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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 14, Number 4

April 1989

TIME TO GO: BRITAIN WANTS OUT

by Stephanie Finucane

The Time to Go campaign, a new British initiative for withdrawal from Northern Ireland, commenced with the signing of its charter on June 30, 1988 in the House of Commons. The 100 signatories from academic, legal, political, and cultural backgrounds all believe that no peace is possible in Ireland while the British remain.

According to Time to Go chairwoman Clare Short, MP, the border of Northern Ireland is not legitimate, having been drawn without the consent of the majority of any national unit of any part of Ireland and since maintained through the use of systematic discrimination. Likewise, Short describes the campaign as "a British movement, to make Britain face up to its responsibilities for the current situation." As of now, the option of withdrawal has been virtually ignored in the mainstream of political debate in Britain. Time to Go is an effort to provoke debate on the issue of how British withdrawal can be accomplished to leave a stable system behind. "We are not talking about pulling everything out and letting everything go," explains Short.

The Time to Go Charter also points out that over the last ten years, opinion polls in Britain show a majority of British support for withdrawal; thus, the questionable absence of the withdrawal option from the political agenda. In the past, officials have shied away from discussing this possibility because, according to Short, "Anyone who talks about it is immediately charged with being a covert IRA supporter. Our political debate in Britain is paralyzed as a consequence of that accusation and fear."

Another factor contributing to the political paralysis is the current invalid political and media consensus that an "acceptable level of violence" exists in Northern Ireland today. Peter Hain, a former leader of the Young Liberals and now a working member of the campaign, negates such reasoning by pointing out that, "The 3,000 deaths in Northern Ireland are equivalent to 100,000 deaths here in Britain....If there had been 100,000 deaths here, people would have realized that this is not an acceptable level of violence. They would see this as a desperate attempt to keep the lid on a crisis that is boiling over."

The Time to Go campaign is planning for a year of discussion and activity leading up to a carnival and march on the 20th anniversary in August of the deployment of British troops in Northern Ireland.

NEWS BITS

By Kathy Regan

Under the heading "A World of Continuing Tensions" - The second decade of Thatcher's conservative revolution begins. Europe doubts her commitment to a unified European Community and civil liberties in Northern Ireland". (US News and World Report 12/26/88)... "There are definite indications that

NEWSLETTER TO PUBLISH MONTHLY

As of this Newsletter issue we will publish monthly. The membership renewal fee will increase to \$20. This progress in communications is necessitated by the increased activities surrounding the north of Ireland and the need for greater member activity. **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE APPEARS ON PAGE 6 JUST BELOW YOUR ADDRESS LABEL.**

Since the inception of our current Membership-by-Mail Campaign last July, our membership has grown by more than 40%. The American Irish PEC is the fastest growing American Irish organization in the United States. The increase in membership and the fact that we are now publishing monthly means our effectiveness will also increase.

Our effectiveness, of course, depends on membership participation. All members have an important role to play. All members should be responding to our Newsletter letter-writing requests and utilizing our Telephone Hotline. This is how an issue is made. It demonstrates to our elected officials and other targets that we are serious. In some cases, your letter may be the first letter received by an elected official. Most people do not contact their representatives. We urge you to please write the letters requested!

We ask you to study the Multi-Purpose Coupon on page 6 which is used for new memberships, membership renewal, change of address, donations and to purchase books, videos, etc. We also ask that you contact and offer your assistance to your State Director whose name and address appears on page 2.

We look forward to your continued membership and support! Remember! Your membership fees also help support our different programs including our MacBride Principles Campaign.

the Provos are considering an alternative strategy to violence. Gerry Adams gave a clear indication of this a few months back when he appealed to Fianna Fail and the SDLP to share with Sinn Fein a common Nationalist position. A major obstacle to the alternative strategy is Sinn Fein's failure to make any sort of electoral advance in the Republic. It is now generally accepted that the prime purpose of the Hillsborough (Anglo-Irish) Agreement was to halt the electoral advance being made by Sinn Fein in the North. There was the perceived danger that Sinn Fein might get more votes than the SDLP and, in doing so, acquire the leadership of the Nationalist community. It would then, in logic at least, have been impossible to deny Sinn Fein a place at the various discussion/negotiation tables. Peter

Continued on page 5

FROM THE EDITOR, John J. Finucane

To date the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs has done much to publicize Ireland's "British problem" in Congress. For that we are very grateful. However, much more has to be done now.

To achieve the aims of the Committee will be no easy task. This requires changing the Administration's pro-British foreign policy regarding the North. This can only be accomplished with strong Congressional support.

All Committee members should take an active role in promoting our issues. Of the 120 members of the Ad Hoc Committee, only 6 attended the recent meeting with the Council of Presidents of Major Irish American Organizations in Washington, DC. This response is totally unacceptable!

What we need is a strong Ad Hoc Committee whose members are determined to achieve the Committee's goals. Many members are sincere, but there are also many who did nothing more than join for the purpose of "looking good" to their American Irish constituency.

One way to rectify this situation is through you, our members. You must meet with your Congressperson and Senators and establish an ongoing relationship. Invite other members of the community (non-Irish included) to participate with you. Convey to your representatives our issues, and get their commitment to participate actively in Ad Hoc Committee activities, and get commitments from them in writing as to what they will do. Get their commitment to co-sponsor and promote the MacBride Principles legislation which has as its prime sponsors Congressman Hamilton Fish and Senator Alfonse D'Amato.

Follow-up is critical. Keep in touch with your representative to obtain progress reports and to keep them informed. Be sure to keep all concerned constituents aware of his activities, both good and bad, and be sure to recognize them when appropriate.

The American Irish PEC

founded 1975

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

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LABOR LIASON: Kevin Garvey, IUOE Local 891, 560 West 169 Street, New York, NEW YORK 10032-(212)281-7172.

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

STUDENT ORGANIZER: Sandy Carlson, 20 Sybil Avenue, Branford, CONNECTICUT, 06504-(203) 488-3770

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MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES UPDATE

On December 13, 1988 the San Francisco Employees' Retirement Board adopted the MacBride Principles...MacBride Principles legislation has been introduced or reintroduced in California, Nebraska, Utah, Oklahoma, Indiana, New Hampshire, Vermont, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Legislation is planned for Washington, Texas, Wisconsin, and San Francisco, California. Shareholder resolutions have been introduced in 24 companies, 7 more than last year. As of this writing, legislation has been passed in committee in both Missouri and New Hampshire. We are also advised that Massachusetts, the first state to adopt the Principles in 1985, has begun to disinvest from American companies operating in the North that have not complied with the Principles.

The campaign is becoming more and more an American issue. We are advised by Tom O'Flaherty that representatives of the American Baptist Church, the Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church will testify in New Hampshire in support of the Principles. A New York based corporation has informed its pension fund to invest only in companies that abide by the MacBride Principles.

WE URGE ALL MEMBERS in the above states to contact their legislators and request that they support the MacBride legislation. We also request that you contact your state's PEC representative and offer your help (refer to organization box on page 2).

Dae Woo Electronics, a South Korean company with offices in the United States, is opening a plant in Antrim, Northern Ireland. We urge **ALL MEMBERS** to communicate to them the message below: President, Dae Woo Electronics, 477 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022 - (phone # 212 909-8200). Dear Sir:

As an American, I am very concerned with the blatant discrimination in employment practiced by the British government against Catholics in Northern Ireland. I strongly urge that your company implement the MacBride Principles of Fair Employment at your plant in Northern Ireland. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,
Signature

STUDENT ACTION

by Sandy Carlson, Student Coordinator

The American Irish PEC is working to establish a nationwide network of college students who will work to promote the MacBride Principles of Fair Employment in Northern Ireland at their universities. Doing this means first instigating awareness, a task that requires countering propaganda from the British Information Service, the British Consulates, the British Embassy, the British government, and the State Department. All of these entities work to maintain American ignorance of the truth of injustice in the north of Ireland. However, we must begin by contacting the schools near us and requesting them to pay attention to the human rights violations in the north of Ireland.

If you are able to contact colleges in your area to assist us in this effort, please contact Sandy Carlson at 20 Sybil Avenue, Branford, CT 06504, (203)488-3770 or at the PEC national office as soon as possible.

OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS

by Kevin P. Murphy, Massachusetts

Ed O'Donnell of Iowa received a letter from the U.S. Postmaster General's office in response to a PEC letter campaign. The situation involved a Westchester County New York Post Office newsletter. THE WESTCHESTER POSTAL PRESS stated that if its recent blood drive for the American Red Cross were held on St. Patrick's Day, then the blood would have been over 80 proof. The letter was from Mr. N. David McLean, the General Manager for the Publications Department, Communications Division for the entire U.S. Postal Service. His apology was ordered by the Postmaster General, Mr. Frank.

Excerpts from Mr. Frank's letter are as follows: "I apologize for the thoughtless remark that appeared in the story about a local blood drive. It was not the intent of the editor to make a disparaging remark about Americans of Irish descent. The comment was a lame attempt at humor that obviously should not have appeared in a Postal Service publication. I have discussed the matter with the editor, and I believe a higher level of sensitivity exists about such comments.

"Americans of many backgrounds join with those of Irish descent on St. Patrick's Day in recognizing the contributions they have made to American life. These are genuine expressions of respect and warmth, one the U.S. Postal Service associates itself with throughout the year."

Thanks to you our members, an offensive situation has been corrected and brought to the attention of a high-ranking official. This proves that when we American Irish are united, and take the time to write a letter or make a phone call, respect for our culture will come. But, unfortunately, not everyone wants to give the American Irish the respect they deserve. HALLMARK is again on the attack.

We have received numerous complaints about the offensive nature of the St. Patrick's Day greeting cards produced by Hallmark Shoe Box Series. Again HALLMARK CARDS (PO Box 419580, Kansas City, Mo 64141- (816) 274-5697), is on the attack depicting the Irish as heavy consumers of alcohol. They have also added to their St. Patrick's Day selection, cards with vulgar sexual connotations. Even worse, HALLMARK IS ENCOURAGING THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL THROUGH THESE CARDS WHICH WILL LEAD TO DEATH AND INJURY. MANY OF THE VICTIMS WILL BE CHILDREN. Another major offender is RECYCLED PAPER PRODUCTS (3636 North Broadway, Chicago, Il 60613-(312) 348-6410).

As many of you know, the PEC has conducted several letter-writing campaigns to both of these companies. Obviously they will not respect our wishes. When you contact Hallmark, they will ask you for catalog numbers. Simply demand that they remove from their St. Patrick's Day selection all cards that make reference to alcohol and that have vulgar sexual connotations. We recommend the following COURSE OF ACTION:

- 1) Do not purchase, at any time, any Hallmark or Recycled Paper products. We recommend you purchase your greeting cards, party items, etc. from American Greetings. (Several years ago, in response to a PEC campaign, American Greetings discontinued the offensive cards), and 2) contact both of these companies. Inform them that you are insulted by the St. Patrick's Day cards that make reference to alcohol, that promote alcohol consumption and that have vulgar sexual connotations. Make clear to them that you will no longer purchase their products and that you will urge others to do the same.

Consider this a long-term action and alert all concerned. Also, when possible, business people should refrain from doing business with these companies.

SEND ALL OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS TO: Kevin P. Murphy, PO Box 8895, J F Kennedy Station, Boston, Ma 02114.

FROM THE NORTH

by Rev. Des Wilson, Belfast

1989 will be an important year in the north of Ireland; there will be both local council and European elections.

From the British government's point of view, it is essential that Sinn Fein not increase its vote; it is also essential that the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) increase its vote. With this in view, a number of measures have been taken.

Sinn Fein has been banned from broadcasting and may be banned from newspapers as well. Church leaders have begun a new round of attacks on both the IRA and Sinn Fein; assassination squads have become active again and they are targeting Sinn Fein candidates and election workers. As Gerry Adams, Member of Parliament and head of Sinn Fein, remarked recently: Sinn Fein has not been able to realize its full voting potential, after all, if you are a Sinn Fein candidate you may get shot!

If Sinn Fein got fifty percent of the nationalist vote, then British policy in the north would suffer yet another blow. The British public has been told that the military republicans are criminals with little real support; if the vote shows that it has large support and even shares equal support with the SDLP, then this story is seen to be false. Such a revelation must be prevented at all costs, even at the cost of reducing British domestic liberties to a degree that causes deep unease in Britain itself. Already some political figures and intellectuals in Britain are saying that some radical reform of British institutions is needed. Such a reform would, of course, be impossible since the British system does not allow a written constitution which can protect citizens' rights in constitutional courts.

When the local council elections are held in May, this will give some idea of the standing of Sinn Fein in relation to other parties. Opposition by the British government and church leaders and the deadly tactics of the British assassination squads may well have an effect different from that intended - people may react with anger at the refusal of yet another civil and human right - that is, the right to hear candidates and make a free and confidential choice between them.

The other side of the story is that politicians are anxious for votes, and therefore, must find some issues on which they can please - or at least not offend - the electorate. This means that SDLP and church leaders who have vehemently opposed supporting some nationalist self-help programs and community groups in predominantly Sinn Fein districts will now make it appear they want to help them. This deceptive process has already begun.

Some private citizens have tried to urge both the Sinn Fein and the SDLP to make an agreement to field a candidate who would be acceptable to both parties. This would help avoid unproductive wrangling among the two major Irish nationalist parties and would help maximize the nationalist and republican vote. Such a vote would be a demonstration of solidarity which our population greatly needs. The SDLP seems likely to avoid any such agreement while Sinn Fein would probably see merit in it.

It is interesting to note that the course of British policy in Ireland may well be determined by the outcome of these two elections in May and June.

PEC NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Saturday, May 6, 1989.....Rockland County, New York

MAKE YOU RESERVATIONS NOW!

For information call (914) 947-2726

THE GREAT ARTIFICIAL HUNGER

by Bob Patzwall, PEC Maryland

The years 1845 to 1849, are undoubtedly the absolute low-point of Irish History. In those five short years Ireland lost over a quarter of her population of eight million people. Between 1 and 1.5 million people died of starvation and disease and at least another million emigrated to foreign lands. Fortunately for us 75% of these emigrants came to the United States. Fully 25% of today's American Irish population are descendants of the "famine Irish".

The "famine" was truly a monumental disaster, and its tragedy was compounded because it was both artificial and avoidable. There was always plenty of food available, but the prevailing economic and political philosophy of the British government did little or nothing to alleviate the suffering. This is how it came about.

By the mid-1800's English landlords (mostly absentee) owned most of the land in Ireland and the native Irish were tenants who worked the land in return for a small section where they grew their own crops and raised their families. The potato, because of its high yield per acre, was the primary staple crop and diet of the Irish people. Other grains and livestock were raised, primarily to pay the "rackrents" to the landlords and their agents, but very seldom for the tenants own use. Thus, dependence on the potato crop cannot be overstated. It meant survival for one-third of the Irish people; in County Mayo it was over 90%.

In 1845, a "Potato Blight" appeared in Ireland (and also in other European countries). It was obvious that disaster was imminent, but the one institution that could have averted it, the British government, virtually ignored all appeals for assistance. The result was the Irish tenants used the "rent Payments" for food in order to survive. Literally tens of thousands were evicted and forced to wander the roads or inter government workhouses. Soon, landlords and agents were attacked in many areas and the British finally did react. The Prime Minister, Robert Peel, established a "commission of enquiry" and took a few inconsequential steps to ease the situation. Basically though, they sent soldiers, not food. Early in 1846, martial law was declared and Irish violators of a sundown curfew could be sentenced to fourteen years in the Australian penal colonies. As the situation worsened Parliament did make an effort by authorizing 100,000 Pounds for Irish relief. This came to 12 pence per person; it followed a 200,000 Pound appropriation for beautifying London's Bettersea Park.

Why this government intransigence? Because the principles of political economy, as espoused by Charles Trevelyan, the permanent Head of the Treasury, would not allow the free distribution of food to the starving. It would "interfere" with the natural forces of the market place. Trevelyan became a virtual dictator who did as little as possible to avert a million deaths from starvation. He was knighted for his efforts, saying "Too much has been done for the peoples".

Awaiting the 1846 harvest, a starving people tried to exist on roots, berries, and even diseased potatoes. The crop failed again and once more the government reacted. This time they refused to allow the import of grain in order to protect the landlord's prices. And those wandering the roads were now charged with vagrancy and sent to prison.

In the midst of all this the other crops in Ireland were huge. Vast quantities of grain and livestock were sent from Ireland to England during this entire period -- enough to have fed twice the population of Ireland at that time. Weekly convoys went from all parts of Ireland to ships at the seaports, protected from the Irish by British troops.

As riots erupted everywhere the British finally gave in -- but way too little and way too late. While the famine "officially" ended in 1849, there was a partial crop failur in 1850. Starvation and disease remained commonplace in Ireland for the next thirty years.

Two and a half million men, women and children died or emigrated because of starvation. The government simply allowed it to happen; some historians claim it was actually "encouraged". And this took place in a country that exported enough food for eighteen million people, and where the dead were actually British citizens. World history, especially Irish and American, was greatly altered by events of the Famine, and Anglo-Irish relations have never been normal since. Genocide is not too strong a description of the "Artificial Famine"

(PADDY'S LAMENT BY THOMAS GALLAGHER, A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT STARVATION, IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE AMERICAN IRISH PEC, \$7.95 + \$2.50 P&H. ORD# 777 - USE MULTI-PURPOSE COUPON ON PAGE 6)

NEW IRISH

by Pete Foley

Congressman Bruce Morrison (D-Conn), a co-chairman of the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs, was elected chairman of the House Immigration Sub-Committee. Former chairman Romano Mazzoli (D-Ky) was voted out by an overwhelming majority of the committee members. The reason given is that the members were dissatisfied with Mazzoli's handling of immigration bills put before the committee in the last session of Congress. The members felt that there a need for substantial immigration reform and that Mazzoli was an obstacle. The only reform enacted was an extension of the Donnelly Visa program which helped some lucky Irish people and the Berman Visa plan which will have 20,000 new visas issued on a lottery basis over the next two years.

The Berman Visa applications will be available in March or April and will cover 150 countries including Ireland but will exclude the six counties and Britain. Any Irish born in these areas will not be eligible.

There will be a big push during this Congress for permanent reform of the immigration laws so that the Irish and other groups will be able to emigrate legally.

COURSE OF ACTION: Contact Hon. Bruce Morrison, Chairman, House Immigration Sub-Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 (phone# 202 225-3661). Congratulate him on his appointment as co-chairman of the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs, and urge that he push for permanent immigration reform that would give legal status to Irish immigrants in the U.S. and future immigrants. **Include in your letter that you are a member of the American Irish PEC.**

TELEPHONE HOTLINE

(914) 429-7849

The Telephone Hotline has already demonstrated its potential. At least two of the people we asked Hotline Users to contact, Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn) and Congressman Joe Kennedy (D-Mass) have responded favorably. Can you imagine the response we would get if every member used the Hotline?

Also, three PEC support groups use it for letters to be written at their meetings. All organizations should consider this activity for their meetings.

DONATIONS are still needed so that we can convert the Hotline to a toll-free 800 number. We urge you to support and use the Hotline and to pass the number on to all concerned.

PEC COMMENT

The Death of Patrick Finucane - Bloody Hands

The officers and members of the American Irish PEC are shocked and distressed at the news of the murder of Belfast Solicitor, Patrick Finucane, by pro-British Loyalist killers. Patrick was well-known to us, particularly by our Vice President, Albert Doyle. He was a lawyer who worked through the system, as nationalists are often admonished to do by the British and others. He was effective in his use of the law to defend his clients - - perhaps too effective. But our sorrow is tinged with anger, knowing that weeks before Pat was killed, a British Government Minister, Douglas Hogg, in the House of Commons had virtually called for such actions against lawyers such as Pat who defended "para-militaries" in Northern Ireland -- and even had the gall to "sympathize" with their clients. What greater indictment could be made of the depths to which the present Tory Government of Britain has sunk. We were horrified at the harsh treatment of the three young defendants in the Winchester trial -- sentenced to twenty-five years in prison for conspiracy to murder in a case in which there was utterly no evidence of intent to harm anyone! But now we are told, on the highest authority of the British Government, that it is apparently a capital offense for a lawyer to "sympathize" with one's clients. Perhaps the next offense will be conspiracy to think rebellious thoughts. Why are these British so different from the Ayatollahs? We now hear that Minister Hogg expressed regrets over Pat Finucane's killing -- but he pointedly accepted no responsibility. How could he? To do so would be to admit the complicity of the Thatcher Government in the whole, sick, shoot-to-kill Northern Ireland policy of that Government. Like Lord Denning, in the Birmingham Six appeal, such an "appalling vista" would be too terrible to contemplate for the Ayatollahs of London. No one likes to admit they have blood on their hands.

NEWS BITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Barry, then the Republic's Foreign Minister, said that such a development would be 'an intolerable situation'. Could it be that history will point to the Hillsborough Accord as having prolonged the violence; having postponed or prevented the day when the ballot-box takes over entirely from the Armalite?" (Irish Post, 1/14/89)

"At a rally of the launch of the Time To Go (TTG) campaign, Eamonn McCann, a founder member of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland, told delegates that withdrawal is in Britain's interest. 'When British troops were sent onto our streets we were told that they would be bringing British standards of justice to Northern Ireland. Instead we are now seeing Northern Ireland standards of justice being brought to Britain'. (Irish Post, 12/17/88)...It now costs 1000 Pounds a week to keep a prisoner in Northern Ireland (compared with 275 Pounds in England and Wales). It costs 1 million pounds for 20 years. The north has 500 people serving life sentences plus 2000 other long term prisoners. (Irish Post, 1/7/89)

Labour Party spokesman, Kevin McNamara, states that British government proposals to tackle job discrimination through the Fair Employment Bill are too limited. Among the chief complaints are that: no timetable is specified, the bill does not allow employers to encourage applications from under-represented groups; and monitoring of applicants only applies to employers of more than 250 workers. (Irish Post, 12/24/88)...The British government is being accused of hypocrisy for citing 'a public emergency' as its reason for ignoring a European Court ruling that PTA detainees be held no more than four days without charge. The Labour Committee on Ireland stated, 'Over the last two decades successive British governments have maintained that there is no war going on in Ireland

BOOKS AND VIDEOS

A PROVOCATIVE NEW VIDEO

OFF OUR KNEES

1988 marked the 20th anniversary of the continuous mass struggle in the North since the formation of the Civil Rights Movement in Ireland.

This video represents the views of those who were there at the beginning, who have continued and grown with the struggle and who are determined to carry on until civil rights, justice and freedom have been attained.

'Off Our Knees' celebrates the stories and aspirations of the people involved - political activists, working people, human rights campaigners - and demonstrates how and why the basic demands of the Civil Rights Movement, for votes, jobs, housing, and end to the Special Powers Act have developed into the demand for a United Ireland - without which true civil rights cannot be won.

Written and narrated by Bernadette (Devlin) McAliskey, the video uses archive film, interviews, murals, posters and songs of the period. Fifty-five minutes.

The American Irish PEC is an official distributor of this video in the United States.

Order # V1201.....\$29.95

BRITISH BRUTALITY IN IRELAND

By Jack O'Brien

Based on unimpeachable sources - such as British Protestant historians Lecky, Crozier and Gough - this study presents Northern Ireland's current situation in its historical context, recounting British oppression in Ireland from the Norman conquest in the 12th century to the Gibraltar killings in 1988.

The introduction is by Paul O'Dwyer, Irish born New York based attorney and life-long champion of Irish causes. Paperback, 220 pages.

Order # B901.....\$15.95

and that they are dealing with criminal elements only...They now decide to admit that there is a war going on in order to justify the decision to derogate from the European Accord as having prolonged the violence; having postponed or prevented the day when the ballot-box takes over entirely from the Armalite?" (Irish Post, 1/14/Court's ruling". (Irish Post, 1/14/89)

In London, six members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) are seeking a judicial review of the broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein and other organizations and are prepared to go to the European Court at Strasbourg if they are denied such a review. In Belfast, two other members of the NUJ have taken a case to the High Court. The NUJ in Dublin is asking the Minister for Communications not to extend the ban on Sinn Fein when it comes up for renewal this month. If he does not concede, then a case will be taken to the European Court on the grounds that the ban is a breach of Article 10 of the Convention on Human Rights. (Irish Post, 1/7/89)

"We are also about to have imposed on us a New Official Secrets Act which will more or less ban anything embarrassing to the government." (Irish Post, 1/7/89.

ACTION REQUEST

Political discussion concerning British colonialism and oppression in Ireland has been blocked in our Congress, thus serving the policy of the British government. The same holds true in Britain. Therefore, a democratic solution to Ireland's "British problem" cannot take place because rational and reasonable input is denied. The result is that after 20 years of consistent failure by the British government and their failure to address the issues, the situation in Northern Ireland is worse than ever. The extent of the death and injuries in the north during the past 20 years, if it took place in the US with a population of over 240 million, would equal well over 400,000 dead and over 4,000,000 injured. The vast majority of the victims are innocents. Destructive, intimidating house breakins by British forces would number in the tens of millions if projected on a U.S. scale. For sure, the standards of our great nation are being eroded and will continue as long as our government's leaders willingly cooperate with Britain's policies.

COURSE OF ACTION: We urge you to write the letter below to both Hon. George Mitchell, Senate Majority Leader, US Senate, Washington, DC 20510 and Hon. John Sununu, Chief of Staff (to President Bush), The White House, Washington, DC 20500. We urge you to make this a letter writing campaign for your organization the next time it meets. Mention in your letter that you are a member of the American Irish Political Education Committee.

Address & Date

(Addresses above)

Dear Mr. _____:

As an American, I am disgusted with our government's failure to do anything to end the terrible tragedy in Northern Ireland. Instead, it has blindly supported British policies of oppression. After 20 years, the situation is worse than ever.

I urge you to use your good offices to prompt Congressional hearings on British colonialism and oppression in Ireland, and to urge President George Bush to recognize and meet with the Council of Presidents of Major Irish American Organizations.

Sincerely,
signature

NEW PEC CHAPTERS

Two PEC chapters have been formed in New York to serve Ulster/Dutchess county and Orange county. For information in Ulster/Dutchess call Pat Hewly 914-435-6897 or Barbara Allen 914-246-2426. In Orange call Barbara McInerney 914-783-7366. **TO FORM A CHAPTER IN YOUR COMMUNITY CONTACT PETE FOLLY, AIPEC NATIONAL ORGANIZER, 3177 VILLA AVE, ERIN, NY 10968 (212) 933-7366.**

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- NEW MEMBERSHIP / MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL \$20
- DONATIONS \$ _____
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- CHANGE OF ADDRESS

FOR NEW MEMBERS OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Name: _____ Date _____
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City/Town _____ St _____ Zip _____
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