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American Irish Newsletter - January 1993

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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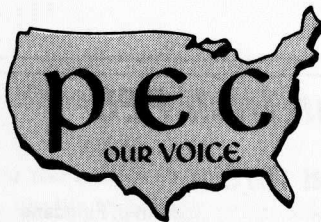


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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 18, Number 1

January 1993

Affinity Fund Saves You Money While You Support The PEC

Beginning January 1993 members will receive an **Affinity Fund application with their PEC membership renewal notice**. We urge you to read it through.

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Newbits by Kathy Regan

The Belfast black taxi service is efficient and cheap, providing a needed service and around 300 jobs in one of the most economically deprived areas in western Europe. It is estimated that the service generates L6 million a year in the local economy and some L2 million is saved in social security payments by having this locally run business. You would think that such an economic success story would be welcomed by those in authority and held up as an example of what can be achieved by hard work and community spirit. Instead, there has been a protracted campaign waged against the black taxis over the past 20 years by a number of government agencies. The latest phase of that campaign is the sudden decision to prosecute the taxis on a technicality. For the past 20 years, drivers have been picking up and dropping off passengers along prescribed routes in both nationalist

Continued on page 4

Attention Congress and Media: Just How Dangerous is British Influence in America?

Just how DANGEROUS is British government influence in American government? Will we soon find out?

President-Elect Bill Clinton, soon to be President of the United States, is already under fire from the British government because of his opposition to British government injustice in Northern Ireland. The Brits are already conducting a dirty propaganda war against Clinton. They will use whoever they can to undermine our President, some willingly and others unwillingly. Who is in charge here?

Since election day, British government agents have been pressuring Clinton and his people to renege on his Northern Ireland Agenda. This is the same government who sent representatives to the US to help the President Bush reelection committee in their unsuccessful bid to defeat Mr. Clinton. The nerve of this same foreign government to now be demanding that Mr. Clinton renege on his Northern Ireland agenda!

The first public assault on our President came from the little read *Washington Times*. In an editorial on November 18 the Times implied that President Clinton is supporting the IRA because he opposes British injustice. The content of the editorial, was obviously supplied by the British Information Service. It contained all the standard lines that appear in editorials around the country, particularly where there are MacBride Principles campaigns underway. The editorials condemn the MacBride Principles and those who support them, support our Government's political interference in our system of justice as in the case of Joe Doherty, urge Americans not to speak out against British injustice, etc.

Nowhere do the editorials voice concern about British injustices or even mention them, even though reputable human rights organizations like Amnesty International have documented such injustice.

Just how DANGEROUS is British government influence in our mainstream media? The amount of British investment in America, which is greater than any other nation including Japan, also adds to the danger of British government influence in America -- through advertising income. Not only are our Congressional leaders intimidated by the British lobby, but so are our mainstream news media. We are advised of cases in which British representatives pressured our mainstream media not to discuss the situation in Northern Ireland or the MacBride Principles. How often has your media reported on the success of the MacBride Principles -- now the law in 13 states?

Americans should be outraged by the British threat to our national security -- our ability to hear the truth.

Mr. Clinton owes his allegiance to his fellow Americans and not to a foreign government. Certainly the Clinton people are aware of the fact that many millions of Irish/Irish Americans voted for Mr. Clinton. Some voted for him because they saw the PEC's *New York Times* ad on November 1, 1992 spelling out Clinton's Northern Ireland agenda, and others because they vowed to "Remember in November" (Joe Doherty). Certainly he is mindful of the support generated for him by the Irish Americans For Clinton/Gore. Our views on these issues are reasonable and we deserve to be heard.

Be A Letter Writer! Repond To The Action Requests.

From the Editor

We have increased our phone calls to the media asking that they report British government injustice in Northern Ireland. We have received various excuses for the lack of coverage.

The most interesting reason they give us is: "People are not interested in British injustice in Northern Ireland."

How can people be interested in an issue they don't even know exists? People learn about different issues from the media, as the media creates issues and interest. They decide what is news and what isn't. The reason people do not know about injustice in Northern Ireland is because the media has kept it out of the public eye. How many people knew about Apartheid in South Africa before the media began covering that issue?

Most of the media people we deal with have no knowledge of the Northern Ireland injustice issue. Like the average American, they too are ignorant of the facts.

They are not aware that the struggle has its beginnings long before 1969. They are not aware of Ireland's partition, nor are they aware of the fact that many millions of Irish people have been exterminated by the British government since it first occupied Ireland.

The key to the media's ignorance is its news sources. For information, the print media depends on the wire services, such as the Associated Press (AP), United Press International (UPI), and Reuters. TV news depends much on CNN which gets much of its news from censored BBC. The wire services often receive their information from British government-controlled sources. This is the information, limited and one-sided, they distribute to the public.

And this is why the media reports only on IRA bombings. This is why the media does not report that the Northern Irish people have had to continuously endure British colonial injustice and oppression for more than 800 years. This is why the media does not report that the British paramilitary Ulster Defense Association (UDA) is responsible for the murder of many more innocent civilians than any of the combatants.

British control over the news shapes not only the opinions of the general population, but also shapes the opinions of media people.

MacBride Principles Update

Member John Myers informs us that the City of Lakewood, Ohio (pop. 70,000) adopted contract-compliance MacBride Principles legislation on November 2, 1992, declaring adoption an "emergency measure" to counteract discrimination in Northern Ireland. According to PEC Ohio State Director, Kathleen Whitford, Director of the Ohio MacBride Principles Coalition, President-Elect Bill Clinton's endorsement of the MacBride Principles holds the promise of further success for the Principles. PEC members in Ohio who are not active in the Ohio MacBride campaign should contact Kathy Whitford. For Kathy's address and phone number, see PEC organization box above.

Member James Bickel informs us that the St. Patrick's Church parish council in Omaha, Nebraska passed a MacBride Principles resolution. Mr. Bickel has forwarded a copy of the endorsement to his State Legislator Tim Hall, who returned a "positive" response and request for more information.

The American Irish PEC

founded 1975

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The Casement Accused

by Sandy Carlson

The British government revealed during the eighth trial in November 1992 that there may be a ninth trial arising out of the Casement Park incident on March 19, 1988. The Casement Park incident arose after two British Army corporals drove into a funeral cortege in 1988. The soldiers were removed from their car after one of them fired shots. They were then taken away to Casement Park where they were shot by the IRA.

The six men on trial in November -- Patrick Pearse Maguire, Patrick Doherty, Hugh Cullen, Brendan Burns, Padriac Wilson, and Charles Columba McMennamin - deny a total of 18 charges of assault, abduction, and murder.

The corporals had been killed after a week of highly emotional events: the British army's SAS had shot dead three unarmed nationalists in Gibraltar on March 9, 1988; loyalist paramilitary Michael Stone had attacked the funeral of the Gibraltar Three at Milltown Cemetery, killing three mourners (one of whom was Caoimhin macBraithigh, into whose funeral the corporals intruded.)

Since then, over 40 men have been sentenced for offenses in relation to the deaths, often on flimsy evidence. There is little doubt that not all are guilty of the killings or even were in the crowd of attackers. The Casement Accused Relatives Committee (CARC) say all those who were convicted were acting in self-defense, in fear of another Michael Stone-type attack.

The CARC claims the sentences are excessive and inconsistent. For example, two men charged with murder received sentences of over 25 years recommended; a third was allowed out on bail and then received a life sentence.

The identification evidence is suspect, says the CARC. Much of the film evidence has been treated: color has been either added or removed, or is hopelessly blurry. Even then-Secretary of State for Northern

Ireland, Tom King, admitted that "it took some time to clarify what was taking place" in the video filmed from the army helicopter.

Because the British are still arresting for this incident, the matter is "sub judice" and, therefore, receives very little media coverage. The "sub judice" rules, particular to British criminal trials, are a convenient method of covering up controversial matters. As a result, this silent internment of anybody present at the funeral goes on without the public's notice.

The Casement trials have set dangerous precedents: conviction on the basis of blurry video evidence, the use of the right to silence to infer guilt, and the use of witnesses from the media. The continued arrest of

individuals four years after the incident is in itself an indictment of British due process. All of this in conjunction with the now time-honored court practices in Northern Ireland: the use of juryless Diplock courts and anonymous testimony of witnesses, and the out of context consideration of events surrounding an incident results in the subversion of due process. All told, this is a handy way to get rid of unwanted citizens, to intimidate citizens from participating in community events, and to accelerate the subversion of democracy. (Test: if the news in this article did not shock or offend you, you are well used to the undemocratic measures that emanate from the mother of parliaments.)

Public Affairs Office Update

We are proud to say that the impact of our Public Affairs Office (PAO) recent newspaper advertising campaign in the *New York Times* and *Houston Post* was tremendous. People across the US learned about British injustice in Northern Ireland, many for the first time. We have begun to break the media wall of silence, at our own expense. Can you imagine what would happen if the media began to report on British injustice in Northern Ireland?

We must concentrate PAO's efforts on educating the media. It is for this reason that we must reconsider the location and primary function of our not-yet-open Public Affairs Office. We had originally planned that the office be located in Washington.

If we place our emphasis on the media, we will probably locate the office in New York City as it is the media capital of the world. There are other advantages to locating in New York City: it will be less costly, and more practical a location as much of PEC resources are located in the area. Based on financial results of our campaign, it would be a long time before we would be able to operate effectively in Washington.

We believe our efforts with the media will bring pressure on Congress in Washington, DC. The organizations

already operating in Washington, DC are, perhaps, better positioned to deal with Members of Congress. Some PEC members have pointed this out. This may lead to a more coordinated relationship between organizations.

To date, the affairs of the PAO, which include the newspaper advertising, have been conducted by a PAO planning committee. The committee membership consists of professionals with advertising, business and legal skills. PEC's President and Vice-President are active members of this committee.

Much of the monies (\$25,000) already raised to fund the operations of PAO have been used for the newspaper advertising campaign. The total value of the ads placed in the newspapers was almost \$50,000, much more than raised for the PAO. Much of that money came in the form of donations and a loan.

We will soon begin an extensive fund-raising campaign to tens of thousands of people for the purpose of continuing the newspapers advertising campaign and opening the Public Affairs Office.

We ask that you be very generous when you receive your solicitation. You will be supporting the most effective public awareness project yet!

A US President With Roots In British Oppression

by Kevin P. Murphy
Massachusetts State Director

The wrongful deportation of Joseph P. Doherty to the hands of British oppressors certainly went against the very foundations and grain of American tradition. The Reagan/Bush Administrations wanted Americans to think that the war in northeast Ireland is something new and far removed from anything American. The roots of fighting British oppression are deep, even in the family tree of the American Presidency, as the following historical fact states.

James McKinley, the grandfather of the 25th President of the United States, William McKinley, hailed from Ballymoney, Dervock in County Antrim. As Presbyterians, the McKinley's were forced to pay tithes to the Protestant Church of Ireland, a church to which they did not belong. Like Irish Catholics in British-occupied Ireland, the McKinley's lived in

absolute poverty and had minimal rights.

The Rebellion of 1798 saw the Society of United Irishmen organize to overthrow British authority in Ireland. Under the leadership of Wolfe Tone, the organization had a large number of Protestants in its ranks. James McKinley and his brother Francis joined the United Irishmen in the hopes of seeing an Ireland free from British oppression and persecution.

The McKinley brothers took part as active soldiers with the United Irishmen at the battle of Antrim. Francis McKinley, the great agitator for Irish freedom and grand uncle of a future American President, was captured by British troops. He was taken to Coleraine and promptly hanged as a rebel.

Shortly afterwards, the President's grandfather, James, immigrated to the United States in search of freedom.

(Special thanks to member Edward Kelley of Boston for the use of his library of Irish American history.)

Newsbits *continued from page 1*

and loyalist areas and nothing was said. Suddenly, a driver was fined for operating illegally since his license allows only pick ups and drop offs at two specific points, not all along the route. This is not a case of bureaucratic red tape; it is another attempt to crush the black taxis. The government sinks millions of pounds into job creation agencies which are failing miserably to put jobs where jobs are needed. Yet that same government refuses to lift a finger to help keep a major local employer in business. If the black taxis were not a locally-run concern, not only would this issue not be a problem, but huge amounts of money would have been handed over in the form of grants and tax breaks. The fact of the matter is that not only does the government give no aid at all to the black taxis, it won't take even the most minor step to allow them to operate. (Andersonstown News, 11/28/92) Black taxis operate in both

loyalist and nationalist areas and this issue may bring ordinary working people together as no "peace group" could hope to. Unfortunately, whenever working people from both communities get together, the government does something to separate them.

The recently completed Stormont talks have come to an end. "The New Ireland they were supposed to be aimed at was one subject to [maintenance of] public order. All cultural, political and religious beliefs could be freely expressed. We wonder was there anyone who noticed the contradiction in this statement and the fact that 35% of nationalists were deliberately excluded from the talks? This exclusion prevented them from freely expressing their political beliefs and let's not forget that representatives of that 35% of the population are not self-appointed mouthpieces but the democratically-elected spokesmen for a particular point of view that had a significant influence on events in Ireland over the past couple of

Use The PEC Telephone Hotline (914) 429-7849

The Telephone Hotline is a very effective way to keep our issues in the forefront and to get results. Recently, we used the Hotline to urge Congressman Joe Kennedy to endorse the MacBride Principles. Just recently Kennedy announced his support for the MacBride Principles.

How the Hotline works -- every Sunday night a letter-writing request is pre-recorded. The message remains the same until the following Sunday. You call the Hotline number (accessible 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week) and you hear a brief message asking you to write a letter. We provide a sample letter and the address. The message is repeated. The Hotline is used by individuals, organizations and telephone chains.

Messages last no more than 3 minutes. For lowest telephone rates call daily after 11 PM or on weekends (Saturday through Sunday to 5 PM).

The more people that use the Hotline, the greater will be our effect.

centuries... Democracy is all-embracing or it is nothing. When people start picking and choosing who will represent the electorate despite the results of the ballot box, then democracy has no meaning at all... Unionists are not interested in any form of political reconciliation with the rest of the people of Ireland. Their whole ethos and *raison d'être* is based on elitism and supremacy and in this they have the full support of the British government... Talks will eventually end the political violence all right-thinking people want to see stopped, but they can only succeed when everyone is involved... The political violence in our society is the legacy of hundreds of years of outside malign interference and, as with any other colonial situation anywhere in the world, no solution is possible until the fact of outside interference is recognized and confronted." (Andersonstown News, 11/1/92)

Irish Political Prisoners in America?

by Stephanie Finucane

1992 was a year of unprecedented amounts of arrests in the American Irish community. While the year started off with the deportation of Joe Doherty to Northern Ireland and the granting of political asylum to Sean Mackin, the hunt for bodies continued with the arrest of Francis Gildernew, Jim Smyth and Kevin Artt. Each man was arrested by the FBI on charges of passport fraud. However, some aspect of their lives in Northern Ireland is tied in: Smyth and Artt are H-Block (Long Kesh) escapees, and Gildernew spent eight years in Long Kesh where, since he was sentenced before 1976, he was given political prisoner status. Gerry McGeough, in contrast, was extradited to the US from Germany after a nearly two-year trial alleging his involvement in IRA attacks against the British army. As the case against him steadily crumbled, a US extradition warrant was issued in January 1992 because he was named in an indictment ten years prior, dating back to 1982, charging him with conspiring to ship arms to the IRA.

The recent wave of arrests in New York are not of persons seeking asylum from persecution in Northern Ireland, but of persons "conspiring" to abet IRA activities. Four Irish-born men were arrested on Wednesday, November 11, 1992 on charges of conspiracy to obtain and export 2,900 bomb detonators and other munitions to the Provisional IRA in Northern Ireland. The arrests, made simultaneously between 2 and 4 o'clock that afternoon, are based on an indictment issued by an Arizona-based Grand Jury on September 3, 1992.

Tony Brannigan, 32, of Armagh, was arrested at his work site in Manhattan where he is a porter. Patrick J. Moley, 32, of Armagh, was arrested at a Manhattan building site where he works as a plumber. While tending bar at the Phoenix bar, of which he is part-owner, Thomas Maguire, 36, of Fermanagh, was arrested while about 30 FBI agents raided the bar after cordoning off the street. No evidence was found, and \$6,000 was taken from the cash register. Simultaneously, Maguire's wife Breege and 2-year-old daughter were greeted by several FBI agents who searched their home, confiscating not only documents

like bank records and passports, but also keys to the house and car. (The keys and some documents were later returned). The family's collection of Irish history books was taken. The fourth man arrested is a Canadian resident from Cork, 55-year-old Dennis Leyne, a retired vice president of a Canadian bank at which he worked his way up during 33 years of employment. Leyne was arrested at JFK airport.

The day after the arrests, the men were arraigned and held at MCC in downtown Manhattan and did not see each other until Tuesday, November 17 at the bail and identification hearing. Assistant US Attorney from Arizona, Andrew Dember tried to convince presiding Judge Michael Dollinger to deny bail, calling the men a threat to national security. He also said the men had no community ties in New York so extradition to Arizona was the only logical step because the indictment originated in Arizona, regardless of the expense such a move would incur (four new defense lawyers, travel costs, etc.) Defense attorneys Steven Somerstein (one of Joe Doherty's lawyers), Peter Neufeld, Frank Durkan, and Michael Kennedy demonstrated the men's strong community ties. Not only was the courtroom packed with supporters, while others waited outside, but concerned persons had already pledged money to post bail for each of the men - if bail was to be granted. (To make things difficult, Canadian securities were rejected.) Durkan, Maguire's lawyer, who has represented several Irish republican cases across the country, said that no one charged of IRA-related offenses in the US has ever jumped bail.

At the end of the day, bail was granted for all four men. Dember immediately appealed the decision and the men were not released. A November 23 conference call between the defense lawyers and Arizona Judge John Roll, recent federal appointee by President Bush, resulted in a postponement of the appeal hearing until December 11 because Roll had not been able to fully review the case. Meanwhile, the men who won bail are still in jail and American tax dollars are paying for this.

Why these men? Perhaps because each displayed concern for the situation in Northern Ireland: Maguire is part-

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owner of the Phoenix bar which has been the location of many fundraisers related to human rights violations in Northern Ireland. Leyne is active in preserving the story of Grosse Ile, Canada's Ellis Island, which is the burial ground for over 20,000 Irish escaping the "famine" orchestrated by British colonialism. Brannigan raises funds in his community for immigrants who are injured or sick and lack medical coverage. Moley ran in the 1992 New York Marathon to raise funds for the Cullyhana Justice Group, which is investigating the murder of Fergal Caraher by British troops in Northern Ireland. It's obvious these men are guilty of speaking out on the horror story unfolding daily in Northern Ireland. (Likewise, Francis Gildernew says he was targeted by the FBI because of his involvement in lobbying for MacBride Principles Legislation in New York.)

Remember the Boston Three? After seven years of surveillance involving 100 agents and the tapping of over 100 phone booths in Boston, the FBI produced no physical evidence. Yet in August 1990, two Americans and an Irish immigrant were convicted of conspiring to violate export laws and create a missile system to shoot down British military helicopters in Northern Ireland.

Is it clear yet? Standing up for human rights in Northern Ireland is dangerous in the US. The threat of "conspiracy" hangs over humanitarians. The arrests of 1992 tell us one thing: the US is pursuing a coordinated effort to intimidate Americans from practicing their right to end human rights violations when it is in conflict with the US agenda. But human rights are not a variable, they are a constant. What is torture and discrimination in one country is the same anywhere else, be it Northern Ireland or Somalia. Why is Ireland always the exception? Are we not all human beings?

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The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC)

For information, write the American Irish PEC, 18 Route 9W, Fairgrounds Plaza, West Haverstraw, NY 10993 or call (800) 777-6807.

British Loyalist Violence

by Sandy Carlson

British loyalist violence intensifies whenever the British and Irish governments enter into dialogue concerning Dublin's role in governing Northern Ireland. This was the case recently, when some northern political parties went to Dublin for talks.

As these parties have considered the north's "Irish dimension" and heard Unionist demands for the unequivocal removal from the Irish Constitution of Articles II and III, which claim sovereignty over the island of Ireland, the loyalist paramilitaries of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), the Ulster Freedom Fighters [UFF] and Ulster Volunteer Force [UVF] have expressed through violence their opposition in concert with their politicians.

Sheena Campbell, a law student, mother, and member of Sinn Fein, was the most recent victim of the UVF's political disaffection. The UVF shot her dead and injured two others in the York Hotel in October 1992. Although the UVF and UFF consistently claim their victims are republicans, this is seldom true -- 80% of their victims to date have been innocent nationalists (predominantly Catholics). Workmen, school teachers, taxi drivers, senior citizens, school boys, community workers, and mothers have all been victims of loyalist murder gangs and attackers while the British and Irish governments have been debating constitutional issues.

A tragic example is the UFF murder of 18-year-old Gerard O'Hara in his north Belfast home late September, where he had been watching TV with his mother. Soon after this murder, there appeared near the O'Hara home graffiti threatening the life of O'Hara's brother.

Loyalists have also engaged in an intimidation campaign, attacking nationalist homes with firebombs and guns, causing some families to either relocate or send their sons away. They have also shot dead or attacked a number of innocent people. Three Dublin shops were firebombed as a warning to Dublin that their "continued interference" in the "internal affairs" of Northern Ireland would not be tolerated. The loyalist firebombing campaign in Dublin coincided with the beginning of the talks more than 18 months ago.

Then, September 29, the loyalist Red Branch Knights' announcement of their existence coincided with loyalist attempts to fire bomb shopping centers, blast-bomb a Dublin-based bank, and contaminate Irish-produced goods in stores.

Loyalists continue in the tradition they set in 1966 when the UVF murdered Patrick Scullion due to the government's meager civil rights concessions to nationalists. The UDA and UFF surfaced in the early 1970s in response to nationalists demands for civil rights.

The UFF was involved in the 1974 Ulster Workers Council (UWC) strike, which shut down Northern Ireland for 14 days and brought down the power-sharing government set up under the Sunningdale Agreement. The Sunningdale Agreement had provided for a Council of Ireland, which included Dublin's involvement in Northern Ireland. This was unacceptable to loyalists, for it smacked of a united Ireland strategy. The UVC strike coincided with bombings in Dublin.

When Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Roy Mason strengthened and intensified policing in Northern Ireland in the mid-1970s, the loyalist murder rate dropped, and the Protestant population regained confidence in the British armed forces, including the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). The Unionists had looked to the loyalist paramilitaries to defend their interests, but now they had the British armed forces, so support for "redundant" paramilitaries waned.

Militant loyalists attempted another strike in 1977 with Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Ian Paisley to the fore. This strike, a demonstration against the British government's security policy and direct rule from London, was a failure. This was evidence of the declining level of support. Nonetheless, the UVF and UFF leaders maintained a fear of betrayal by Britain. The British government held secret meetings with Republicans, and they introduced power sharing with nationalist. Loyalists continued their violence.

The 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement inspired further loyalist violence. This Agreement between the British and Irish governments was made without consulting the northern people and had the support of only the nationalist Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP). The Agreement's recognition of the

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north's "Irish dimension" and its rhetoric concerning equality of citizenship did not agree with the loyalists. They wanted to induce the government to drop the treaty by showing it would produce instability throughout the north.

As part of their campaign, they firebombed the homes of RUC officers. Their strategy actually cost them support. The Anglo-Irish Agreement's survival has marked the loyalists first failure to dislodge a political structure which includes Dublin's role in Northern Ireland's "internal affairs."

Although the loyalist leadership called a ceasefire April 1991, when then-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Peter Brooke brought four of the north's political parties together for talks, loyalist leadership violated it that May by killing a Sinn Fein member. When the talks were suspended later in 1991, the UFF and UVF resumed their firebombing campaign in the Republic of Ireland and shot so many nationalists that the RUC had to set up a special squad to deal with it. Loyalist paramilitaries did not resume their ceasefire when the talks resumed, but intensified their murder campaign.

By now the cyclical ebb and flow of loyalist violence must be obvious to the British and Irish governments and the political representatives at the talks table. Yet those parties have allowed the talks to stagger for nearly two years, after 25 years of political agreements, strategies, and failed attempts to govern. No government sincerely committed to the well-being of its citizens could allow this to happen. Responsibility for loyalist brutality rests on the shoulders of the loyalists, but responsibility for the perpetuation of brutality rests in the hands of the British and Irish governments who refuse to deal directly with their disaffected and dissatisfied citizens.

Why do we not read of this sorry record of Loyalist violence in the American media?

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Offensive Situations

by Kevin P. Murphy

For too long Irish and American Irish have been stereotyped as unable to achieve great stature due to a weakness for alcohol. In real-world America, the Irish are at the top of the success ladder in business, politics, sports, film, theater, literature, labor, etc. Like most other large American ethnic groups, the Irish have had it with mean-spirited stereotypes.

Although greeting card companies like Hallmark have cleaned up their St. Patrick's Day cards, **Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company** of St. Louis, Missouri has not been so considerate. On bar windows from Boston to San Francisco, huge, green, neon *shamrock* signs brandish the word "Budweiser." In reality the Shamrock stands for the Holy Trinity, symbolizing the conversion of the Irish to Christianity by St. Patrick centuries ago. It also represents the endurance and culture of the Irish people throughout the years of Ireland's agony.

Thanks to Budweiser's ad campaign, the Shamrock is now synonymous with the consumption of alcohol and, therefore, Budweiser is much to blame for the stereotype equating Irishness with heavy consumption of alcoholic beverages. This mean-spirited stereotype is replayed in people's minds daily as they drive by bars on Main Street, USA. Certainly,

Budweiser sells a huge amount of its product to non-Irish people. Budweiser would never use ethnic slurs on other heritages to sell its beer. No other group would allow it. Neither should the Irish.

Many would say that since Irish are prominent in US business operations, why should we care about slurs anymore? The answer is simple: despite having tremendous political and economic clout in the US, the Irish too often have run into a stone wall when it comes to promoting justice and self-determination for the oppressed Nationalists in Northern Ireland. Each time a large scale slur against the Irish goes unchecked, the signal goes to Washington, DC and London that the Irish are apathetic and pressure for civil rights and justice in Ireland is unimportant. Also, labeling the Irish as social misfits implants stereotypes in people's minds that the Irish are unworthy or unable to have a united nation.

Write or call: August Busch III, Anheuser Busch, One Busch Pl., St. Louis, Missouri 63118 -- phone # (314) 577-2000. In your letter demand that Anheuser Busch discontinue its promotions that associate the Irish with alcohol. Ask that they immediately recall all the offensive Budweiser Shamrock neon signs. Let them know that if they do not cooperate you will boycott their products.

Bernadette Devlin: Banned by the BBC

The decision of the BBC to invoke the Broadcasting ban in relation to my contribution to the "Nation" programme marked an extension of this abhorrent legislation

into the area of reporting and commentary. A number of features of the entire disturbing and distasteful episode are particularly alarming. I recorded my

contribution ten full days before broadcasting. The final programme was a grossly simplified distortion of an excellent studio discussion. However, despite the decision of the BBC to subtitle my entire contribution, neither the programme-makers nor the BBC informed any of the participants in the programme of this proposed action.

I was anonymously alerted to the reality of what the programme was at 11 o'clock the night before it was to be shown. I immediately made efforts to contact the programme makers who had in effect gone to ground. On my behalf, [attorney] Gareth Pierce was in contact with the BBC who refused:

. to postpone the programme, until I

had seen the edited contribution
 . to examine the unedited recording
 . to reconsider their decision to subtitle

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. to remove my contribution from the programme. The public perception of the ban is that it is a "Sinn Fein" ban. The overwhelming majority of

subtitled broadcasts have involved elected representatives of Sinn Fein. It is also perceived as the "anti-violence" ban, silencing those who are paramilitary representatives, or advocates of "political violence". By a single broadcast, I was categorised, in the minds of millions of people as "one of those people from whom society requires protection". Why? Mr. Cox, the programme producer, whose exact role and motivation in creating this situation remain unclear, blames the BBC.

The BBC, in turn, blames the government, and the government, as in the road-signs at military check-points, blames "the terrorist". Of no relevance to the BBC, its lawyers, Juniper Productions, David Cox, or the

British Government is the small matter of my basic human right to speak, to be heard or, indeed, my right to security of person.

Of even less relevance was my reputation as a human rights activist, a non-violent campaigner of twenty three years standing, a political commentator and analyst of Irish and international human rights issues. That is not to blow my own trumpet. It is to put in perspective the enormity of the BBC action. Their only defence has been that they acted on their lawyers' advice. Their lawyer's defence is that they were only "doing their job". It is not the job of lawyers to police the state. It is not the job of lawyers or broadcasters to violate the human rights of citizens in order to police the state.

I have no legal redress in this matter of the violation of my rights. No law enforcement officer, or agency, no Court or member of the judiciary, no Government authority stated that I, **Bernadette McAliskey**, should not be permitted to state my analysis of the causes of political violence in N. Ireland on the airways. Some faceless lawyer doing his job dictated my fate, in the interest of the Government, its ideology, and its advancement.

Action Requests

Write the letters below preferably in your own words or as is. Have friends, family, organizations, business associates, etc., do the same. Mention that you are a member of the American Irish PEC.

Action Request # 1

While we are waiting for President-Elect Clinton to assume office it is important that we build support for his Northern Ireland agenda within Congress. Write the letter below to: Honorable George J. Mitchell, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

Dear Senator Mitchell:

As you are aware, President-Elect Bill Clinton has pledged to take action concerning British injustice in Northern Ireland. His pledge, which appeared in the New York Times on November 1, combined with President Bush's pro-British policies, won him many votes, if not the election. As a concerned citizen, I urge that you rally support in the Senate for his Northern Ireland agenda.

I look forward to your response on this urgent matter.

Sincerely yours,

Action Request # 2

If you have access to a copy machine, include with your letter a copy of President-Elect Bill Clinton's letter to Bruce Morrison and our November 1 ad in the New York Times from the December newsletter. Write the letter below to: Mr. Tom Brokaw, NBC Nightly News, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

Dear Mr. Brokaw:

During his campaign President-Elect Bill Clinton promised to speak out against British injustice in Northern Ireland. On November 1 an ad was placed in the New York Times by the American Irish Political Education Committee which made his position public.

I ask that you report on Mr. Clinton's Northern Ireland agenda. Millions of people are interested in Northern Ireland even though it is not covered by the media.

Sincerely yours,

Congratulations on MacBride Progress

Nancy Love, a PEC member from Wisconsin, deserves thanks for her efforts to promote the MacBride Principles in her state. She and her husband campaigned for Senate hopeful and MacBride supporter Russ Feingold (D), organizing fundraisers, etc. Feingold met with State Senator Brian B. Burke who has proposed a MacBride Resolution. Feingold won the election in a very tight race with incumbent Bob Kasten.

Join Or Support

The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC)

I want to join in/support the American campaign to end British government civil and human rights violations in Northern Ireland. I am sending you this completed form together with my membership fee/donation.

- Regular Membership / Membership Renewal \$20
- Senior Citizen, \$15 Student, \$15
- Additional Donation \$ _____
- Donation Only \$ _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Members receive the monthly *American Irish Newsletter*. If you give a donation only and would like to receive the newsletter check here .

Name _____

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Town/State/Zip _____

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Make checks payable to American Irish PEC and mail to American Irish PEC, Fairgrounds Plaza, West Haverstraw, NY 10993 -- Phone number (914) 947-2726.

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