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American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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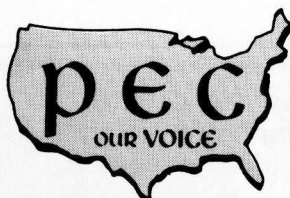


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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 20, Number 8

August 1995

PEACE IN IRELAND: DON'T TAKE IT FOR GRANTED!

The spontaneous street violence that erupted in nationalist areas of Belfast following the British government's release of Paratrooper Lee Clegg reminds us of just how fragile the peace and the peace process are.

Last month, Northern Secretary Sir Patrick Mayhew released Clegg, who had served only 1,412 days of a life sentence for murdering Karen Reilly in 1990. Reilly had been in the back seat of a stolen car driven by joyriders when Clegg opened fire and killed her.

Observers believe Mayhew released Clegg so British Prime Minister John Major could win hardline votes in his leadership fight. It is widely believed by nationalists that Clegg's release shows Britain's callous, condescending attitude toward the Irish. Whereas, the Casement Accused have spent more than five years behind bars for murder, even though they were not present when two IRA men shot the two British soldiers dead, Clegg has walked away from a life sentence and resumed service in the British army after killing an 18-year-old girl.

That the British government jeopardized the English-Irish peace process in a power play is certainly clear. That, as British Political Development minister Michael Ancram said, "The peace process, from the time it started, has always been a very, very delicate flower. It is our job to make sure that flower is sustained and allowed to grow," is also certainly true. That flowers can rise from the dead is anything but certain. Therefore, we must continue to ensure that the peace process continue by working through the American democratic process to encourage the Administration to prevent such injustices from recurring. These injustices fly in the face of democracy and threaten the peace that requires your ongoing support.

**Please Don't Forget to Purchase Raffle Tickets
If You Need More Raffle Tickets, Call Us at (914) 947-2726**

Thank You!

We thank all members who sent PEC a donation or purchased raffle tickets to help ease our financial crisis. **Please excuse us for not sending a personal acknowledgment.** We also thank members who have already committed themselves to a monthly donation. Although we are not yet at the level of funding that we should be at, we are encouraged.

Make A Monthly Donation To PEC

A monthly donation from each member, regardless of the amount, will go a long way toward keeping the PEC financially solvent. When you pay your bills, why not include as a monthly expense a donation to PEC. Send whatever you can afford. This is one sure way to permanently end PEC's financial crisis. Please do your share to ensure that PEC continues its most important work.

Newsbits by Kathy Regan

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams tells the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation that the peace process has deteriorated. The British government is afraid of all-party talks because "peace talks demand compromise and accommodation," he says. He adds that the decision to release paratrooper Lee Clegg is "another slap in the face for those who are trying to develop a non-violent way out of the conflict, especially those who took to the streets to protest." (*Irish American Information Service* 7/10/95)

At a debate in Derry on the peace process, SDLP chairman Mark Durkan questions Northern Secretary Patrick Mayhew's ability to contribute to the peace process. "While I do not believe that Patrick Mayhew has the competence, confidence, or even the compulsion to contribute positively at this stage, this does not absolve the rest of us from our own leadership responsibilities," says Durkan. (*Irish News* 7/11/95)

The loyalist Ulster Democratic Party's spokesman, David Adams, condemns DUP leader Ian Paisley for his "inflammatory rhetoric," which incited Orange Order members to violent confrontation with the RUC in Portadown. The disturbances

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OUR VIEW

The breakdown in the English-Irish peace process is due to BRITISH POLITICS; not the Irish Republican Army's refusal to decommission its arms -- to surrender. The issue is British colonialism and oppression in Ireland, not the IRA.

British Prime Minister John Major and his party have as their first priority keeping themselves in power -- maintaining the support of unionist Members of Parliament. Fulfilling the wishes of their citizens by finding a permanent and just solution to the northern conflict is secondary. This brings us to the question asked by member Patrick Flanagan, SJ of New Jersey: Why is Britain dictating the pace of the English-Irish peace process?

As we stated previously, we are concerned that the only British purpose of the Downing Street Declaration was to end armed conflict. Their stalling to date reinforces our concern.

As we previously stated in this newsletter, outside help is needed to mediate the peace process. There must be a neutral force to set the agenda to get all-party talks under way. Disarmament by all sides will come in due course as substantial progress towards a permanent solution is made.

We can get the process started by urging President Bill Clinton to appoint his promised peace envoy and to urge the European Union or the United Nations to appoint a mediator. The SDLP has encouraged Major to appoint an independent arbiter to break the current log-jam rather than rely on British civil servants, but the British have side-stepped the request.

How can anyone justify having Britain (England) in the driver's seat? England's 800-year history in Ireland, as a colonial occupier, has been one of continuous tyranny, genocide, contempt for the Irish people, and deception. Certainly the British (English) government is still deceiving the Irish people. For example, the decommissioning of arms by the IRA wasn't a part of the Downing Street Declaration, which set the terms of the peace process. But now decommissioning is a British tactic to stall the progress fair-minded people had expected--to the alarm of the Tories. It's time for outside help.

Turn To Action Request #1 On Page Six

**USE THE TELEPHONE HOTLINE
(914) 429-7849**

Offensive Situations

by Paul Newman, New York

It seems that the last stereotype to fade is the correlation between being of Irish ancestry and alcoholism. Syndicated columnist **Mona Charen** recently wrote a piece on alcohol and how it is used or abused by our society. She smugly states "some groups like the Irish have high rates of alcoholism and

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drunkenness, whereas others like the Jews, Italians or Chinese do not." In other words, the Irish race is a culture that encourages alcoholism and all the problems that go with it. Haven't we had enough of this garbage?

Please write the following letter in your own words or as is to: Mona Charen, 5777 W. Century Blvd. Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear Ms. Charen:

I find your June 15 article on alcoholism troubling. You single out people of Irish ancestry as those who encourage alcoholism. Your statements are incorrect and ignorant, and can lead many of your readers to draw negative opinions of the Irish and Irish Americans. At a time when Americans should be coming together you are encouraging bigoted assumptions of a certain ethnic group. Please be more sensitive.

Sincerely,

**Send Offensive Situations to: Paul Newman,
9 Deltic Road, New City, NY 10956**

From the North

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

The only democratic solution to the problems in the north of Ireland is a British withdrawal. The reasons for this have been explained many times and can be summed up thus: The British Administration cannot provide true democracy for the Irish, for true democracy does not exist for the British at home, and nothing short of modern democracy will be acceptable to democrats in Northern Ireland.

The task is to find a formula which will enable the British to withdraw without appearing to surrender. Such a formula is available if the British stop stalling and enter into all-party negotiations. An extreme right-wing British government could do it more readily than a weak Majorite or a Labor government.

It is naive to say to the British establishment that they now have the best opportunity in hundreds of years to make an honorable settlement, as some of its most powerful members want to remain in control in Ireland. They do not appreciate such language.

It is reality that unless they make an honorable settlement now, the war will resume. This would condemn the people of the north to decades more of repression, internal conflict, industrial and commercial frustration, and, eventually, a war more severe than anything we have seen so far.

In the past, the men and women who were militarily active in the 1940's and 1950's had a moderating influence on today's Irish Republican Army. They were relied upon to ensure that war, however severe, never went beyond certain limits or, if it did, the people responsible would be told in clear terms that such warfare was not acceptable to the republican family as a whole. The IRA refused, for example, to be drawn into a sectarian war even when the resources of British intelligence were being used to try to create one. When those efforts failed, British and Irish media said it was a sectarian war, nevertheless--every soldier or police officer attacked was attacked because he or she was a Protestant. When the IRA attacked Catholics who were police, soldiers or judges, the media then said not only was the IRA sectarian by attacking Protestants, but also was cruelly indifferent event to its own. But it was never a sectarian war, even when Catholics were killed by government encouraged loyalists to make it appear so.

There is little doubt that if the war resumes, some of the restraints will be swept away by a generation of young people angry, intellectually capable, and convinced that old methods have had their day.

Democrats who point this out to British and Irish officials are accused of threatening them with war, thus justifying the British line that Irish democrats have guns under the table to use if they do not get their way. The inability of most journalists, politicians, academics and church people to analyze an obvious situation will be one of the factors leading to a resumption of the war, if that tragedy happens.

How can a resumption of the war be prevented? If the British government wants it to resume, then nothing Irish democrats can do will prevent that from happening. The British by a series of deliberate and well calculated manoeuvres turned the peaceful civil rights movement of the 60's into a revolutionary war which they thought they could deal with and win. Time and organizational ability on the part of the IRA showed they were wrong, but the lesson seems not to have penetrated Whitehall consciousness. They believe even yet that they can win a guerilla war fought to drive them out of territory where they are economically damaging and politically unjustified.

For many Irish democrats the problem is that although the British have never won against a revolutionary war and know that the UK is going to dissolve into a new form (even apart from the Irish secession) they are still imprisoned by historical mind sets. They cannot cope with historical

movements which other people would accept with a shrug of the shoulders and make the most of.

One thing that will prevent a resumption of war is British fear that London will also suffer. If by some stroke of magic the British could get the IRA to give up all explosives and its ability to make explosives, that would be the last we would hear of the peace process. But life is not like that and 600,000 democrats in the north are hardly likely to agree to a decommissioning which for many of them would be equivalent to getting notice to quit the Northern Ireland state forever. It happened in the 1920's and 1960's. Democrats know they would be foolish to let it happen again.

International pressure, especially from the US, to get the British government into negotiation with all elected representatives of the people is an essential for permanent peace.

Our Best Tool...

Is not being used! The *PEC Telephone Hotline* -- (914) 429-7849 -- is PEC's most effective and quickest tool for contacting our government leaders. Yet, it's not used as it should be.

Recently, there has been much activity in Washington that has required member action to our nation's political leaders. Our members who use the Hotline have been right on top of things, including playing a crucial role in the success of the MacBride Principles in the House of Representatives.

Imagine the impact the Hotline would have if 1,000 members used it weekly. PEC would be able to generate at least 1,000 calls and letters to opinion makers. That is real clout. Now is the time we must be demonstrating clout to keep the peace process moving and in the right direction.

So start using the *PEC Telephone Hotline* (914) 429-7849. Messages change every Sunday night. Hotline is in service 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. You can pass the message on to other concerned people.

Newsbits *cont. from page 1*

began after Orangemen attacked a TV camera crew. (*Newsletter and Irish News* 7/11/95)

Belfast's only Irish language secondary school, Meanscoil Feirste, is awaiting a judicial review of the Department of Education's denial of funding. Meanscoil parents believe the British Department are denying their funding for political reasons because they have fulfilled all criteria laid down by the Department for recognition. (*Just News* 6/95)

Ireland's Justice Minister, Nora Owen, tells relatives of the 33 victims of the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings there is no evidence of collusion between British agents and loyalists. However, Irish television producer Paul Larkin Coyle says the RTE (Irish television) team has uncovered significant evidence of collusion between loyalists and British agents. Coyle says the RTE team has found that elements within "British Intelligence units would run loyalist paramilitaries seemingly as a matter of course as agents as it were and also at times assist them in assassinations and other acts of terrorism." (*Just News* 6/95)

Amnesty International 1995 report urges that "the protection of human rights be placed centrally on the agenda in the search for a political settlement in the context of ceasefires in Northern Ireland." The human rights organization's report notes the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture's concern (1993) that "detainees held under emergency legislation ran a significant risk of psychological ill-treatment and, on occasion, of physical ill-treatment." Amnesty emphasizes the need for recorded interrogations and the right of the detained to legal assistance during interrogation. The report repeats Amnesty's long-standing concerns about the "ineffectiveness of inquests dealing with disputed killings by the [British] security forces." (*Irish Times* 7/6/95)

Boycott Of England Needed Now

PEC member **Bill Fahy** suggests that all members and their families and friends **boycott England** by not traveling there during the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Ireland's Great Hunger 1995 - 2000 or until a permanent peace with justice is achieved in Ireland.

Certainly, no American Irish should have trouble participating in this boycott. As descendants of the victims of this English-made tragedy, during which our ancestors suffered violently, we owe this small sacrifice to their memory.

The boycott will also bring pressure to bear on the British government to quickly advance the peace process to a democratic and permanent solution. The boycott is also being promoted by other organizations.

Just as important as the boycott is educating the public about the Great Hunger. The British would like us to be ignorant of our history so they don't have to face up to their responsibility for injustices in Ireland.

You can purchase the books *Paddy's Lament* and *The Great Hunger* and the video, *When Ireland Starved*, through the PEC. Call (914) 947-2726. You can loan these items to others and you can use them as gifts. We ask also that you and your family, friends, etc. attend Hunger activities that take place in your community.

PEC Ad Thanks President Clinton

Minnesota PEC State Director **Leah Curtin** has advised that on May 27, 1995 an advertisement thanking President Bill Clinton for supporting the peace process and urging House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole to support the Administration's Irish peace policy, was placed for PEC in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* by the *Minnesotians For Peace*, who paid for the ad.

The ad was similar to the one PEC placed in the *Washington Times*, the quarter-page ad which was reprinted in this Newsletter.

Whenever possible, we must publicly thank the president and encourage Republican leaders to get involved. We are grateful to the *Minnesotians For Peace* for their generosity and astuteness.

Great Hunger Resolutions Are Needed

We congratulate **Dale Warner** of Santa Clara County, California, for having had adopted the first resolution of its kind (that we are aware of) by Santa Clara County's Board of Supervisors. We also thank the Santa Clara Legislature, who unanimously adopted the resolution on June 13, 1995: **Michael M. Honda**, Chairman; Board of Supervisors: **Blanca Alvarado**, **Ray Gonzales**, **James T. Beall, Jr.**, and **Dianne McKenna**.

Next month, PEC will print a resolution for members' use.

We must secure official recognition of the Great Hunger from our town, county, city, and state governments. This is an easy enough process. All you have to do is get a copy of the PEC resolution to your government representatives requesting that they introduce it to their government body. The process will educate our leaders.

If you would like a copy of the resolution immediately, call PEC at (914) 947-2726

The Great Hunger: TIME FOR AN ENGLISH APOLOGY

The great British writer William Makepeace Thackeray described English colonial rule in Ireland as follows:

"It's a frightful document against ourselves -- one of the most melancholy stories in the whole world of insolence, rapine, brutal, endless slaughter, and persecution. There is no crime ever invented by eastern or western barbarians, no torture or Roman persecution or Spanish Inquisition, no tyranny of Nero or Alva but can be matched in the history of the English in Ireland."

The American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC has commenced a grassroots campaign to seek from the British government an apology for causing much of the death and suffering during Ireland's Great Hunger. **We need your help to make this campaign a success.** (See *How You Can Help* below.)

An English apology must be one of the goals of the Irish American community during the 5-year commemoration period (September 1995 through September 2000) of the 150th anniversary of the Great Hunger. This man-made starvation claimed up to 2 million lives and forced another 2 million Irish to emigrate. Between the years 1845 and 1850, Ireland lost half of its population. Yet, during the potato blight England shipped out of Ireland enough food to feed the population twice over.

The Southern Baptist Church in America has apologized to black people for their past support of slavery. Germany has apologized to the Jewish race for Nazi atrocities. Japan apologized for wartime abuses against Korean women. These are wise international healing gestures. Now, as we commemorate the Great Hunger, an English apology would be an appropriate gesture.

Reputable scholars now recognize that rigid English adherence to laissez-faire principles of political economy, lack of sympathy with the Irish people and outright anti-Irish hostility converted the tragedy of the potato blight into a disaster. Why not an apology by the English?

An English apology is long overdue the Irish people. The first step toward reconciliation, which would demonstrate the sincerity of the British government, would be to acknowledge responsibility for the magnitude of the disaster. An apology would be the stroke which starts to melt the hard hearts blocking movement to bring peace with justice to Northern Ireland.

PEC has commenced the campaign by writing to the British government requesting an apology.

The British government's acknowledging responsibility for the Great Hunger is important to today's English-Irish peace process. The British portray themselves as impartial brokers in Ireland keeping peace between Catholics and

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Protestants. Yet history shows they are responsible for fomenting dissent among the Irish people and for supporting the loyalists' for their pro-Union position. By acknowledging responsibility, the British will be accepting responsibility for today's conflict, too.

People like you have a major role to play in making this just campaign a success--as you did with the Boston College-Thatcher campaign. **The campaign must continue until the British government acknowledges its responsibility.** This means that you can hand out this R&D throughout the 5-year duration of the commemoration. We can obtain an English apology, **but only with your help.** Get others to assist you.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Write the letter below to: British Ambassador Robin Renwick, British Embassy, 3100 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20008.

Dear Mr. Renwick:

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Ireland's Great Hunger, please urge the British government to issue an apology to the Irish people in acknowledgment of responsibility for the enormity of this calamity. Such an acknowledgment is essential to establishing peace and reconciliation in Ireland.

2. Send a copy of this PEC *Reproduce & Distribute* (R&D) to all Irish American organizations and the different new media (newspapers, radio & TV news programs, college media, etc.) in your community. Distribute them at all Irish American functions such as: dances, feisanna, festivals, concerts, etc. Mail them to friends, relatives, etc. throughout the U.S.

LOOKING AHEAD

1. PEC will be producing petitions to the British government for an acknowledgment of responsibility for the Great Hunger. You'll be able to copy them, get them signed, and return them to us so we can deliver them to the British government.
2. The letter-writing campaign will broaden in coming newsletters.

For further information contact:
AIEF-PEC, 54 South Liberty Drive,
Suite 401, Stony Point, NY 10980.
(914) 947-2726

It has been on the cards for months now that the marching season would be very difficult this year. The unionist community ... feels insecure about its future. It is deeply skeptical of the peace process, suspecting that the end of violence was brought about because a deal was cut to buy off the IRA.

DON'T LET PEACE PROCESS FALTER

excerpts from an article by Mary Holland

(Peace Process Should Not Be Allowed to Falter, Irish Times, July 13, 1995)

It has been encouraged in these suspicions ... by its own leaders. The focus ... has been on Ian Paisley and David Trimble, but other, ostensibly more "responsible" politicians have helped to fuel the paranoia which sees sell-out and betrayal everywhere.

Against this background, and long before the violence in nationalist areas provoked by the release of Private Lee Clegg, it was clearly important that stratagems should be worked out to allow the marches to pass off peacefully. The [Orange marches] are not exactly a new problem. Ever since [Dublin] has been empowered, by the Anglo-Irish Agreement, to make representations on matters affecting nationalists, the Orange marches have been high on the agenda. In recent years, the measures taken by successive secretaries of state have helped to defuse the inevitable tensions.

This year's confrontations constitute a dangerous ... setback not only to the political process but to relations between the communities. Sir Patrick Mayhew continues to insist that the decision to release Private Lee Clegg was not a major factor in exacerbating tensions. If he believes this, then both parts of this island may be in worse trouble than we yet realize.

Once widespread rioting, again wholly predictable, broke out in nationalist areas, it was inevitable that Sinn Fein's commitment to the peace process would be ... questioned. Fears in loyalist areas have been, quite understandably, heightened by warnings from unionist leaders and reports in the media that senior IRA figures are talking about a return to violence.

What is most worrying in all this is the impression that Dublin is no longer speaking--or acting--with the ... determination which brought about the

ceasefire in the first place. This may not be entirely fair. I accept that, for example, officials at the Maryfield Secretariat have been working ... to try and broker ... compromises over the Orange marches. But that is not how the situation is perceived, at least by nationalists in the North.

On the contrary, there is a worrying suspicion that the alliance constructed by John Hume and Gerry Adams, which persuaded the IRA to call off its campaign and pursue an "alternative strategy," is falling apart. In essence, this consisted of a coalition of Northern nationalists, [Dublin], and the Irish-American political lobby, whose influence in Washington was crucial to winning the Clinton administration's support for the peace. From the start, the central role in this "pan-nationalist front" was that of [Dublin], since it has the responsibility for negotiating with Britain.

When John Bruton became Taoiseach, fears were expressed that, given his implacable hostility to the IRA, he would be unwilling either to contemplate the kind of risks associated with his predecessor, Albert Reynolds, or to take a tough stance with the British if this seemed to be pushing him too close to Sinn Fein. In fact, ... Mr. Bruton has been extremely critical of the British on issues like the release of Clegg, and his outrage has carried more weight because he is so patently a decent ... politician. On the prisoners issue, he moved swiftly to release men and women convicted of paramilitary crimes in this State and has [impressed] on the British the need to [do the same].

Yet the impression persists not only of a faltering in the peace process due to external reasons like the recent Tory leadership contest, but of a lack of coherence and drive in [Dublin's]

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handling of it. In part, this may be due to Mr. Bruton's desire to show unionists he understands their concerns. But ... he has made a serious mistake in allowing himself to be drawn into the argument about the decommissioning of IRA weapons.

Inevitably, the apparent confusion of views within Irish nationalism has been seized on by the British as an excuse not only for excluding Sinn Fein from all-party talks but for putting pressure on the SDLP to join in without them.

[What is essential now] is a clear statement of the long-term objectives of the peace process and evidence of a renewed determination not to be diverted from these aims. We want to see a political settlement acceptable to both communities in the North and to the people of the island as a whole. Sinn Fein has accepted, and this is a historic step, that this can only come about with unionist consent.

Reaching agreement on such a political settlement will be far from easy. [The Orange march confrontations have shown] the depth of the suspicions and fears in both communities and how little these have been eroded by nearly a year of peace. Any return to violence would render inclusive talks impossible, which is another reason for getting them under way as quickly as possible.

Earlier this week, as Orange and Green confronted both the police and each other on the streets of the North, Sir Patrick Mayhew said he believed peace was now "embedded" in the hearts and minds of ordinary people and that they would not allow it to fail. Unfortunately, if peace breaks down, ordinary people will have very little to say about it.

FOR INFORMATION about *PEC-American Ireland Education Foundation*, write 54 South Liberty Drive, Suite 401, Stony Point, NY 10980, or call (914) 947-2726.

Published August 1995 by PEC-AIEF



The wives of former Irish political prisoners living in the US have formed a group to campaign against the government's attempts to deport their husbands to Ireland.

Irish American Families Against Political Deportations met with 28 members of Congress in Washington in June to publicize their husbands' cases. "The INS just started scooping the men up at once," said Colleen Gaynor, whose husband, Noel, had political status while he was imprisoned in Long Kesh from 1976 to 1990.

US ATTEMPTS TO DEPORT FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS

When she and Noel planned to marry, they went to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and discussed Noel's imprisonment. "We didn't withhold any information, and the INS gave him temporary work status," Ms. Gaynor said. "Then, after working for two and a half years, two INS agents came to the door at 6:30 in the morning and arrested him."

Gaynor's attorneys are arguing that other former political prisoners in Ireland have been granted the right to stay in the US on the grounds that their imprisonment was political. However, the Gaynors are concerned that pending anti-terrorism legislation, which contains a special clause referring to Northern Ireland, will target men who have been political prisoners by refusing to acknowledge the political nature of the offenses and/or imprisonment. The controversial legislation will exclude them from the right to political asylum.

Noel Gaynor, Charlie Caulfield, Matt Morrison, Paul Campbell, Kevin Crossan, Gabriel Megahey, Robbie McErlaine, Jim Barr, and Brian Pearson all face a similar plight: the families could be forced to uproot themselves and return to Ireland. "It is the United States of America, our own country, that is virtually threatening innocent women and children by destabilizing our families. The Government would have us choose between our husbands, children, and senior parents," the women say.

The State and City of New York have passed resolutions in support of the prisoners and their families.

On July 14, Thomas Manton and three delegates from the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs met with Janet Reno in behalf of the families.

Members can support this campaign by writing to President Clinton urging him not to deport these men.

Turn To Action Request #1 On Page Six

Member Suggestions

Thomas Delahunty of North Carolina suggests we take advantage of the fund-raising letters we'll receive from candidates, committees, etc., before the 1996 elections.

Tom suggests that you send the solicitations back stating that you would first like to know their positions on a united Ireland, the MacBride Principles, etc., before you contribute. We suggest asking about their position on the Irish Peace Process. If they have not taken a position, will they, and what will it be. **You will get their attention.**

If your candidates are already doing the right thing about Ireland and you send a donation, be sure to tell them that that is why you're contributing to their campaign.

Robert Sweeney of Connecticut urges members with access to Internet or E-mail to send Action Requests to President Clinton at his electronic address: president@whitehouse.gov.

E-mail is inexpensive and easy to use. Robert sends the President a word of encouragement regarding peace in Ireland a couple of times a month. You can include in your transmission other requests such as, that he support the Irish nationalist position, that he keep the pressure on the British, etc.

Members who don't have access to Internet or E-Mail can call, fax or write to President Clinton at: Hon. Bill Clinton, The White House, Washington, DC 20500 - Phone # 202 456-1111, Fax # 202 456-2461.

RETRACTION

Due to erroneous information in the *Irish Voice*, we had asked members to request that US Rep. Funderburk of North Carolina apologize for saying to British Prime Minister John Major that, "I am more British than he is." The comment was made by another Representative. We apologize to Mr. Funderburk, who personally telephoned us, for wrongly attributing this remark to him.

Action Requests

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

1. Hon. Bill Clinton

The President
White House
Washington, DC 20500
Ph. # (202) 456-1111
president@whitehouse.gov

Message: Please appoint the peace envoy and call for an impartial international negotiator to broker the final settlement in Ireland. Britain's release of soldier Lee Clegg shows the British are not objective.

I also respectfully urge that you do not deport former Irish political prisoners in the US to Ireland.

2. Dole For President

810 First Street, NE, Suite 30
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 414-6400

Message: Senator Bob Dole's accepting Mrs. Thatcher's support is offensive to Irish Americans. She is guilty of rights abuses in Northern Ireland. I urge you to rectify this offense by supporting the Irish peace process and urging the British government to move it forward.

MAJOR CONCERN:

Dole Accepts Thatcher's Endorsement

by Ed Walsh, New York

As reported by CNN White House correspondent, Wolf Blitzer on *Inside Politics*, Sunday, July 1, 1995, Senator Bob Dole, in his bid for the Republican nomination for the presidency, has publicly accepted former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher's endorsement. Blitzer commented, "Our researchers have yet to find a single electoral vote in the British Isles."

Dole has slapped all concerned people in the face. He is saying he's quite comfortable with Thatcher and her human rights violations against the nationalist community in Northern Ireland and Britain. Her government's anti-Irish, anti-Catholic bigotry and injustice--the current British government's inheritance--are well documented throughout the western world.

Many Irish Americans had begun voting Republican (Reagan Democrats, etc.), yet Dole has decided their issues are irrelevant--or maybe he's just taking their votes for granted.

The cruelty and discrimination that Margaret Thatcher as prime minister, her army, and her courts visited on the Irish people are a reminder of the kind of genocide the British government has always visited on the Irish--and any other ethnic group they decided to "look down upon" as inferior to them. Is Senator Dole in "denial," or is it that he doesn't care what we voters think?

We have repeatedly asked Dole to endorse the English-Irish peace process; he has refused to do so. We weren't asking for much, just for his recognition of and encouragement for a process that could lead to Irish unity, freedom, and self-determination after 800 years of English oppression.

The senator has ignored our issues. He has even treated the peace process as if it were a non-event and we, the Irish American community, a non-lobby.

What do we do? The answer: Take pen and phone in hand and let Dole know he made a big mistake and that he must now rectify this with a strong endorsement of the English-Irish peace process and a strong criticism of the British government's delaying tactics.

If we do not do this, Dole will think we just don't care or that we are just too lazy to contact his office and let him know we believe he is wrong. We must make certain Dole and other candidates will not be in a position to return to a pro-British policy if the Republicans win the 1996 elections. Don't let that happen!

See Action Request #2 On This Page

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