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## American Irish Newsletter - July 1989

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 14, Number 7

July 1989

## NEWS BITS

by Kathy Regan

Despite the British Government's opposition and enormous expenditures, the MacBride Principles have been enacted into law in twelve states. In Minnesota in 1988, the British government spent \$100,000 to oppose the MacBride Principles while the pro-MacBride forces spent \$2,000. In 1988 in New Hampshire, the British government spent \$200,000 while the MacBride coalition spent \$318; in 1989 the British spent \$275,000 and the New Hampshire coalition spent \$810 on their respective campaigns. One of the most outrageous British expenses was the \$3,191 per person spent to fly opponents of the MacBride Principles to the United States on the SST; compare this to the normal fare of approximately \$500 for a round trip on Aer Lingus! If the British government were sincerely interested in ending employment discrimination in the north of Ireland, they should have spent these huge sums on implementing training programs for unemployed workers (AIN-PEC 5/89).

The *International Federation of Journalists*, representing 150,000 journalists, published a report accusing Margaret Thatcher of a systematic and extensive attempt to control press freedom in Britain and condemning the broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein. The *International Press Institute*, representing 2,000 editors and journalists from 50 countries, has deemed Britain "the only black spot in Western Europe when it comes to freedom of the press" (Irish Post, 4/15/89).

People peacefully protesting the cases of the Birmingham Six and Guilford Four were arrested in London just before Mikhail Gorbachev's recent visit. When protestors unfurled a banner in English and Russian, "Justice for the Birmingham Six" and "Free the Guilford Four", police moved in. The very same banner had been used in October in a similar protest outside the British Embassy in Moscow. Campaigners said, "It's ironic that protestors are allowed into Red Square in Moscow, yet we cannot even try to highlight our campaign in London. Margaret Thatcher should take a leaf out of Mr. Gorbachev's book and try some glasnost." (Irish Post, 4/15/89)

An Irish-Anglophile with a fascination for British rule in India, Mr. Foley [Congressman Thomas Foley (Wash-D), Speaker of the House] has almost fashioned himself as a figure from a 19th-century British parliament (Wall Street Journal 6/1/89). This statement lends credibility to the rumor that the purpose of the Friends of Ireland (US Congress), of which Mr. Foley is chairperson, is to protect Britain's interests and reputation.

## PEC CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

The first PEC Regional Conference was a major success, thanks to Brian McGrath, Conference Chairperson, and his staff: Colette Sanders, John Dunleavy, and Georgie Consiglio.

Almost one hundred activists attended to hear experts in different areas of American Irish activism. Members traveled from as far as Nebraska, Indiana, Minnesota, and Virginia to

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE APPEARS  
ON PAGE 6 JUST BELOW YOUR ADDRESS  
LABEL.**

## HALLMARK CARD CAMPAIGN

The American Irish PEC has been conducting a major campaign against **Hallmark** and **Recycled Paper Products** regarding the offensive nature of some of their St. Patrick's Day greeting cards. That campaign has been greatly intensified by individual efforts of PEC members Catherine O'Shaughnessy Goldi of Ohio and Leah Curtin of Minnesota. Active support is also coming from influential quarters such as the Archdiocese of New York, Catholic League for Religious & Civil Rights, Morality in Media, and Ohio's Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

Top executives of *Hallmark Cards Inc.*, based in Kansas City, Missouri, met with Phil Chaney, Missouri State Director of the American Irish PEC, to discuss widespread concern regarding the company's production of greeting cards that slur the American Irish people.

Phil Chaney reports that Hallmark has promised to rectify the situation, including removing offensive cards from its *Shoe Box* series and generally upgrading the Hallmark St. Patrick's Day selection.

"The company is very concerned about what a planned nationwide protest by American Irish might have on Hallmark's image and its profit margins," said Chaney. "At the same time I felt that the three people I met with were genuinely concerned about the issue and have promised to discontinue derogatory cards which depict the American Irish as drunkards or ignorant fools."

John Finucane, national president of the PEC, has urged caution. "We must continue to be on guard until we see the changes in the 1990 selection. Until that time we must move with caution as Hallmark has made promises in the past".

Catherine O'Shaughnessy Goldi, who organized in Ohio a campaign of informing the media and influential Americans, is both pleased and cautious about Hallmark's commitment.

"Irish and American Irish people have helped make the Hallmark company strong in Europe and are a tremendous support to the parent U.S. company," Chaney said. "Now is the time", Chaney continued, "for Hallmark to help repay some of that effort. At this point we have been promised support from the Hallmark company and we are more than willing to work closely with them. Now we wait to see whether their promises will become reality."

exchange information and to gather expert advice.

Topics discussed included: organizing and leading a MacBride Principles Campaign, organizing letter writing campaigns, forming a PEC support group, organizing student activities on college campuses, effectively communicating with elected representatives, countering negative stereotyping of the American Irish, becoming politically active, and the importance of the PEC telephone hotline.

Continued on page 4

## FROM THE EDITOR *by John J. Finucane*

*New York mayoral candidate Rudolph Giuliani's refusal to participate in the recent American Irish Forum has angered many an American Irish including influential citizens. Many are angry simply because he ignored us as mainstream Americans. Giuliani's controversial decision is in the "special interests" of the Bush Administration's policy which is not to embarrass the British government. This is contrary to Giuliani's claim to be his own man. His flip-flop came as a surprise to some because of his St. Patrick's Day public statements opposing British presence in Ireland. Giuliani, if elected, would probably not be supportive of and might even attempt to reverse New York City's MacBride legislation.*

*Giuliani is gambling that most of New York City's working-class American Irish will vote for him because of his "often proposed, but never achieved" stand on law and order. As most American Irish are not aware of the facts, he will probably succeed, if we allow it to happen.*

*The controversy surrounding Mayor Koch and Giuliani has done what we have not been able to do. It has projected into New York City politics an American Irish dimension. To take advantage of this opportunity, we must educate the American Irish and we must work for a candidate of our choice. If we do not produce, we will bury ourselves and have no one else to blame. Let's not turn New York City politics over to an administration that will not recognize serious-minded American Irish and their concerns!*

## The American Irish PEC

**founded 1975**

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Vice-President.....Albert Doyle  
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## BRITAIN'S NEW FAIR EMPLOYMENT BILL

by Oliver Kearney, Executive Secretary, Northern Ireland Fair Employment Trust

A source close to the British government's Northern Ireland Office has provided details of a confidential assessment made by the NIO at the beginning of May about the MacBride Principles campaign.

This assesment concludes that the government's Fair Employment Bill will have its Third Reading at Westminster on May 24, 1989.

In an endeavour to secure support for the bill from the British Labour Party Front Bench and the SDLP, the British have added up to one hundred amendments to the original bill. Many of these amendments are technical changes related to drafting, but many are more substantial; however, they do not have the effect of adequately resolving the issue of legal provisions for affirmative action. It is likely that the bill will pass to the House of Lords to receive royal assent before the end of July. This will make it law but it will not become effective in the north of Ireland until supplementary regulations are written by the Department of Economic Development (DED) which will control the Bill. The DED is part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service which controlled the Fair Employment Agency, hindered it and made it ineffective. The Northern Ireland Civil Service will also control the new commission responsible for the new legislation.

The British government has now made a pessimistic assessment of its ability to oppose the MacBride Bill in the California State Assembly, but have some hopes that they may still be able to defeat MacBride Bills in Ohio, Texas, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Oklahoma. (Ed. Note: Bills in both Maryland and Texas have been blocked for 1989).

Congressman Joe Kennedy and Mayor Raymond Flynn of Boston recently sent urgent telegrams to every member of the British Parliament warning about the consequences in the United States of failure to institute effective measures of affirmative action.

In the House of Commons, Ken Livingstone, MP, claimed that the British Government had spent up to 15 million pounds in fighting the MacBride Principles in the U.S. The six county Industry Minister, Peter Viggers, refused to discuss the figure mentioned by Mr. Livingstone.

VERMONT - PEC representative Bob Dinan advises that the MacBride Bill has been officially signed by the Governor and is now law... NEBRASKA - Larry Doyle, PEC State Director informs us that the Nebraska State Democratic Party has called upon the Nebraska State Legislature to enact LB578 which will place the MacBride Principles in Nebraska State Law.

## EIGHTH ANNUAL IRISH HERITAGE FESTIVAL

**Sunday, August 27, 1989**

**Marian Shrine, West Haverstraw, NY**

Entertainment will include top Irish American bands, a bagpipe band, ceili dancing, a one-act play, step dancing, fashion show, special presentations, vendors, an outdoor Mass, and more. Mass will be celebrated by Fr. Des Wilson from Belfast. There is free parking; admission is free for children under 12 accompanied by an adult, \$6 per adult, and \$4 for senior citizens. Soda, food, beer and wine will be available at reasonable prices. Gates will open at 10am and close at 7pm. For complete details write the PEC or call (914) 947-2726.

**FROM THE NORTH**

by Fr. Des Wilson, Belfast Correspondent

The British government made unprecedented efforts to neutralize the vote for Sinn Fein in the recent elections. They used propaganda, acts of intimidation, and pre-election assassinations, yet the Sinn Fein vote remained steady, with the party losing only half of one percent of its vote. This reveals that the British methods of dealing with the republican voice have once again failed. The loss of twelve seats from local councils will not be particularly worrying to the party. Each local council election is a kind of referendum on whether the British government should be opposed with maximum pressure (including military pressure) or not. The decision of about one third of the Catholic population of the north of Ireland is that it should, if that is the only discipline the British understand.

The SDLP (Social Democratic and Labor Party) increased its vote and the number of seats it holds. It can also hope to have control of a couple of councils and at least equal numbers in Derry. But there are some moral questions to be faced. For example, will the SDLP continue the policy of advising their voters to give second preference to Unionist candidates to squeeze out Sinn Fein? The tactic worked in some places, such as in West Belfast, where the refusal of parties like the SDLP and the Workers Party to transfer to Sinn Fein meant that a Sinn Fein candidate with over a thousand votes failed to get elected while an SDLP candidate with just over 500 votes got a seat. Opposition to Sinn Fein, fueled by government and church statements and promises, has now reached such a pitch that the nationalist SDLP will support a unionist in preference to a republican.

The chief losers were Ian Paisley and his church-based DUP (Democratic Unionist Party). This failure to win as many voters as in the past (he seems to have lost 22 percent of his vote) was probably due to the futility of much of his campaigning against the Anglo-Irish Agreement. There were so many solid rational political arguments against the Agreement that Paisley's midnight marches were unnecessary and embarrassing. The rational arguments were never put forward, except by Irish nationalists who were appalled by the extent of the sell-out and the price paid.

The prevailing attitude of unionists now is one of fear and a feeling that since the British government is not to be trusted and Paisley is a fool, there is not much they can do. The decline in the number of people who actually voted is an indication of how they feel. The pity is that they absolutely refuse to believe any nationalist or republican who genuinely wants to reduce that fear. Whether Paisley has at last been seen as a bluffer will be shown in the European election on June 15. That election will also be a referendum, for nobody expects any of the three European MP's to have any real power. Meanwhile, the SDLP can claim on the basis of the latest local elections to be the second largest political party in the north of Ireland, and Sinn Fein can claim to be the second largest political party in Belfast.

The British government wisely removed most real powers from the local councils as far back as the early seventies. The formula, as far as the British were concerned, was: one person, one vote; but also, many votes, no power.

The British policy of destroying Sinn Fein has failed. The party will not go away. From now on the British are committed more than ever to a policy of refusing to recognize 35 to 40 percent of the Catholics of the north of Ireland. Their future policy must be based upon a greater criminalization of republicans.

Whether this will lead to a more overtly oppressive military policy remains to be seen. One potent factor against this is the mounting public opinion in Britain which says that the British game in Ireland is up. In Britain last month, there was a whole week of events organized by English groups (Time

**!!! IMPORTANT NOTICE !!!**

In the last issue (Volume 14, No. 6 - June) we made several typographical errors in the article by Scott Smith, *Media Coverage On Northern Ireland*. Please dispose of this article and replace it with the corrected version which we have reprinted in this issue.

We ask all members to make copies and send them to local and major radio, TV and newspaper editors and journalists, and to other people you deem influential. You can also distribute it wherever the public gathers. For those of you who have already sent out copies, follow-up with the corrected version.

This is a very important program that should be ongoing!

**OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS**

by Kevin P. Murphy, Massachusetts

A member in Arlington, Virginia has called to our attention that Congresswoman **Patricia Schroeder** of Colorado has degraded the American Irish image. This outrage took place on May 4, 1989 on the nationally televised *Larry King Show* on *Cable News Network*. She made the following statement: "God created whiskey so that the Irish would not rule the world". Here we have Congresswoman Schroeder, who labels herself as a liberal, generating racist stereotypes about the American Irish. Such remarks should never be made by public figures on public media even if they should happen to have Irish blood in their veins. Letters of protest should be sent to Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515...A Bronx, New York member informed us that the Florida community of Delray Beach uses a pig colored green as the official mascot of its St. Patrick's Day Parade...A Boston, Massachusetts member has informed us that a merchant at the Assembly Square Mall in Somerville, Massachusetts has been selling T-Shirts that depict the American Irish as gun-toting drunks...A New York member informs us of a March 12, 1989 *New York Times* crossword puzzle that stated, "Tippling to the top. There was an Irish tenor who put whiskey in his tea. He said it was the only way he could sing high C." Letters should be sent to Mr. E.T. Maleska, Puzzle Editor, New York Times, 229 W 43 St, New York, NY 10036...Another outrage appeared in the defense industry magazine *Combat Mission* which praised British troops in the six counties and labeled the situation with the Irish as nonsense. The article depicted the Irish as violent misfits. Letters should be sent to, Pilot Communications, 831 Federal Road, Richfield, CT 06804. Mention if you were a former member of the US Armed Forces.

We thank all who have assisted in this column by making us aware of offensive situations. Without your input, this column would not exist.

**ALL OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO KEVIN P. MURPHY, PO BOX 8895, J F KENNEDY STATION, BOSTON, MA 02114.**

To Go Program) who say that the British government has nothing to offer except withdrawal. October will see yet another campaign. In a real sense the British government cannot win. With the demoralization of its supporters in the north and a growing awareness of reality in Britain, it cannot go on with sterile policies forever.

It is possible that Fr. Patrick Ryan's European campaign in the Irish Republic and the extradition issue may create similar public opinion in the south of Ireland as well.

## IRISH IN THE CONSTITUTION:

THOMAS FITZSIMONS

by J Robert Lunney, Esquire

Thomas Fitzsimons, who represented Pennsylvania in the Constitutional Convention, thought of government as a logical extension of the relationship that existed between families, ethnic communities, and business groups. His own immigrant family, Philadelphia's Irish community, and the city's fraternity of merchants all figured prominently in Fitzsimons' rise to wealth and status as he sought a government strong enough to protect and foster the natural interaction of these elements in a healthy society.

His participation at the Battle of Trenton and the defense of Philadelphia convinced him of the need for central control of the nation's military forces. Similarly, his wartime association with Robert Morris and other fiscal architects of the nation convinced him that an effective national government was essential for the prosperity of the country.

Fitzsimons' family came to Philadelphia from Ireland in the mid-1750's. In 1763 Thomas went into business with his brother-in-law, George Meade (the grandfather of the Civil War general), specializing in trade with the West Indies.

When Parliament reacted to the 1773 Boston Tea Party with punitive measures, what the Americans called the "Coercive Acts", Philadelphia merchants, including the partners in the prosperous George Meade & Co., were infuriated. Such economic concerns thrust the young Fitzsimons into politics and the patriot cause. In 1771 the city's merchants and tradesmen of Irish heritage elected him as the first Vice President of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

Popular respect for his political judgement and economic ability led in 1774 to his election to a committee organized to direct the protest over the Coercive Acts and the city's Committee of Correspondence. In choosing him for these posts, the voters ignored a law that barred Catholics from elective office. Fitzsimons went on to represent the city at a special convention held to discuss the crisis. Its deliberations led Pennsylvania to issue a call for a meeting of all the colonies -- the first Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia in September 1774.

When Philadelphia's military was organized, Fitzsimons, as a captain, commanded an infantry company.

When Washington began a slow withdrawal of his main force to safe positions on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, Fitzsimons company went on duty in December, 1776 to cover the Continentals' retreat.

Later he joined Washington in time to deal with a British counterattack. When General Charles Cornwallis reached Trenton in January, 1777, the Americans slipped away in the dark. At dawn they struck the enemy's rear guard at Princeton, smashing a second British brigade.

Later, Pennsylvania authorities asked Fitzsimons to serve on a board to oversee the Pennsylvania Navy, which formed the primary defense of Delaware Bay and the River approaches to Philadelphia. In this role, Fitzsimons not only helped plan the Capital's defenses, but organized logistics, coordinated defense with neighboring states, and negoti-

ated with a sometimes reluctant Continental Congress over regional strategy.

Fitzsimons became associated with financier Robert Morris, helping to organize banking facilities that Morris used to support the Continental Army and Navy in the last years of the war. In fact, Fitzsimons served as a director of the Bank of North America from its founding in 1781 until 1803.

In 1787, the state elected Fitzsimons to represent it at the Constitutional Convention. There he spoke often on issues relating to commerce and finance, arguing that the central government should have the right to tax both exports and imports to raise revenue and regulate commerce--reiterating a position that he had advocated with little success in the Continental Congress.

Following the completion of the Convention's work, Fitzsimons resumed his seat in the Pennsylvania legislature, where he led the fight for a special convention to ratify the Constitution, arguing that since the document derived its power from the people, the people must approve it through representatives elected solely for that purpose.

Fitzsimons sat for six years as a federalist in the new House of Representatives. He served on several important committees and was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. He also chaired the committee that organized the government of the Northwest Territory. In the aftermath of the Army's defeat by Indians in 1791, presided over a committee that investigated the matter. That committee set an important precedent by asserting that the Congress, under the powers vested in the First Article of the Constitution, had the right to oversee the President's handling of military affairs.

### PEC Conference (continued from page one)

Guest speakers included: Congressman Benjamin Gilman, Senior Minority Member of the House Foreign Relations Committee; Paul Keating, Associate Editor of Newsweek; and PEC leaders John Finucane, National President; Albert Doyle, Vice-President; Leah Curtin, Minnesota State Director; Kathy Regan, New York State Director; Kevin Murphy, Massachusetts State Director; Tom O'Flaherty, New Hampshire State Director; Shannon Eaton, Maine State Director; and Sandy Carlson, Student Activities Coordinator.

The centerpiece of the conference was the PEC's *American Irish Guide to Action*. The purpose of the Guide is to enable members to implement the different PEC programs in their community. The Guide is a comprehensive, step-by-step, easy-to-read publication filled with pertinent information on how to organize and lobby for our objectives. Copies of the Guide are available by sending a check for \$5.00 to the American Irish PEC. Copies were sent to members who enrolled for the Conference but did not attend.

A very important agreement at the Conference was that members will begin to build support for federal MacBride Principles legislation introduced by Congressman Hamilton Fish (R-NY) and Senators Al D'Amato (R-NY) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ). To do this, we ask members to contact local organizations, unions, American Irish organizations, religious groups, clubs, etc., and ask that they adopt a MacBride Principles resolution. For our members' convenience, we have prepared a draft resolution that can be obtained by writing to the American Irish PEC.

Members were also urged to organize conferences and mini-conferences in the different areas of the U.S. Interested members should contact the PEC's national office. Tom O'Flaherty and Shannon Eaton will organize a conference in Massachusetts for the New England region.

# MEDIA COVERAGE ON NORTHERN IRELAND

by Scott S. Smith

In both news and editorial content on Northern Ireland, the issue should not be on whose side one is, but whether statements are accurate and whether differing views are allowed to reach the public. In Britain, censorship laws control what is broadcast about Northern Ireland on radio and television. More insidious is the voluntary censorship exercised by newspapers, ranging from inaccurate news reports from British officials to editorials that reflect the prejudices and ignorance of the British government.

There is no essential difference between censorship imposed by state law and that imposed by those who mediate the news and analysis for the public as Liz Curtis illustrates in *Ireland: The Propaganda War* (Unwin Hyman 800 547-8889). This voluntary censorship has been the disease which has afflicted the American media which is virtually unaware there is anything wrong. But there clearly is. Irish American columnist Jack Holland documents meticulously just how off base reporting and editorializing regarding the war was during the 1970's in *The American Connection: U.S. Guns, Money, and Influence in Northern Ireland* (available through American Irish Political Education Committee).

Presentation of Britain's role in Northern Ireland in a favorable light is the responsibility of the British Information Services (BIS). On January 30, 1972 (Bloody Sunday), fourteen civil rights marchers were killed by British troops. Even though these killings were witnessed by many foreign journalists and news footage of the event was captured live, Britain denied responsibility for killing innocent people by claiming that, "The shooting started with two high-velocity shots aimed at the troops manning the barriers. No one was hit and the fire was not returned. Four minutes later, a further high-velocity shot was aimed at a battalion wire cutting party. This shot was also not answered...Throughout the fighting that ensued, the Army fired only at identified targets--at attacking gunmen and bombers." (BIS Policy and Reference Division, February 1, 1972). According to the *Irish Independent* of the same day, "When the civil rights march was decided on, the [nationalist paramilitaries] were told and accepted that there were to be no guns on the march." The killing of unarmed civil rights marchers was thus covered up by the fabrication of attacking gunmen.

In addition to distorted reporting of events, the British Information Services has also laid down a foundation of propaganda in the United States. Even though the current round of fighting was started by loyalists and intensified by the actions of British troops, it has been consistently depicted as the fault of the I.R.A. Loyalist paramilitaries are described as "reacting" to I.R.A. provocation, even though the random killing of Catholics actually increased when the I.R.A. observed truces. The British media refer to the war as religious. This is because loyalists are generally Protestant and nationalists are generally Catholic. These were the respective religions of the British colonists and the native Irish they tried to suppress.

By making the conflict seem like some medieval theological argument, Britain assures the world that the war is

nothing sensible people should worry about. The British media offers an image of British "Tommies" trying to keep the irrational "Paddies" from killing each other, hoping the world will ignore Britain's record of being a prime source of violence, inflaming Irish nationalism by its actions. Britain is eager to promote the idea that the situation is too complicated for an "outsider" to understand - that there is no alternative to its current course, no "quick solution" in the foreseeable future.

One of the best examples of how blatantly untruthful Britain's version of the problem is is the notion it promotes that there is actually no war going on, merely an outbreak of crime by hoodlums. This effort to criminalize the war by denying Irish nationalists political motivation suggests that Irish nationalists are members of the mafia instead of patriots. This image was to some extent destroyed by the 1981 hunger strikes during which ten men died in an effort to win back prisoner-of-war status for fellow nationalists. Their sacrifices make it hard to argue that the ten young men were in a crime syndicate for their own benefit. If the British government cannot acknowledge the existence of a real war and the political motivation of its opposition, how truthful is it about the other facets of the conflict?

When journalists refuse to accept the British-processed version of the news and decide to obtain first-hand information, their efforts are thwarted by their superiors as well as by the British government. Jo Thomas, formerly of *The New York Times*, tells of such an experience in the May-June 1988 *Columbia Journalism Review*. Ms. Thomas was investigating the murder of three young unarmed members of the Irish Republican Army. As she discovered material supporting claims that the British have a shoot-to-kill policy against Irish nationalists, "a senior editor...began telling [her] to stay out of Ireland. A high-ranking British official...suggested [she] drop [her] investigation in exchange for a lot of access to the secretary of state for Northern Ireland...as well as an exclusive first hand look at the Anglo-Irish pact then being negotiated between London and Dublin." In addition, "several American colleagues suggested [she] leave the difficult investigations to local press; if there really were a story, British and Irish reporters would be on top of it. In fact, they were not--but some of them began treating [her] as if [she] were a member of the IRA." (*Columbia Journalism Review*, May-June 1988, p. 32). In February, 1986, Ms. Thomas was ordered home because of the attention she paid to Northern Ireland.

Despite similar obstacles, Morgan Strong of *Playboy* recently published an interview with both Danny Morrison and

## REPRODUCE & DISTRIBUTE

...this material and mail to radio, TV and newspaper editors and publishers. This article can also be distributed wherever the public gathers. Help inform the media and the public of the truth!



Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein (a legal nationalist party in Ireland) along with an unidentified IRA volunteer. According to Mr. Strong, "If we had been discovered by British troops, I might have been writing this in Long Kesh prison. Under British law, it can be illegal to interview members of [Sinn Fein and] the IRA." No representative of the British government would meet with Mr. Strong. Moreover, the British would not allow *Playboy* to distribute its April, 1989 issue in the United Kingdom until it agreed to remove two pages from the interview. Thus, not only do the British control what information comes from their media, but they also directly influence American journalism through intimidation.

In Ireland and Britain, members of Sinn Fein cannot have their words broadcast on radio or television. One need not sympathize with either side of the conflict to believe that truth will best emerge from free debate and that those who restrict it must fear how the public will react to what they might hear.

British officials discourage Americans from becoming interested in Northern Ireland by belittling those who are already involved. They promote the ideas that: American organizations and individuals who are involved in movements to pressure a British withdrawal are supporters of violence; Americans have a romantic idea of Ireland's contest with Britain; and, the Irish who have come here and are active against the British presence in Northern Ireland have not kept up with events since they left.

The sophisticated management of media coverage by British officials, the result of more than 800 years of colonial experience, has kept the American media from accurately reporting on British actions. Inaccurate coverage of events such as security force attacks on nationalist funerals and the horrendous loyalist death squad activity, has distorted coverage of nationalist activity and viewpoints and provided several basic misconceptions about the war. Media manipulation allows the British government to promote its own excuses for remaining in Northern Ireland.

One excuse is the need to respect the democratic wishes of the loyalist majority. The fact is that Britain has ignored that majority whenever it has seen fit, such as when it imposed direct rule from London in 1972 and the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985. In 1918, after ignoring the vote of 80 percent of the Irish people who wanted a free and united island, the British partitioned the country, forcing three nationalist-majority counties out of the new Northern Ireland state. This division gave Britain control of the largest piece of land possible with a facade of a democratic majority, precisely to keep the international community from looking closely at this gerrymandering. A 60 % Protestant/loyalist majority could, however, only be maintained by driving the Catholic nationalists out of the area. Therefore, pogroms accomplished what employment and housing discrimination did not.

The second excuse is that a withdrawal of British troops would lead to a blood bath. British withdrawal would immediately take away two principal sources of violence, British forces and the I.R.A. The I.R.A. will have achieved its objective of ending British colonial occupation. Loyalist backlash would not be long-term because it is based on unfounded fears of discrimination against Protestants in a united Ireland, a notion which could be dispelled by

talking to Protestants living in the South right now, who actually have a somewhat privileged status.

Some of the resistance stems from concern about loss of jobs to the minority. However, several studies show that an end to the war would result in an economic boom which would be the best thing for all of Ireland, something which could be aided during a transition period with some of the \$2.5 billion per year Britain now spends on the war. Ultimately, Protestant attitudes rest on a kind of anti-Irish racism and anti-Catholic fury fanned by the extremist Reverend Ian Paisley. When Protestants realize there is no foundation for their fears, a backlash will wither.

Many Protestants are propertyed and have no desire for a new phase of guerilla war against an Irish state. They do not want to lose what they now have. Ultimately, however, it should be up to the victims of loyalist violence, the nationalist Catholics, to decide whether they want to be protected by British troops against their will. The American media has never questioned this absurd presupposition or even asked why neutral forces could not provide policing during a transition. This is all too typical of the U.S. coverage of a war which has resulted in 2,700 deaths, an impact on the 1 1/2 million people of Northern Ireland (a state the size of Connecticut) proportional to the impact seven Vietnam Wars would have on the U.S. The 40 million Americans of Irish descent have only started to mobilize against this disgraceful state of poor reporting and pro-British editorial bias. Until that changes, there will be no large-scale pressure for British withdrawal and the war will continue--anybody can see that 800 years of Irish resistance to British rule is a tradition that will continue until British soldiers leave, regardless of how one may feel about revolution.

*(The author, who is of Ulster Protestant English background, is a free-lance journalist who has written extensively about Northern Ireland. His writings have appeared in newspapers such as Newsday, Christian Science Monitor, Houston Post, and the Los Angeles Herald Examiner.)*

### **Attention News Media**

For news updates and background information representing the views of the Nationalist community contact:

**AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee (PEC)**  
Malloy Building  
Stony Point, NY 10980  
Telephone: (914) 947-2726  
Fax: (914) 947-2599

### **JOIN THE AMERICAN IRISH PEC**

**FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION ONLY**

**CALL 1 (800) 777-6807**

**Daily between 3pm & 9am EDT**

**PEC DINNER DANCE****To Honor****Emerald Society, NYC Fire Department  
and****Dr. Frank Forster, Santa Barbara, California**

On Saturday, September 30, 1989 the American Irish PEC will hold its Annual Dinner Dance. Honored at this function will be Dr. Frank Forster and the Emerald Society, Fire Department City of New York.

Dr. Frank Forster, author of *Undue Process*, (see Books and Videos on this page) was a highly respected medical practitioner in Santa Barbara, California for nearly 20 years when his reputation and practice were destroyed by the government because of his efforts to promote Ireland's reunification. Unfortunately, Santa Barbara was also the home of then President Ronald Reagan. Dr. Forster was set-up by the authorities on drug-related charges which were later dismissed by three courts.

The Emerald Society, Fire Department City of New York and the American Irish PEC have been directly associated with each other since 1977. The Emerald Society's support to the PEC has been critical to its survival, particularly in our early years. The Emerald Society was a founder of Irish Solidarity Day. It has been involved in many campaigns related to the north, and because of that activity, its president, in 1980, was invited to meet with President Jimmy Carter. The Emeralds have proven to be steadfast in their support. They hold the distinction of introducing to the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade banners such as, Human Rights For Northern Ireland, Smash H-Block, and Bobby Sands and Comrades Live On.

The Annual Dinner Dance will take place at Bishop's in Tappan, New York (Rockland County) from 8pm to 1am. Music will be provided by John Egan and the Irish Tradewinds. Tickets are \$40 per person (\$400 per table of 10) which includes a cocktail hour (8 to 9 pm), full course dinner and open bar. Make your reservations now to assure your place when we make these very special presentations. For information call (914) 947-2726 days or (212) 365-0213-(914) 947-2998 evenings.

**PEC TELEPHONE HOTLINE****(914) 429-7849**

The Telephone Hotline is the best tool we have available to make an issue of British colonialism and oppression in the north of Ireland. Its success depends entirely on it being used by all concerned, including non-members. The Hotline is a 24 hour-a-day service.

**HOW IT WORKS!** Every Sunday night an Action Request, similar to our Newsletter Action Request, but much briefer, is recorded on a telephone answering machine. It is a simple request for you to write a short letter concerning issues related to the north (MacBride Principles, Joe Doherty, media censorship, etc.). The Action Request is **repeated** slowly giving the user ample time to write out the request which includes name, address, phone number when appropriate, and a suggested letter. The Hotline message takes less than 3 minutes. Always have paper and pen ready.

**BOOKS AND VIDEOS, ETC.**  
**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO A.I. AWARENESS COMM.**

**UNDUE PROCESS****by Fancis Forster M.D.**

*UNDUE PROCESS* is a book about injustice, about bureaucratic malice and bungling, about the attempted destruction of an American citizen who tried to exercise his right to free speech. It is a story of spying and political intrigue which, were it fiction, would be worthy of John le Carre or Peter Maas. But it is not fiction.

The author, an Irish-born physician who practiced medicine in Santa Barbara, California, the home of former President Ronald Reagan, has long been an outspoken proponent of Irish Republicanism. In his efforts to promote the cause of Irish unity, Dr. Forster more than held his own against formidable opponents. But, he paid a price for his daring.

*UNDUE PROCESS* is a sad book, a disturbing book, a book that will endure. It is a reflection of the sorry present state of the principles on which our nation was founded, and will put all who speak out publicly on their guard. Dr. Forster's story should be read by every American who values his freedom. Paperback, 177 pages.

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**FATHER AND SON****by Peter Maas**

A current best-selling novel. No one before has penetrated so deeply into the terrible world of apparently never-ending violence that Northern Ireland has become. With a narrative skill, gift for detail and talent for sustained suspense to rival those of John le Carre and Frederick Forsyth, Peter Maas expertly weaves a complicated, totally satisfying story, ranging from the offices of MI5 in London to the inner councils of the IRA and to the network of Irish-American supporters whose money and cooperation help make the struggle possible. Hardcover, 316 pages.

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**A PATHWAY TO PEACE****by Gerry Adams MP**

The debate on the war in the six counties has been unbalanced and restricted. Twenty years of death and destruction demands that a full and informed debate be initiated. *A Pathway For Peace* outlines an agenda for such a debate. The author is the President of Sinn Fein and a Member of British Parliament for West Belfast in Northern Ireland. Paperback, 92 pages.

Order #223.....\$5.95

**FOR USE BY ORGANIZATIONS!** Organizations should designate a member to call the Hotline prior to a meeting. That member will then transform the message into letter format, make copies, and distribute at the meeting with letter paper and envelopes. That person will then gather the completed letters and mail them. Letters should always be written at the meeting and not taken home. Most people will not write them at home. **Remember! One letter to a national figure represents the views of 1,000 people!**

It is important that people throughout the United States use the hotline. This kind of widespread use will demonstrate national support for our issues. Communications (letters, phone calls) make an issue. Follow-up letters and meetings with your government representatives are also very important.

**SPREAD THE WORD! Distribute the Hotline No. (914) 429-7849 to your friends, relatives, associates, etc. and urge them to use it regularly.**



## ACTION REQUEST

The news media has not been subjected to enough pressure to end its biased and censored reporting on the war in the north of Ireland. There is no steady pressure on them to provide responsible and impartial coverage on a regular basis. They do not maintain correspondents in the north and, for the most part, rely on British government-controlled news sources.

The media makes or breaks an issue by generating public interest in it. South Africa was far from the minds of well-meaning Americans before the media brought it to their attention. They must do the same regarding British colonialism in Northern Ireland. A just solution is possible, if the media provides fair and objective coverage of the issues. Increased coverage will prompt public discussion and political debate on the issue which has been sorely lacking. Media censorship and bias have prevented such debate and discussion and are a root cause for the twenty-year duration of the north's tragic situation.

We urge everyone to communicate (write or call) the message below to both the *New York Times* (212) 556-1234 and *Los Angeles Times* (213) 237-5000. Have your friends, associates, relatives, etc. do the same. Be firm but not hostile. Preferably write the letter in your own words, using our letter below as a guide, or simply rewrite our letter as is.

address & date

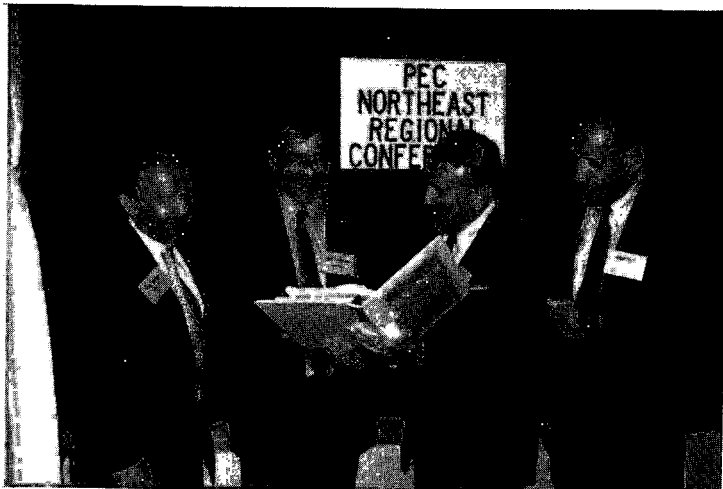
Editor  
New York Times  
229 W 43rd St.  
New York, NY 10036

Editor  
Los Angeles Times  
Times Mirror Square  
Los Angeles, CA 90053

Dear Editor:

Your inaccurate and biased reporting on the conflict in Northern Ireland prolongs the violence and suffering because it prevents accurate discussion and political debate. I urge that you do not depend on British government-controlled news sources as they do not represent the views of the nationalist community, approximately 40% of the population. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,  
signature



Congressman Benjamin Gilman, senior minority member of the House Foreign Relations Committee, peruses the PEC's new American Irish Guide To Action. Pictured with Gilman at the recent PEC Conference, from left to right, are: Brian McGrath, Conference Chairperson; John Finucane, PEC National President; and Al Doyle, Vice President.

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