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American Irish Newsletter

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## American Irish Newsletter - September 1992

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 17, Number 9

September 1992

## Letter-writing Campaign To Governor Bill Clinton

See *Reproduce & Distribute #1*

*Be sure to have the enclosed post cards  
signed, addressed and mailed.*

## Newsbits

by Kathy Regan, NYS Director

Ford has refused to adopt the MacBride Principles, maintaining that their own fair employment principles accomplish the same objective. However, "Catholic workers at the Ford plant in Belfast have described the company's own fair employment principles as a sham after the three latest vacancies within the already heavily Protestant engineering section were all filled by Protestants. It's further claimed that out of the last ten appointments and promotions made over recent months, just two have been Catholic ... We were told the Ford Fair Employment Principles were going to redress the disgraceful imbalance in the workforce, but it's clear that the whole thing is nothing more than a huge, meaningless publicity stunt. These posts were the perfect opportunity for plant management to pass the message that things are about to change. Instead, they have decided to thumb their noses at the Catholic people of West Belfast." (Andersonstown News, 6/20/92)

Preliminary research gathered by Dr. Mary Allen, a GP in Crossmaglen, Co Armagh, highlights comparatively high local incidence of cancer-related illness in both humans and cattle. She believes that all the signs point to British army surveillance gear being responsible ... Health fears center on infra-red rays beamed out from army observation posts after dark, allowing night vision of the surrounding countryside ... Cancer, brain tumors and miscarriages are reported to be at alarmingly high levels in south Armagh. Farmers in the area have also reported severe ill-health in their cattle,

## PEC Public Affairs Office To Commence Media Advertising Campaign

Through the PEC's *Public Affairs Office* we will commence a newspaper advertising campaign designed to bring nation-wide attention to the issue of British colonialism and injustice in Ireland, during the Presidential campaign. The potential of this effort is enormous. This action is the ultimate of actions.

**To be successful, we will need the sacrifice and generous financial support of all members and supporters.**

The *Public Affairs Office* will place ads in America's most prestigious newspapers. The initial costs will be approximately \$30,000. The donations we receive from our members and through the ads will enable us to place ads in other major newspapers around the country.

The number of ads we place will depend on the amount of financial support we receive through donations.

The ads will highlight British human rights violations in northern Ireland and the illegality of British presence in Ireland, and will expose the silence of our government leaders, including President Bush and most of our Congressional Representatives. They will also help influence Governor Bill Clinton to take a public position on northern Ireland.

Such high level advertising will do much to elevate nationally the stature of our cause.

The ads will also serve to awaken and unite many within the American Irish community (44.3 million according to the 1990 census) as we approach the general election; and for the first time make many aware that there is a non-violent organization (the PEC) through which they can work to bring about justice. We will also rally support from caring Americans of different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

So join with us in taking this ultimate step. Send a generous donation.

**If 300 members immediately sent in a minimum of \$100 we would be well on our way to placing more ads. It is up to you to help us meet this challenge. Send as generous a donation as you can afford.**

To send your donation use the coupon on last page of newsletter. Check "Donation Only" and write in the amount. Make checks payable to AIPEC and mail to AIPEC, 18 Route 9W, Fairgrounds Plaza, West Haverstraw, NY 10993 - Phone # (914) 947-2726.

We thank you in advance for your support.

including cancerous growths and calves born deformed. (Irish Post, 5/30/92) On July 30, 1992 Patrick Mayhew, Northern Ireland Secretary of State denied Joe Doherty credit against his sentence for the almost ten years he served in the United States. The Life Sentence Review Board will review Joe Doherty's case after ten years of lawful custody, including time on remand in Britain. The prediction of his lawyers Steve Somerstein and Mary Pike has come true, "He will know no fairness from British officials..." (AIN-PEC 7/31/92) ...In further documentation of harassment of young people, Ciaran McCullough, 18,

*Continued on page 2*

### From The Editor

As you can see the PEC is dramatically elevating its activities through the Public Affairs Office media advertising campaign. To back up this activity we will have to expand the size of the PEC. We will need many more members/subscribers.

Everyone is asked to make a special effort to recruit at least one new member/subscriber. Every new recruit is a potential letter writer and distributor of information, and a financial supporter of the PEC.

Certainly you have at least one colleague or family member who is interested in our issues. Ask them to join. If they are not joiners, ask that they subscribe to our newsletter.

For this purpose only (new members/subscribers) the special one-time fee is only \$12. Renewals remain \$20 per year, senior citizens and students \$15.

New members/subscribers should send a note indicating their preference (member/subscriber) with their check for \$12 payable to AIPEC. Mail to AIPEC, 18 Route 9W, Fairgrounds Plaza, West Haverstraw, NY 10993. Any questions call (914) 947-2726.

### NEWSBITS continued from page 1

claims he's been stopped, searched and questioned almost 100 times by the RUC and British army since the start of the year. In the most serious incident with a British army foot patrol, joined by an RUC patrol and more soldiers, he was required to give personal information, take off his coat, open his shirt, and remove his shoes. He said, "I was standing bare chested and in my sock soles in a dark entry with about 20 RUC and British soldiers. It wasn't a pleasant experience ... I can't walk by a patrol without being abused or spat at or stopped and questioned and searched. (Andersonstown News, 5/30/92)

The efforts to placate Unionist opinion in the north and the plaudits they receive for just showing up at the talks are really pretty nauseating. Statements such as "Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution remain the main stumbling blocks to dealing between unionists and the Dublin government." (Irish Post, 7/11/92, "Paisley can make or break the talks." (Cork Examiner, 7/7/92) and "The most enormous accommodation was made by Unionists in agreeing to talk with Ministers from the Republic." (Cork Examiner, 7/13/92) appeared frequently in both press and broadcast media. Why is unionists participation such a big deal and why are Dublin politicians even thinking about changing Articles 2 and 3 of their constitution?

Amnesty International issued a report stating that human rights abuses continued in the north, especially in Castlereagh Interrogation Center. Investigations into controversial deaths in the north, particularly those involving security force personnel, did not meet minimum requirements set out in international standards. Amnesty called on the British government to reform interrogation and detention procedures and said Diplock Courts are unfair. (Cork Examiner, 7/10/92)

## 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

Editor .....John J. Finucane

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

National Headquarters: Fairgrounds Plaza  
West Haverstraw, NY 10993 - (914) 947-2726 - Fax# (914) 947-2599

Western States Executive Director: Susan Catt, 2292 North Ironwood #110, Apache Junction, ARIZONA 85220 - (602) 982-0370.

STATE DIRECTORS: Jack O'Brien, 11109 Belton Street, Upper Marlboro, MARYLAND 20772-(301)336-5167; Leah Curtin, Hlibernian 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, CONNECTICUT06443-(203)245-4739; Kevin P. Murphy, P.O. Box 8895, J.F. Kennedy Station, Boston, MASSACHUSETTS 02114-(617)665-5736; 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, 15910 Lucille Drive, Cleveland, OHIO 44111- (216) 251-7551; Andy Kelly, 168 S Coeur D'Alene Street-102E, Spokane, WASHINGTON 99204 - (509) 747-7431; John Hatch, 302 North Bedford Street, Carlisle, PENNSYLVANIA 17013 - (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) 234-1962; Elizabeth McElligott, 7747 E Dale Ln.,Scottsdale, ARIZONA 85262 - (602) 585-3602.

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

### Public Affairs Office Financial Report

As of June 27, 1992 the PEC has raised \$24,755.57 for the purpose of establishing a Public Affairs Office (PAO) in Washington, DC. A special bank account has been opened for these monies which will be used exclusively for the PAO and its operations.

While the PAO is not yet officially established, it has begun to function. See PEC Public Affairs Office To Commence Media Advertising Campaign on page 1.

We are planning more fund-raising activities which includes our current raffle. Please don't forget to send in your raffle tickets. If there are any proceeds from the newspaper advertising campaign, they will go towards the Public Affairs Office.

## Queens University Guilty Of Discrimination

by Sandy Carlson

On June 15, 1992, Queen's University of Belfast (QUB) paid "substantial undisclosed compensation" to a Catholic man (nationalist) who claimed he was discriminated against, according to the *Irish News*. However, in the settlement read out at the Fair Employment Tribunal, QUB denied bias in its hiring and promotion practices but accepted that the man was placed at "significant disadvantage". This was the second case in two weeks in which QUB paid compensation without accepting liability. Both cases were settled out of court. At this year's Queen's University commencement exercises, QUB Vice-Chancellor Gordon Beveridge said, "The university concedes nothing," when asked whether Queen's admitted to either consciously or inadvertently discriminating against Catholics.

Currently, there are eight cases of employment discrimination pending. Most of them involve Catholics (nationalists). QUB has set aside approximately \$1 million to help pay legal costs in future fair employment cases.

This most recent case of discrimination involved Mr. James Copeland, who worked as budget systems manager in the university's bursar's office and applied for the newly-created post of senior finance officer in February 1990.

"In March, the day before interviews were to be conducted, he accidentally discovered he had not been shortlisted because of his perceived lack of 'commercial expertise,'" according to

the *Irish News*.

"He protested to the selection panel, which reversed its decision but gave him only 15 hours' notice of his impending interview.

"Mr. Copeland was placed third out of six candidates and the job was given to a Protestant woman.

"During the tribunal, Mr. Copeland claimed that his boss, university bursar David Gass, had blocked his promotion because he did not want a Catholic working at the most senior levels of management.

"The tribunal also heard evidence that Mr. Gass may have allegedly discriminated against Catholics over a five-year period," said the *Irish News*. Nonetheless, QUB continues to support Mr. Gass.

Following the Fair Employment Tribunal's findings, Mr. Beveridge announced that the university would have 2 experts carry out a review of employment practices. One of those experts widely testified against the MacBride Principles, according to fair employment pressure group Equality.

Although the vice-chancellor claimed the discrimination situation had improved since a Fair Employment Agency (forerunner of the Fair Employment Commission, FEC) probe in 1987, most of the current cases were lodged between 1990 and this year. The Fair Employment Commission has said that QUB may have to carry out its own review before the end of the year, by law. Little appears to have changed, in spite of the high-level promises, however, the *Irish News* reported on June 29 that Queen's had advertised a position for senior lecturers in the school of finance in the unionist *Belfast*

*Telegraph* and not in the *Irish News*, which has a nationalist readership. However, the day before the accounting lectureships were advertised, the university placed an ad for cleaners in the *Irish News*.

According to an *Equality* open letter to Queen's Vice Chancellor, a FEC report in December 1989 said that only 16% of Queen's 3,000 employees were Catholic. "A further FEC Monitoring Report published in March 1992 showed that of 2,554 employees surveyed by the University in 1991, 20.3% were Catholics of Northern Ireland origin," according to *Equality*. Catholics (nationalists) currently constitute 42% of the north's population and 51% of the north's higher education students.

Meanwhile, *Equality* has said that claims of bias at Queen's have increased. "Campaigners in the U.S., Britain, Europe and the south have undertaken to work against Queen's and we are calling on all academic institutions to sever academic and cultural associations with Queen's until it takes action on discrimination," said *Equality's* honorary chairman, Oliver Kearney. In an open letter to the Vice-Chancellor of Queen's, Mr. Kearney pointed out, "There is an overwhelming imperative for Queen's University to give inspirational leadership to society in rooting out this endemic system of Economic Apartheid, by publicly adopting and implementing a vigorous program of Affirmative Action, accompanied by declared Goals and Timetables for redressing the communal inequality which has been systematically engineered for generations."

Turn to *Action Requests* on page 6.

### PEC Annual Dance

St. Aedan's

Pearl River, Rockland County, New York

Saturday, October 24, 1992

9:00 pm to 1:00 am

Music by Celtic Justice

Admission \$20 per person -- includes Beer & Set-ups; BYOB  
For reservations / information call (914) 947-2726 or 947-2998

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Telephone Hotline  
(914) 429-7849**

*A 24 hour, 7 day-a-week service*

### *The PEC Says Thank You...*

To the Worcester, Massachusetts PEC, under the directorship of Jim Browne, member Enda Charles of Pearl River, New York, Sandy Carlson of Connecticut and Michael Tuohy of New York.

The Worcester PEC conducted a fund-raiser at the AOH Division 36 hall in Worcester. We also thank Div. 36 for their generous support. Enda Charles organized a social at the Phoenix Club in the Bronx, New York. Sandy Carlson and Michael Tuohy set up PEC information booths at Irish Festivals.

### **A Challenge To MacBride**

by Kevin P. Murphy, *Massachusetts State Director*

The MacBride Principles Campaign represents the strongest force ever for positive change in northern Ireland. Since 1985 the PEC has been in the vanguard of advocating and lobbying for the MacBride Principles in scores of states, cities, towns and counties.

However some individuals remain uneducated on these principles of equality as was evident recently in Boston during the visit of England's Prince Philip. As was reported in the July 14 edition of *The Boston Herald*, Mr. Michael Donlon, President of Boston Ireland Ventures (BIV), a Boston based investment program that sends American investment into northern Ireland, attended a gala party for the English Prince aboard the HMS Active in Boston Harbor. As reported in the 7/14/92 *Boston Herald*, Mr. Donlon proudly proclaimed to Prince Philip that he, "raises investment for businesses in Belfast." Prince Philip was quoted as stating in the *Herald* article, "Are these the good guys?" That question depends on which side one is on. If you are the British government then BIV's refusal to use the MacBride Principles when investing in northern Ireland is great. For BIV's investment without these fair employment provisions lets Britain off the hook in regards to ensuring equality for nationalists. If you are a member of the heavily discriminated against nationalist community, then investment without the MacBride Principles is nothing more than money given to Britain to maintain the status-quo of bigotry and despair.

Northern Ireland nationalists need fair employment provisions on US investments to ensure a chance at lasting equal opportunity. This is not the case with the BIV program, chaired by Boston Mayor Ray Flynn and SDLP leader John Hume, which has not incorporated the MacBride Principles in their investment program. We must continue to work to make the MacBride Principles a must for all American investment in northern Ireland. We will be giving hope to the oppressed.

### **The St. Patrick's Battalion**

by Sean Prior, Arizona

The story of the St. Patrick's Battalion is a little known episode which occurred during the U.S. Mexican War. The story involves the desertion of Irish-born American Troops and others who crossed over and fought for Mexico in a conflict which cost Mexico the loss of nearly half its national territory.

During the course of the conflict, almost three hundred American deserters joined the Foreign Legion of the Mexican Army, and this unit became known as the "Saint Patrick's Battalion." The name was adopted for the unit because the majority of it's members had been born in Ireland.

For the first time, a complete account of the St. Patrick's Battalion is revealed in a new book titled "Shamrock and Sword" by Robert Ryal Miller. The book gives us an excellent overview of the war and its importance in U.S. history.

As revealed by Miller, over 24 percent of American troops under the command of General Zachary Taylor, who entered Texas in 1845, were born in Ireland. Taylor's army was sent south by President Polk to guarantee the annexation of Texas, which had been a northern province of Mexico.

The main reason that so many U.S. troops had been born in Ireland was due to their coming here in large numbers as a result of the Great Irish Famine of 1845-1848. For economic reasons great numbers of Catholic Irish found themselves often going directly from the coffin ships to fight against their fellow Catholics in Mexico, which may have caused some to want to desert. Records indicate the brutal military discipline and severe punishment inflicted for minor offenses were the primary reasons for most of the American troops desertions.

The Irish-born soldiers were by no means the only soldiers to desert their ranks. The fact that over 9,000 enlisted men went over-the-hill was perhaps a reflection of how unpopular the Mexican war was with many Americans.

John Quincy Adams, former president, and Abraham Lincoln, who were both then serving in congress, felt that the war was totally unjustifiable. However, for many other Americans the execution of the war and the resulting appropriation of Mexican lands was simply a fulfillment of the concept of "Manifest Destiny."

The last great battle of the Mexican War took place at Churubusco just outside Mexico City. Among the thousands of Mexican troops defeated by the Americans at Churubusco, were two companies of the St. Patrick's Battalion. Of the 85 Irish deserters captured and court-martialed by the Americans, 50 of them were executed for treason. Most of the others were whipped and branded on the face with the letter "D" for deserter. It is believed that over 90 of the Irish escaped. Another 35 San Patricios, as they were known to the Mexicans, died during the fighting on that fateful day of August 20, 1847. Twenty-one other San Patricios also lost their lives at the battle of Buena Vista earlier in the conflict.

It is rather interesting that John Riley, from County Galway, who was the leader of the St. Patrick's Battalion, escaped being executed since desertion from the American side took place just a few days before war was declared. Consequently, he was not charged with treason.

Twice a year, on March 17 and September 12, the anniversary of the hangings, people all over Mexico commemorate the Irish contribution to their war.

# **Make Northern Ireland An Issue In This Year's Presidential Election**

**Reproduce & Distribute #1**

There are many millions of Americans, particularly American Irish, who support a democratic, united Ireland and an end to British colonial injustice there. Many of these people would vote for a Presidential Candidate who would take a public position in opposition to British injustice in northern Ireland. Something Presidential Candidates have not done in the past.

If political analysts are correct in their forecasts that this year's Presidential election will be a close race, we may well be in a position to influence a candidate to take such a public stand.

To date neither candidate has taken such a public position. President George Bush has already made it clear that he supports British colonial policy in northern Ireland. Governor Bill Clinton did make favorable statements at an Irish Forum in New York City this past April, but those remarks were not made public.

Governor Clinton stated that he would support the MacBride Principles, call for an end to visa-denial, speak out against British human rights violations and would send a special envoy to northern Ireland.

Unfortunately, his positions are not part of his public policy. His foreign policy position papers do not include any references to Ireland (northern Ireland). When the American Irish Political Education Committee (AIEPEC) contacted his national campaign headquarters, his staff was not aware of his statements in New York City.

Media coverage of his positions was limited to American Irish publications. In other words, his position is unknown to the general public, including the many millions of Americans who oppose British government injustice in Ireland, who do not read American Irish newspapers.

**Fortunately, we can change this.** As a "candidate for change" Governor Clinton may very well take a public position, **IF** enough people write to him. He will only respond to public pressure. It is up to us to create that "public pressure".

By going public we mean that he has to include his positions on Ireland in his TV and radio advertising, press releases to the mainstream news media, and public addresses and debates. This way he will be on public record nationally and all concerned Americans will learn of his position.

To influence Governor Clinton to do the right thing will take a lot of effort. We are asking him to change American foreign policy relative to northern Ireland.

We can do it if we put our minds to it. We must generate a lot of letters, phone calls and post cards to his national and local campaign offices.

**TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:**

1. Reproduce and distribute this Action Request to friends, relatives, business associates, organizations -- distribute at social and community events, feises, festivals, dances, etc.

2. Organize a letter-writing campaign to Governor Bill Clinton using the letter below as a guide. Have family, friends, relatives, business associates, organizations and their members, etc. write.

3. Call Governor Clinton's Campaign Office in your community (get phone number from directory assistance) and his national campaign office (501) 372-1992. Have others do the same. Use the message in the letter below.

4. For those who will not write, develop a form letter using our letter below as a guide. Make sufficient copies. Have people sign and address the letter, and address an envelope. It is best that you mail the letters. That way you know they were mailed.

**If you receive post cards with this article, have them signed, addressed and mailed.** Again, it is best that you mail the post cards.

5. **If you have the opportunity to meet Governor Clinton or Senator Gore in person on the campaign trail, ask them to take a public stance. Also use the same approach when you run into members of his campaign committee.**

**We have pre-messaged, pre-addressed post cards to the Clinton Campaign Headquarters available at 5 cents each (\$5.00 per 100). To order send check payable to AIEPEC, 18 Route 9W, Fairgrounds Plaza, West Haverstraw, NY 10993.**

## **Sample Letter**

Write the letter below in your own words or as is. The address is: National Director, Bill Clinton For President, PO Box 615, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Dear Governor Bill Clinton:

I respectfully urge that you make public your position on northern Ireland as stated in New York City this past April at the Irish Forum. Include these positions in your TV and radio advertising, press releases to the mainstream media and when making public debates and addresses. There are millions of Americans who share these views and who would vote for the candidate who publicly supports them.

Sincerely yours,

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

Published September 1992 by American Irish PEC

# Ireland In Europe

by Sandy Carlson

In Europe, the close of 1992 is synonymous with "European union: the abolition of frontier checks; the removal of restrictions to the free movement of persons, goods, capital, and services; and the harmonization of taxes." The completion of the Single Market will create a trading bloc on a par with the U.S. This economic union will be accompanied by political union which will involve a strengthening of the European Parliament's powers. This will result in a more federal Europe with a central administration in Brussels whose powers will inevitably infringe on those of individual member states.

Because Ireland will remain a marginal region on Europe's periphery, the island will suffer as a result of European union. Indeed, although Ireland and Northern Ireland has been a part of the EC since 1973, Northern Ireland is the 45th poorest region out of 171, and Ireland, 25th. In unemployment, Northern Ireland is 16th from the bottom, and Ireland, 14th.

The EC identifies one of Ireland's primary problems as "peripherality": it is on the edge of Europe, separated from the continent by water, has no external economy, and is involved in no self-affirming activities. This makes Ireland less accessible than the continental countries or even Britain, which will be connected with France by the Channel Tunnel. Ireland's inadequate rail network and poor economy also make it unattractive as a market or as a place to set up shop. *Northern Ireland in Europe* (1/91) says that "Northern Ireland may become more isolated as peripheral traditional industrial regions are bypassed by new telecommunications and transport."

The EC regard Ireland as a region in its entirety and Northern Ireland as a region within the United Kingdom. Both are classed as "Objective 1" -- that is, among the poorest EC regions which need to be brought up to EC standards economically. However, Northern Ireland does not receive an increase in EC funds because those funds go only to

states which are Objective 1 in their entirety. A 1990 EC report on reforming structural funds says that it is difficult for the EC to "contribute significantly to the development of Northern Ireland".

Recent reforms in EC regional policy included the establishment of a Regional Consultation Committee, which plays no role in the legislative process. In addition, its members are appointed by government in a personal capacity. This reduces the committee to a nonsense in Northern Ireland, which is governed by the Northern Ireland Office -- itself a collection of British members of parliament who have no organic or political interest in or understanding of Northern Ireland.

The European Parliament itself recognizes the EC's ineffectiveness, to date, in improving the economies of the regions in its *Ten Years That Changed Europe*: "In 1957 the Community's founding members agreed to bring about the harmonious development of the regions. Three decades later, this objective remains a distant goal." This highlights the Community's ambiguous approach to the regions. On the one hand, Article 23 of the Single European Act, on economic and social cohesion, provides for the redistribution of powers to the regions; on the other hand, the European Parliament is fighting for more power.

The EC recognizes that "in a Europe with no internal frontiers, man (sic) and money will settle where the environment is most favorable. It is a race which the strongest regions will be best equipped to win." In another EC document, the EC says, "Today there is a new challenge to regional policy: the internal market could give an extra stimulus to the most prosperous regions." However, another EC leaflet says that the EC does not expect the new freedom of movement to lead to migration, for "experience has shown that the vast majority of citizens prefer to live and work in the region they regard as home."

All of these points, and the fact that the EC is receiving more membership applications from former eastern bloc

## Reproduce & Distribute

countries -- the acceptance of which will mean Ireland will be competing with other badly off countries for structural funds-- indicate that participation in the EC will not benefit the island of Ireland.

In the run up to Ireland's June 18 referendum on EC participation (in which Irish voters approved European union), Taoiseach Albert Reynolds's government used taxpayers' money to campaign for a yes vote. When questioned about the integrity of this act, Reynolds said that the government was not obliged "to provide facilities" for groups opposed to the Maastricht Treaty (on European union). This undemocratic "just sign here" approach is a sign of things to come in the new European order. Dublin will forego sovereignty for it will no longer control interest rates or prices, and it will no longer be able to create loans or government investments. How big money is invested in Ireland will be determined by the European Central Bank rather than Dublin. The European Central Bank, to which the Irish Central Bank will submit, will be an independent body not subject to democratic control. University College Dublin professor Anthony Coughlan says that European monetary union will cause price rises that will fuel inflation in Ireland and reduce living standards.

Ireland's only chance of survival may lay in tourism, which the EC says "brings mankind and peoples closer together and kills prejudice." Thus, Ireland may survive as Europe's reconciliation theme park, as Europe contributes nothing toward a solution to Ireland's economic, social, and political crises. It is ironic that Ireland, in this state, will become part of America's economic competition.

### JOIN OR SUPPORT

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

## Report: Western States Leadership Conference

by Susan Catt, Executive Director,  
Western States Region

On June 6, 1992 officers representing the Western Region of the American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC) met for a one-day leadership conference in Boulder, Colorado. The purpose of the conference was to develop and expand the recently formed PEC Western Region network and to plan future strategies.

The Western Region network is designed to unite the efforts of PEC leaders throughout the West and to combine their work with that of the national PEC. While the PEC for years has had members throughout the West, this is the first time it has established a body to organize their efforts. It is expected that from this networking more PEC Support Groups will also form in the West.

The conference was organized and chaired by Susan Catt, Executive Director of the Western Region from Arizona with the invaluable assistance of Terry Deem Reilly, Colorado State Director. Present at the conference were National President John Finucane, and State Directors from the West including Linda Barker, Oklahoma; Mrs. Leah Curtin, Minnesota; Mr. Larry Doyle, Nebraska; Dr. John Geisen, Idaho; Mr. Andy Kelly, Washington; and Elizabeth McElligott, Arizona. Also present were members and guests from Wyoming, Colorado, California and Washington.

Special guests for the conference were Colorado State Legislator Pat Killian and human rights activist Sean Mackin. Representative Killian spoke on how legislators are affected by a MacBride Principles campaign. She stressed that when approaching legislators use simple, well laid-out "visually appealing material" with facts that point to lessening human suffering by way of the MacBride Principles. Representative Killian also pointed out that the message from northern Ireland human rights activists is confusing for most Americans and should be simplified.

Special guest human rights activist Sean Mackin shared his life story in northern Ireland. A story that makes perfectly that one does not have to be a member of a paramilitary organization to be discriminated against, harassed, interned, tortured, and life threatened to the point of fleeing one's own country. All present were grateful to Mr. Mackin recognizing his personal sacrifice in attending.

President John Finucane stressed the importance of the work of the State Directors and members in the West: activities in the western states such as local and state MacBride campaigns, letter writing, distribution of information, radio and tv presentations, information booths, are effective because they demonstrate that American concern about injustice in Ireland is broadbased and not limited to states with heavy American Irish populations. He also urged all to support the PEC's planned opening of a *Public Affairs Office* in Washington.

The afternoon session included discussions: on future MacBride campaigns; the value of letter writing; educating the public through the *Reproduce & Distribute* program and personal contact with the news media; providing libraries with quality materials; a talk on how to deal with media misinformation and censorship by Colorado State Director, Terry Deem Reilly. Linda Barker, Oklahoma State Director, explained how she successfully approached the editor of her community newspaper to do a lengthy article about northern Ireland. The article was well received and was very effective in explaining to many, for the first time, the facts about British colonialism in northern Ireland. She also noted that all the information she needed was found in our *American Irish Newsletter*.

Before the conference Finucane and Mackin did a 30 minute radio interview on KGNU public radio.

It was agreed at the conference that the Western Region would organize a speaking tour for a guest from northern Ireland to be conducted in conjunction with a series of fund-raisers in different areas of the West. Members are urged to get involved in organizing the speaking tour and

fund-raisers. For information contact your state director and/or write to Susan Catt, 2292 North Ironwood #110, Apache Junction, AZ 85220.

After the conference John Finucane travelled to New Mexico at the request of member Willie Lennon to conduct a series of talks and radio interviews. Sean Mackin travelled to Nebraska at the invitation of the Nebraska PEC.

Mr. Mackin and PEC State Director, Larry Doyle met with a group of Nebraska State Senators and legislative assistants. Mackin described life in West Belfast focusing on the discrimination in the work place and the necessity of enacting MacBride Principles legislation to help eliminate such discrimination.

Mr. Mackin was interviewed on *Talk of the Town* (KKAR radio) with host Steve Brown. His interview originally scheduled for thirty minutes lasted one hour and fifteen minutes. He spoke of his treatment at the hands of British forces in Ireland. Callers expressed shock that such treatment was regularly carried out and condoned by the British government. Other media coverage included an interview by Phil Rooney of KFAB Radio and a largely positive article which appeared in Nebraska's largest newspaper, the Omaha World-Herald.

Following dinner with the local PEC Support Group, Mr. Mackin addressed an enthusiastic audience at the Dingle Bay Oyster Restaurant about the treatment of Irish nationalists by British forces in Ireland. He appealed to all to care about what goes on in northern Ireland and to support the MacBride Principles campaign in Nebraska.

According to State Director Larry Doyle, Mr. Mackin was very enlightening and well received.

John Finucane's trip to New Mexico included a talk in Santa Fe, which attracted a broadbased, influential audience, and Albuquerque. He also did two radio interviews including a one hour program on public radio with members Willie Lennon and January Roberts.

We are grateful to Larry Doyle and Willie Lennon.

Members in the Western Region are asked to get more active and to help us build our network.



### Action Requests

(For Action Request #1 refer to Reproduce & Distribute #1.)

#### Action Request #2

Concerning the article *Queen's University Guilty Of Discrimination* on page three, write the letter below. Include with your letter a copy of this article.

Both Harvard and Georgetown universities' pension funds have subscribed to the MacBride Principles. Write to: Harvard University, Pension Fund, 1350 Massachusetts Ave, Holyoke Center, Cambridge, MA 02138-3800 and Georgetown University, Pension Fund, 37th & O Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20057-0001.

Dear Pension Fund Director:

Thank you for your support of the MacBride Principles. Please contact Queen's University Vice-Chancellor Gordon Beveridge, (Queen's University, Belfast BT7, Northern Ireland) and protest his refusal to resolve the problem of employment discrimination practiced against nationalists. I also ask that your university cease any involvement with Queen's until the problem is resolved.

Sincerely,  
signature

### The Importance Of Letter Writing

Organized letter writing campaigns have played a major role in many MacBride Principles successes and in drawing attention to injustice in northern Ireland. Letter writing also has been effective in combatting the negative stereotyping of the American Irish.

The more people we have writing letters, the greater will be our effect.

We ask all members to make a special effort to write the letters we request through our Action Request program. We also urge, if you can, get others to do the same. Every letter counts.

Don't forget to use the Telephone Hotline (914) 429-7849.

## DON'T FORGET !!!

Please return your raffle tickets as soon as possible. If everyone purchases the book of tickets (\$12) they received with the August Newsletter, it will be a big boost for the PEC.

The Raffle takes place on October 24, 1992.

THANK YOU !

### Join Or Support

#### The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC)

I want to join in/support the struggle 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

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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