehicles contained concrete barricades similar to those used to contain crowds at Drumcree. Shortly after 6 AM,

military vehicles moved into position on the Ormeau bridge. (IAIS 7/12/99)

Editor's Note: a British writer reports the following. The horror stories I heard about the RUC over the last week have led me to believe that everything I have heard about their behavior is true. One woman's story, which has been corroborated by photographs and legal evidence, demonstrates that the RUC is beyond reform. Her first experience of the RUC was two years ago, when two officers dragged her from her home and beat her in the street. There were many witnesses, and she started a case against them; but it collapsed when the RUC threatened to pursue a counter-claim of assault. Two other police officers testified that they had seen the victim assault the two officers first. The court believed them, and at the end of the case, the officers warned this woman that they hadn't finished with her yet. The second encounter occurred about a year ago and ended with this woman's being taken to hospital. A loyalist gang at the end of the Garvaghy Road broke past the RUC and attacked the woman, who was holding her two-year-old son. The victim made an official complaint against both the attackers and the RUC, who made counter allegations; she decided against pursuing the case. Later, two police officers visited her and said if they had any more trouble with her, they would prosecute her. The third incident occurred in Jan. Again, loyalists gathered at the end of her road, eventually entered the nationalist area, and ran around threatening everyone in sight. Two men wielding iron bars dragged this woman from her house and threatened her in the street. The final straw came in mid-June, when she asked the RUC to prevent a loyalist attack on a neighbor's home. The RUC told her to "f*** off" and sort it out herself and drove away. (*AIN-PEC 7/99*)

American Irish History: *American Irish Help to Build the US Navy*

By Kevin P. Murphy, *Massachusetts*

FOUNDED by County Wexford-born John Barry, the US Navy is the most powerful force on the seas. It owes much of its strength to the American Irish sailors who helped to establish the armed force almost 200 years ago.

American Irish officers held together the small US Navy in the War of 1812, when the might of the Royal Navy challenged American freedom.

Under Irish-born Thomas McDonough's command, the Navy rescued US sailors at the British colony of Gibraltar. McDonough and American Irishman Stephen Decatur had defeated pirates and captured a Turkish frigate in 1805, after pirates

had attacked US ships at Tripoli.

In 1814, McDonough's small fleet defeated a large British fleet at a major battle on Lake Champlain in New York and Vermont, thereby preventing a British invasion of the US from Canada.

The son of Irish immigrants, Charles Stewart likewise played a key role in the American Navy in the War of 1812. Stewart commanded the USS Constitution, leading it to sink HMS Catherine and HMS Phoenix and to capture HMS Lord Nelson. Stewart, who would become the grandfather of Irish nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell, also led the USS Constitution to victory over pirates in Tripoli.

Also, a Lieutenant Gallagher who was Irish-born led sailors and Marines to stop British raids on the Great Lakes in 1812. A Captain Boyle of the USS Comet sank three Royal Navy ships and captured HMS Aberdeen in the War of 1812. County Down native Captain J. Blakely commanded the USS Wasp in the War of 1812 and captured HMS Reindeer.

Despite having smaller fleets and an awesome opponent in the Royal Navy, these early American Irish naval pioneers achieved victory that led the way to American freedom.

Source: *Library of Edward Kelley, Boston*

House: Time for new Policing in the North

BEFORE the collapse of the Irish peace process, leaders in Congress called for the total reform of the RUC, Northern Ireland's police force.

On July 8 in Belfast, Rep. **Ben Gilman**, chair of the House International Relations Committee (IRC), and a senior bipartisan congressional delegation released a letter cosigned by Speaker **Dennis Hastert** and Minority Leader **Dick Gephardt** to the Patten Commission that is investigating the RUC and will advise the British on the future of the force. Ninety-three percent of the force is Protestant; the RUC has a long record of anti-Catholic discrimination and human rights abuses.

The letter called for "a police service that will...protect the human and civil rights of each and every citizen. There is nothing more important for a just and lasting peace in [the North] than a new, acceptable, fair police service."

The Patten Commission is scheduled to release its report on policing this month.

Congressman Peter King is Subpoenaed in *The Committee Case*

COUNSEL for plaintiffs David and Albert Prentice have Rep. **Peter King** in July to appear as a witness in the lawsuit against Roberts Rinehart Publishers and Sean McPhilemy. McPhilemy is the author of the controversial book on British-loyalist collusion, *The Committee: Political Assassination in Northern Ireland*.

The House of Representatives, through its counsel, asked the Prentice lawyers to withdraw the subpoena, which it regarded as an unnecessary and burdensome interference with King's duties. If the plaintiff's do not withdraw the subpoena, then the House counsel will likely file a motion to quash it.

King, co-chair of the Congressional Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs and the author of the controversial book *Terrible Beauty: A Novel*, previously submitted an affidavit to the Court on behalf of McPhilemy attesting to *The Committee's* importance. King noted that the book "has become a vital document in connection with worldwide demands for reorganization and/or abolition of the Northern Irish police force known as the Royal Ulster Constabulary," and that "these are demands which will occupy Northern Ireland's center stage in the coming months."

McPhilemy reveals in *The Committee* that since the late 1980s, a secret unionist committee conspired with loyalist assassins to murder Catholics in the North. Immediately upon the book's publication last year, the Prentices, prominent Northern businessmen named in the book, filed suit for libel for \$100 million.

Economic Inequality Highlighted in New York

By Mike Tomlinson, *Senior Lecturer in Social Policy at Queen's University, Belfast, and member of the West Belfast Economic Forum*
Excerpt from the April/May 1999 Issue of Economic Bulletin

AT A TIME when the peace process is once more threatened by the unionist demand for the IRA to begin to hand over arms and explosives,... the issues of equality and liberty stem first and foremost from the actions of state military forces. But what has this to do with inequality?

The last 30 years of war have had distinct effects on the economies of Ireland and Britain, most of which have impacted on the North of Ireland. The first effect is war-related spending. We have seen substantial inflation of police and military budgets in the south. We have seen the expansion and skewing of police and intelligence budgets, and compensation budgets in Britain. In the North, there has been a blank check for the intelligence services, the RUC, the prison service, and the British Army. In total, the war cost a minimum of \$40 billion between 1969 and 1994. By the early 1990s, annual war costs were equivalent to the total spending on health and education in the North, or 60 percent of the South's social welfare payments budget.

The second effect is a more general economic one. The conflict has helped to accelerate the gap between the Northern and Southern economies in terms of industrial development strategies. The South has expanded manufacturing employment; in the North, it continues to decline as it has done so for many years. The North's private sector is much too small compared to the public sector. The North depends heavily on the British Treasury for about \$5 billion per annum.

The third effect concerns labor market inequalities. Labor market patterns remain sharply differentiated by men and women and Catholics and Protestants in key areas and sectors. There are obvious cases that you know about, such as the RUC. One in three Protestant men working in the public sector was in a security-related occupation in 1996; one in 77 Catholic females worked in security. Then there are the less well-known ones. The Northern Ireland Civil Service has the lowest reported Catholic share of senior employees of anywhere within

the public sector. Three quarters of the top 3,200 employees within the central machinery of government are Protestants. At the highest salary level within the civil service, 80 percent of the non-specialist staff were Protestants in 1995....

We might contrast this with the bottom end of the labor market, where the rate of long-term unemployment among Catholic[s] was more than three times the Protestant rate in 1991; and where Catholics were substantially over-represented among the [unemployed]. The point is not simply a fair employment one. It's about who controls the upper echelons of the state and who exercises control on the streets.

Equality is about redistribution: the redistribution of opportunities and outcomes. The Mitchell Agreement is about the politics of spending, not taxation. Tax remains under British control. For this aspect of our economic sovereignty, we must depend on 2.7 percent representation at Westminster (instead of a potential 30 percent representation on an all-Ireland basis). The implication of the proposed arrangements under the Agreement is that it would be difficult

New Equality Commission Will Begin Work Next Month

THE NORTH'S new Equality Commission, set up to promote equal opportunity on the bases of religion, race and gender, will start up next month.

The 20-member commission will combine the work of four existing bodies which will be dissolved: the Fair Employment Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Council. The staff of these groups will become the staff of the new commission.

The agenda of the new body, envisaged in the Mitchell Agreement, includes a 13-year target to end employment discrimination in the North, where Catholics are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as Protestants.

The commission will begin work Oct. 1. Joan Harbison, the current chairwoman of the Commission for Racial Equality, will be its chair. Her part-time deputy will be Bronagh Hinds, director of the Ulster People's College.

The commission will enforce the legal duty of public sector bodies to promote fair employment in areas including religion, political opinion, gender, race, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

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to institute a unified tax regime for inward investors and business development in general on the island of Ireland. While trade and business development as a North-South implementation body is a start...the Agreement has not delivered the strategic policy levers that can alter the prevailing distribution of economic opportunities and outcomes.

We need a radical restructuring of the security industries. We need more than a downsizing of these industries; these industries need to be reconstituted in terms of function and social composition....The Agreement could deliver on this, but, like tax, law and order remain under Westminster control. We will have to see how equality-minded the Patten Commission [assessing policing in the North] is and what sort of judgments the British government makes when it publishes its reassessment of troop numbers, military installations, and so on....

Economic development strategies need an equality agenda. The Agreement is promising here on several counts. The Northern Ireland Act places a duty on public bodies to

promote equality of opportunity—and to be seen to be doing so.... I fear there is a long way to go here. [A recent West Belfast Economic Forum report] shows that there are now fewer [Industrial Development Board]-supported jobs now than before the 1994 cease-fire (14 percent down). The fair employment record of IDB-sponsored companies in West Belfast also leaves much to be desired.

Affirmative action is still too weak and unfocused. Some of us were very disappointed by the outright rejection of public procurement as a policy lever in the [British government's] Partnership for Equality White Paper. Similarly, I remain to be convinced by the claim that New Deal (a welfare-to-work strategy) will "meet many of the objectives of [the Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights]'s recommendations on affirmative action for the unemployed." This strikes me as misplaced optimism about a scheme which combines traditional labor supply measures (training, employment service assistance, benefit sanctions) with short-term employment subsidies. As well as focusing on employability, we might ask why the vast majority of jobs located in Social Need areas in

Belfast are not just taken by people living in the non-needy areas of Belfast but people living outside Belfast altogether. Locating jobs in high unemployment areas is not enough—we have to make sure the unemployed people living in those areas get as many of the jobs as possible.

We need to develop economic development strategies that expand private sector employment while developing complementary public sector services, and "intermediate" labor market schemes. For too long, the emphasis has been on persuading the transnationals to locate, and on helping sunset industries to limp on. We need more bottom-up business development particularly in the areas most devoid of jobs. That means developing Community Businesses, the provision of capital, and targeted skilling.

To conclude, we need continuing peace and the implementation of the Agreement, sooner rather than later, as a first step. Then, we have to develop the functions and agendas of the new political structures to ensure that equality remains central to public policy.

Anti-Catholic Employment Discrimination Remains a Problem

A BRITISH government report published in July shows that Northern Catholics, compared to Protestants, are still under-represented in the workplace. The unemployment rate for Catholics is 12 per cent, while that for Protestants is 5 per cent.

The report reveals that Catholic employment fell several percentage points behind the most recent estimates for Catholics as a proportion of the Northern Ireland population as a whole. The employment figures are based on a 1997 Labor Force Survey

carried out by all member states of the European Union. The report reveals that more than 62 per cent of the unemployed in the North are Catholics.

The report also says the difference is most marked for men, with 16 percent of Catholic men unemployed, compared to six percent of Protestant men. Seven percent of Catholic females are unemployed, compared to 5 percent of Protestant females.

Meanwhile, the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee's recent report on

fair employment recommends that the British government take several steps to create equal opportunity for employment in the North. Those steps include: providing adequate resources for the new Equality Commission to carry out its duties outlined in the Mitchell Agreement; enhanced contract-compliance measures; and the establishment of an oversight unit within the Northern Ireland Office to ensure that public bodies meet their new obligations to promote equal opportunity.

Action Requests

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

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

Message: As a member of the American Irish PEC, I urge you to publicly support Congressman Ben Gilman and the House International Relations Committee in their call for the British government to establish a new police force in Northern Ireland that will fairly represent all citizens in that community.

Write: President Bill Clinton, The White House, Washington, DC 20500; telephone 202-456-1111; Fax 202-456-2461; Email: president@whitehouse.gov

Message: As a member of the American Irish PEC, I urge you to continue your support of the Irish peace process and former Sen. George Mitchell's role in the review of the process. Please use your good offices to move the peace process past the superfluous issues of parades and de-commissioning so that peace and democracy can take hold in the North. Further, please use your good offices to ensure that the next Democratic contender for the White House keeps peace in Ireland to the fore of his or her foreign policy agenda. US involvement must continue to bring the Irish peace process to a successful close.

(continued from Page 2)

13,000 officers—about 1,100 or fewer are Catholic. The Fair Employment Commission had recommended an increase in the number of Catholic officers until the threat of violence subsided; then the force would be reduced, according to the recommendation.

August 5

Following the arrest of a third suspect in connection with the Pat Finucane murder 10 years ago, the UFF warns that its cease-fire might not hold. The arrested man is a member of the UFF.

August 6

Relatives of the victims of the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings react angrily to a recommendation that a proposed inquiry be held in private. Relatives say that only a public inquiry could remove the suspicion of a cover-up.

August 7

Two men suspected of being involved in a plot to smuggle arms from the US to Ireland plead not guilty to illegally mailing guns.

August 9

The Gardai and the RUC meet in Omagh to review the investigation into a dissident republican group's bombing there almost a year ago. The bombing killed 28 people. In the Republic, the Victim's Commission recommends that the government pay £10,000 in compensation to 110 families whose members the IRA killed during the Troubles.

August 10

The Parades Commission decides to allow an Apprentice Boys march to proceed down the Ormeau Road in part because the organization had promised to abide by the Commission's decision regardless of whether or not it permitted the march, according to the commission chair.

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