



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Sacred Heart University
DigitalCommons@SHU

American Irish Newsletter

The Irish American Community Collections

1-1992

American Irish Newsletter - January 1992

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews



Part of the [European Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Other American Studies Commons](#), and the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC, "American Irish Newsletter - January 1992" (1992).
American Irish Newsletter. 116.
https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews/116

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the The Irish American Community Collections at DigitalCommons@SHU. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Irish Newsletter by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@SHU. For more information, please contact santoro-dillond@sacredheart.edu.



AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 17, Number 1

January 1992

GET THIS INFORMATION OUT

This Newsletter's *Reproduce & Distribute* article *Irish Protestants Support A United Ireland* provides us a golden opportunity to win considerable American support for a United Ireland. Many Americans refrain from speaking out against English colonialism and injustice because they are of the erroneous opinion that all northern Ireland Protestants want northern Ireland to remain a colony of England. They see the struggle as one between Catholics and Protestants.

If northern Ireland Protestants support a United Ireland, which is the case today, many more Americans would be more willing to support a United Ireland.

Recently two organizations formed in northern Ireland, one all Protestant and one predominantly Protestant, that call for a United Ireland. This is explained in this newsletter's *Reproduce & Distribute* article *Irish Protestants Support A United Ireland*.

It is of the utmost importance that this information, and subsequent information to be published in this newsletter, gets into the hands of news media personalities, politicians, clergy, the general public, etc. This information, which should be standard handouts for all members, should be distributed as widely and as often as possible.

Newsbits by Kathy Regan

Dessie Ellis, cleared of explosives charges [in England] said he had noticed a change in the British public's attitudes to the judicial system. "My faith is not restored in the British legal system but my faith in ordinary British people has never been questioned." (Irish Post 11/9/91)....Angry residents staged a "no human shields" protest yesterday in a bid to have an army observation post removed from their block of flats in Belfast...they are being subjected to a reign of terror by the soldiers who have taken over the four flats on the top floor. They said that consistent complaints about the alleged army harassment have been ignored because the government believes the location of the military base in a residential area will deter IRA attacks. (Irish News 11/7/91)....Cliftonville football team vowed to defy loyalists last night. Club chairman Jim Boyce said his club would return to Windsor Park next week despite an attempt by the Ulster Freedom Fighters to kill and maim supporters with a shrapnel grenade. (Irish News 11/7/91)....Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams has asked DUP deputy leader, Peter Robinson to seriously consider a united Ireland as an alternative to the Union which "no longer exists in any recognizable form." Mr. Adams, in an open letter to Mr. Robinson, was responding to the east Belfast MP's recent remarks about the state of the Union between Britain and Northern Ireland.

Pressure Mounting For Fair Employment Reforms

by Sandy Carlson, Reporting from Belfast

The Fair Employment Commission has been responding to international pressure for fair employment reforms. A recent government report has confirmed that the lag between Catholic and Protestant unemployment is still significant, however: Catholics are still 2 1/2 times as likely to be unemployed as their Protestant counterparts.

Recently Fair Employment Commission (FEC) Chairman Bob Cooper warned employers that they should remove unofficial flags or emblems which may be construed as sectarian, such as a picture of the Queen of England. His advice came after the Fair Employment Tribunal found the Eastern Health and Social Security Board guilty of religious discrimination for failing to give a job in a Protestant area to a qualified Catholic woman. The Tribunal hit out at the Board for its display of a picture of the Queen on Board premises.

The Democratic and Official Unionist parties responded angrily to this action, with DUP councillor William McCrea calling the FEA the "unfair employment agency". He said that "government bodies are seeking to alienate the majority community through their sickening appeasement to placate Republicans". The following day, two DUP councillors, Sammy Wilson and Peter Robinson, held a protest against this action in front of the FEC office in Belfast. Nobody attended.

Soon after this action, Cooper announced that the FEC would be enforcing a reduction of the overall employment imbalance between Catholics and Protestant within individual firms, where segregation is a significant problem.

The FEC's annual report revealed that 175 complaints were made on behalf of Catholics and 45 on behalf of Protestants.

Although the SDLP and the Irish government have claimed that reforms in equality of opportunity legislation have taken place as a direct result of their input in the Anglo-Irish Conference, these changes are actually the direct result of international MacBride Principles lobbying, according to Tom Hadden and Kevin Boyle in their 1989 review of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. *PEC*

Mr. Robinson said the British government had embraced a course that can only lead to the destruction of the Union. (Irish News 11/7/91)....There will be no more meetings of Belfast City Council until Secretary of State Peter Brooke agrees to meet unionist members to discuss the banning of Sinn Fein. Unionist councillors last night backed a Sammy Wilson motion

Continued on page 3

From The Editor

The most effective approach to ending British injustice and domination in Northern Ireland is the MacBride Principles.

Not only do they provide Americans an excellent opportunity to educate the public via state and local MacBride Principles campaigns, but they also help undermine Britain's illegal colonial occupation of Northern Ireland. They oppose discrimination which is the foundation of British presence there.

The ability of the British government to hold onto Northern Ireland depends entirely on its ability to control the different segments of society. This control is achieved by guaranteeing to favored segments the power and privilege to control their constituents. Presently jobs in all segments of the economy are controlled by a handful of Loyalist leaders.

If equal rights are guaranteed to everyone in Northern Ireland, and the existing abuse of power by so few is stopped, there would no longer be any motive for the power-brokers to remain under British colonial rule. The MacBride Principles open the way to a United Ireland.

Members can do their share by initiating MacBride Principles campaigns in their local government and by urging local community groups and organizations to adopt MacBride resolutions.

We urge you to take such an action in your community. For information on initiating a MacBride Campaign contact the PEC by letter or phone (914) 947-2726.

Offensive Situations

Action Request #2

by Kevin P. Murphy, Massachusetts

We will limit this month's report to only one issue because of the extent of the outrage this issue has generated. It deserves a response from every member.

We have received many complaints about a joke book *500 Great Irish Jokes* written by Jay Allen, a non-Irishman, and distributed by Penguin Books, an English publishing house. The jokes degrade all people of Irish heritage and especially those of the Catholic faith. The "jokes" attack priests and nuns, e.g. "Identifying the belief in the Trinity by Irish priests as easy because 'most of them are fairies,' and the reference to a 'vibrating crucifix' as 'the newest rage among Irish nuns.' There are many sordid references to Catholic priests and nuns.

Write to: Mr. Marvin Brown, President, Penguin Books USA Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014. We suggest the following: *I find your publication 500 Great Irish Jokes to be offensive and bigoted against all people of Irish heritage, especially those of the Catholic religion. I call upon Penguin to withdraw the book and to apologize to both the Irish and Catholic communities. Ask for a response.*

SEND ALL OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS TO: Kevin P. Murphy, PO Box 8895-JFK Station, Boston, MA 02114. PEC

USE THE PEC TELEPHONE HOTLINE

(914) 429-7849

The American Irish PEC

founded 1975

National President.....John J. Finucane
Vice-President.....Albert Doyle
Treasurer.....Loretta Fitzgibbons
Recording Secretary.....Kathy Regan
Financial Secretary.....Tom Sheridan

American Irish Newsletter

EditorJohn J. Finucane

Assistant Editors Sandy Carlson.....Albert Doyle
Stephanie Finucane.....Kathy Regan

National Headquarters: Fairgrounds Plaza
West Haverstraw, NY 10993 - (914) 947-2726

Western States Executive Director: Susan Catt, 2292 North Ironwood #110, Apache Junction, ARIZONA - (602) 982-0370.

STATE DIRECTORS: Jack O'Brien, 11109 Belton Street, Upper Marlboro, MARYLAND 20772-(301)336-5167; Leah Curtin, Hibernian Life, 790 Cleveland Avenue, Suite 221, St. Paul, MINNESOTA 55116-(612)690-3888; Kathy Regan, 3045 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NEW YORK 10468-(212) 365-0213; Frank O'Day, 21 Pierce Lane, Madison, CONNECTICUT 06443-(203)245-4739; Kevin P. Murphy, P.O. Box 8895, J.F. Kennedy Station, Boston, MASSACHUSETTS 02114-(617)284-0723; Bob West, 683 Walnut Road, Wauconda, ILLINOIS 60084-(708)526-6520; Terry Deem Reilly, 1123 Clarkson, Denver, COLORADO 80218-(303)837-9443; Dan Warren, PO Box 1270, Scarborough, MAINE 04070 - (207) 883-4167; Kevin Murphy, 9685 Sunny Isle Cir., Boca Raton, FLORIDA 33428-(305)488-1526; Ned A. Delaney, 1211 El Grande St., Lafayette, INDIANA 47905-(317)474-2546; Larry Doyle, 46 B 2007 Betz Road, Bellevue, NEBRASKA 68005-(402)292-5291; Phil Chaney, 663 West 70th Street, Kansas City, MISSOURI 64113 - (816) 363-6523; Kathy Whitford, 1270 St. Charles, Lakewood, OHIO 44107 - (216) 529-0670; Andy Kelly, 168 S Coeur D'Alene Street-102E, Spokane, WASHINGTON 99204 - (509) 747-7431; John Hatch, 302 North Bedford Street, Carlisle, PENNSYLVANIA 17014 - (717)249-4217; Nancy Love, 804 Riverwalk Dr. #209, Waukesha, WISCONSIN 53188 - (414) 542-4767; Dr. John T. Giesen, 1107 Ironwood Dr., Coeur D'Alene, IDAHO 83814 - (208) 667-7459; Linda Barker, 1111 South Oakwood, Apt 1204, Enid, OKLAHOMA 73703 - (405) 237-2236.

NATIONAL MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES CONSULTANT: Tom O'Flaherty, RFD #6, Box 153, Laconia, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03246 - (603) 528-5733

NATIONAL ORGANIZER: Pete Foley, 3177 Villa Avenue #3H, Bronx, NEW YORK 10468-(212)933-7196

STUDENT ORGANIZER: Sandy Carlson, AIPEC, Fairgrounds Plaza, 18 Route 9W, West Haverstraw, NY 10993 - (914) 947-2726

Supported in part by the Emerald Society,
NYC Fire Department

PEC Reorganizes In Boston

Boston's PEC had its reorganization meeting on November 22. It met again on December 12. The well-attended meetings took place in the Stadium in Allston. The meetings, chaired by Jim Smith, were enthusiastic and drew a considerable number of young people.

Topics of the meeting included PEC strategies for the '90s, countering media censorship, recruiting new members, informing the public, and letter writing.

PEC National President John Finucane, State Director Kevin Murphy and Jim Browne, Massachusetts PEC Support Group Coordinator, were present at the reorganization meeting.

The Boston PEC will conduct monthly meetings. For information call Jim Smith at (617) 782-9294.

There is also a PEC active in Worcester which is chaired by Jim Browne. For meeting information call (508) 852-7304.

From The North

by Rev. Des Wilson from Belfast
Director, Springhill Community House

The people in the Sperrin Mountains gave an incisive and unmistakable answer to the British government in the most recent election. They gave Sinn Fein 44% more votes than in the previous election while they gave SDLP less.

Sinn Fein won this council seat over the SDLP by a margin of a few votes and the message was loud and clear -- people in that area are not going to be frightened off voting for any candidate.

The previous council member -- a member of Sinn Fein -- was assassinated by a British/Loyalist death squad. In the hope of avoiding another election, Sinn Fein asked the other parties to stand down and allow another Sinn Fein candidate to take the dead man's seat. The SDLP and Workers Party refused.

During the election campaign Sinn Fein members were subjected to threat, assassination, beating, kidnapping and verbal abuse. Cahal Daly, the Cardinal Primate of Ireland, refused to meet them and British ministers boycotted them. They were denounced from pulpit and platform, to make it unrespectable to vote for them.

The answer given by the people in this constituency was indeed loud and clear -- it is the people and not the preachers who decide who their representatives will be.

The result upset the British/Loyalist minority in Ireland who have had a veto on democratic progress for the past 70 years. It depressed the Dublin government, which now wants Sinn Fein banned by the British, giving, we are led to believe, an undertaking that if the British ban Sinn Fein, Dublin will do the same.

Clearly neither government has yet recognized, any more than the churches have recognized, the awful anger of people who have been degraded, abused and insulted for as long as the oldest of them can remember. The British do not want to ban Sinn Fein as that would be "counter productive."

The cup of sorrow which the British/Loyalist minority had to swallow was now complete. In New York the United Nations was being made aware of British atrocities in Ireland; at Maastricht Europeans were being made aware of the pre-democratic nature of the British system and how British power lies not in British parliament but in British aristocracy; in Strasbourg a special meeting of European parliament members convened to hear about how the British use anti-Catholic discrimination in employment to bolster up their rule in Ireland. And a special conference is being prepared in London for this spring on the subject of Britain's cruel rule in Ireland.

At Strasbourg John Hume agreed to attend the preliminary meeting and also a further meeting to initiate a motion for the European parliament. If it could be impressed on friends in the US that the British government now enjoys the lowest reputation in Europe and is the center of one inquiry after another into abuses of human rights and refusal to act democratically, then perhaps there would be an even greater effort to shake off the last remnants of respect for an administration which has caused so much harm. For the sake of Europe and of Britain itself, as well as for the sake of democracy in Ireland, this tyranny is being faced -- quietly, efficiently and effectively. *PEC*

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR DONATION

In November the PEC sent out a donation request to all members and past members. We thank those of you who have already responded and urge those who have not, to please do so at this time.

As the PEC too is feeling the effects of the recession, we are well aware of the hard financial times some members are experiencing.

To give a donation will be a sacrifice for many. But sacrifice is required in order that we be successful.

Please send your donation today! Mail checks payable to AIPEC to 18 Route 9W, West Haverstraw, NY 10993. Thank you!

NEWS BITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

calling for an indefinite adjournment until Mr. Brooke agreed to consider proposals for removing elected SF members from City Hall. (Irish News 11/12/91)....Protestant republican, Bobbie Heatley, stated that the British establishment would not pull out of northern Ireland unless it perceived it to be in its best interests. "Britain is intent on retrieving the losses of the 1920s and 30s. The present policy is to use the north as a bargaining chip in order to co-opt Dublin into the reintegration of the 32 counties in a new British federation. Democracy is not about partition -- it is about sovereignty and independence. Articles two and three of the Irish constitution are not the problem. The real problem is the British claim to sovereignty over the six counties enshrined in section 75 of the 1921 Government of Ireland Act. (Irish Post, 11/9/91)....Of Bloody Sunday, Bobbie Heatley....stated, "The [British Army] shot the civil rights campaign off the streets." He feels that "the financial leverage of the British exchequer could be used to promote all-Ireland cooperation rather than to finance the repressive techniques currently being used to uphold partition." (Irish Post, 11/23/91)....Northern Ireland Electricity has been accused by a High Court judge of being "deeply hostile" to the objectives and activities of the Fair Employment Agency. (Belfast Telegraph 11/13/91)....Northern Ireland is facing "one of the most bloody winters" it has ever seen, DUP deputy leader Peter Robinson warned last night. Predicting an upsurge in loyalist violence on both sides of the border, he told MPs that "so-called loyalist terrorism," had increased this year as a result of unionist disaffection, and had become in the eyes of the security forces, "much better organized than ever before". (Irish News 11/6/91)....BP America Inc. said yesterday it was willing to give up almost \$5 million in contracts with the city of Cleveland rather than sign a controversial document that calls for fair-hiring practices in Northern Ireland. Last spring, the City Council passed an ordinance that bars the city after Jan. 1 from doing business with companies that refuse to abide by the MacBride Principles, a set of guidelines that promote equal job opportunities for Catholics in Northern Ireland. (Cleveland Plain Dealer 12/12/91) *PEC*

The Irish In Wisconsin

by Margaret E. Fitzgerald, Ph.D.

Wisconsin has strong Irish roots, although today it is not considered particularly Irish. In 1980, in the only U.S. census covering ancestry, Wisconsin ranked 21 out of 50 states in the number indicating Irish ancestry. At 15% of the state, the Irish were the second highest ethnic group in the state, but overwhelmed by the 56% who identified themselves as German.

The story was different in the 19th century. When Wisconsin was part of the Old Northwest Territory, there were Irish trappers and traders traveling the lakes, rivers, and forests. When Wisconsin became part of Michigan Territory, Irish from County Wexford led the first wave of immigration in the 1820's to the lead mines discovered in the southwestern region. Mining brought the need for shippers, haulers, freight handlers, clerks, storekeepers, and craftsmen. Milwaukee, once just a fur-trading port, became the lake port of entry for immigrants who crossed the Atlantic and made their way west. For families from all counties of Ireland, Milwaukee became a gateway not only to mining and related occupations, but to the pot of gold at the end of every Irishman's dream-rainbow: land of one's own. Land office sales of agricultural land made farming equally important with mining in the southern part of Wisconsin.

The great majority of Irish who emigrated to Wisconsin were Catholic. The first priest to serve them was an Italian Dominican, Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli, often jokingly called "Fr. Matthew Kelly" by the lead miners. After ordination in 1830, Fr. Mazzuchelli was assigned as the only resident priest in the upper Great Lakes region. He served the Indians, whose ancestors had been Christianized by French Jesuits two hundred years earlier, and he served the south-western Wisconsin Irish, whose ancestors had clung to their faith during two centuries of oppressive British Penal Laws.

To complement Fr. Mazzuchelli's endeavors in the southwest, Fr. Patrick O'Kelley was appointed first resident pastor in Milwaukee in the southeast in 1839. He built St. Peter's Church to serve all Catholics, French, Irish, and German, but disagreements erupted over language. The Germans felt strongly that language preserved religion and that the immigrants would lose their faith if German were not used in sermons and school. Fr. O'Kelley was replaced in 1842 by German-speaking Fr. Martin Kundig who managed to placate the Irish majority. In 1843, Fr. Kundig organized a St. Patrick's Day celebration in Milwaukee in which 3000 Irish and Germans took part. This was a remarkable achievement since the population of the city was only about 6000.

The Irish continued to come to Wisconsin in the late 1840's and the 1850's and settled in northern, central, and western areas. The actual ethnic breakdown is speculative since some reports counted birth, some ancestry, and some language spoken. A Catholic source gave these figures in February 1845: of 25,090 Catholics, there were 5,628 French, 2,776 Germans, and, lumped together, 14,538 Irish, English, Scots, and Americans. Soon after the same source reported an increase to 27,000 Catholics, of whom 16,000 were Irish and 8,000 German. The

number of German Catholics almost caught up to the number of Irish Catholics and remained close, but the number of immigrant German Protestants vastly increased the total German numbers.

Unfortunately, the official statistics do not represent the Irish but seriously underestimate them. The summary statistics for the U.S. censuses count only the number of Irish born. The later-arriving Germans count as German because they were foreign born. The second generation Irish whose parents had settled in New Brunswick, Maine, or the eastern states before succumbing to "Wisconsin Fever," are counted as Canadian or American. By the 1870 census there was no clue to Irishness unless an Irish-born grandparent resided with the family.

A typical family was that of William Fitzgerald and Ann Harrigan who emigrated in 1830 from Irish-speaking southwest Cork to New Brunswick. Eight of their children were born in Ireland and two in Canada. Their son Maurice (the author's great grandfather) made two trips to Wisconsin and in 1851 encouraged his parents and siblings to move to Oshkosh. William and Ann and all their children but one holdout transplanted themselves to Wisconsin. They prospered far more in Wisconsin than they had in New Brunswick as they engaged in lumbering, farming, groceries, and supplies. Maurice and his brothers, James and Daniel, despite getting rich in the lumber industry, built large brick houses outside Oshkosh. They gladdened the heart of their father, just before his death, by having the new railroad stop near their homesteads named Fitzgerald Station. Along with Erin Prairie, Newry, Dublin, Kildare, and other places, Fitzgerald Station (now Old Fitzgerald Station Campground) would be a testimonial to the Irish presence in Wisconsin.

William and Ann Fitzgerald and their descendants became American but they kept the values brought from Ireland. Religion was important. The Fitzgerald family took part in the establishment in 1856 of St. Peter's, the first Catholic church in Oshkosh. Family was important. They moved, along with Ann Harrigan Fitzgerald's siblings, as an extended family from Cork to New Brunswick to Midwest America. Education was important. Ten of the 22 granddaughters of William and Ann became schoolteachers. Culture was important. A great-granddaughter, Vera Fitzgerald Cowan, who died at age 100 in 1988, loved to say her prayers in Irish and to sing in Irish of a land she had never seen. A great-grandson, James Clare Fitzgerald, who died at age 99 in 1981, was a high school principal and story-teller in the tradition of the seanachie.

Ireland was not forgotten. Great-granddaughter Rose Kavan, who graduated from Oshkosh High and Vassar College (1880), was a noted lecturer and writer in the U.S. and abroad. No matter what her topic, she always managed to interpose something on Irish freedom. She made impassioned arguments for the right of the Irish to throw off the yoke of the English. She believed, as Lord Byron did, that "the union between England and Ireland is the union of the shark with its prey."

Many Irish moved westward from Wisconsin, but enough remained to make the Irish still the second largest ethnic group. The Irish led the way among foreign immigrants to Wisconsin in becoming Americanized, but they accepted the American way of life without entirely losing their Irish identity. **PEC**

Irish Protestants Support A United Ireland

by John J. Finucane and Stephanie Finucane

There is growing support for a United Ireland within northern Ireland's Protestant community. This support is confirmed by the recent formation of the Campaign For Democracy (CFD) and the Irish Protestants Education and Action Group (IPEAG).

The emergence of these groups confirm the conclusion drawn from the PEC fact-finding trip to Ireland in June 1990: "Unionist [Protestant] opposition to a united Ireland is mixed and many in the Unionist community consider themselves to be Irish." (See *American Delegation Visits Northern Ireland, American Irish Newsletter* August 1990.) CFD is predominantly Protestant and IPEAG has an all Protestant membership.

Erroneously, Protestants have been represented as a one dimensional body loyal to Britain, and adamantly opposed to reunification of Ireland. However, there is no one Protestant opinion about British presence in northern Ireland. The flaws of this one-dimensional portrayal of Protestants are especially obvious when one confronts the existence of groups like IPEAG and CFD which formed to expand upon a part of the history of Irish Protestants the authorities and media would like forgotten: the Society of United Irishmen, formed in 1791 and led by Protestants like Theobald Wolfe Tone, which supported the creation of a republic of Ireland.

A founder of IPEAG, Robbie McVeigh, stated in the *Irish Reporter* (10/91), that the group is "committed to a united Ireland, believing that this is the only political framework which can provide a lasting peace in our country." One of the main gripes IPEAG has with society in northern Ireland today is the blatant sectarianism that categorizes elements of society and places Catholics and Protestants against each other. Says McVeigh, due to this situation, Protestants today are having an identity crisis wrought with "political and cultural confusion."

As McVeigh states, "what makes a Protestant a Protestant is the interaction of a number of factors: religious, social, historical and so on. (It) is more than a religious identity in Ireland." Thus, "Protestant" has come to refer to an ethnicity, just as "jew" connotes historical background and religion. IPEAG wants to break down this false identity that makes war in northern Ireland possible. Says McVeigh, "we need to rethink the whole construction of sectarian division within anti-partitionist analysis."

IPEAG is an innovative anti-partitionist group willing to recognize the differences between the communities in order to create a new situation in which these differences are no longer seen as disparities of privilege and underprivilege that set the two communities apart. The two communities must free themselves from the definition of one another that the British have instilled in them.

However, a major road block to conquering the division of the Catholics and Protestants is the interference of the Catholic and Protestant Church hierarchies in the state's affairs. According to McVeigh, previous nonsectarian groups have failed to prevent this interference. "We believe that the Catholic Church has been unambiguously sectarian in its meddling in secular affairs in its own interests - to the detriment of the liberties of Protestant and Catholic people alike (in Ireland)," said McVeigh.

Reproduce & Distribute

The reason behind making IPEAG exclusively Protestant is that the group wants to offer "Protestant people an opportunity to work towards a non-sectarian Ireland." Being both Irish and Protestant, it is "difficult to articulate our demands in the context of existing institutions, which are effectively either pro-British or pro-Catholic."

IPEAG wants to work with Catholics to create a "mass-based . . . organization which encompasses Protestant and Catholic people." In this way, IPEAG feels it can best end sectarian division in Ireland. Says McVeigh: "Many organizations define themselves as nonsectarian and proudly boast of their Protestant and Catholic members, but then do nothing to address the reality of sectarian division in Ireland. We operate the other way round. Although all our members belong to one religio-political bloc, our work is aimed at breaking down popularly held prejudices and stereotypes, and at fighting sectarianism and discrimination."

IPEAG also recognizes the need to protect the rights of Protestants and believes that their approach is much more effective than that of the unionists because IPEAG is "happy to campaign against any aspects of 26-county government policy which we see as being anti-Protestant." The unionists, on the other hand, are actually threatening the rights and protection of Protestants in the event of reunification because, beginning with Direct Rule in 1972 and reinforced by the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, it has been made plain that "the British have no long-term interest in remaining in Ireland. They have effectively washed their hands of the Protestant population here."

McVeigh continues, saying that a united Ireland is inevitable and IPEAG offers an alternative to the situation to which the unionists are leading: while IPEAG would draw upon an ideal of its own past, a united Ireland, and promote the concerted work of Catholics and Protestants, the unionists, instead, are making this cooperation impossible by sowing the seeds for a united Ireland in which Protestants will be "thrust into a reactionary, Catholic state." In contrast, IPEAG "offers Protestant people the chance to play their full part in working towards a democratic, secular and non-sectarian country, with justice for all."

The formation of a group like IPEAG is evidence of the fact that reunification of Ireland is not a Catholic issue - it is an Irish political issue that has nothing to do with religious beliefs, just like the whole war Britain has skillfully produced in northern Ireland. Most importantly, it demonstrates that the people of northern Ireland and their opinions are misrepresented by government officials and mainstream media. IPEAG has the spirit of a people tired of the tyranny of masters of illusion who create/sleight of hand politics that create a misconception in place of reality for all the world to see, smothering the native voice in the process.

(Representatives of the American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC) regularly travel to northern Ireland and meet with Protestant and Catholic representatives).

JOIN OR SUPPORT

**The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC).
For Information write: Fairgrounds Plaza, 18 Route 9W,
West Haverstraw, NY 10993 or call 800 777-6807.**

Published January 1992 by American Irish PEC

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S CRIMINALIZATION OF LEGITIMATE POLITICAL OPPOSITION

By Sandy Carlson, *reporting from Belfast*

For the British, the criminalization of legitimate political opposition -- Sinn Fein and other nationalist groups -- is tantamount to the criminalization of the Republican ideal, defined thus: "Ireland's right to sovereignty, independence, and unity are inalienable and indefeasible. It is for the Irish people as a whole to determine the future status of Ireland. Neither Britain nor a small minority selected by Britain has any right to partition the ancient island of Ireland, nor to determine its future as a sovereign nation." (Sean MacBride, founder of Amnesty International)

Secretary of State Peter Brooke declared at Westminster on November 9, 1990 that "The British Government has no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland"; however, that Britain continues economically subsidizing the six counties, continues reinforcing the armed forces there, and continues investing in its battle against Sinn Fein's credibility indicate that the British intend to maintain their hold on Ireland. Brigadier General Frank Kitson, (*Low Intensity Operations*, 1971 and 1991) recommends this campaign thus: "Although with an eye to world opinion and to the need to retain the allegiance of the people, no more force than is necessary for containing the situation should be used, conditions can be made reasonably uncomfortable for the population as a whole, in order to provide an incentive for a return to normal life and to act as a deterrent toward a resumption of the campaign." Kitson points out that doing so requires that the government "discover and neutralize the genuine subversive element."

This criminalization -- "neutralization" -- of the opposition requires having in place legal mechanisms to make this possible. For the past 18 years, the British government has relied on its Emergency Provisions Act (EPA) to vest the armed forces and judiciary with such authority. This act, renewed in August 1991, renews the power to intern and to continue the Diplock court system of three judges sitting with no jury. (By another law, defendants are denied their right to silence, for judges are permitted to infer guilt from silence.)

A new EPA provision allows the British armed forces to arrest and charge individuals possessing household articles--such as rubber gloves and kitchen scales--if they deem these items will be used "for terrorist purposes."

This illegitimate harassment is widespread. The British armed forces raided 5,000 homes in 1988, according to RUC figures. One of the most glaring cases of such community criminalization is the Secretary-of-State-sanctioned search of the Conway Mill in October 1990. Crown forces cut a door in two to gain entry, although they knew a woman with the key to the door was standing by. The search party caused considerable damage in the Mill. Simultaneously, Sinn Fein offices, the West Belfast Taxi Association, and homes in nationalist areas were raided. The RUC, which did not have a search warrant, said these early morning raids were part of an investigation into the IRA's funding. Nothing was found.

The RUC also engages in a youth harassment campaign. Currently, 7 youths are in hiding in the South because the RUC threatened them that when they are 17 (and can be held without a parent present), they will all be arrested. In RUC custody currently are a diabetic youth and an asthmatic youth whose medicines have been tampered with. Amnesty International has made a worldwide urgent action call on behalf of Damien Austin,

Reproduce & Distribute

who was severely beaten and threatened that the UVF would murder him and his father before Christmas.

This state violence takes place in conjunction with loyalist paramilitary violence, often the result of British armed forces' collusion with them. Yet, in May 1990, the Stevens Inquiry into loyalist collusion exonerated the RUC and claimed that collusion was "neither widespread nor institutionalized", in spite of the fact that more than 2,600 documents had been recovered during the inquiry. Nevertheless, as recently as September 30, 1991, the RUC advised nationalists that their "security documents" were in the hands of loyalist paramilitary groups.

These aspects of community criminalization complement the British government's criminalization of a political party which represents the views of that community: Sinn Fein. Other forms of criminalization which target the party include: media censorship, the exclusion of Sinn Fein from the political process, the harassment of Sinn Fein candidates, and the murder of Sinn Fein members and councilors by loyalists colluding with the British armed forces. The British government is thus working to physically and politically destroy viable political opposition.

The British government's political marginalization of Sinn Fein in the media became law in October 1988. By this censorship legislation, the broadcast media are forbidden to broadcast the voices of Sinn Fein representatives. Rather, reporters must paraphrase Sinn Fein statements or the broadcaster must use an actor's voice over the actual voice.

Political marginalization became overtly apparent during the aborted Brooke talks in mid-1991. The British government stated that Sinn Fein was excluded from the talks process because the party supports "violence". However, the British government clearly supports--and finances--state violence, and the Unionist parties and the SDLP support the British presence. This pretense of pacifism was exposed in March 1990, when Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness asked Peter Brooke what Britain's response would be "if the IRA's armed struggle ceased." Brooke's reply was that Sinn Fein "cannot expect to be treated in the same way as any other political party."

When Sinn Fein exercises its political right to participate in the electoral process, the British engineer vilification. For example, shortly before a recent by-election in North Belfast, the home of Sinn Fein candidate Joe Austin was searched by the RUC. When the RUC failed to break down the door, they smashed windows to gain entry and arrested Austin's 17-year-old son. This search and arrest were an effort to plant in the public mind suspicions and doubts about the man who went on to win the election.

In addition to all of this is political murder. In 1991, 4 Sinn Fein members have been murdered. Since 1989, 3 Sinn Fein councilors have been murdered by the UFF: John Davey (2/89); Eddie Fullerton (5/91); and Bernard O'Hagan (9/91). Three months before the UFF murdered O'Hagan, security files containing his personal details were found on a rubbish heap in Dungivin. At the time, the RUC insisted that these security documents had been thrown away in the wrong place accidentally.

Unless and until all the political parties in Ireland develop the courage to address this fact, Britain's brutal criminalization of what should be the island-wide ideal of self-determination will continue.

The American Irish PEC is not affiliated with Sinn Fein or any other Irish political party. However, we recognize the undemocratic treatment of Sinn Fein, which is after all, a legal political party.

SUPPORT OR JOIN The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC). For information write: 18 Route 9W, West Haverstraw, NY 10993 or call 800 777-6807.

Published January 1992 by American Irish PEC

**HELP STOP THE VIOLENCE
SPEAK OUT AGAINST BRITISH INJUSTICE**

Things To Do For 1992

We need more action concerning the MacBride Principles Campaign. A great opportunity for many of us, especially those of us who are not involved in statewide MacBride Principles campaigns, is to initiate a MacBride Principles resolution in our town and/or county governments and local organizations including student groups. Such activities offer an excellent opportunity to educate the public.

This is not a major undertaking. (See *PEC Youth in Action* next column.) Our experience is that these bodies are receptive to the MacBride Principles. Such a resolution is of no financial cost to them. The resolution we have available simply calls on the body to endorse the Principles and to support adoption of proposed federal MacBride Principles legislation. The adopting body then sends copies of the resolution to the appropriate state and federal legislators which is all explained in our *MacBride Principles Resolution Explanation Sheet*.

To get started contact AIPEC, 18 Route 9W, West Haverstraw, NY 10993 [phone# (914) 947-2726]. Enclose \$2.50 for our MacBride Principles Kit which includes, a briefing paper, a *MacBride Principles Resolution Explanation Sheet* and 12 MacBride Principles *Think About It* brochures.

PEC Information/Membership Tables

With the month of March just around the corner there will be many parades, concerts, dances, etc. These are all great opportunities to get northern Ireland related information and PEC membership information out to the public. We must take advantage of these opportunities.

Information concerning northern Ireland is already available through the *American Irish Newsletter*. Just make copies of the *Reproduce & Distribute* articles for distribution. A PEC membership application will appear in the next issue of our Newsletter. If you would like copies of our standard membership brochure and past newsletter issues, contact the PEC.

How to distribute the information! Get permission from the organizers of concerts and dances to set up a table. Lay out the materials and the public will help themselves. You can also hand distribute membership information at parades. Any questions call AIPEC (914) 947-2726.

BOOKS AND VIDEOS, ETC.

-- BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND --

The Enduring Gael: Our Irish Heritage.....\$9.95 + \$2.50 P&H
by F. Robert Dougherty

This book, published in 1985, is a collection of 15 essays on the history of Ireland and the Irish from Pre-Christian to present time. It includes essays on Cromwell, ancient manuscripts, Wolfe Tone, the Great Starvation, today's struggle, and more. Paperback, 101pp

Make checks payable to American Irish Awareness Comm.
Use multi-purpose coupon on page 6.

S.O.S. West Point Military Academy Bagpipe Band Needs Funds For Equipment

Keep Celtic culture alive at West Point. Be a part of history. Send contributions to: West Point Fund, USMA, West Point, NY 10996, or call: Capt. Kevin Donohue at (914) 938-5002. Indicate that the money is for Pipes and Drums. **Be sure to mention you are a member of the American Irish PEC.** Gifts are tax deductible.

PEC Youth In Action

On November 14, 1991 the Union County, New Jersey Board of Chosen Freeholders unanimously (9-0) approved Resolution #1078-91 endorsing the MacBride Principles and calling for the adoption of MacBride Principles legislation by the federal government. Union County represents 21 municipalities and 600,000 people.

The co-sponsors of the resolution were Democratic Freeholder Chairman James Connelly Welsh and Republican Freeholder Louis Santagata.

The resolution was introduced at the request of 17 year-old Sean Kane, Union County representative of the American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC). Mr. Kane met with members of the board, prior to the resolution's adoption, and briefed them on the MacBride Principles. At the November 14 board meeting he addressed the full board and a standing room only audience of local residents. He explained in detail the need for the MacBride Principles and highlighted discrimination in Northern Ireland.

Board chairman James Connelly Welsh commented on the adoption of the resolution, "I was glad to see that the entire Freeholder Board, which represents a multiplicity of nationalities and cultures, stood up for human rights and joined in the affirmative vote".

John Finucane, PEC National President stated, "We commend the initiative and determination displayed by young Sean Kane in achieving this important success. He is a reflection of the caliber of the new generation of young people getting involved in the American campaign to achieve democracy and equality for all people in northern Ireland."

Michael Tuohy, a 20 year-old student at Pace University in New York and recent member of the PEC, already organized two presentations on northern Ireland at his college. On November 15 Al Doyle, PEC Vice-President addressed a fraternity and on December 5 PEC President John Finucane spoke to another group of students.

Michael plans more talks for the semester.

He also informs us that out of the talks he recruited new PEC members and has formed a campus PEC Support Group

Concerning these activities, Michael stated, "The majority of the students were unaware and even shocked about what they heard. Given the chance to find out about northern Ireland, people want to get involved with the PEC."

We commend Michael for his work and dedication. *PEC*

Action Request #1

Joe Doherty

by Susan Catt, *Western States Region Executive Director*

A decision from the US Supreme Court in the case of Joe Doherty is due early this year. We must continue to bring pressure to bear in support of Joe Doherty's case.

Members are urged to write the letter below to the following: Honorable William Barr, Acting Attorney General, US Department of Justice, Tenth & Constitution Avenues, Washington, DC 20530, your 2 US Senators (Honorable _____, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510 and Congressional Representative (Honorable _____, House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515).

As this is an urgent request, have your family, friends, business associates, organizations, etc. do the same. Write the letter in your own words or simply rewrite as is.

Dear _____:

Please use your good office to ensure that Joseph Doherty, whose case is now before the U S Supreme Court, be granted political asylum. Mr. Doherty, who committed no criminal offense in the US, has been imprisoned for more than 8 years.

I look forward to your response on this urgent matter. Sincerely,

Detach Here

TO JOIN the PEC use coupon below

MULTI-PURPOSE COUPON

[] MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL OR [] NEW MEMBERSHIP
 [] \$20 1 - YEAR [] \$35 2 - YEARS
 [] CHANGE OF ADDRESS
 [] DONATION _____ [] BOOKS, VIDEOS, ETC.

FOR NEW MEMBERS OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____ St _____ Zip _____

Date _____ Phone# _____

Membership includes a one-year subscription to our monthly Newsletter.

CORRECTIONS & ADDITIONS

IMPORTANT -- In the December 1991 issue under the title MacBride Principles Update, we asked members in New York to begin contacting their Assembly and Senate representatives, requesting they support new MacBride Principles bills that will be reintroduced in the 1992 legislative session. Unfortunately, we left out their addresses.

The addresses are: in the Assembly (Honorable _____, New York State Assembly, Albany, NY 12248); in the Senate (Honorable _____, New York State Senate, Albany, NY 12247).

It is very important that you write to them now. Simply request that they co-sponsor and support the MacBride Principles bills to be reintroduced in the 1992 legislative session. When writing to your Assembly rep ask that they contact Assemblyman John Dearie. When contacting your Senate rep ask that they contact Senator Joe Holland.

If you do not know your representatives names check the white pages of your telephone book under *New York State of* or check at your post office.

In the November 1991 issue Roger McGrath reviewed the book *Ireland Restored: The New Self Determination* by Vincent J. Delacy Ryan. If you would like to purchase a copy, send \$29.50 to Mr. Vincent Ryan, PO Box 183, Northridge, CA 91328. *PEC*

TO ORDER TAPES, VIDEOS, BOOKS, ETC.

QTY	ITEM	AMOUNT
Sub Total _____		
NYS Residents add sales tax _____		
Shipping _____		2.50
TOTAL		

AMERICAN IRISH PEC
 Fairgrounds Plaza
 West Haverstraw, NY 10993

First-Class Mail
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Garnerville, N Y
 Permit No. 13

MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRING
9201 - January, 1992

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE LABEL