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## American Irish Newsletter - October 1989

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 14, Number 10

October 1989

## NEWS BITS by Kathy Regan

Commencing a six day tour of the north where he would be meeting with representatives of Sinn Fein and the SDLP and wishing to be fair to all sides in the northern conflict, John Finucane of the American Irish Political Education Committee called upon Loyalist politicians to meet with him as well. "I would like to tell them that, as far as we are concerned, their position would be safeguarded if and when there is a united Ireland. If in that scenario Protestants were to find their liberties under threat, I can assure them that our group...will be the first to defend them. Our group is not anti-Protestant in any way, and the purpose of my visit is to gather information and take home a cross-section of peoples' views and opinions." (The Irish News & The Newsletter, 7/28/89)

The British government proclaims that it wishes to help develop the economy in the north of Ireland. To that end, it has spent £63 million developing shipyard jobs and at times has developed jobs at a cost of from £25,000 to £60,000 per job. At the same time, it has denied funds to a program organized with the help of Father Desmond Wilson which planned to create 200-250 jobs at a cost of approximately £400 per job... When Father Wilson and a group of unemployed people got together, took over an abandoned mill and began to establish businesses in it, the government moved in and, at a cost of approximately £10 million, re-did the factories to make an army barracks on the site. Clearly the goal is not to help the economy, but to stifle native Irish industry...Since partition, Northern Ireland has gone from being the richest part of Ireland to the second poorest economy in Europe (AIN-PEC).

Comment on the north by a woman from Liverpool. "It is very important that the English people come forward and agitate for withdrawal of British troops from Ireland but it is equally important that they do so for the reason that the troops should not be there in the first place. Far too many of the English people feel that 'their boys' should be brought home and that 'they' (the Irish Catholics and Protestants) should be left to fight it out among themselves." (AIN- PEC)

An article in the London Times commemorating the Twentieth Anniversary of troops being introduced into the north was titled Falklands Won on the Falls. Its conclusion was, "The proficiency of those who landed at San Carlos owed much to their experience in Ulster. Since the end of World War II, the British army was continually in action -- in Palestine, Indonesia, Malaya, Korea, Kenya, Cyprus, Suez and Aden. Then came 1968 and no action at all. Not a single British soldier died...Northern Ireland put everything back on course and helped produce a new and better army...There were lots of new weapons and better infantry tactics. Most of all Northern Ireland has given several generations of officers and NCOs the

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## IRISH SOLIDARITY DAY

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## AMERICAN IRISH REAWAKENING

by Kevin P. Murphy

In recent years we have been witnessing a dramatic increase in American Irish awareness. This new awareness, much of it fostered by the American Irish PEC, has taken a political as well as cultural flavor. MacBride Principles legislation is sweeping the United States. The MacBride success, which England has spent millions of Pounds to lobby against, could not even be imagined 4 years ago. Even the most dedicated American Irish activist could not fathom the impact of American Irish unity through this campaign.

Most major metropolitan areas now have cultural radio and TV shows that foster the Irish language and musical traditions. The growth of American Irish publications is something that even our most optimistic members could have never predicted.

Yet despite this progress we as an American ethnic group have only just begun to tap the powerful resource of our community. As one of America's most educated and economically successful ethnic groups, we really have not had the impact on our Government in regards to the cause of Irish freedom that one would expect.

Despite the profound reawakening of Irishness here in America, we still have many of our fellow American Irish who are not aware of their Irishness or of their culture's great impact on American society. These are the American Irish that need to be educated. Many feel that their culture consists of wearing green on St. Patrick's Day and being portrayed as misfits in St. Patrick's Day greeting cards. We should not scorn these people, rather, we should inform them of the greatness of their culture.

Today there are many of our people who are active in lobbying for MacBride legislation and Irish freedom who just a few years ago were almost totally ignorant of their culture.

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## MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES UPDATE

On August 31 the California State Senate voted 25-6 in favor of the MacBride Principles legislation. California, with the world's 7th largest economy, is a very significant victory. Of course the prime victory will be when the Bill is signed by Governor George Deukmejian. We are very proud of the fact that the American Irish PEC played the key role in this major success in a state with a population of over 24 million people..

The bill was originally introduced by Assemblyman Tom Hayden in January 1987 at the request of Roger McGrath, PEC Western Regional Director. Hearings were held and it was decided the bill would be held over to 1988 during which time no significant action was taken. During this time, Joe O'Neill, PEC California State Director, Sean Prendiville, PEC rep and Brian Blake, chairman of the Southern California MacBride Principles Coalition, with the help of Jack Henning, President of California AFL-CIO and representative of the Irish American Labor Coalition, began to effectively organize support throughout the state at the grass roots level. At the request of Joe O'Neill, Assemblyman John Burton of San Francisco, introduced a new bill in January 1989. It was their efforts and those of their committee members that brought the bill to the Governor's desk. We want to commend Joe O'Neill, Roger McGrath, Brian Blake, Sean Prendiville, and their fellow

committee members, to numerous to mention, for their outstanding efforts and sacrifice. We also want to acknowledge the help of Fr. Sean McManus of the INC, the AOH, IAUC and Irish Northern Aid. **BOSTON** - On August 29 the Boston City Council, led by Councillor Hennigan Casey, voted to pursue the possibility of adopting the MacBride Principles. Mayor Ray Flynn of Boston has signed an executive order prohibiting city agencies from entering into contracts with American companies operating in Northern Ireland that do not adhere to the MacBride Principles. **OHIO** - In September the American Irish PEC sent Fr. Des Wilson to Ohio to meet with leading members of the Senate to lobby for the MacBride Principles. His itinerary was arranged by Kathy Whitford, Ohio State PEC Director and Mike Hall. **PENNSYLVANIA** - According to the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Trust, SDLP employment spokesperson Sean Fearon will travel to Pennsylvania on September 15 to publicly endorse the British Government's new Fair Employment Bill and to lobby against the MacBride Principles. In Belfast, prior to the recent elections, the SDLP in order to win votes, informed the electorate that it now supports the MacBride Principles. The SDLP have never debated the Principles with its membership. According to the Trust, members of the North's middle-class community and the SDLP are willing to be enrolled as paid agents of the British government for personal gain and are under pressure from the United States because of the annual subvention of \$250,000 provided the SDLP by the National Democratic Institute.

### **The American Irish PEC**

**founded 1975**

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National Headquarters: Malloy Building  
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**WESTERN REGIONAL DIRECTOR:** Dr. Roger Mc Grath, 1311 Rancho Lane, Thousand Oaks, CALIFORNIA 91362-(805) 497-6407.

**STATE DIRECTORS:** Jack O'Brien, 11109 Belton Street, Upper Marlboro, MARYLAND 20772-(301)336-5167; Leah Curtin, Hibernian Life, 790 Cleveland Avenue, Suite 221, St. Paul, MINNESOTA 55116-(612)690-3888; Kathy Regan, 3045 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NEW YORK 10468-(212) 365-0213; Tom O'Flaherty, Good Time Farm, RFD #6, Box 153, Laconia, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03246-(603)528-5733; Shannon Eaton, 271 Deering Avenue, Portland, MAINE 04102 - (207) 772-1496; Frank O'Day, 21 Pierce Lane, Madison, CONNECTICUT 06443-(203)245-4739; Kevin P. Murphy, 29 Zolla Circle, Revere, MASSACHUSETTS 02151-(617)284-0723; Bob West, 683 Walnut Road, Wauconda, ILLINOIS 60084-(312)526-6520; Terry Deem Reilly, 1123 Clarkson, Denver, COLORADO 80218-(303)837B-9443; Joe O'Neill 1376 21st Avenue, San Francisco, CALIFORNIA 94122-(415)681-8734; Kevin Murphy, 9685 Sunny Isle Cir., Boca Raton, FLORIDA 33428-(305)488-1526; Ned A. Delaney, 10940 W. 100 N., Kokomo, INDIANA 46901-(317)566-3824; Larry Doyle, 46 B 2007 Betz Road, Bellevue, NEBRASKA 68005-(402)292-5291, Phil Chaney, 663 West 70th Street, Kansas City, MISSOURI 64113 - (816) 363-6523; Kathy Whitford, 1270 St. Charles, Lakewood, OHIO 44107 - (216) 529-0670.

**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 Court Street, New Haven CONNECTICUT, 06510-(203)789-0070

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### **Say Yes To MacBride!**

*FROM THE EDITOR by John J. Finucane*

*Some newspaper articles have stated that the MacBride Principles campaign in the United States is run by politicians. Recently, in one American Irish newspaper, it was suggested that a group of politicians were preparing to take over control of the MacBride Principles campaign if our good friend Harrison Goldin, Comptroller of New York City is not elected. The article also stated that these people are close associates of outspoken opponents of the MacBride Principles.*

*The MacBride Principles campaign (or the American democratic movement to end British colonialism and oppression in Ireland) is not the private possession of any one politician or American Irish organization. The MacBride Principles campaign is a united effort by active people, their organizations and political figures who seek justice in Northern Ireland. It is for this reason the MacBride Principles campaign has been highly successful in the United States. Let us not heed anyone, political or activist, who would dare suggest that they or their organization runs the show. Very many capable and dedicated people and organizations have made great sacrifices to bring the campaign to its present level of success.*

*Our organizations have enough capable leaders who are more than qualified to represent our community with regard to American Irish issues. The American Irish people must never forget that it took years to develop such leadership. Let us not throw it all away and return control of our thinking and actions to the Moynihans, the Kennedys (Sen. Edward), the O'Neill's and the Careys.*

## EDUCATE THE PUBLIC

**Your help is needed to educate the public.** We will publish in the Newsletter articles such as "Britain's Plastic Bullet Kills" which is published in this issue. These educational articles will be marked Reproduce & Distribute.

Save the Newsletter copy for the purpose of making copies. Send them to people with influence such as : clergy (all religions), union officials, politicians (your US Senators and Congressman, and local and state legislators), interested friends, etc. It is also most important that you send them to local TV, radio and newspaper "news editors". This action will greatly enhance our "media education campaign". Do not send too much information as people will tend to put it aside. Just one article at a time, unless asked for more.

We suggest that you develop a small list of pertinent people,

eg., your US Congressman and Senators, a couple of clerics, and two or three news editors. On a monthly basis, send them the appropriate article from the Newsletter. From time to time send a short note with the article so that they know who it is from.

These actions by you will prove to be very rewarding. For the most part, you will be giving people information they have never before seen. You will surely win support for Irish freedom - you will be effectively countering British propaganda and media news censorship.

It is further suggested that you reproduce these materials for distribution at public functions (Irish and non-Irish). This activity will not only help educate the public, but will also help increase membership in the American Irish PEC.

### FROM THE NORTH

by Fr. Des Wilson, *Belfast correspondent and Director of the Conway Mill*

Why should a relatively obscure factory in West Belfast excite fear in the hearts of government, politicians and church?

In the Conway Mill, a large building once dedicated to manufacturing linen of superb quality, people are creating jobs, writing and acting for the theatre, and arranging lectures and discussions. They act independently in all this, and since they can invite whom they wish and say what they like the place has an air of being lived in, worked in and incessantly talked in.

This independence tells you why government, politicians and church are fearful of it. In Ireland in general and in the North East in particular you are not supposed to work, play, or even live except under strict supervision. Without supervision you could easily fall into sin, or out of favor. You could find yourself thinking wrong thoughts or living the wrong way. You could, and this would be really extreme, engage in political discussion or religious controversy with nobody around to tell you when you went wrong.

For many people this unsupervised control of your own life seems a good thing. They cultivate it. The ancient universities were made up of people who thought exactly this way. Bills of Rights and constitutions, declarations of Human Rights and treatises on citizenship have been composed on the one great principle of human freedom that people should be allowed to develop their own genius because by so doing they will renew the face of the earth. The British government however does not use its resources in the North of Ireland in order to write treatises on human freedom or to create new expressions of human dignity. What happened to Conway Mill is a symbol of a whole colonial way of life imposed by the government on Irish people who are determined to be free of it.

Conway Mill, 90 thousand square feet of empty space, was bought by citizens who wanted to turn this old sweat shop into a place where people could feel dignified again. Naturally they did what the old industrialists did not -- they placed learning centers right alongside working places. Theatre and lecture rooms right alongside leisure spaces. It seemed such a good idea that all those agencies calling out for peaceful methods of

change should be delighted with it. They weren't.

The citizens were speedily advised by the authorities that they would be looked upon with more favor if they placed the chairman of the Police Authority on the management board. This kind of person the citizens felt they could do without. They were then advised to place on the management board a "very successful" businessman. The businessman had previously transformed a community resource into a highly lucrative "personal enterprise". Since this was exactly the opposite process from that intended by the Mill management committee, this second recommendation also was refused. From then on it became more and more clear that the Mill was out of government and political favor.

For the Church universal the issue seemed to be clear -- after all, if the Church said that people were inspired by the Holy Ghost -- and it did -- then surely it should welcome people thinking for themselves: creating their own amusement, exchanging views with both friends and enemies and thus making peace.

The Church in Belfast did not. Within months the new project involving education, leisure, work and free exchange of visits among enemies and friends was dubbed dangerous and undesirable. "The government", said a prominent Church educationalist, "should set up a centre for adult education because of the danger posed by dubious alternatives". The message was clear, citizens control of thinking, playing, working or living, was a dangerous novelty.

Some years later the government opened a new college of further education which churchmen hailed as a "Giant Step Forward", replacing activities which unhappily, "often took place in premises not at all suitable for education".

Those citizens who had been brought up in the broken down classrooms smiled. The premises were not the problem. The problem was that neither the government nor church controlled this private center of learning.

Then the news media attack began with stories implying that the Conway Mill was a front for armed subversives. The stories were planted, we understand that. We, in the North, now also understand that freedom seems a threatening thing to many people in positions of Civil and Church power. But such a small amount of freedom? So little power?

## IRISH IN THE CONSTITUTION:

JAMES MCHENRY

by J. Robert Lunney, Esquire

James McHenry was born in Ulster as the son of a prosperous merchant. He received a classical education in Dublin, followed by an education in the New World at the Newark Academy (later to be known as the University of Delaware), where he studied medicine.

McHenry spent two years in Philadelphia as an apprentice to one of America's foremost physicians, Dr. Benjamin Rush. The young student quickly acquired the skills and knowledge expected of an eighteenth-century doctor. More importantly for the American revolutionary cause, however, he also received a political education from Rush, who was one of Pennsylvania's leading opponents to British rule and a future signer of the Declaration of Independence.

In 1775, McHenry joined the American forces participating in the siege of Boston. He worked in the military hospital in Cambridge as a volunteer assistant surgeon.

Later, McHenry fought as a regular member of the Fifth Pennsylvania Battalion. The Fifth Pennsylvania, as a regular continental unit, reported directly to New York City. Its mission was to construct and defend Fort Mifflin, an American outpost near the northern end of Manhattan Island. Overwhelming British and Hessian forces under General William Howe attacked the fort from three directions on the morning of September 26, 1776. Pushing forward despite fierce resistance by the outnumbered garrison, the British forced a surrender. McHenry was one of five physicians and 2,000 soldiers who were captured by the British at Fort Mifflin. After spending some time caring for sick and wounded prisoners of war, McHenry was paroled.

In 1778 he joined the Continental Army again at Valley Forge, where Washington selected him to serve as Assistant Secretary on his staff. McHenry remained on Washington's staff for two and one half years. During that period, he saw action in the Battles of Monmouth and Springfield, New Jersey, and became a valued member of Washington's immediate military family.

Near the end of 1780, McHenry transferred to LaFayette's staff. This change led to his commission as Major. He served at LaFayette's side at Yorktown, where Washington had moved his main army from New York, as a French fleet from the West Indies arrived to block any British escape by sea. Washington's brilliant concentration of forces trapped Cornwallis. A formal siege of Yorktown culminated with a bayonet attack on British positions during the night of October 14, 1781. Cornwallis's surrender brought the active military phase of the war to an end.

McHenry resigned his commission at the end of 1781 to enter Maryland politics. Elected to the State Legislature, he served for thirteen years, using this forum to argue the cause of federalism. Between 1783 and 1786, he sat in the Continental Congress, and in the following year he represented Maryland at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Although he played no leading part in the deliberations of the Convention, McHenry continued to support the call for a strong central government. His military staff training was reflected in his

## NORTHERN IRELAND: An Un-American Experience

by Stephanie Finucane

During my recent first visit to Northern Ireland I encountered the mud-green fences surrounding the many British barracks and surveillance towers; military check points; young, British troops in camouflage uniform running through the "normal" cities; military landrovers amongst black taxis and passenger cars - many of the facets of the war in Northern Ireland.

I visited in Belfast the *Conway Mills* and the *Spring Hill* community centers, both grass roots efforts on the part of Nationalists to create for themselves futures through industries and political education. The centers had three striking features in common: run down offices, evident of the poverty of the Nationalist plight; a 24 hour volunteer crew literally working for their lives; and very little money left to sustain their projects.

I had a decent bed to sleep in that night and I was only passing through this war zone. Thoughts of my opportunity-ridden life of access, to education, to social advancement, to political action, still swam in my head. The surveillance towers and foreign men in uniform, I realized, did not sink in this US Democracy-framed state of young American student mind. I could not feel personally the presence of this foreign power. And why? Because the whole scene was alien to me: The whole idea of a foreign power in Northern Ireland, in any country, had no precedent in my life experience in the US. I had nothing to compare it to. Therefore, all I saw in Belfast, and throughout my six day visit to the North, just bounced off my head.

Now I am back in the US and can try to imagine living in a war zone like Northern Ireland, being fully educated and with no job to walk into, no hope of ever leading a normal life, according to American standards, using all time and effort, instead, to free my people from the cycle of state inbred poverty and discrimination through the work of the community centers.

Northern Ireland is another world altogether, where, for too large a sector of a "democratic society", 9 - 5 jobs don't exist, materialism does not exist, social prestige does not exist, and greed does not exist. The Nationalist community, instead, is working for the essentials of daily life that I, as a free American, take for granted. It would take the experience of living and, thus, suffering, in the North to actually get a feel for the war.

I was relieved to leave Northern Ireland because the thought of what is truly going on in those six counties was too distressful to consider.

meticulous notes of the convention's proceedings--notes that have proven invaluable for generations of American historians.

In 1796 President Washington once again called on his old wartime aide, this time to assume the duties of Secretary of War. McHenry continued in office for many months after the threat of war with France ended in 1800. His last years were spent in quiet retirement at his Maryland estate, "Fayetteville," named after his general at Yorktown. As a staunch federalist, he opposed America's slide into war in 1812, although he lived to see his son follow in his footsteps as a wartime volunteer. Ironically, his son participated in the 1814 defense of the Baltimore fort named for his father. This was the same battle that inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner".

# MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES GRASS ROOTS CAMPAIGN

The MacBride Principles campaign (for Fair Employment in Northern Ireland) is more important now than ever. As you are aware, Britain's new fair employment legislation is grossly inadequate according to Britain's Labour Party, Dr. Christopher McCrudden, one of Europe's foremost anti-discrimination experts, and the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Trust.

We need to begin a grass-roots campaign to generate further support for federal and state legislation.

There are two MacBride Principles bills pending in the U.S. Congress. One bill is sponsored in the House by Congressman Hamilton Fish and in the Senate by Senator Al D'Amato. The second bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Frank Lautenberg. For these bills to become law, we must demonstrate extensive grass-roots support.

To help generate that support, we have prepared below a draft MacBride Principles resolution for your use. All members are asked to contact local organizations, unions, Irish organizations, clubs, religious groups, etc. and ask that they adopt a similar resolution. Our resolution can be used as a guide. You can solicit help from friends (welcome non-American Irish) in this endeavor. Copies of all approved resolutions are to be sent to the American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC) and to pertinent legislators.

**IT IS MOST IMPORTANT** that the names of the US Congressmen and Senators representing the district in which the adopting groups are located appear on the resolution, and that copies of the resolution be mailed to them. They must know that these actions have been taken. **In states that have not yet adopted the Principles**, it is equally important that your state representative's names appear on the resolution and that they too, receive a copy.

## MacBride Principles Resolution

WHEREAS, The officers and members of (name of organization) support human rights and the right of all people to equal employment opportunity;

WHEREAS, employment discrimination in Northern Ireland has been cited by the International Commission of Jurists as being one of the major causes of the conflict in that area;

WHEREAS, Dr. Sean MacBride, founder of Amnesty International and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, has proposed several equal opportunity employment principles to serve as guidelines for American corporations in Northern Ireland. These include:

1. Increasing the representation of individuals from underrepresented religious groups in the workforce, including managerial, supervisory, administrative, clerical and technical jobs;
2. Adequate security for the protection of minority employees both at the workplace and while traveling to and from work;
3. The banning of provocative religious or political emblems from the workplace;
4. All job openings should be publicly advertised and special recruitment efforts should be made to attract applicants from

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underrepresented religious groups;

5. Layoff, recall, and termination procedures should not in practice favor particular religious groupings;

6. The abolition of job reservations, apprenticeship restrictions, and differential employment criteria, which discriminate on the basis of religion or ethnic origin;

7. The development of training programs that will prepare substantial numbers of current minority employees for skilled jobs, including the expansion of existing programs and the creation of new programs to train, upgrade, and improve the skills of minority employees;

8. The establishment of procedures to assess, identify and actively recruit minority employees with potential for further advancement; and

9. The appointment of a senior management staff member to oversee the company's affirmative action efforts and the setting up of timetables to carry out equal opportunity principles.

**RESOLVED:** The officers and members of (name of group) endorse the MacBride Principles For Fair Employment in Northern Ireland on (give date);

**RESOLVED:** The officers and members of (name of group) do petition U.S. Senators (your 2 U.S. Senators' names) and Congressmen (Congressmen's name), to sponsor and promote MacBride Principles legislation introduced by Senators Frank Lautenberg and Al D'Amato and Congressman Hamilton Fish. (Include names of pertinent state legislators if MacBride legislation has not yet been passed in your state);

**RESOLVED:** Copies of this resolution will be sent to the above named elected representatives and the American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC), Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980 - (914) 947-2726.

## MacBride Principles Promotional Materials Available

To help you promote the resolution, we have available excellent materials: MacBride Principles (*Think About It*) brochures at \$.10 ea.; *Testimony by Oliver Kearney*, Executive Secretary of the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Trust, at \$.08 ea. and our complimentary MacBride Principles Briefing Paper. Also, for those who do not have the facilities available to reproduce the resolution for use, send us a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope and we will send you a copy.

**Join The AMERICAN Irish PEC**  
**For Membership Information Only**  
**Call 800-777-6807 daily between 3pm & 9am EDT**

# BRITISH PLASTIC BULLETS KILL

by Sandy Carlson

A plastic bullet is a hard plastic and lead projectile, 4 1/2 inches long and 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Plastic bullets can be fired at speeds of up to 175 miles per hour. Although plastic bullets can cause damage when fired from 40 yards, the Northern Ireland police and the British army are permitted to fire the bullets from 20 yards. Currently, both the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC--police) and the British Army use plastic bullet guns. However, the British government is considering arming the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR--local army) with a new, more sophisticated plastic bullet. The new model, the Arwen Ace, will burst upon impact and emit CS gas.

Plastic bullets are more lethal than the inaccurate rubber bullets which often hit innocent by-standers from 20 or 30 yards. They were implemented in Northern Ireland in 1974, ostensibly as a riot control method to be fired near rioters but not at them. The British immediately discovered the many advantages plastic bullets had over rubber bullets and live ammunition. The image "plastic bullet" conjured was one of a simple, harmless, almost toy-like riot control weapon. Thus, plastic bullets did not carry the stigma that live ammunition did; hence, outsiders would not as readily protest plastic bullets. When a target population understands its personal danger but the rest of the world is sure there is no danger, then the oppressor is, in essence, free to abuse that population. Thus, the British were able to abuse and overuse this weapon. The British are able to further sophisticate this lethal weapon, although the European Commission of Human Rights at Strasbourg found the British guilty of abuses in 1978 as a result of their using rubber bullets.

On August 3 and 4, 1981, an International Tribunal of Inquiry determined that plastic bullets were lethal and should be banned. Indeed, on July 1, 1981, William Whitelaw, British Home Secretary, said he would not use plastic bullets against English rioters because using such a weapon would mean inflicting injury.

On May 13, 1982, the European Parliament passed a resolution banning plastic bullets as lethal weapons and urged member nations to refrain from using plastic bullets and to respect the lives of their citizens.

In September 1981, Neil Blayney, Member of Parliament, began efforts to ban plastic bullets in Ireland. In April the following year, Laborite Richard Balfe claimed that unless plastic bullets were banned in Northern Ireland, they would be used in Britain. After parliamentary debate and voting, an overwhelming majority voted for a ban; Ian Paisley and 42 Conservatives voted against the ban. However, the British still use this lethal weapon.

The youngest victim of plastic bullet "riot control" is 4-year-old David Madden, who needed six stitches for a head wound. In the three months from May 5, 1981, 161 suffered serious injuries from plastic bullets. Thirty-one persons had head injuries. On May 26, 1982, the Earl of Gowrie said, "I appeal to the people of Northern Ireland, and since the activities of very young people

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are in our minds at the moment, in particular to parents there, to try to control their children, who often join demonstrations as a matter of excitement, but who end up in very lethal positions indeed, and of course put themselves as well as the security forces at very great risk." Thus, according to the Lord of Gowrie, Northern Ireland's children are responsible for the lethal positions that result from the British having plastic bullet guns and for jeopardizing the safety of the British forces, in spite of the fact that the children killed or maimed by soldiers using plastic bullet guns were not involved in riots or near riots.

Between 1972 and 1986, the British forces killed sixteen people with plastic bullets. Seven of the victims were children between the ages of ten and fifteen years old.

Still, the British plan to use a more sophisticated version of this weapon. Said Ulster Unionist Ken Maginnis, "they (soldiers) have not got back up immediately available and need some means to protect themselves. It is, or ultimately will be, a question of whether they use live ammunition in order to protect themselves or whether they use these baton guns" (*Irish Echo*). The standard of an acceptable level of violence is gradually deteriorating. Now parents should be grateful that the British shoot Irish children in the head with plastic bullets, for the time may soon come when the British shoot children with live ammunition!

This outlandish paranoia is similar to that exhibited by the Israelis. On January 29, 1989, Yitzhak Rabin, Defense Minister, changed the rules regarding plastic bullets so that, "under certain circumstances soldiers are allowed to shoot plastic bullets at any Palestinian deemed to be preparing to throw a rock, burn a tire, set up a roadblock, or carry out disruptive behavior--even when no lives are threatened." (*New York Times*). Just four months earlier, the State Department issued a report stating that it was "disturbed by Israel's use of plastic bullets against Palestinian demonstrators, contending that the policy is leading to rising casualties." (*Sioux City Journal*)

Two of the three countries in the world that use plastic bullets (Israel and South Africa) have been rebuked for their misuse of the weapon. Still, these expressions of concern are worthless as long as children and other innocent persons are slain or wounded. Not one British soldier has ever been held accountable for murdering or maiming with what is meant to be only a riot-control weapon.

Contact your Representatives and Senators and encourage them to protest the British government's continued use and advancement of plastic bullets.

**Join The American Irish  
Political Education Committee (PEC)  
founded in 1975**

**For Membership Information Only  
Call 800-777-6807 between 3pm & 9am EDT**

*Published by: American Irish PEC, Malloy Building,  
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**ACTION REQUEST # 2**

**OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS**

Member Elizabeth Barry of Pennsylvania informs us of the following situation: The May 27, 1989 episode of Star Trek "Up The Long Ladder" was about the "Bringloidis", a people who are descendents of colonists from Earth. They are described by Commander Riker as being "stubborn" and immediately when beamed aboard the Enterprise the leader of the clan offers Chief O'Brien whiskey from a flask he's kept hidden inside his shirt. The leader then runs after the Captain trying desperately to interest him in his daughter. Throughout the course of the episode they are depicted as filthy peasants with Irish brogues and con artists who only think of their daughters as property to be bought and sold in marriage. They are discovered brewing poteen -- Irish whiskey illegally in their quarters by Captain Picard who laughs at the whole situation as being absurd. Meanwhile a red-haired, red-dressed colleen seduces Commander Riker.

Elizabeth Barry wrote to Gene Roddenberry, producer of Star Trek. Roddenberry's office responded that they were sorry she was offended, but did not offer to correct this degradation of the American Irish image. Instead, they offered, "...And the 'Stage Irish' characterizations used are those used in the Irish stage to this day, and are not considered offensive by the Irish themselves...they consider these characters to be part of their culture".

**COURSE OF ACTION:** Write or call Mr. Gene Roddenberry, 5555 Melrose Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90038-3197 -- (213) 468-5850. Inform him that his Star Trek episode "Up The Long Ladder" in which the Irish were depicted as heavy drinkers of alcohol, stubborn and con artists, is indeed offensive to the American Irish community--that we do not accept the "Stage Irish" characterizations. Also inform him that the American Irish community has been combatting these offensive situations for many years and is presently conducting an extensive campaign directed at Hallmark Greeting Card Company and Recycled Paper Products.

Be sure to request a reply and send a copy to the PEC.

**News Bits continued from page 1**  
 experience of commanding troops in action." (Irish Post, 8/19/89)...Religious booksellers Veritas have refused to stock a new book from the Northern priest Father Joe McVeigh which criticizes Catholic Church policy in Ireland. A representative of publisher Mercier Press stated, "The book, *A Wounded Church*, is critical of some aspects of the Catholic Church and we can only assume that they did not like the content -- it stresses that the church has tried to preserve the status quo." [Father McVeigh was] surprised to hear of the decision. "If they are not stocking it, it is a form of censorship." (The Sunday Press, 8/6/89)...Patrick Kelly, a passenger in a car driven by Brendan Toner, was shot at a border crossing. The driver had been stopped twice within 20 minutes and, when he was stopped for the second time, refused to show his identification. "I told the soldier he had seen it 20 minutes earlier and he knew where I was going. I put the car in gear and drove off. The shot was fired in a matter of seconds by another soldier at the roadblock." (The Cork Examiner, 8/21/89)

**BOOKS AND VIDEOS, ETC.**

Make checks payable to American Irish Awareness Comm.

**A WOUNDED CHURCH** By Fr. Joseph McVeigh

This controversial book has caused an uproar in Ireland, north and south. It has been banned by Veritas Religious Bookstores in Ireland.

Fr. McVeigh's book "A Wounded Church" looks at the history of the Catholic Church in Ireland over the last two centuries in the light of the present role of the Catholic hierarchy in the ongoing conflict. After centuries of persecution of the Catholic Church in Ireland the Catholic hierarchy emerged in the latter half of the eighteenth century as an ally of British colonial rule...they are seen by a large section of their own people as allies of the British government rather than spiritual and moral leaders.

According to the author the bishops continually condemn violence without defining it and without analysing the root causes of injustice and poverty. Fr. McVeigh says they have so far failed to condemn the institutionalized violence of the state and therefore have become part of the problem. Published by Mercier Press. Paperback, 120 pp.

Order # B925.....\$11.95

**THE BOYNE WATER: The Battle of the Boyne 1690**  
 By Peter Berresford Ellis

In the year 1690 Ireland, still suffering from the effects of Cromwell's colonization, found itself the pivot of a wider European crisis, with the battle eventually fought at the River Boyne proving decisive of both international and Irish issues. Peter Berresford Ellis's masterly account of the battle and of its causes and consequences makes it plain why, after almost three hundred years, the Boyne remains one of the most potent symbols in Irish politics. Paperback, 163 pp.

"It throws new light on that encounter and on the men who fought on either side on that scorching July day...Well told, the account is enlivened by vivid eye-witness descriptions of the battle and its aftermath."

Evening Herald

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**SPECIAL !!!**

**PADDY'S LAMENT: A Prelude To Hatred**  
 By Thomas Gallagher

**A limited number of autographed hardcover copies are available!!!**

In the summer of 1846, an unknown, uncontrollable disease swiftly turned Ireland's pivotal potato crop into foul slime. The contamination spread with almost incredible speed across the land. The peasant and his family now found their precarious, meager existence--their very lives--in hazard. They turned to their British governors for relief. What they received was starvation, eviction, deeper poverty, and rampant sickness. Their plight is portrayed in staggering, terrible detail. A quarter of the population died miserably in less than two years. Those who could manage steerage fare to escape to America endured almost as grim an ordeal on British ships. One quarter of the emigrants died at sea. The final death toll reached 2 million.

Every American Irish family should own a copy of this classic. Hardcover, 345 pp.

\* Order # B909.....\$19.95

A top secret green card outlining what British soldiers should do if arrested in the Republic has come to light. It states, "You are to decline to hand over your weapons, be photographed or fingerprinted. If questioned...decline to give any information about your operational duties beyond explaining how you came across the border by accident." The green card makes it clear to troops that they should seek immediate permission to ring the British Embassy and gives a special telephone number in Dublin to ring." (The Cork Examiner, 8/21/89)



**ACTION REQUEST # 1**

Members have informed us that since we began our campaign against news media bias, censorship and unprofessional reporting in news coverage of Northern Ireland, they have noted improvements in some of the major news media. They have even noticed progress in some of the more pro-British elements. While we are encouraged to learn that the media is sensitive to our organized protests, we must still continue our efforts.

What is needed to resolve this ages-old tragedy is public discussion and political debate. The news media coverage of Northern Ireland must be fair and reported regularly and must include the views of the nationalist community.

We continue our campaign by asking that you contact the Associated Press (AP). AP has no offices in Northern Ireland. AP erroneously reports the war in Northern Ireland as sectarian strife and that the nationalists are fighting to "unite" Northern Ireland with the Irish Republic. "Unite" implies that the north and south were always divided. We must inform AP that they are misleading the public.

**COURSE OF ACTION:** Write or call Mr. Louis D. Boccardi, President, Associated Press, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020, phone # (212) 621-1500. It is preferred that you write the suggested letter below in your own words. Have friends and family do the same.

Dear Mr. Boccardi:

Please direct AP writers not to use the words "sectarian" and "unite" when reporting on the war in Northern Ireland. These words mislead the public. The Irish nationalists are fighting to drive the British out of Ireland and to "reunite" the north with the Irish Republic. Ireland, north and south, was one country until the British illegally partitioned it. Nationalists are not fighting the Protestants. It is only sectarian in the sense that some extreme loyalists, who happen to be Protestant, attack Catholics in an attempt to protect their privileged position. Further, we urge that AP open an office in Northern Ireland and that they not depend on British information sources.

Sincerely yours,  
signature

**American Irish Reawakening continued from page 1**

Don't be afraid to let a friend read a copy of our *American Irish Newsletter*. The apathetic American Irish of the 1980's may turn out to be the American Irish activist of the 90's.

Many Americans find it hard to understand why we have such a struggle in lobbying our elected officials to pressure England to leave Ireland. After all, we have so many of "our own" in the US Senate and Congress and State Houses and City Halls. They fail to realize that in many cases non-Irish politicians will take up our cause quicker than our own.

This is changing though, as more and more American Irish are being informed. We have come along way in the 1980's and by working together we will see even greater achievement in the 1990's.

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