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American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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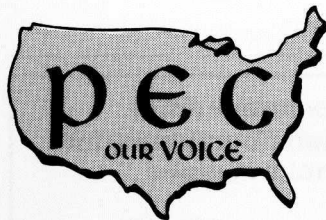


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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 20, Number 5

May 1995

England's Colonial Presence in Ireland Has No Popular Support In The U.S.

There are no mass letter-writing campaigns to President Clinton urging him to support British colonialism in Ireland, no campaigns urging him to support employment discrimination in the north. Nor was there any such support during the Reagan-Bush era. Britain's support in America comes mostly from powerful voices in our government, editorial boards and syndicated columnists, many of whom serve English interests.

Historically, in America it has been a comparatively small number of anti-Irish anglophiles in powerful places who have kept the US silent on English oppression in Ireland—making second-class citizens out of concerned American Irish. However, there is, and has always been, significant nationwide support, Irish and non-Irish alike, for Irish freedom. These people conduct mass letter-writing campaigns to the President.

To whom should President Bill Clinton listen: the American electorate or the English government and their lackeys in our government and media? After all, we are a democracy. President Clinton is the only President to have the courage to address British presence in Ireland democratically. In doing so, he has put the Brits and their American lackeys in place — and they are crying like spoiled children. Too bad! England is getting a little taste of what concerned American Irish have endured for two centuries, second-class treatment. Clinton is right to listen to the American voter.

But beware! There are many in our government who would quickly return to a pro-British Irish policy if they win power and if we let them. We have yet to receive commitments of support for President Clinton's Irish peace policy from any of the candidates for President, or from Senator Bob Dole and Speaker Newt Gingrich, to both of whom the PEC has conducted letter-writing campaigns requesting support.

For sure Ireland's "British question" will be a significant issue in the 1996 Presidential election. Concerned Americans will not allow anyone to undermine the peace process to the detriment of Irish freedom. We have come too far to turn back.

PEC Places Ad In The *Washington Times*

Thanks to the support of our members, on March 21, 1995 the PEC placed an Op-Ed page ad in the *Washington Times* thanking President Clinton for his contributions to the Irish peace process, and urging Republican leaders Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senator Bob Dole to support that process.

The *Washington Times* is read by all Republican and Democratic government leaders and their staffs in Washington, DC. A copy of the PEC ad appears as a *Reproduce & Distribute* on page 5.

YOUR SUPPORT IS DESPERATELY NEEDED!

*If you have not already done so, please send a generous donation
in response to our fund-raising letter mailed to you in April.
Your support is critical to our continued operation.*

Newsbits by Kathy Regan

It has always been British policy to arm the unionists and disarm democrats, mostly Catholics... The present tactic of demanding unilateral disarmament... delays real talk about democracy in Ireland (which would) lead to demands for democracy in Britain, with Scotland and Wales the chief contenders... The clear intention of the British government is to create a situation where democrats become impatient and irritated. Or where the republican movement becomes split, where some want to take military action and others did not... They would be putting the republican leadership in the position of condemning other members of the republican movement... Gerry Adams would never be allowed to put forward one democratic idea- he would always be stopped short by the demand that he condemn military republicans... The British strategy is not only to split the republican movement, but to have one side of it fighting another.

(*Andersonstown News*, 4/25/95)

* * *

New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman, after some reluctance and sensing the mood of concerned New Jerseyans, has endorsed new contract compliance MacBride Principles legislation that includes the British government's fair employment legislation. On April 6 Mayor Hal
con't on page 4

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OUR VIEW

Can you imagine the English government demanding that the Irish Republican Army surrender its arms before substantive talks can begin? That's right, the same English oppressors who, under Cromwell, exterminated half the Irish population and sent almost 100,000 Irish people off to the colonies as slaves. The same English oppressors who, during the Great Hungers of 1739 and 1845-1849, allowed millions of Irish men, women and children to starve to death, demanding that the Irish people put their trust in the English government. The same English oppressor that has been responsible for the death and suffering of tens of millions of Irish people during the past 800 years.

The demand by the English government that Sinn Fein make the Irish Republican Army "decommission its arms" before substantive talks can begin, (which was never even an issue during three years of secret talks between Sinn Fein and the English government), is an outrage that could wreck the peace process. Are we to expect many similar ridiculous demands by the English during negotiations?

Such a demand by one side in a conflict, that its undefeated foe disarm before negotiations begin, is unheard of in peace negotiations. It is something new, invented by the never-to-be-trusted English government. There is no parallel in the history of war. Disarmament is a part of negotiations, NOT A PRE-CONDITION.

Can you imagine an unarmed nationalist community at the mercy of a heavily-armed loyalist community that possesses almost 150,000 legal gun permits, and a British police force and army that has a history of violently abusing them? We wonder whether these new conditions raised by the British with regard to disarmament are only tactics designed to allow them to back off the entire peace process. We also wonder why the Irish government doesn't speak out on this issue.

PEC Announcements

Congratulations to PEC Oklahoma State Director Hal Cousins. Because of Hal's work, the Oklahoma County Democratic Convention unanimously passed a resolution thanking President Clinton for his "efforts to bring peace with justice to Northern Ireland - and urging the President to highlight this peace effort by appointing a special peace envoy to Northern Ireland." This resolution will now go on to the State Convention and the Sixth Congressional District Convention. Cousins, a delegate to both conventions, has vowed to see the resolution passed at both.

NEVADA STATE DIRECTOR APPOINTED -- PEC is happy to announce the appointment of Bob Fuhrel as PEC Nevada State Director. Bob can be contacted at 1901 Rio Canyon Ct. #202, Las Vegas, Nevada 89128. His evening phone number is (702) 255-9619. Nevada-based members are urged to contact Bob to offer their help.

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

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Boston College Is Being Watched

by Kevin Murphy, PEC Massachusetts

On March 26, concerned citizens met in Watertown, MA to organize a watch committee to monitor Boston College, following the statement of a BC press officer that the college still plans to give some kind of award to Margaret Thatcher.

The BC watch committee will have a network in place in Massachusetts that will immediately go into action should BC go ahead with new plans concerning Thatcher. The PEC is once again ready to activate its national network to organize that all-important nationwide protest that proved so successful in stopping the planned presentation by BC to Thatcher of the Ignatius Medal.

(Ed. note: PEC expresses deep gratitude to all the people and organizations in Massachusetts that took an active part in this campaign, especially to those who did organizing work: John Hurley, Patrick Lappin, Dave Burke, Jack Meehan, former State Rep. Marie Howe and Steven and Jane Hammond.)

From the North

by Rev. Des Wilson, *Director, Springhill Community, Belfast*

The London/Dublin Framework Document about the future of Northern Ireland did not promise a great deal to Irish democrats. Yet unionists were outraged. The reason for their outrage is not that nationalists are getting democratic rule. It is that nationalists are even mentioned as having a right to anything of the kind.

Many years ago unionists admitted they could not concede democratic government in even one city, Derry, because if they did, they would lose control over all of the north of Ireland. That was the meaning of their slogan "not an inch". They believed that giving in on one single item would "open the floodgates" and more and more would be demanded.

They were right. A state founded on domination could not afford even one concession to make friends. Better, they thought, to have beatable opponents than lovable friends.

Now their worst nightmare is being fulfilled - arrangements for Ireland's future are being made by others while unionists lurk silently in the shadows. John Major does not need their votes in the House of Commons and there will be a change of government in Britain soon anyway. Furthermore, Irish republicans have been well received in America and the only unionist opposition to them was Dr. John Alderdice, a weak leader of the weakest unionist party, and members of a political party emerging from the unionist paramilitaries.

The disarray of Britain's supporters in Ireland has not been greeted with the wild joy which Paisley and his clerical colleagues predicted. Democrats have been quietly assessing what is happening and regretting publicly and privately that unionists are not part of it.

In the past unionists were able - because it suited British policy -- to declare, "Not an inch" and refuse to talk to anybody but themselves. Now British policy is changing and they are required to talk to many people, even their detested rivals, Sinn Fein. They find this difficult. British policy has dictated in the past that they drive wedges between Catholics and Protestants and create disunity between north and south, between rich and poor, between employers and employees. In this way the union was secured and wages kept low.

Today business people recognize that cooperation is important, that all must work together or the economy will wither and that persecution of minorities is internationally unpopular. It is as difficult for unionists to accept this as it was for the Colons in Algeria to accept the decolonizing policies of DeGaulle.

Meanwhile some of the political ideas loyalists had in the 1970s are rising again from the dust of battle. During that time, some loyalist militants were thinking radical thoughts about power sharing, community government and so on. The British government, by a series of maneuvers, diverted their discussions into the safer and more traditional line of thought that killing Catholics led to good government. Now that the killing of Catholics is suspended, the radical thinking is reemerging.

Hence, the rather thoughtful-sounding and willing-to-talk new generation of loyalist militants.

One question now is whether the government will want--or be able--to divert this radical and innovative loyalist thinking into a program of killing of the kind which suited them so well in the past. Many doubt the government's ability to do it.

Some also doubt the government's willingness to do it. Government policy at present is best served, they say, by allowing loyalist, unionist, republican, nationalist, catholic, protestant and jewish citizens to regard each other with tolerance - as long as they do not take their loving too far and jointly challenge British rule.

Rev. Des Wilson Needs Our Help

by Elizabeth Logue
US Director of Doors of Hope

The British Government continues to boycott the Conway Mill. Many of the businesses operating in the Mill have succeeded and now together employ up to 400 people. This shows what can be accomplished when the local people work together. The harassment and boycott by the British government has hurt the education floor and the theater, where so many seminars and social events have taken place. By law, education should be funded by the government, as should many of the cultural events.

The Mill committee asks for your help in appealing to: Sir Patrick Mayhew, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Stormont Castle, Upper Newtonards Road, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland.

Sample letter: I urge that you end the ban on funding for the Conway Mill. Much good has come from the Mill, including the creation of badly needed jobs and the promotion of learning and culture.

The British government in Ireland is now pushing some groups into friendly association with each other while at the same time trying to split the republican movement into two warring camps. This is a delicate game which was probably helped rather than hindered by the deaths of some of Britain's most cunningly ruthless police and military operators in the 1994 helicopter crash in Scotland.

Democratic Irish people, however, know as much about countering such moves as the British government knows about creating them.

When they get to know even more about it, Ireland will achieve democratic rule for the first time.

Newsbits *con't from page 1*

Daub of Omaha, Nebraska signed into law a MacBride Principles ordinance which would prevent the cities pension funds from being invested in American companies with operations in Northern Ireland that do not comply with the MacBride Principles. (AIN-PEC 4/6/95)

The British government is placing pressure on many people to make positive gestures before they can participate in the peace process. Judging by recent actions, they seem to feel no change is necessary on their part. The issue of prisoners is high on the agenda, yet treatment of prisoners and their families has not changed... At Belmarsh Prison in London, relatives of two Irish political prisoners had visits first canceled, then rearranged, then canceled again as they arrived at the prison gates. This after the families had gone to the considerable expense and inconvenience to make the trip to England for the first visit their loved ones had been allowed in almost six months. (Andersonstown News, 3/4/95)

Fresh pressure has been mounted on the FBI to end its cooperation with the RUC, it emerged last night. A group of American-based lawyers has protested to the US Department of Justice in Washington over "clear evidence of human rights violations by the RUC." National coordinator of the Lawyers Alliance for Justice in Ireland, Kevin Lynch further stated that, "it is a true blight upon the reputation of the FBI that it continues to ignore clear evidence of human rights violations by the RUC." The group has asked the Justice Dept. and the FBI to oppose plans for the RUC to attend the Quantico training academy. (Irish News 3/13/95)

Two uniformed RUC men came to the home of Mrs. Mary Quinn. They wanted to speak to her 19 year old son about a traffic fine. When Mrs. Quinn told the officers that her son had gone out, they asked to be allowed to search the house. She refused as her husband was ill. They refused to produce a warrant and one of them began pushing the door with his shoulder while the other started kicking it, eventually smashing the glass. They searched the house for ten minutes and did not find her son. Before they left, she asked them about the smashed in front door (it was snowing) and they told her to "take it up with the barracks." (Andersonstown News, 3/4/95)

Gerry Adams In America

by Sandy Carlson, reporting from Ireland

Equality of treatment was the theme of Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams' visit to the US this March. Sinn Fein has been calling on the British government to treat Sinn Fein like any other political party and engage in talks, at a ministerial level, with its representatives.

Adams came to America to launch Cairde Sinn Fein (Friends of Sinn Fein) and open its offices in Washington. Cairde Sinn Fein oversees the party's publicity and fund raising in the US. During his visit, Adams met with New York Governor George Pataki and many Congressional leaders, including Edward Kennedy, Ben Gilman, Peter King and Tom Manton. He also attended Speaker Newt Gingrich's St. Patrick's Day luncheon.

President Clinton granted Adams a multi-entry visa, allowing him to fundraise for his party, and met with him at the White House on St. Patrick's Day, in spite of the British government's demand that Adams be barred and silenced in America. In direct opposition to British requests, Clinton granted the visa without any assurances that the IRA would "decommission" their weapons.

Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Patrick Mayhew, rejected the Sinn Fein statement Clinton accepted in lifting the fundraising ban—an activity the British allow in England. Mayhew said the statement did not provide the "clear and reliable assurances" the government is seeking to proceed with talks. Clearly, the British government is seeking a military victory over Sinn Fein which will also split support for the party among those who believe the IRA should keep its weapons. The British aim is victory rather than dialogue and compromise.

Adams was not slow to point out that British military operations in Ireland continue: arrests are still made, houses raided, and the British military maintains its presence. "Mr. Major and I agree that there is a need for demilitarization—including the decommissioning of all weapons," Adams said.

Adams congratulated President Clinton for "again making the right decision to treat Sinn Fein equally." He said, "every issue must be on the table and everyone must be at the table." The British government has insisted that ministerial talks with Sinn Fein will not begin until the IRA agrees to decommission its weapons.

The British responded to Adams' visit by dismissing it as hype—at the same time all their media correspondents covered the visit. They said American support for democratic, inclusive dialogue between Britain and Ireland was a passing fad among Irish Americans who do not understand the realities of Northern Ireland. The British government and press bemoaned the end of the special relationship between Britain and the US.

At the same time, Ulster Unionist Party spokesman, Ken Maginnis, signed a parliamentary motion attacking John Major's position on the issue, thus revealing discontent among the unionists and some Tory backbenchers on Britain's Ireland strategy. Clearly, the IRA ceasefire has destabilized both the British government and unionists, neither of whom are prepared to pursue a peace agenda, the terms of which would be defined by the participants rather than the British government.

Sinn Fein believes that Adams' visit showed that the British are on their own in refusing to fully recognize Sinn Fein as a democratic party and are stalling the peace process by holding republicans at arms length. The British are trying to decommission Sinn Fein's electoral mandate, the party says.

Sinn Fein has been encouraging American supporters of democracy to continue demanding that British ministers talk with Sinn Fein immediately and stop stalling peace in Ireland for the sake of John Major's support at home. The party credits Irish America for keeping the Irish issue alive and making it a pivotal campaign issue in America.

Irish & Jews had harsh English lesson

by Sidney Zion

With Purim and St. Patrick's Day back to back this year, my thoughts naturally turn to the English. You say why? Because the common cross shared by the Jews and the Irish in this century is the double cross of the British Empire.

I confess I wasn't thinking about Palestine in the 1940s or Bloody Sunday when I dropped into London last week for a little R&R, but the headlines from home brought me up shorter than the dollar to the pound. There I was sipping martinis in the Reform Club, Winston Churchill's old watering hole, just as the news hit that Bill Clinton had invited Gerry Adams to the White House for Paddy's Day.

This was better than showing up at Shepherd's in Cairo on the morning of the Six-Day War, but where the hell was Disraeli now that I needed him? With the British murmuring "Clinton" and "treachery" in the same whiskey glass, I gave my half-Irish wife wide berth. At the lunch table, she tasted the wine first. I'm not Abraham Rudnitsky's grandson for nothing, kid.

Of course, I was plenty proud of our President. The big rap on Clinton is that he's indecisive, and I've been one of the rappers. But if peace ever comes to the north of Ireland, Bill Clinton gets the credit. From the day he gave Gerry Adams a visa, thus violating the "special relationship" we have had with the English, he has stood tall, and against all the winds that blow from Whitehall.

These are the strongest of winds, make no mistake. The Irish are anything but meshugga when they charge that our government runs with the Brits, that the State Department is an outpost of Whitehall. The same has been true in the Middle East. The hands that have dealt the cards in Foggy Bottom were never manicured in Tel Aviv.

The White Paper, the Hebrew Revolt

The American press, listening to the voices of power, has played the British card in Ireland as they played it against the Jews of Europe during World War II and in the Hebrew Revolution against the English in Palestine.

In 1939, the British issued the infamous White Paper, which locked the Jews of Europe in with their German killers. Franklin Roosevelt smoked Camels while the Jews went up in smoke. And 90% of the Jews of America voted for him.

Churchill, while out of power, attacked the White Paper, promised to abrogate it if elected. He was elected. And the Jews died while the White Paper lived. Clement Atlee promised a Jewish Palestine. When elected, he sent 100,000 British troops into the county to destroy Zionism.

We are told now by the British government that the IRA must unilaterally give up its arms before peace can come to Northern Ireland. The British condemn Clinton for meeting with Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein, even as they collude with Ian Paisley, the hit

man of the Ulster Brigade, which would keep the Catholics under the boot forever.

When the British left Kenya,

they did not demand unilateral disarmament. When we left Vietnam we did not ask the Viet Cong to lay down its arms.

In Palestine, in 1948, the British confiscated every Jewish rifle they could find. With Jerusalem under siege, British soldiers stopped every Jewish car and tank, grabbed every gun and turned them over to the Arabs.

Harry Truman, praised by Jews as a savior of Zionism, did nothing to stop the British outrage. Indeed, he placed an arms embargo on the Middle East -- which meant that the Jews could get nothing while the Arabs were armed by the English.

Paul O'Dwyer and like-minded Irishmen supported the Hebrew Revolution in Palestine. It's not the only reason I have a soft spot in my heart for the IRA. I don't back the gunmen who kill innocent people on the streets of London or in the pubs of Belfast, of course not.

But the real question has never been answered in 800 years: What's an English soldier doing on Irish land?

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To Keep Informed

about the English-Irish peace process and how you can help, contact:

**PEC-American Ireland
Education Foundation, 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980 --
Ph.# 800 777-6807**

Published May 1995 by PEC-AIEF

Black 47:

Ireland's Great Hunger 1845-49

(Reprinted from "Paddy's Lament" by Thomas Gallagher)

The idea that the peasantry had become superfluous in Ireland, that more attention should henceforth be given to ridding the land of people and stocking it with cattle, gained more and more adherents among Ireland's landlords as the famine's ravages continued. It was an idea set forth repeatedly by Lord Carlisle during his visits to Ireland, in words like these: Here we find, in the soil and climate, the condition best suited for pasture; hence it appears that cattle, above all things, seem to be the most appropriate stock for Ireland... Corn can be brought from one country to another from a great distance, at rather small freights. It is not so with cattle, hence the great hives of industry in England and Scotland can draw their shiploads of corn from more southern climates, but they must have a constant dependence on Ireland for an abundant supply of meat."

Great Britain wanted a pastoral country nearby to produce meat for its industrial workers and, since a pastoral country could not be a populous one if its flocks and herds were not to be eaten at home, the Irish people were being told, by way of evictions and the pulling down of cabins, to clear out of Ireland. An undetermined number, of course, would remain, that number being necessary to take care of the cattle destined to supply food to England and Scotland's industrial workers.

So readily did the landlords accept Lord Carlisle's "solution" to Ireland's ills that notices began appearing in newspapers in the spring of 1847, at the very height of the famine, that referred to the people as though they were cattle ready to be shipped.

It must be remembered that there was still enough wheat, oats, barley, butter, eggs, pork and lamb in Ireland, even in this famine year, to feed for a year four times as many people as were leaving the country. But all this produce was still being sent to Liverpool on the very same ships that carried the emigrants, whom the English lawmakers claimed could not be fed, were redundant in their native land and, therefore, had to go somewhere else.

The Irish continued to crowd into ports, all saying in effect the same things, that they were "glad to leave their wretched country." "All we want is to get out of Ireland... we must be better off

anywhere than here." "Bad legislation, careless legislation, criminal legislation has been the cause of all the disasters we are now deploring."

These sentiments, which the emigrants took with them if they took nothing else, were soon to coalesce into a profound loathing, a savage hatred, of Great Britain. In time, this hatred would give life and impetus to Irish societies on both sides of the Atlantic, and it would be handed down from generation to generation. As early as 1845, one of England's great future prime ministers, William Gladstone, had prophetically called Ireland, in a letter to his wife, "that cloud in the west, the coming storm, the minister of God's retribution upon cruel and inveterate and but half-atoned injustice."

Even the *London Times*, which celebrated the famed emigration of '47 with the gleeful declaration that the Irish were "gone with a vengeance," would in a later editorial express fear of the hatred the Irish were taking with them: "If the exodus goes on, as it is likely to go on... the United States will become very Irish... So an Ireland there will still be, but on a colossal scale, and in a new world. We shall only have pushed the Celt westward. Then, no longer cooped up between the Liffey and the Shannon, he will spread from New York to San Francisco, and keep up the ancient feud at an unforeseen advantage."

At this point the *London Times*

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It's Up To You!

You have a critical role to play in educating the public and organizing Great Hunger commemorative events. PEC has available plenty of informative **Great Hunger** brochures. Just give us a call for free copies: 800 777-6807.

If you are planning any events on the Hunger, send the information to: Frank Morris, Jr., PEC Great Hunger Awareness Campaign Director, 821 Briarwood Lane, Camp Hill, PA 07011 - Ph# 717 737-7013.

tells the truth: "We must gird our loins to encounter the nemesis of seven centuries' of misgovernment. To the end of time a hundred million spread over the largest inhabitable area in the world, and, confronting us everywhere by sea and land, will remember that their forefathers paid tithe to the Protestant clergy, rent to absentee landlords, and a forced obedience to the laws which these had made."

The writer of these lines might well have taken one of the Liverpool steamers over to Ireland to observe firsthand what was going on there. Or, perhaps he received some shocking dispatches from reporters at the scene. In any event, the myriad claims of British malfeasance in the Irish crisis, based on the overwhelming evidence of eyewitnesses, finally began to find expression in the editorial pages of the *London Times*. Placing the blame on the Irish had at last become untenable.

For further information

about Ireland's Great Hunger or to play your part in the Irish peace process, contact:

PEC-American Ireland Education Foundation, 54 South Liberty Dr., Suite 401, Stony Point, NY 10980; phone #: 800 777-6807.

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AS ADVERTISED IN THE
Washington Times -- Tuesday, March 21, 1995

Peace In Ireland!

Thank You Mr. President

We wish to commend President Bill Clinton for his open support for the Irish peace process which has advanced to an historic high point. The time has come when the people of Ireland, North and South, are ready to put aside age-old animosities and to move on. There is no reason why they cannot do so, while maintaining their own separate heritages, as we Americans have learned to do.

There is no better year than 1995 to begin the peace process -- the year we begin the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Ireland's Great Hunger during which two million people starved to death.

The President is also to be commended for his decision to welcome Gerry Adams to our country and to the White House. It is only by hearing all sides that Americans can be informed about what is going on in Ireland. We know that many millions of Americans, not just those of Irish heritage, welcome and admire the President's courage.

In our twenty years of promoting peace in Northern Ireland, we have not witnessed such an opportunity for real peace, nor such an outpouring of good will from the American people and our President. This chance for a permanent peace must not be lost.

We urge the Republican leadership, Senator Bob Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, to raise their voices in support of our government's Irish peace policy. Surely this is not a partisan U.S. political issue.

The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC), founded in 1975, is a committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation, a non-profit, tax-exempt, mainstream American organization. PEC seeks to bring about a democratic, united Ireland through peaceful means and is not affiliated with any party or political group in Ireland or elsewhere.

**For further information contact
the PEC at the address below**

**Paid for by the PEC-American Ireland Education Foundation
54 South Liberty Drive, Suite 401, Stony Point, NY 10980 - (914) 947-2726**

Won't You Help Make The Peace Process Work? Get Involved Today!

Action Requests

Write the letters below (or call), preferably in your own words, or as is. Be courteous. Have friends, organizations, business associates, etc., do the same.

1- Taoiseach John Bruton

Dept. of An Taoiseach
Upper Merrion St.
Dublin 2, Ireland

Request: I urge you not to let the decommissioning of arms become the only issue in peace talks. Decommissioning of arms is an issue that, along with other issues, needs to be addressed at the negotiating table. The British cannot allow this issue to prevent the move to full-scale negotiations.

2- Mr. Haley Barbour

Chairman
Republican National Comm.
310 First Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Request: I urge that your party take a positive stand on the Irish peace process. American Irish voters are deeply concerned about the past record of the Republican party on this issue. US involvement in the peace process has been largely responsible for its success. We will not allow this to change.

PEC Helps Kill Helms Amendment

On Friday March 31, it was learned that North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms planned to introduce an amendment to the Senate Appropriations Bill halting all economic assistance to Ireland until the IRA surrenders all of its weaponry. This measure, which would have been a direct assault on the peace process by Sen. Helms, was conspired, we believe, by long-time Helms friend Ian Paisley, an opponent of the peace process. That weekend the PEC activated the National Telephone Chain (NTC) to support the work already started by several Members of Congress.

PEC called its NTC members who in turn began flooding Senate Majority leader Bob Dole's office with phone calls and faxes demanding that the amendment be stopped. We are advised that Senator Dole took up the issue with Prime Minister John Major.

On Tuesday, April 4, the PEC was informed by the office of Congressman Ben Gilman that the Helms amendment was dead. If this amendment had been passed, the ramifications for the peace process and the White House Conference on Investment and Trade would have been disastrous. Thanks to the members of the PEC this disaster was averted.

Our National Telephone Chain has become one of the most important and effective components of the American United Ireland lobby. Its clout cannot be over stressed. It played an important role in this success.

JOIN THE NATIONAL TELEPHONE CHAIN TODAY! It's free to join. Call 800 777-6807. Give us your name with a daytime and evening phone number where you can be reached. NTC will only be used in urgent situations. You will be required to make a phone call or, if you prefer, send a fax to a targeted individual. Your participation in NTC will greatly increase our effective.

Use The Telephone Hotline

A 24 hour, 7 day-a-week service
914 429-7849

Volunteers Are Needed To Sell Raffle Tickets

We will soon commence our annual raffle. The prizes will be two round-trip airfare tickets to Ireland from New York City or Boston and five \$100 consolation prizes. Tickets are \$3 each (book of six tickets \$15).

Won't you please volunteer to sell raffle tickets? This raffle is one of our most important fund raisers. To order tickets, call PEC at 800 777-6807 or write: PEC-AIEF, 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980. Let us know how many books you want (six tickets in a book). Thank you for your support.

To Join Or Renew Your Membership PEC-AIEF

[] 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 () _____

Name of your Congressman/woman _____

Make checks payable to PEC-AIEF and mail to 54 South Liberty Drive, Suite 401, Stony Point, NY 10980. For information call 1 800 777-6807.

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