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## American Irish Newsletter - June - July 1986

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# THE AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the Action Irish

Vol. 11, No. 3

JUNE/JULY, 1986

*"The Irish American (sic) Political Education Committee, based in Stony Point, New York, is the closest equivalent that Irish Americans have to the Jewish Anti-Defamation League ..."*

IRISH AMERICA (Patrick Ross) May, 1986

## OPERATION HARASSMENT — Report No. 1

By Albert Doyle

Several months ago, when the PEC instituted its project of gathering information about official harassment of people active in the cause of Ireland's Reunification we were already aware of some cases. Although we have not yet been able to publicize our campaign through the media (only in our Newsletter) we have been astounded at the number of cases of intimidation which have been reported to us on the basis of our limited appeal. We are now more determined than ever to publicize this outrageous conduct by our own government. Many of our correspondents have freely offered to let us identify them if it would help but we see no need to do this at present. We are able to draw a number of conclusions at this time and we are calling them to the attention of our friends in Congress. Based on our information the following facts are now clear:

- (1) There is a centrally directed plan to harass and intimidate Irish activists who are exercising their rights as Americans and not engaged in any illegal activity.
- (2) The purpose of this harassment is to serve British interests, not those of the U.S.
- (3) The nature of the questions asked by visiting agents rather clearly indicates no real investigatory purpose but rather to frighten and intimidate people, e.g. visiting targets at their place of work, asking seemingly foolish questions ("are you aware of any illegal activity?").
- (4) In some cases the agents make crude overtures to recruit people as informers.

We also have found that Irish activists are not the only targets of this harassment and that we are not alone in our concern. In future reports we will say more on this and on your rights if "visited". For the present, just remember you don't have to talk to any government agent. If you do, ask for and note his identification and what office he is with. We will be reporting further on this subject. Keep the information coming.

## NEWS BITS

by Andy Prior

[Ed. Note: In an ironic turnabout, N.I. Loyalists — those "loyal" to all things British, — especially law and order, have begun to savagely attack the protectors of N.I. "law" — the N.I. police (RUC). Following is a summary of some recent Loyalist violence.]

03/09 — RUC Chief Constable Hermon confirms that 15 families of RUC members had been forced to leave their homes following attacks by loyalists ... 03/15 — John O'Neill (25) a Catholic was beaten to death in Belfast in an apparent sectarian attack ... 03/30 — Apprentice Boys of Derry march through Portadown banned on the basis of intelligence that major violence is planned by loyalist paramilitaries ... 03/31 — Despite ban more than 2,000 loyalists march along Catholic area of Portadown and serious rioting breaks out between loyalists and the RUC which

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## MAJOR VICTORY

New York's Northern Ireland Investment Bill authored by Assemblyman John Dearie and Senator John Flynn, has won overwhelming approval in both houses of the New York State Legislature. Governor Mario Cuomo is expected to sign the Bill into law shortly. The Bill will deny investment of New York State pension funds in American companies doing business in Northern Ireland that do not comply with the MacBride Principles of Fair Employment.

According to political observers; the Bill's surprise victory was accredited to the united effort of New York's American Irish organizations, their leaders and members. Much credit must also go to those members of the Senate and Assembly who held firm to their commitment to this human rights legislation while under intense pressure from bitter and powerful opponents, Senators Warren Anderson and John Marchi and N.Y.S. Comptroller Ned Regan. As a political leader, Assemblyman John Dearie displayed an exceptional ability to get things done — political savvy. This is the kind of leadership New York needs.

## PEC ACTION NETWORK — EARP: BECOMING A MAJOR INFLUENCE

by John J. Finucane

A member of our Emergency Action Request Program (EARP) living in Michigan reproduced and distributed copies of a PEC EARP request which resulted in generating almost one thousand personal and form letters opposing the anti-American Irish Extradition Treaty. Three New York members had printed five thousand copies of an EARP request on the Treaty and distributed them at the Yankee Stadium in New York on Irish American Day. Several non-Irish organizations opposed to the Treaty reproduced an EARP message and distributed them to their members. Other members reproduced our requests for distribution at work, social gatherings and organization meetings. Obviously EARP is very effective and the more members it has the greater will be its effectiveness. It is the largest Action Network of its kind available to our community. It serves to unite us in political action. EARP has been used extensively both nationally and selectively concerning the Treaty and similarly in New York in support of the Northern Ireland Investment Bill. It has recently been used in New Jersey to support passage of that state's Irish Investment Bill.

(Continued on Page 3)

## A COP FOR ALL SEASONS

by Dr. Roger D. McGrath, PEC California

A snowy November night in 1906 found a big, Irish-born New York City cop walking his beat along the Harlem River. As he came to a bridge that spanned the river, he heard voices cry out for help. He sprinted to a point on the bridge where a little knot of people

(Continued on Page 4)

# NON-VIOLENT TERRORISM?

by Joe Farrell, PEC, Pennsylvania

**British Official:** Really, you don't expect us to just walk out of India, do you?

**Gandhi:** Some day you will do just that. You will just walk out.  
— Scene from the movie *Gandhi*

Mohandas Gandhi did not seek to drive the British into the Indian Ocean. Rather, he devoted most of his life to organizing the vast Indian people to persuade the British to leave India peacefully — to walk out — and to freely grant India the independence that its people would show they desired. Since Gandhi denounced all violence, and particularly since many voices in recent years have told us that so-called "constitutional" means are the appropriate way to fight injustice in Northern Ireland, you might think that the British found his approach praiseworthy. or at least an acceptable form of dissent. Such was not the case.

The British answered Gandhi's non-violence by claiming that he was in fact causing violence — by causing unrest, which, given the repressive response of the British, resulted in violence. (Alistair Cooke offers a recent example of this peculiarly British logic. In one of his introductions in the BBC series "The Last Viceroy" he commented that while Gandhi seemed a unifying figure to outsiders, his constant pleas for Hindu-Moslem brotherhood were an incentive to further rioting (?!))

More generally, as the film *Gandhi* showed, rather than respond in like spirit to the reasonable entreaties of the Indians, the supposedly democratic British answered by jailing protesters, brutalizing and killing peaceful demonstrators, alternatively seeking a deal with the Indians that would leave the British in charge, and, failing that, warning of religious divisions in India while colluding in promoting them. Nor was this just the response of fossilized British colonial officers, cut off from their enlightened countrymen. Winston Churchill responded to the growing movement by calling Gandhi a "half-naked fakir".

Eventually, although he forbade even throwing a rock at a baton-swinging British policeman, Gandhi spent almost six years in British prisons. And unswayed by Gandhian non-violence, the British sought every means to frustrate India's drive for independence. Unable, finally, to make Indian Nationalists accept continued British rule, the British jailed Gandhi and other leaders during World War II while allowing a political rival, Mohamma Ali Jinnah, to promote a partitioned Moslem state in which Jinnah would be number one.

Following his release Gandhi found the religious-political rivalries promoted with such British collusion too great to overcome. When a war-weakened Britain, unwilling any longer to bear the effort and expense of ruling India, had to grant India freedom, it was to an India that had been divided, with bitter historical results, one of the first of which was Gandhi's own assassination.

Britain fought Indian nationalism with everything available, Indian non-violence notwithstanding. Unable to completely overcome it in a world where Britain's power and importance were declining inexorably, Britain played a role in frustrating its goals

## The AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

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Editor ..... John J. Finucane

Assistant Editor ..... Andy Prior

and bequeathing a legacy of violence and religious hatred for India to inherit along with its freedom. Does this sound familiar?

But in the end, Britain did walk out. They have one more walk to take.

## THE GOLDIN REPORT

Harrison Goldin, Comptroller of the City of New York, has scored a major victory in his efforts to promote compliance with the popular MacBride Principles of Fair Employment. In his efforts to mandate compliance of these principles by American companies doing business in "Northern Ireland" who receive investments from New York City's Pension Fund, he has prompted what is being termed by many, "a historic decision".

The New York City Employees' Retirement System won a law suit in Manhattan Federal Court on May 12 that compels American Brands to mail an anti-discrimination resolution to all its shareholders in time to be voted on at its annual meeting. American Brands began mailing proxy solicitation notices well in advance of the required date, so as to deprive the pension system its right to sponsor a resolution concerning the MacBride Principles.

The ruling by District Court Judge Robert L. Carter is believed to be the first ever in the U.S. involving the MacBride Principles. The judge ruled that these anti-discrimination principles for firms that do business in Northern Ireland, are legal under both American and British law.

American Brands had claimed that the MacBride Principles would force it to discriminate against Protestants. Judge Carter accepted that the Principles do not call for discrimination against anyone.

American Brands is the parent company of Gallaher, Ltd. which employs 2,000 among them not one Catholic male.

## EXTRADITION TREATY UPDATE

by Albert Doyle

There is a Washington, D.C. saying that Washington is the worst place to really understand America. The current battle over the U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty illustrates the truth of that saying. It is only the latest outbreak in the continuous struggle for the soul of this country — a struggle between different views of this country's meaning and goals. In favor of the treaty are the cynical power-wielders, country-club Anglophiles, people whose knowledge of foreign countries was learned in Hollywood and who are specifically ignorant about Ireland and her history. On the other hand, the opponents include those who would defend the powerless against government oppression, who still see America as the land of freedom, who haven't forgotten our own anti-colonial revolutionary history. Recent weeks have seen an unprecedented effort by the British and their American followers to push the Treaty out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This costly campaign, financed by British and U.S. taxpayer money, has pulled all the stops in trying to influence the U.S. media, ever descending to the low level of identifying all Treaty opponents as supporters of "terrorism". Tom King, the British pro-counsel in Ireland, has been lobbying in Washington pushing this line. All of this has generated considerable pro-Treaty press coverage which we do not have the funds or resources to match. Despite these efforts, despite the establishment support, at this writing we are holding our ground! Senate opponents of the Treaty have prevented its movement by proposing a compromise which would allow the extradition of terrorists (hijackers, killers of innocent civilians, etc.) while preserving the traditional U.S. judicial review of foreign extradition requests and the political offense exception. The real motives of the British and their U.S. followers were never more starkly revealed than by their reaction to this compromise. They are opposed to it. They want Joe Doherty and others who would never be extradited under existing law. The battle goes on.

**FROM THE EDITOR**

During the past twelve months Americans of Irish heritage have transmitted tens of thousands of messages (letters, phone calls, mailgrams, etc.) to our elected representatives. Unlike in the past, these messages displayed unity in that they concentrated on certain issues such as the **anti-American Irish US-UK Extradition Treaty** and the **different Irish Investment Bills**. We individuals and organizations did not go off in different directions. We stood united across America in action and made a tremendous political impact. Because we are united we are now being listened to.

No matter what the outcome of the debates on the anti-American Irish Extradition Treaty, we are big winners. **WE HAVE UNITED POLITICALLY AT THE GRASS ROOTS LEVEL.** Very recent proof of our new unity is the outstanding victory of our New York brothers and sisters regarding the Northern Ireland Investment Bill (see Major Victory pg. 1). The key to this success and the developments concerning the Treaty is **your letters, phone calls and mailgrams.** Remember: **the bottom line is votes.** These messages, for the first time in American history, have brought the American Irish in direct political confrontation with the Administration and the British government. This is clout. Democratic organizations such as the PEC are powerless without grassroots support. Your messages are that grass roots support.

The success of these organized action campaigns is of great importance to the PEC as we have been the prime movers and innovators of these action networks since our inception in 1975. What is more important to us is that we have only begun. There are millions of American Irish out there who will help us if contacted. Our Operation One Million is helping us reach them.

Now that we have developed unity in political action, we must act to build on it. One such way to build on it is to get more of our members to join EARP a free service (see page 3). It is also of the utmost importance to solicit new subscribers for the **American Irish Newsletter**. At least 16% of all subscribers become letter-writers (Note: one letter on a national issue represents for the politicians the views of one thousand Americans.). We urge you to make a commitment to solicit at least one new subscriber for the Newsletter within the next month. Please consider for gift-giving occasions a one-year subscription to the **American Irish Newsletter**. Reproduce the subscription application below for this purpose. Last, but certainly not least, we urge those of you who have not already given financial support to Operation One Million to do so at this time. See Operation One Million Update this page. **ONWARD TO A UNITED IRELAND THROUGH A UNITED AMERICAN IRISH COMMUNITY.**

**PEC ACTION NETWORK — EARP** (Continued from Page 1)

Through EARP a free service to our members/subscribers we contact on short notice, all our letter-writers throughout the U.S., to inform them and to request action in the form of letters, phone calls or mailgrams, concerning important American Irish issues such as the Treaty and the Investment Bills. It is proving highly effective. Its impact in support of New York's Northern Ireland Investment Bill was praised by the bill's principle promoter, Assemblyman John Dearie. He stated, "The PEC's Emergency Action Request Program enabled us to rally and maintain pressure on our legislators state-wide through the large amount of mail and phone calls it constantly generated. *EARP is an effective democratic tool in our development of grass roots political unity.*" (italics ours). We also know that the U.S. Senators in the Foreign Relations Committee who support the Treaty are upset by the letters and phone calls. Won't you join EARP and help us display grass roots political unity?

**JOIN EARP!**  
*"an effective tool in our development of political unity."*  
 NY Assemblyman John Dearie  
 To become a member of EARP send your name and address stating same to AIPEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, N.Y. 10980 or call (914) 947-2726.

**OPERATION ONE MILLION UPDATE**

Since the last issue of the *American Irish Newsletter*, there has been a significant increase in the number of members/ subscribers giving financial support to Operation One Million. As of this writing nearly 30% have contributed which is an almost 100% increase. Of course, we are still far from our stated goal for 1986 of \$250,000.

As an education/action oriented organization it is our function to prompt more and more members of our community to read the truth about the colonial war in Ireland and to urge their participation in the Democratic process by becoming letter writers. The purpose of Operation One Million is to enable the PEC to reach by *direct mail* one million American Irish during 1986, urging they subscribe to our Newsletter. In our first appeal for your financial support for operation one million, we predicted that 3% of those people we contact would join. We also stated that 13% of our joiners participate in our letter writing campaigns (EARP). I am happy to report that since we mailed out our first ten thousand Newsletter mailers both of these predictions have increased. We have had over 400 new joiners which equals a 4% return and the number of members participating in our letter writing campaigns is up to 16%. Obviously, we are very pleased with these results.

**We urge you to support Operation One Million** if you have not already done so. Remember! Operation One Million replaces our annual financial appeal. To become a sponsor simply fill in the coupon below and mail to American Irish PEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY, 10980. Suggested sponsorship is \$100. Of course, we will gladly accept whatever you can afford. All donations will be gratefully acknowledged.

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Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

YES, I wish to sponsor OPERATION ONE MILLION. Enclosed, find my check (money order) for \$\_\_\_\_\_ in  full  part payment of my sponsorship. My total pledge for 1986 is \$\_\_\_\_\_ which I will make \_\_\_\_\_ installments.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

had gathered and learned that a man had just jumped, evidently in a suicide attempt. The cop quickly peeled off his long-tailed winter coat, threw his helmet aside, and dove from the bridge. He hit the icy water with a crash; high diving techniques had not been part of his police training. Nearly knocked senseless himself, he nonetheless caught hold of the jumper, towed him to shore, and forced the water the jumper had swallowed from the man's lungs. Spent by the effort and nearly frozen, the big cop collapsed. Minutes later, though, an ambulance arrived and rushed both the jumper and the cop to Harlem Hospital where they soon recovered.

For his heroic efforts the cop was awarded the medal of honor, the police department's highest decoration; it was the first of two he would receive for courageous acts in the line of duty. The cop was Matthew J. McGrath.

Matt McGrath was born on a farm near Nenagh, County Tipperary, in 1876. He was one of eleven children. His tenant-farmer father worked long, hard hours but an absentee, English landlord insured that the McGraths would never rise above a subsistence level. The landlord's proudest boast was that he had never had to catch a bullet from a tenant.

Surprisingly, though, the landlord was no effete Englishman. He was a practiced athlete and could throw the hammer nearly 150 feet. When he came to collect his rents during the summer he would join in the village games and impress the local youths with his prowess. Matt made up his mind that he would beat him.

Matt was then just 17 years old, but he was already six feet tall and 170 pounds and was still growing. He didn't have a hammer to work with and his father kept him busy in the fields from dawn to dusk. Nonetheless, Matt improvised his own training regimen: at night he sneaked out and wrestled the family bull! After months of this the bull had finally had enough and one foggy night galloped away, never to be seen again. By then Matt had gained twenty pounds and his muscles were bulging.

Now that the bull was gone, Matt persuaded a local blacksmith to fashion a crude hammer for him to throw. Day by day Matt's throws went farther and farther. Soon his prowess was the talk of County Tipperary. He threw the hammer 20 feet farther than his landlord's best and beat the best thrower in the British army by 10 feet.

The British thought Big Matt, now standing more than 6'2" and weighing over 200 pounds, would make a fine addition to their army. "Me boy," said an officer, "come with me to the barracks at Ardagh. You'll make a grand soldier!" "I'm going to be no soldier," replied Matt. He had heard of the conflict with the Boers in South Africa and wanted to take no part in the fighting unless it was on the side of the Boers. "I mean," said the officer, "come to the barracks and have your sport. There's hammers for you to throw."

Matt decided instead that the time was now propitious for him to immigrate to Amerikay, the land of the free. His parents tried to dissuade him but, when seeing that his mind was made up, gave him the family's only carpetbag and the stoutest pair of boots his father owned.

Matt landed in New York in 1897 with six pennies in his pocket. The very day he arrived he found employment as a blacksmith. A few days later he discovered Central Park. Thinking that it was the country, he kicked off his shoes, sprinted on the grass, heaved heavy boulders, and swam in a pond. A mounted policeman happened by and told Matt he had broken a dozen ordinances and ought to be arrested. But upon hearing Matt's brogue and learning that he had just arrived in America, the policeman, an Irish immigrant himself, softened. They parted good friends and Matt made up his mind to become a police officer.

For several years Matt worked as a blacksmith by day and attended school at night. In whatever spare time he had he trained with the hammer. In 1902 his alderman got him an appointment for the police department's examination. Passing the test with ease Matt became one of New York's finest. He also began to compete regularly in the hammer throw. In 1907 he won the United States junior championship and the next year qualified for the Olympic team.

The 1908 Olympics were held in London, England. Since the American team was largely composed of Irish Americans — Matt McGrath, J. P. Sullivan, Tom Morrissey, Mike Murphy, John J. Hayes, Mike Ryan, D. J. Kelly, Martin Sheridan, and John J. Flanagan, to name a few — sparks were bound to fly. During the opening

ceremonies the athletes of one nation after another passed by the reviewing stand and dipped their flags to the King of England. When the Americans approached the royal box Matt McGrath stepped beside the American flag-bearer and said, "Dip that banner and you're in a hospital tonight." Old Glory went unbowed past the King of England.

The English were left in shock. The next day London newspapers lashed the Americans with the severest criticism they could muster and called for an apology. Veteran Olympian and world record discus thrower Martin Sheridan spoke for McGrath and the other Americans when he answered the English by pointing to the flag and saying, "This flag dips to no earthly king." The precedent had been set. To this day the United States does not dip its flag in the Olympic ceremonies.

Despite a torn ligament, Matt took the silver medal in the hammer throw. John J. Flanagan, another New York City cop who was the reigning Olympic champion and world record holder, beat Matt by a mere two feet. Both men broke the old Olympic record. When Matt received his medal from the King of England he was said to have responded to the king's compliments in "a brogue two sizes wider" than normal. American Irish dominated other events as well, winning the 800, 1500, marathon, intermediate hurdles, high jump, and discus.

Following the Olympics, Dublin hosted the Irish members of the American team before their return to the states. Matt stayed on to visit his native Nenagh. He was hailed as a conquering hero and greeted by pipe and drum bands. The celebration continued for two weeks. As if to repay the Irish for their hospitality, Matt set a new world record in the hammer throw before he left for New York.

For the next half-dozen years Matt dominated the hammer throw and the 56-pound weight throw, more than once breaking the world records that he himself had established in the events. In 1911 he threw the hammer 187' 4" and the 56-pound weight 40' 6"; the second record remained unsurpassed during his lifetime. In the 1912 Olympic Games at Stockholm Matt took the gold medal and set a new Olympic record with a hammer throw of 179' 7". The record would last until the 1936 games.

Ever since the 1908 games journalists had been referring to Matt McGrath and his fellow weightmen on the American team as the "Irish whales." Almost all of the American shotputters, discus throwers, and hammer throwers were Irish and they were all huge. They also all happened to be New York cops; Martin J. Sheridan, John J. Flanagan, Patrick J. Ryan, and Patrick J. McDonald were the most prominent of Matthew J. McGrath's comrades. They must have been a sight walking the streets of New York. In a day when Americans were considerably smaller than they are today, McGrath stood 6'2" and weighed 245 pounds and McDonald, who won the shotput in the 1912 Olympics, stood 6'5" and weighed something over 300 pounds. The others were similarly large.

World War I forced the cancellation of the 1916 games but Matt made the Olympic team in 1920, although by then he was 43 years old. Somewhat off form at Antwerp he placed fifth in the hammer throw which was won by Pat Ryan. But Big Matt was not through yet. He again made the Olympic team in 1924 and not only carried the Stars and Stripes for America but he also won the silver medal in the hammer. He was 47 years old!

Meanwhile, Matt McGrath the police officer was also making his mark. He was decorated with his second medal for valor when he captured a murderer in a most unusual manner. The murderer had taken refuge on a river barge and opened fire when McGrath approached on a nearby pier. Big Matt found cover behind a pile of bricks and then flung the bricks with such speed and accuracy at the man that he threw his gun into the river and surrendered.

Patrolman McGrath became a sergeant in 1917. The next year he was made a lieutenant; in 1927, a captain; and in 1930, a deputy inspector. In 1936 he became a police inspector, the third highest rank in the department. High rank, desk work, and age did not seem to diminish Big Matt's formidable appearance though. In 1932 a journalist looked in on McGrath as he sat behind his desk in a mid-Manhattan precinct and wrote: "His eye is blue-gray, his jaw like reinforced concrete, and his build of two-forty-five pounds as solid as a steel bridge pier."

# SOUTHERN CENSORSHIP — IRELAND'S SHAME

by Sean McGuffin, (PEC, California —  
Author and Journalist, former resident of Belfast)

"Section 31, makes my blood cold.' So sings Ireland's foremost folksinger, Christy Moore in his hit song. Not surprisingly this poignant ballad, protesting press and media censorship in the Republic of Ireland was banned from the airwaves — under Section 31, of course. What exactly is Section 31?

## The Curse of the Cruiser

The Cruiser. Conor Cruise O'Brien, author, academic, former UN official, former minister of Posts and Telecommunications, former Editor of the British *Observer* newspaper, former and, many believe, rightly or wrongly, — present British agent, currently columnist for the *Irish Times*.

We are back in 1974. RTE (Radio Telefis Eireann) broadcasts interviews with internees released from illegal detention without charge or trial in the North. Many of them allege that they have been tortured. This subsequently turns out to be true, as every international inquiry and even the British themselves have verified, but the Cruiser is not happy.

Off comes his liberal journalist hat and on goes his censor's bowler hat. He resurrects Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act. Henceforth it will be *illegal* for any radio or television program in the Republic of Ireland to broadcast any material "likely to undermine the authority of the State." What State? The internees weren't alleging that they had been tortured by the Republic of Ireland, they had been brutalized by the British!

He specifically forbids interviews with members of any organization in N. Ireland considered illegal by the British government and also with members of perfectly legal organizations whom HE and the Free State government reckon 'support the men of violence' i.e., the IRA. The cabinet and subsequent regimes have gone along with him. As a result, the widest ranging censorship powers outside the Soviet Bloc countries exist in Ireland.

This means that although, both North and South, Sinn Fein is a perfectly legal organization, whose members stand for election — and win, viewers and listeners in the Republic cannot listen to their views although they can vote for them. They are denied all airtime, even if they pay for it. Even when they represent the third largest party in the Republic.

This leads to ludicrous results of course. The BBC, Ulster Television and Independent Television, all British owned and operated, can and do interview Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison and, at the time of the hunger strike, Owen Carron, but those living in the 'freedom' of the Republic cannot see these interviews or panel discussions on Irish television, they must tune in to British networks.

So its been for over a decade. "Section 31 is so imbedded in RTE staff procedures that if you removed it tomorrow this place would have a cerebral hemorrhage," says Ronan O'Donoghue, RTE current affairs producer, "It's totally demoralizing. All creativity is being stifled by this."

Eamonn McCann, one of the leading Dublin journalists, or 'bridled broadcasters', puts it this way. "Worst of all is the self censorship. An entire generation of Irish journalists is being turned into spineless puppy dogs. Those who protested the state censorship in the beginning have either resigned, been dismissed or given up. The Government seem to think that if one doesn't talk about the violence it will magically go away. Now, a journalist on the trail of a good story, a story of real public interest, frequently doesn't pursue his leads, knowing that it will never reach the printed page. And don't dare to reveal anything about British propaganda or dirty tricks! We don't have a Freedom of Information Act over here, we have a totalitarian state. Welcome to Moscow on the Liffey. The land of saints and scholars? Don't make me laugh."

## Letter To Editor

May, 86

Dear PEC,

I hope this small donation will help insure one person is made more aware of the situation ongoing in Ireland today. I only wish I was a millionaire and could afford to send more. I guess every little bit helps you in your work. Your work is important in it's nature and I must commend you on the job you do.

I have gained countless information thus far from my connection with the PEC. I intend to learn more and more as our correspondence continues. I enjoy reading your articles because as I have said earlier they are most informative.

I just wanted you to know we appreciate the job you are doing and we pray God's blessings upon you and your staff. I did distribute those flyers you sent me, but they were hardly enough for the vast amount of military personnel stationed with me in Panama. If you send me more, you can be assured they will be passed on to possible prospects who may also join us in our efforts. I hope for the day when we can see Ireland UNIFIED . . .

J. Criger  
Panama

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## NEWS BITS

(Continued from Page 1)

results in 39 RUC and 38 demonstrators wounded. 148 plastic bullets are fired and Keith White, a loyalist, goes into a coma after being struck. 28 loyalists are arrested after RUC raids. In Lisburn loyalist gangs go on a rampage stoning and petrol bombing 11 Catholic homes. In Craigavon 2 police homes are attacked and in Belfast cars, buses and vans are hi-jacked and set ablaze by loyalist mobs . . . 04/01 — loyalist attacks against RUC homes continue . . . 04/04 — Overnight, 14 RUC member's homes are attacked. In Belfast a police landrover is the target of a gun and nail bomb ambush. Since 3/3 there have been 76 incidents of intimidation of RUC officers in the form of threats or attacks. A Catholic family's house is petrol bombed. An arms cache including a machine gun, shotgun and 2,000 rounds of ammunition in Protestant East Belfast is found . . . 04/06 — Following more overnight attacks against the homes of policemen and Catholics N.I. Sec. King said extra troops may be necessary . . . 04/08 — In one of the worst nights of rioting shots were fired at the RUC in Belfast and petrol bombs were thrown at other officers homes. A Catholic family was burned out of their home in Lisburn . . . 04/11 — An RUC officer's home is petrol bombed. "The glass smashed and the bombs were thrown into the living room. A Roman Catholic neighbor heard the crash and ran into the street in his pajamas. He banged until we woke up and then, with other neighbors, who had rushed to the house, helped us to get out. We have lived in this house for 23 years but we can't go back." (Irish Times 04/12/86). 3,000 British troops are on standby alert ready to be airlifted to N.I. In Kilkeel a Catholic school and in Tyrone an AOH hall is petrol bombed. In Belfast a Catholic Church and five buses were damaged by fire . . . 04/14 — Keith White dies becoming the first loyalist victim of plastic bullets . . . 04/18 — Catholic homes are attacked again in Lisburn and Belfast, damage is caused during arson attacks on a Catholic school, a golf club, a public house and a Housing Executive office. Two loyalist arms caches

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And what of the two major political parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael? Well, when they're out of office, they deplore Section 31, but when they're in office? They use it to stifle all nationalist opinion. As my uncle used to say, "what can you expect from a pig but a grunt."

In the kingdom of the blind, the one eyed man is king; in the kingdom of the deaf; in Ireland, the silence could deafen you. **Note.** Sean McGuffin is a member of the National Union of Journalists.



## ACTION LETTER

by Albert Doyle

This Action Letter can serve as an *ongoing* project for individuals and organizations. Copies can be made for distribution at different functions and can be brought to meetings for members to write.

The professional politicians who run the major political parties are already gearing up for the next Presidential election. In the past we have started our attempts to influence their decisions on matters of importance to us at the last minute, with unfortunate results. Right now, there are a number of important issues which have gotten attention in Washington in ways we never were able to accomplish in the past. These include the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty, the proposed foreign aid package related to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the MacBride Principles of Fair Employment as related to restrictions on investment of various public pension funds, and other topics. We are suggesting a letter to the Democratic National Committee to start them thinking about these matters as platform subjects. We are starting with the Democrats not because these are partisan issues in a U.S. political sense but because the Reagan administration has demonstrated that it is only too ready to follow British (Thatcher) policy with regard to Northern Ireland to the point of declaring political war on American Irish and the Democrats may see an issue in this. Please write now and get your family, friends, relatives, co-workers and organizations to do so too.

For your convenience we provide the letter below. Please write the letter in your own words using our letter as a guide. If this is not possible, simply rewrite our letter as is on your own stationery. Please mention in your letter that you are a member of the American Irish Political Education Committee.

Your address and date

Chairman  
Democratic National Committee  
20 Ivy Street, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Sir:

In view of the open hostility of the present administration to American Irish people concerned about reunification of Ireland and as a member of the American Irish Political Education Committee, I urge you to adopt a platform policy on Northern Ireland. I suggest that you advocate reunification of Ireland and an end to discrimination in Northern Ireland by adoption wherever possible of the MacBride Principles of Fair Employment. Other topics for consideration could be opposition to the U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty changes which would deprive U.S. Courts of jurisdiction and an end to censorship by visa denial.

Sincerely,

6

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#### NEWS BITS

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discovered. Since March, 35 policemen and their families have been forced to leave their homes ... 04/19 — At the annual Democratic Unionist Party (Paisley's) conference there were motions criticizing the RUC and calling them "collaborators" and "mercenaries". In Portadown rioting broke out after a rally in Dunmurry, Catholic homes are attacked. There are attacks on the homes of 5 RUC officers in Lisburn and Belfast ... 04/21 — The RUC announces that a special unit had been set up to give assistance to police officers whose homes are attacked or who suffer intimidation. — The attacks continue and will heat up as the Protestant "Marching Season" is soon launched. (Fortnight 03/24-4/20, 04/21-05/04, 05/05-05/18/8).

### JOHN DEARIE TO RECEIVE PEC'S "OUTSTANDING AMERICAN AWARD"

Assemblyman John Dearie (D-Bronx, NY) and Councilman Connie O'Sullivan (R-Orangetown, Rockland County, NY) have been selected as the 1986 recipients of the PEC's "Outstanding American Award". The awards will be presented at the PEC's Eleventh Annual Testimonial Dance to be held on Saturday, September 20, 1986 in Blauvelt, New York. Full details will appear in next Newsletter issue.

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