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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee *of the American Ireland Education Foundation*

Volume 23, Number 11

November 1998

Tutu's Peace Warning: "Take Risks to Build Trust"

By Niall Blaney

Excerpt from the October 2, 1998 *Irish News*

Northern Ireland's politicians must answer to the people if the peace process stalls over decommissioning, Archbishop Desmond Tutu has warned. The South African clergyman said it was unrealistic to expect there would be no problems following constitutional agreement or displays of brinkmanship by negotiators.

During a press conference at Queen's University, the archbishop said a peace process could never run smoothly. He said: "You have got so much baggage to deal with. We recently had what we described as a roller coaster ride, to the point that we did in fact have a settlement and the euphoria that a breakthrough had happened.

"But no sooner had that taken place than maybe you had a massacre and a political party saying it was pulling out--it wasn't smooth at all. It would be unrealistic to expect that you would not keep encountering difficulties, and precisely because it is people negotiating," Tutu said.

"The give and the take and brinkmanship happens along the way--I don't think we should be surprised. But I believe that all the key players are committed to upholding the settlement."

Tutu said one important lesson from the South African experience was that the situation was made vulnerable if too many preconditions were imposed. The South African process had been fortunate to have leaders ready to take risks "for the sake of this huge prize at the end of the road."

Small concessions by one side were matched by similar moves by other parties, he said. "Before you know it the process has a momentum that does begin to be unstoppable. People get to a point when they realize that if they get stuck on whatever the subject was--disarming, or your decommissioning--that they would have answer to the people who are the ones after all who bear the brunt of failing."...

"I think one has got to understand what the people are saying on each side and never be dismissive of any position. You have to try to understand where they are and hope that they would understand where you are. There are different perspectives on the truth and no single group can claim to have an absolute monopoly. As you speak to one group, you have to speak to another. The movement should not be lop-sided, it should be together so that the leader on one side doesn't go back to its constituency empty-handed."...

He said there should be no intransigence or bottom-lines, adding: "That is not a very helpful position. The bottom-line must be that we want to find each other so that we can move together for the sake of all of us."

Newsbits By Kathy Regan

A loyalist jailed for the murder of Loughlin Maginn, whose killing led to the Stevens inquiry, walked free from prison September 23. UFF man Edward Jones was one of five prisoners released as part of the Mitchell Agreement. He had been serving a life sentence.... Jones (33) was jailed in March, 1992, along with two UDR soldiers—Andrew Smith of Palace Barracks and Andrew Browne of Blaris Park, Lisburn—of aiding and abetting in the murder of Maginn. At their trial, the court was told that Smith had passed on information to the UFF about Maginn, and Jones had driven Browne and a UDA man to the murdered man's home on a reconnaissance mission two weeks before the shooting. Maginn's killing led to the establishment of the Stevens inquiry into alleged collusion between the security forces and loyalist paramilitaries. It was set up in September, 1989, when the deputy chief constable of Cambridgeshire was appointed to lead the investigation into the theft of controversial security force documents from British army and RUC bases that were allegedly

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OUR VIEW

"Our Role and Interest in the North are not Over"

So said New York Congressman Ben Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, following the presentation Sept. 29 of the UN Special Report on harassment of defence lawyers in the North.

UN Special Rapporteur Param Cumaraswamy's report found that the RUC "has engaged in activities which constitute intimidation, hindrance, harassment, or improper interference [with defense counsel]." It highlighted the case of Patrick Finucane, a lawyer whom loyalists killed in his home in 1989 with the help of British agent Brian Nelson.

Gilman said that the US must continue to monitor the quality of human rights in the North to ensure that the Mitchell Agreement does not collapse. "The undermining of the Rule of Law and respect for human rights in Northern Ireland could no doubt contribute to the eventual collapse of the Peace Accord," he said.

Clearly, we have a role to play in ensuring that human rights abuses do not become part and parcel of new governmental structures in the North. If paramilitary violence is a threat to democracy and civil liberties, then government institutions must place themselves above the paramilitaries and exercise just, democratic, and open policing. Otherwise, they invite a continuation of violence and struggle.

Early next year, the International Relations Committee will be holding full committee hearings on the RUC. Write to Congressman Gilman to let him know that you support US investigations into human rights abuses in Northern Ireland. (See Action Requests, Page 6.)

PEACE PROCESS UPDATE

September 10

UUP leader David Trimble says that he "could resign" if an IRA weapons hand over does not take place shortly; Sinn Fein MP and chief negotiator Martin McGuinness says that weapons decommissioning could only take place with full implementation of the Mitchell Agreement—including the appointment of the new northern Executive.

The British government's Commission on Policing now has more than 1,000 submissions from the community.

September 22

Trimble and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams meet to further discuss arms decommissioning. The UUP's insistence that weapons be handed over before an Executive is formed threatens to derail the peace process. Trimble suggests that other political parties in Northern Ireland could press ahead without Sinn Fein if IRA disarmament does not take place.

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National President.....John J. Finucane
Vice-President.....Albert Doyle
Membership/Subsorption Coordinator.....Loretta Fitzgibbons
Recording Secretary.....Kathy Regan
Financial Secretary.....Tom Sheridan

Editor Sandy Carlson

National Headquarters

54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980
(914) 947-2726 Fax (914) 947-2599

E-Mail Address: AIPEC@aol.com

PEC Website Address: <http://www.slrus.com/~weet/pec/>

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, 7608-8th Ave., #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

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September 23

With the support of First Minister David Trimble, the anti-intimidation group Families Against Intimidation and Terror (Fait) calls for prisoner releases to be discontinued until there is an end to paramilitary attacks of all kinds. Fait did not oppose the earlier release of convicted killers who are members of the British army, however. The Fait report shows that attacks by loyalist paramilitaries are more frequent than those by republicans.

September 25

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and Northern Secretary Mo Mowlam say that progress is being made on decommissioning. Following a meeting in Government Buildings to review progress on the Mitchell Agreement, Mowlam says she did not consider decommissioning to be a roadblock.

(continued on Page 6)

From the North

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

On the week ending Friday, Oct. 9, the British Tory Party conference at Bournemouth, England, ended. At it had been exhibited all the worst aspects of this new, down-market Toryism, which dates from the advent of Mrs. Thatcher to that party's leadership. Whatever about the relentless imperialism and colonialism of the older brand of Toryism, its grandee leadership had gone about its mission with a panache that was often mistakenly taken for a beneficent paternalism. The image of the new Toryism is vulgar, its members being—in one reputable journalist's words—"football hooligans dressed in suits."

It came as no surprise, therefore, that anything to do with the North at that conference brought out the jingoistic, Union Jack-waving, xenophobia that lies at the heart of British Toryism and leads it to believe that the English are superior to any other 'race' on the earth. It was quite clear that if these Tories had been returned to power at the last British general election, the Mitchell Agreement would not have come about.

Despite their hypocritical claim to be basically in support of the Agreement, every Tory's rant at the main conference (by such as "shadow" Secretary of State Andrew Mackay) or at the fringe meetings gave the lie to that claim: British soldiers found guilty in the courts of the murder of a young Irish civilian were lauded as heroes; come what may, the Union would be defended; and Sinn Féin, despite its electoral mandate and the spirit and legal letter of the Agreement, would not be permitted to take up its entitlement to seats on the new Assembly's executive until the IRA surrendered by 'decommissioning' post haste; and so on.

One would have thought that a very

bloody 30 years' stalemated war had never taken place or that some political arrangement offering a chance for an impending settlement of the problem that caused it had only just lately been laboriously hammered out. For these unreconstructed backwoodsmen (they were almost entirely of that gender), grandstanding and pathetic attempts at self-justification were more important than the need for the British and the Irish peoples to make work a *modus vivendi* that would enable them to live at peace with each other.

Since at this point, unless New Labor makes an unforeseen hash of things—which it is quite capable of doing—it would seem that the Tories have no chance for a decade of regaining power, why should anyone worry about what they say? A good question, were it not for the encouragement that their posturing gives to Northern Ireland unionism, which is itself currently doing its utmost to overturn the Mitchell Agreement. Remember that in the North, unionists endorsed the Agreement only with a very slim majority. Since then, its wreckers have been able to avail of the Omagh bombing to harden attitudes in that camp.

The wreckers' strategy has been to topple Trimble and effect a *coup* inside the main unionist grouping, the Ulster Unionist Party. Drumcree has been useful to them, since Trimble is the member of the Westminster parliament for the area, and he can be threatened in this way. Perhaps that goes part of the way to explain the intransigence of the Orangemen and the longevity of their agitation. Their main strategy has been to resurrect the hoary old issue of the IRA's decommissioning of weapons, which they want done post-haste, regardless of

the deal's provisions, and as a precondition. They know that it is unlikely that this will be done, but they have brought Trimble into their camp, and he is now engaged in arresting the progress of the Agreement.

According to the Agreement, the cross-border bodies were scheduled to be established by Oct. 31; this step will likely to be delayed indefinitely because of Trimble's refusal to institute the Assembly's shadow executive.

There have been a few pleas from timid nationalists or others who feel that they have a vested interest in keeping the Assembly alive for Sinn Féin (not the IRA) to make a token gesture of decommissioning in order to preserve Trimble and his allies from the enemies in their own camp. The powers within nationalism/republicanism have rejected these pleas. For one thing, unionism is insatiable; for another, the wreckers have stated that tokenism will not do for them.

The main point is: the wreckers do not want this Agreement. It could herald the death knell of the Orange/Unionist character of the British state in Ireland, and of what use would Britishness be to them then, even if they were to retain the UK? Their "Britishness" is conditional. Their cries that they have already "conceded too much" are nonsense. As Dublin journalist Tom McGurk asks: "In what sense is accepting power-sharing, equality, and full citizenship (for non-unionists) as clearly demanded in an all-Ireland referendum....conceding?"

It would be preferable if an enlightened form of unionism, under Trimble's leadership or otherwise, were to emerge and cooperate willingly in implementing the Agreement. If it does not, then that is unionism's problem. The unionists are unnecessary. The two governments, with the backing of the international community and pro-Agreement Northerners, can deliver on their own.

Newsbits *(continued from Page 1)*

passed on to loyalists. Double agent Brian Nelson was arrested as part of the inquiry. (*Irish News*, 9/24/98)

Loyalist protestors called First Minister David Trimble was called "a traitor" as he arrived in Portadown to discuss the Drumcree standoff with Orangemen... DUP assembly man Paul Berry, who was among the protesters, said Trimble was "not concerned" about the Orangemen in Portadown, now in the 79th day of their Drumcree standoff. Berry said it had been Trimble's duty of as first minister to inform the new Assembly that "there is a major issue within the province of Northern Ireland and it's in his constituency." During the lengthy meeting, which went ahead despite the loyalist protest, Orangemen called on Trimble to ensure that they were allowed "to go down our traditional route." Shortly before the meeting, Portadown district spokesman David Jones said that Orangemen saw Trimble "as an Orangeman and MP for this Constituency, whether he's first minister or not. He's been more preoccupied with the assembly than what's happening in Portadown." (*Irish News*, 9/24/98)

After the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday, 1972, began taking eye-witnesses' testimony, victims' relatives' spokesman Don Mullan said: "I think some interesting new evidence will come out. For example, we have been approached by people who had contact with the British military at the time—girlfriends, people who were working in restaurants frequented by soldiers—who were warned that something big was going to happen and were told not to go on the march and not to let their families go on the march." (*Irish Times*, 9/25/98)

The Irish World in America: Seeking Justice for Ireland

By Kevin P. Murphy, *Massachusetts*

Throughout Ireland's long struggle for freedom, the American Irish community has played a vital role. American Irish newspapers have been a major force in opposing British misrule.

For more than 100 years, *The Irish World* newspaper played a central role in helping the Irish people in their struggle to win freedom for Ireland. Galway-born Patrick Ford founded *The Irish World* in 1870 in New York City. Ford was an ardent Irish nationalist and a highly-decorated Union Army officer in the Civil War.

From the paper's beginning, it actively advocated a free Ireland totally independent of British rule. The paper also advocated the rights of workers in the US. At the same time, Ford's paper fought against the rampant anti-Irish discrimination of the day. His paper also raised funds for victims of injustice, whether it was in Ireland or in the coal mines of Pennsylvania.

Patrick Ford's *The Irish World* raised so much money for Parnell's Land League that the British government asked the US government to shut it down.

During the struggle for Irish independence from 1916 through the 1920s, the Ford family continued the paper and were key in using the paper to raise money for the Irish political prisoners and in selling bonds for the Irish Free State.

When the present troubles broke out in the North 30 years ago, *The Irish World* continued to advocate for a united, independent Ireland.

The paper ceased operations in January, 1985. Nevertheless, *The Irish World* symbolized the American Irish people's commitment to Ireland.

The *American Irish Newsletter* continues in the spirit of Patrick Ford's *The Irish World*. The *Newsletter* is the only American Irish publication to take on anti-Irish bigotry in America and to continue to use this nation's influence in seeking justice for Ireland.

The Northern Conflict is Measured in Human Loss

The Cost of the Troubles study, begun in 1996 under the auspices of the Initiative on Conflict Resolution & Ethnicity, has uncovered the following conflict-related statistics:

- 3,643 people have been killed in the Northern conflict
- 273 children in the North under the age of 18 have lost their lives to violence
- British plastic bullets in the North have killed nine children
- armed forces' harassment of children in troubled areas is so common that children and their parents treat it as a part of every-day life
- some people have steel bars behind their doors and grills on their windows
- people are afraid to go out of their neighborhoods or into the "other side's" territory for fear of being attacked or killed.

Where are the Unionists Going?

By Brian Feeney

Excerpt from the September 23, 1998 *Irish News*

Lady Hacksaw's cabinet secretary, now Lord Armstrong, became best known for his unfortunate phrase, "economical with the truth." It's a pity because, in Anglo-Irish relations, he produced a metaphor that became the basis for the dealings that ultimately led to the Mitchell Agreement.

In the early 80s, officials of the Irish and British governments were engaged in what were known as "joint studies," the very beginnings of what became the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Along with his Irish counterpart, Dermot Nally, Armstrong took the lead in these talks. He said everything should be mixed in and stirred, like making gravy. The more you stirred, the smoother the gravy became....In the end it did all come together in 1985 with signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

Over the years of work leading up to it, officials and politicians in Ireland and Britain got to know each other socially as well as politically--though not all of them. Armstrong's metaphor horrified unionists. They didn't want to mix. All kinds of discreet, off the record, unattributable, deniable gatherings were devised to make unionists feel welcome. They didn't come.

One of these is the British-Irish Association (BIA), which organizes an annual session alternating between Oxford and Cambridge. For years, secretaries of state; Irish foreign Ministers; top officials from London, Dublin, and Belfast; politicians; stickies; academics; clergy; chancers; free loaders...you name them, they were there--except unionists.

By the early 90s, one or two unionists began to turn up, but never enough to satisfy Armstrong's plan. Today, another result of the Armstrong-Nally mixture, that ungainly mouthful the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body,

is meeting in York: 50 MPs and TDs have been meeting twice a year for nine years. No unionists have ever attended, though places have been left for them. Their pretext for boycotting it was that the Anglo-Irish Agreement set it up.

Suddenly, it looks as if all this is going to change. Ten days ago, the BIA had its annual event, and David Trimble arrived as the conquering hero bestowing his first ministerialness on proceedings instead of carping and cavilling, as on previous visits. Now it seems Trimble is insisting on launching Strand Three of the Agreement, the British-Irish Council. He's mad keen on the North-South Ministerial Council too.

Then there's the new Anglo-Irish Agreement, though you're not allowed to say that. It's called the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference. Members of the North's Executive will be able to attend its meetings.

From attending nothing, unionists are going to be dizzy whirling around all the conferences and councils and cross-border bodies. The travel expenses will be mighty.

It's going to be a new world for unionists. They're going to be stirred in Armstrong's gravy--or perhaps not. The truth is, the new zeal for attending is really a ruse to frustrate the ultimate aim of Armstrong's project.

Unionists have no intention of sloshing about in the same gravy boat as republicans. Despite conspiring with the UDA and UVF in the seventies and early 80s to overturn democracy, unionists still believe they're a cut above republicans and won't sit down on equal terms with them. They devised all kinds of high-flown pretexts for boycotting all gatherings where

they might meet nationalists or republicans. The real reason for staying away was because they had no argument to present to avoid living on equal terms with the rest of the people on this island.

Since the fall of Stormont, unionists have not come up with a single proposal which would have resolved the problems on this island. They said no to all proposals but couldn't suggest anything themselves. The inevitable result is that they have ended up having to accept a settlement based on the three-strand approach devised by the Irish government.

That's one of the reasons unionism is split 50-50 on the Mitchell Agreement. They all know the architecture is planned by their political opponents.

What's still missing is anyone in the UUP who has the vision to step forward and paint a picture of what would be good for unionism. Nationalist leaders have a very clear view of their long-term strategy. In 10 years, they will still be working for a united Ireland. What will unionists be doing in 10 years time? What do unionists see as their future?

Is David Trimble capable of producing a "big idea" that will give unionists a goal to work towards? Can he give them a party line to follow when they attend meetings they're signed up for?

Unionism has to solve its own problems. Essentially Trimble has to tell them where they're going. The DUP says, to perdition. What does the UUP say?

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New York landscape designer Robert Haldane is designing a garden in memory of the Great Hunger and the Irish who died as a result of that catastrophe.

New York Landscape Architect Designs Great Hunger Memory Garden

Haldane, a native of Donegal who has lived in the US for 11 years, agreed to do so at the urging of local priest Francis McCloskey, who had pointed out to him one day in May four years ago that a local cemetery was "full of famine Irish" and asserted that "something should be done."

Shortly after his meeting with McCloskey, Haldane designed the garden. Since then, he has been working in Ireland and the US to build support for the project.

On March 17, Albany became the official site for the garden, and the State of New York gave it an endorsement. A place is to be set aside along the river front, near the old Erie Canal.

"This is a very strange project because I did not start out to do it," he said. "Usually, when you design something like this, there is someone who wants it. Nobody wanted this. But I can't let it die. I have fought for four years to find support for it. I have let my own business go downhill."

The plan calls for an area about the size of a football field. Visitors would enter the memorial through a boreen—a little road with stone ditches, hawthorns, and wild flowers—where they would be invited to pick up a small stone.

Next to the boreen would be four raised grass ridges, similar to mounds that the Irish used for potato beds in

the 19th century. When abandoned after the Great Hunger, those mounds reverted to grassland and can be seen throughout Ireland today.

Following the boreen farther into the garden, the visitor would come upon a walled-in area. The walls are to be about 10 feet high. Inside, behind a locked wrought-iron gate, the visitor would see a beautiful garden, symbolic of the big houses and estates owned by the gentry.

"This opulent garden would be symbolic of the British government's actions during the Great Hunger," according to Haldane. "Tenants who could not afford to pay their rents were evicted from their homes, thrown off the estates and left to wander the roads. All they could do was stare through the gates, which remained locked against them."

Ironically, many of the stone walls that kept them out were built by the Irish themselves as part of British government relief projects. The very roads they wandered after being evicted were also built by gangs of dispossessed Irish working for food.

Passing on from the enclosed garden, the visitor would face an uphill journey along a walk of paving stones leading toward an unseen fate. There are to be 32 stones, each representing, and coming from, one of the 32 counties of Ireland. The stones are to be hollowed out and

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planted in grass.

"Where people fell and died it is said that *fear gorta*—hunger grass—grows," Haldane explained.

The design also calls for what will look like four larger potato ridges adjoining the paving stones. These mounds are to represent four mass graves and the four provinces of Ireland.

Many Irish died along the roadsides during the Great Hunger and were left where they fell. "The only memorial many of those people had were the stones that covered them to protect them from the animals," Haldane said. "People passing on the road would place another stone on top and a cairn would grow. You still see them along the roads in Ireland, but people don't know they are graves anymore."

As people pass out of the garden, they would be invited to place their stone or pebble on one of the four grass mounds, slowly building giant cairns in memory of the millions who died. "The people will help to build this garden," Haldane said. "The stones they put there will be evidence of their interest."

For more information, contact Robert Haldane at 518 325-2000 or send donations to The Famine Garden Foundation, in care of Ciaran G. McCabe, 15 Anthony Street, Hillsdale, NY 12529.

Source: *The Litchfield County Times Monthly*, New Milford, Connecticut.

For more information, contact the
American Ireland

Education Foundation-PEC

54 S. Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980
800-777-6807

Published by the AIEF-PEC Nov. 1998

Human Rights Body Highlights Outstanding Issues

The Mitchell Agreement calls for a Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission with a role beyond that which the Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights (SACHR) currently exercises. The SACHR's annual report highlights the need for just such a body if the North is to achieve reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust, and the protection of everybody's human rights.

The report recommends the need for an independent, impartial investigation of all threats to lawyers in the North, the bringing to justice of any guilty party, and the need to provide training programs for the judiciary on international human rights standards.

It also recommends that sections nine through 11 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (relating to the financing of paramilitary organizations)

should "continue in force as part of any permanent counter-terrorism legislation." Also, it says that any future legislative provision and current legislative provisions be immediately amended to ensure that the UK does not breach the right to silence and the right against self-incrimination as interpreted by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

The report also criticizes the UK's decision to extend the life of the Emergency Provisions Act for two more years. This law includes the power to defer legal advice for 48 hours, which is incompatible with the UK's obligations under the ECHR.

Addressing employment equality, the SACHR recommends that the proposed unified Equality Commission requires further research that must include an examination of the role of

the new Human Rights commission and any new Department of Equality that might emerge from the new Assembly. The report points out that the British had largely dismissed the SACHR's review of employment equality, though it took two years to complete, generated three volumes of research, and resulted in a final report with more than 160 recommendations.

In its review of the report, the Committee on the Administration of Justice commented: "The last 25 years have seen successive governments consistently disregard the findings [of the SACHR]. Clearly, if, as the Agreement promises, the human rights of all are to be protected, then the Human Rights commission established under the Agreement must... possess a bite equal to its bark."

Source: *Committee on the Administration of Justice*

How the Irish Saved Civilization: Ireland is the Only Light in the Dark Ages

The holy men and women of Ireland played a key role in preserving Western civilization's heritage. In *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, author Thomas Cahill takes the reader to the Ireland of St. Patrick and the Book of Kells, a place far from the barbarian despoliation of the continent. On the fringe of Europe, Irish monks and scribes laboriously, lovingly, and even playfully preserved the West's written treasury.

As the once vast and mighty Roman Empire disintegrated into chaos and ruin during the course of the fifth century, illiteracy became the standard on the continent, all the great continental libraries vanished, and scholarship ceased to exist. Yet, at the same time, the newly literate Irish scribal scholars began the monumental task of copying every piece of Western literature they could uncover.

As a result, the classical literature of Greece and Rome survive today.

In addition to transcribing this great cultural legacy, Irish monks in exile, inspired by the legendary St. Patrick, reestablished literacy on the continent, providing a critical bridge between ancient Rome and medieval Europe.

When stability returned in Europe, these Irish scholars were instrumental in spreading learning, becoming not only the conservators of civilization but also the shapers of the medieval mind, putting their unique stamp on Western culture.

Without Ireland, the transition from the classical age of Rome to the medieval era could not have taken place. Not only did Irish monks and scribes maintain the very record of Western civilization but also they brought their uniquely Irish world-

view to the task. As Cahill illustrates, much of the liveliness associated with medieval culture had its roots in Ireland.

Cahill's book reconstructs an era that few know about but which is central to understanding our past and our cultural heritage. The author delightfully conveys his knowledge with a winking wit that aptly captures the sensibility of the unsung Irish who relaunched civilization.

The New York Times describes Cahill's book as "charming and poetic...an entirely engaging, delectable voyage into the distant past, a small treasure."

\$12.95 paperback. TO ORDER, call 800 229-3505 or write **PEC Irish Books**, 1433 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404-2135. Mention that this is a PEC order.

Action Request

Write the letter below, call, ore-mail. Be courteous. Have friends, organizations, business associates, and others do the same. Please mention your membership in the PEC.

Write: **Congressman Ben Gilman**, 2449 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515
202 225-3776, e-mail: ben@mail.house.gov

Message: As a member of the American Irish PEC, I support the House International Relations Committee's investigations into human rights abuses in Northern Ireland, including the hearings early next year on the RUC. Please use your good offices to call for an independent inquiry into all threats against lawyers in the North.

Write: **Congressman Chris Smith**, 2370 Rayburn, Washington, DC 20515
202 225-3765

Message: As a member of the American Irish PEC, I urge you to continue your efforts to monitor human rights in Northern Ireland. This is an essential part of the ongoing peace process.

(continued from Page 2)

September 27

Seamus Mallon, deputy leader of the new Assembly, says he will tell the British and Irish prime ministers that the governments "should now start to work closely with all the political parties in the Assembly so that we have a concerted effort on the part of the [Mitchell A]greement, rather than partial efforts in relation to one section of the agreement." He insists decommissioning is not a precondition to setting up the Executive.

September 29

Republicans should make a "confidence-building gesture" toward unionists to help heal the decommissioning rift as it remains a running sore, Mallon says.

United Nations special Rapporteur Param Cumaraswamy delivers his report to Congress detailing "strong evidence of collusion" between the RUC and loyalist paramilitaries in the death of attorney Patrick Finucane. Loyalists using a police-issue handgun killed Finucane in his home in 1989. The report is delivered to the House International Relations Committee at a hearing on Capitol Hill. The Rapporteur recommends that an independent inquiry be made into all threats against lawyers in the North and suggests an independent judicial inquiry be made into the Finucane case. Cumaraswamy's report recognizes the inadequacy of the police complaints system in which the RUC investigates itself. He notes that "of 16,395 complaints received through 1994, not one has resulted in any disciplinary action against any RUC officer." Following the hearings, Committee Chair **Congressman Ben Gilman** appeals to the British and Irish governments to repeal emergency legislation passed after the Omagh bombing. (See Action Requests.)

September 30

Blair and Adams meet but fail to make progress on the decommissioning issue.
The British army begins to dismantle checkpoints around the North.

October 5

Speaking at the Conservative Conference, Trimble says that unionists would not let the Assembly Executive be formed with Sinn Fein taking up seats unless the IRA decommissions its weapons. In Dublin, Ahern tells the Irish parliament that Sinn Fein does not control IRA decommissioning, but, in his opinion, IRA decommissioning will take place in the next two years. UUP hardliners form the action group Union First to press Trimble on the IRA's decommissioning. The DUP pledge to block major aspects of the peace deal in the new Assembly.

October 6

The IRA vows not to hand in its weapons and explosives until Britain "disengages" from Ireland.

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