



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Sacred Heart University
DigitalCommons@SHU

American Irish Newsletter

The Irish American Community Collections

11-1985

American Irish Newsletter - October - November 1985

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews



Part of the [European Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Other American Studies Commons](#), and the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC, "American Irish Newsletter - October - November 1985" (1985). *American Irish Newsletter*. 155.

https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish_ainews/155

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the The Irish American Community Collections at DigitalCommons@SHU. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Irish Newsletter by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@SHU. For more information, please contact santoro-dillond@sacredheart.edu.

THE AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the Action Irish

Vol. 10, No. 5

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER, 1985

NEWS BITS

by Andy Prior

According to London sources the Anglo-Irish talks have so far resulted in an accord that allows a consultative role for Dublin, including a small permanent office in Belfast for Irish civil servants. There will be closer cooperation between the RUC and the Garda, while the laws banning the display of the Irish tricolor will be repealed and it will be permissible to put up street names in Irish in Nationalist areas. In return for this and a few other bits and pieces, Dublin will sign a new Anglo-Irish treaty which will formally recognize that N.I. is part of the U.K. and that the border can't be changed without the consent of the Unionists." (Irish Post 9/7/85) ... Britain's Margaret Thatcher reportedly has very graciously offered to recognize an Irish dimension to the territory known as Northern Ireland, if in exchange the Dublin Government recognizes that Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom ... This is a typical Thatcher ploy, which offers to give away nothing in exchange for acquiring a major benefit, and **any Dublin government that would go along with such a ploy does not deserve to remain in office** (Campbell's Scoop-Irish Echo 9/85) ... (Ed. Note: The British government continues to play with Irish lives.)

Douglas Hurd, N.I. Secretary for less than a year, has been replaced by the former British Employment Secretary, Tom King. Mr. King is not known for having had any previous interest in N.I. A few quotes concerning the change: "the move demonstrates a quite remarkable insensitivity, even callousness, and a false sense of priorities". — Irish Times editorial ... "It is a pity the N.I. Office is always regarded as the dustbin. I went there because Mrs. Thatcher was fed up with me at home". — James Prior ... "The failed Minister for Unemployment" — Worker's Party spokesman on Mr. King ... "It would appear that the office of Secretary for N.I. has been a purgatory for those on the way up and a limbo for those on the way down." — John Hume ... "The shifting of Mr. Hurd demonstrates how low a priority N.I. has on the Westminster political agenda and can only be described as a well-aimed kick in the teeth for the long suffering people of N.I." — John Cushman of the Alliance Party.

Dr. Brian Mawhinney, a Belfast born English M.P. described as virulently pro-Unionist, has been appointed as private secretary to the new N.I. Secretary, Tom King (Irish Times 9/85).

A PEC request to purchase advertising time to promote Irish Solidarity Day on one of New York's most listened to all-news radio stations WINS, was rejected by the management of WINS as controversial. The letter was signed by John R. Waugaman, vice president general manager. ... NYC Police Department Emerald Society Bagpipe Band stands tall and is to be commended for displaying courage. Over the protest from the Irish government and Gardai and "warnings" from the Police Commissioner, its members participated in a march in Ireland in honor of the Hunger Strikers ... Britain's BBC and Independent Television Network journalists conducted a 24 hour strike in protest of political interference. Specifically, the strike took place because a program in which a leader of Sinn Fein was interviewed was censored by an appeal by British Home Secretary, Leon Brittain. This tactic which proved very embarrassing to British citizens aids and abets Communist Russia in its propaganda war. British censorship of the news concerning the war in Ireland is commonplace and nothing new. It is this censorship that keeps people the world over ignorant of the facts as to why there is a war in Ireland (AINS-PEC 9/85).

Irish National Television was without news programs for 29 hours due to an action by journalists to protest the decision to cancel an interview with Martin Galvin (IAUC 8/16/85) ... The

(Continued on Page 2)

RUC: POLICE OR ARMY

by Andy Prior

The poor British. Their having a bit of a problem these days in N.I. They want to give the appearance that the need for the British army there is decreasing. That the IRA is being beaten and that the IRA is becoming just a police problem. They want the world to think that a state of war doesn't exist in N.I.

Well, we can always rely on the ever-clever Brits (masters of
(Continued on Page 2)

EXTRADITION UPDATE

by Albert Doyle

Thanks to an aroused American Irish community the plan of the Administration to quietly change the U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty to allow the Thatcher Government to reach into *our* country to seize Irish Nationalists has been derailed — but perhaps only temporarily. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee continued the hearings on the proposed treaty changes on September 18. This time opponents were to be heard — and heard they were, both at the witness table and in the Senate corridors. Professors Chris Pyle of Mt. Holyoke and Charles Rice of Notre Dame and other articulate opponents pointed out to the Senators the legal defects of the proposals. Several Congressmen, including Mario Biaggi (New York) and William Hughes (New Jersey) also spoke out against this proposal to deny traditional judicial review of the political offense exception, as did others. Mrs. Agnes Mallon, PEC representative at the hearings, was interviewed by the *New York Times* and her comments were given prominent coverage.

At this writing it is not clear when additional hearings will be held, since not all scheduled opposition witnesses were heard.

We must not assume that our actions thus far have won this battle. Keep up the written and telephone pressure on your Senators particularly. We are glad to report that at the Solidarity Day rally in New York on September 21 Senator Alfonse D'Amato, a member of the President's own party, announced his opposition to the treaty — *but we must not desist*. Keep up the good work (See Action Letter in this issue).

IRISH SOLIDARITY DAY A SUCCESS

Thousands turned out on September 21 for New York City's fifth annual Irish Solidarity Day. The highlight of the day was Mayor Ed Koch when he read "approvingly" the words of a placard which he said sums up his opinions, "Brutal British Bastards Leave Ireland". Although some of the speakers opposed all violence, they all pointed to the British government as the cause of the troubles, called for a British withdrawal and called for our government to end its pro-British bias and help end this horrible tragedy. There were numerous dignitaries present which included; U.S. Senator Alfonse D'Amato, Congressmen Mario Biaggi, Benjamin Gilman, Tom Manton, and Joseph DiGuardi all of who expressed their opposition to the Extradition Treaty and urged our *continued* protest. Congressman Gilman also had high praise for the PEC's campaign against the Extradition Treaty. Also attending were Fr. Patrick Boyle an official representative of Cardinal John J. O'Connor, Harrison Golden; NYC Comptroller, Andy Stein, Manhattan Boro President; Peter King, (Nassau County Comptroller), Joe Heinz (former NYC Fire Commissioner), and Assemblymen John Dearie and Phil Healy. Most all major American Irish organizations were represented as was many Labor organizations.

reality distortion — perception not truth counts) to come up with a duecedly simple answer — let's militarize the police. Let's train, arm and deploy men like soldiers but we'll call them policemen — members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

In 1979 a special unit of the RUC was established in South Armagh, an area known to the British as IRA "Bandit Country", an area strongly nationalistic and sympathetic to the IRA — a perfect area for British "dirty tricks." The new unit received SAS (the highly secret British army group that has given new meaning to the word "unorthodox" type training. This "police" training included physical endurance, marksmanship and also intense psychological conditioning: for example, being constantly woken up during the night or being blindfolded and dumped into the middle of nowhere to see how they stood up to disorientation.

When put into action these squads specialized in surveillance. These teams would set up temporary, hidden observation posts in the fields of Armagh, where they would stay for days without eating a hot meal (fires could lead to detection) and with the minimum of movement. It has been revealed that these "policemen" while on operations would often wear IRA — type gear and carry non-regulation weapons.

The unit served as a prototype for another "police" outfit called E4A which was extended throughout the whole of N.I. E4A achieved a rather successful record of "kills". This "police" unit is reportedly responsible for the killing of three unarmed IRA volunteers in November 1982; two unarmed INLA men in December 1982 and the killing of Michael Tighe in November 1982. Michael's crime was that he was allegedly seen by an E4A team (laying in ambush) while in possession of some 60 year old unusable rifles found in a farm shed. Tighe's friend, Martin McCauley, who was seriously injured, was brought to trial charged with possession of weapons. RUC witnesses at the trial have admitted they concocted a false story about their stakeout.

Last year E4A was disbanded but that type of unit is still in operation throughout the North. Now each division of the RUC has a Mobile Support Unit (MSU). Additionally, there are a number of Headquarters MSUs under the control of the Special Branch. It was a Belfast MSU which was responsible for the attack on last year's August internment march that resulted in the killing of John Downes and the wounding of a number of Americans.

Mobile Support Units consist of 20-30 RUC officers divided into a surveillance team and an "action" team (the Quick Reaction Force) which back each other up. They operate under a command structure independent of the local RUC. MUS's training, weaponry and covert operations exactly mirror the British Army's SAS.

So, the next time you read or hear how the situation in N.I. is returning to normal and how the police are taking over "security" functions from the army, remember that the summary execution of "suspects" is not a part of "normal" police functions. Remember that the RUC can only extend their functions into the N.I. war zone by relinquishing it's role as a police force that keeps the peace and protects and defends the community from criminals and instead becomes a military force that actively seeks out it's enemy — other soldiers — and aggressively attacks.

OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS

Hallmark Cards Incorporated
Kansas City, Missouri 64141

July 23, 1985

Mr. John Finucane
National Political Education Committee
Stony Point, NY 10980

Dear John:

Thank you for your letter and package which arrived recently. I appreciated being able to review "The Same Old Story", which provides an interesting-historic treatment — information which was new to me.

It's been good chatting with you on several instances recently.

We are pleased to advise you and your membership that all of the St. Patrick's Day cards that were of concern to your members in 1985 will not be made available in 1986.

Of course, it is true that a few may still be in the inventory of our dealers, since they buy our merchandise outright. They do not return what is left over after the season. We would not have any control over this excess, but we assume that it would be minimal and quickly work itself out next year.

We believe that our authors and editors are quite sensitive to the feelings of the Irish and have attempted to be most careful in designing St. Patrick cards and other items for future years. As we have discussed often, we have made great progress in this area.

It is our feeling there is some difference between references to drunkenness or lack of sobriety and the taking of a social drink, which is common on St. Patrick's Day. We understand your concern about the elimination of references to alcohol, but point out that St. Patrick's Day is a social occasion nationwide for all people with attendant celebrations.

Again, thank you for communicating with us . . . we hope that you will enjoy our new selections, such as Irish Treasures, in 1986. Have a good year.

Sincerely,
Chip Dickey
Manager, Consumer Affairs

NEWS BITS (Continued from Page 1)

official total of unemployed in N.I. now stands at 120,072 — over a fifth of the working population. The breakdown showed 25% male, 13.8% female unemployment. (Irish Times 8/31/85).

The Official Unionist Party deputy leader, Harold McCusker, MP, has declared that Unionists had a right to resist British Gov. betrayal, if necessary by force of arms, and he could envisage Unionists shooting at the RUC and British Army. (Irish Times 9/11/85) . . . Loyal to the Crown? . . . A gasoline bomb attack on an Irish bus passing through N.I. was admitted by the Ulster Freedom Fighters, an alias used by the Loyalist paramilitary organization the UDA. The UFF said all southern vehicles could be regarded as targets because of what he said was "the Irish Gov.'s interference in N.I. affairs." (Irish Times 9/7/85) . . . A Federal court has refused to extradite James Barr who was accused by supergrass Harry Kirkpatrick with attempted murder of a British soldier in 1981. The judge felt that the accusation was insufficient evidence. (Irish Post 9/7/85).

The urgent need for positive gov. action to fill the political vacuum in N.I. was stressed by the National Conference of Priests in England and Wales. One of those requesting action, Fr. Joe McVeigh, stated that "the British gov't. is deliberately camouflaging the real issue in Ireland with propaganda which paints the conflict of the North as religious. (Irish Times 9/7/85) . . . The woman's prison in Armagh is to close later this year and the 40 or so inmates will be transferred to a separate section of the new prison at Maghaberry, Co. Armagh. The new prison will also contain up to 1,000 male prisoners from Long Kesh, Magilligan and Belfast. (Irish Times 9/6/85).

The AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

(formerly the Political Education Committee National Newsletter)

founded in 1976

Published by: The American-Irish National Political Education Committee, with the support of the Emerald Society, Fire Department, City of New York.

Malloy Building

Two North Liberty Drive, Stony Point, N.Y. 10980

Editor John J. Finucane

Assistant Editor Andy Prior

FROM THE EDITOR

The American Irish National Political Education Committee's (PEC) campaign against the proposed changes to the US-UK Extradition Treaty is second-to-none. Being firm believers that constituent pressure on elected representatives is crucial in influencing their positions, and that lobbying efforts by national organizations such as the PEC are not in themselves sufficient, the PEC directed much of its efforts in mobilizing that crucial grass roots pressure in opposition to the Treaty changes. The PEC also conducted an extensive mailing with information package to all 100 members of the United States Senate and the major news networks. PEC Vice President and Chief Legal Council Al Doyle is a member of the coalition that organized the testimony against the Treaty. Al Doyle was also nominated to testify at the hearings by Congressman Benjamin Gilman and the PEC.

Perhaps our most effective effort to obtain the necessary grass roots support is the PEC EMERGENCY ACTION ALERT, a new concept proposed by Jerry Murphy, Chairman, PEC Information Selection Committee, which enabled the PEC to reach an estimated 400,000 American Irish throughout the United States. The Action Alert which is similar in format to the PEC's *American Irish Newsletter* Action Letter Program, request letters and telephone calls to our US Senators and the major news networks. It is in the form of advertisements which were placed in the *Irish Echo*, *Irish Edition* and *Boston Irish Echo*. Readers were also requested to reproduce and distribute the Action Alert. The Alert proved to be very effective. In one instance, a group distributed over 5 thousand copies. The Action Alert was also reproduced and distributed by all PEC State Information Distribution Center Directors. It is our intent to expand the Action Alert Program to include all major American Irish newspapers. We also plan to activate this program whenever pertinent issues such as the Treaty arise. To do so, WE WILL NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

YOU CAN SUPPORT THE PEC'S EFFORTS by sending a donation payable to: NPEC and forward to same at, Malloy Building, Two North Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980.

JAMES ROWAN O'BEIRNE

by Kevin P. Murphy

James Rowan O'Beirne left his native Ireland from Cork in 1854 and immigrated to New York City. O'Beirne worked as a laborer in New York after arriving. O'Beirne became a self educated man who had a gift of eloquent speech. O'Beirne rose up to become prominent in the legal profession. During the American Civil War like many other Irish Immigrants O'Beirne enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served with the 37th New York Volunteers who became known as "The Irish Rifles". O'Beirne showed great heroism in battle. He was wounded several times. O'Beirne rose up to the rank of Brigadier General. Gen. O'Beirne was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Lincoln.

President Lincoln named Gen. O'Beirne as Provost Marshall for Washington D.C. When President Lincoln was assassinated in 1865 O'Beirne organized the pursuit and capture of the assassins. After the war O'Beirne served as United States Commissioner of Immigration, New York City Commissioner of Charities and President of the Boy Scouts of America. O'Beirne did much work in assisting immigrants not only from Ireland but from other lands who were entering America. As New York City Commissioner of Charities, O'Beirne strongly advocated the rights of the poor. As Boy Scouts President he guided the organization to spread throughout America. He died in 1902 in New York.

Research: Boston Public Library,
Irish-American History volumes 3&4 dated 1936.

TERRORIST OR POLITICAL PRISONER?

by Joseph Farrell (PEC, Pennsylvania)

The fiery young nationalist came from a humble, rural background and grew up with a hatred for the system where by the British controlled his country. He was jailed for a time, at age 24, for anti-British plotting; then, two years later, he was arrested for alleged involvement in the killing of a pro-British official. He was imprisoned from 1946 through 1948 on "remand"; though he was finally released, he would later say that he had trained the man who killed the official and would detail his role in the killing. He described the conditions in which he was imprisoned as terrible — but said that it was nonetheless a good time for him, because he spent it thinking and planning for his country's future.

He might well have been described as a "terrorist" or a "criminal" by the New York Times or the networks, if they were aware of him. But when he eventually became a major subject of their news coverage they characterized him quite differently. His name: Anwar Sadat.

"POLITICAL ASYLUM IN AMERICA: NO IRISH NEED APPLY"

by Barbara Allen

The tentacles of oppression stretch well beyond the tortured landscape of Northern Ireland. Unchecked by either natural boundaries or political borders, they reached into a Buffalo courtroom late in August to seize a young man already deeply scarred by their effects.

By any measure, Gerry Doherty (no relation to Joseph Doherty) has been through more than most young men of 28. Arrested in Belfast during 1976, he was charged in connection with a bombing at a local car dealership.

He was tried before a Diplock court, a non-jury tribunal often compared to the show trials conducted during the regime of Joseph Stalin. Despite the fact that none of the prosecution witnesses could positively identify him, he was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment.

Doherty spent four and a half years on the blanket protest in Long Kesh. He watched as the British government allowed Bobby Sands and nine others to die on hunger strike rather than negotiate their demands. After being transferred to Magilligan Prison, he was beaten so severely in a 1984 attack, that a prison officer who witnessed it resigned in protest and offered to testify in court on his behalf.

While serving his sentence, he met Maire Dolan, an American girl, through a letter writing campaign. Maire was to become Doherty's fiancée. Doherty was released from prison in November 1984.

Six months later, he applied to the U.S. Embassy in Belfast for a visa that would allow him to meet Maire's parents before their wedding, Thomas Tighe, the embassy official who interviewed him refused his application on the grounds of his prison record. Tighe said Doherty would never be allowed into the United States even if he were married to an American citizen.

Tighe's information turned out to be false, marriage to an American gave Doherty a good chance at a U.S. visa. Before they were to learn that, however, Doherty and Dolan thought they had no alternative. On Sunday, July 28, both were arrested as Doherty tried to cross the U.S. border at Ogdensburg, New York.

Doherty came to trial on August 28th in Buffalo. Administration Judge Gordon Sacks of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service sat on the bench. He heard government attorneys describe him as a potential "terrorist".

Defense attorney Thomas Cleary used his opening remarks to describe to the judge what life was like for Doherty and many like him in Northern Ireland. Judge Sacks was unmoved. One day later Doherty was deported. At the time of this writing, Maire Dolan has not been sentenced.

NATIONAL POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

PEC (1975 - 1985)

TEN YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE AMERICAN IRISH COMMUNITY

by Linda Woods

The American Irish National Political Education Committee (PEC) was founded in 1975 to promote the reunification of Ireland and to counter British propaganda concerning Northern Ireland. It is a non-sectarian organization in which men and women play an equal role.

The PEC recognizes the fact that many Americans, especially those of Irish descent, are concerned about the conditions in Northern Ireland, but are opposed to the use of violence as a means of ending British rule. The PEC seeks to provide these people with a mechanism by which they can participate in the American democratic process to achieve this goal.

Therefore, the PEC seeks to effect a change in the foreign policy of the United States by keeping the issue of human rights in Northern Ireland before the American people. The members of the PEC are proud to be Americans and they believe that as citizens of a free society they have the right to expect the government of the United States to oppose injustice throughout the world, and particularly in Northern Ireland.

Based on this belief, the PEC has grown into a substantial grass roots organization, with thousands of members across the United States, many of whom take part in letter-writing campaigns, lobbying and political education.

The PEC regularly publishes a newsletter, which has grown from a simple information bulletin into an educational aid for many American Irish. The newsletter now contains articles on the history of Ireland as well as the history of the Irish in America. Members of the PEC believe that once people begin to acknowledge the contributions made by the Irish to our American way of life, they will feel the pride and develop the courage needed to bring an end to British colonialism in Ireland.

The PEC has accomplished much during the last ten years. It has demonstrated the political and economic power of a people united. Many of these accomplishments are reflected in the political and economic tactics presently employed by the American Irish community to protest Britain's oppressive policies in Northern Ireland.

To review a few of these accomplishments, in 1976, the PEC began an active campaign against greeting cards depicting the Irish as drunkards and social misfits. In 1977, the PEC supplied information on human rights violations in Northern Ireland for a congressional report.

In that same year the PEC began working together with the Emerald Society of the N.Y.C. Fire Department. This unity continues today.

The following year, the PEC successfully influenced the New York State Legislature to declare St. Patrick's Day "Northern Ireland Human Rights Day," and launched a successful letter-writing campaign to the top 5,000 companies in the United States, urging them not to invest in Northern Ireland because of the human rights situation there.

In 1979, the PEC campaigned against those Congressmen who supported the British occupation of Northern Ireland, and even more significantly, in 1981, during the hunger strikes in Northern Ireland, the PEC became an important nationwide source of information.

In 1982, the PEC saw the successful outcome of the greeting card campaign when several major corporations removed offensive cards from the market.

Also, 1982 saw the PEC prompt a very reluctant apology from the *Boston Globe* concerning an editorial cartoon that depicted the Irish race as sewer rats.

In 1983, the PEC was able to convince the Massachusetts Legislature to divest pension funds from companies whose business activities supported the British occupation of Northern Ireland.

During that same year, the PEC brought together concerned organizations to successfully campaign for the removal of Rockland County funds from the British-owned Barclay Bank in protest of British atrocities in Ireland. The PEC continued to be successful in 1984 when it blocked the showing of a British comedy, "Robin's Nest," which was offensive to the dignity of the Irish People.

This year, the PEC celebrates its tenth anniversary with increased

membership and growth in political strength. Perhaps its greatest accomplishment is that it brought together thousands of American Irish from across the nation and provides them with a vehicle by which they can work together.

We are also reaching more people today than ever before. Much of our work is carried out from the PEC's small national headquarters in Stony Point, N.Y., which is still being run by volunteers. We realize that our efforts could be much more effective if we could afford the services of a paid professional staff.

The PEC's growth was also reflected during this year's PEC's Irish Heritage Festival. This annual festival, which was first held in 1981, not only features Irish music and dance, but also provides a forum for Irish culture. There are speakers on Irish history, American Irish history and the Irish language, as well as an Irish play.

While each year attendance has grown, this year's event saw a great increase in the number of young people participating in all activities.

So many of our young people feel proud to be Irish, but often they express that pride only on St. Patrick's Day. This is because they are unaware of the contributions of the Irish people. Yet once they learn their history as Americans and understand how much the Irish have given to America, then they will keep feeling proud all year long. Their pride, their ability to identify with the sufferings of the Irish people, will give them courage to demand justice through our government for our brothers and sisters in Ireland.

This pride and this courage in being an American of Irish heritage will rise like a wave and sweep across the country until it reaches the very shores of Ireland. This is the goal of the PEC.

(Reprinted from *Irish Echo*, August, 1985)

PLEASE REPRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE
AT DANCES, FESTIVALS, MEETINGS, ETC.

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY SUBSCRIPTION OFFER TO AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Regularly \$8⁰⁰
Now Only \$6⁰⁰

To subscribe send your name and address on the coupon below and a check or money order for \$6.00 to: National PEC, Two North Liberty Drive, Stony Point, N.Y. 10980.

YES, please enroll me the following name person
for a one year subscription of the bi-monthly
AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER. Enclosed, please
find my check for \$_____ Date _____

Signature _____

Name (print) _____

Address _____

BRITISH INFLUENCE IN IRELAND

by Sean McGuffin (PEC, California, the author of "Internment" and "The Guineapigs".

A former resident of Belfast, he is a member of Amnesty International and Association For Legal Justice)

Most of our readers are well aware of the draconian legislation which exists in N. Ireland and England to 'deal with' Irish nationalists. No jury 'trials' in the Diplock Courts, the notorious Orange judiciary, the seven-day detentions without access to family, doctors, attorneys or priests, the forced 'confessions', the torture, the lengthy remands without bail which amount to 'legalized' internment and the PTA¹ arrests in England, but how many are aware of the parallel legislation which exists in the so-called 'free state', the Republic of Ireland.

How many of you know much or anything about Green Street in Dublin? This is where the Special Criminal Court sits. Where it has sat for thirteen years when it was introduced as a 'temporary measure.' Since 1972 some 26 judges have sat upon and even passed away upon its dingy benches.

Over 1,800 people have appeared before the three judges who are chosen each month to administer 'justice'. No jury has ever contaminated its august halls. Gardai and soldiers parade the corridors, armed with FN rifles. The Court's findings are not formally reported. The Incorporated Council of Law Reporting does not cover its decisions. Any journalist who sits way back up in the tiny public gallery, straining to hear what's being mumbled below, runs the risk of prosecution if he/she comments unfavorably upon the proceedings, as those employed by the *Irish Times*, the *Irish Press* and *Hibernia* magazine have discovered to their cost.

There is no Dail review of the Court. It is autonomous; answerable to no one. It makes its own rules. In return for its 'privilege' its only concession to cooperating with those who pay its inflated salaries is to provide the Government of the day with a 'blacklist' of all who appear before it, whether convicted or acquitted. Men and women who's names appear on this list, whether found 'guilty' or not have a disturbing tendency to lose their jobs shortly thereafter.

Fishing Expeditions

In the last ten years over 14,000 people have been arrested under Section 30 of the Offences Against the State Act. Fewer than two percent of those arrested were ever convicted of any crime, even in the Special Courts. These arrests have had two purposes: 1) as a fishing expedition, and 2) to have a 'chilling effect' upon any Government critics, i.e. open intimidation.

In 1983 alone, over 2,500 search warrants were issued under this Act. Only 238 prosecutions arose out of them. That means that nine times out of ten the 'suspicion' upon which the warrant was 'based' proved groundless — yet the search and seizures went ahead. No compensation is ever paid.

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Eamonn Barnes, has unfettered discretion about whose home is to be searched and who is to be sent before the Special Criminal Court. It is he who decides whether someone charged with a criminal offense is to get a jury trial or a special non-jury trial, where the conviction rate is 76% and where, for example, one can be convicted of membership of an illegal organization, such as the IRA, solely on the word of an Inspector in the Gardai (police force), who says that he has reason (unspecified) to believe that this man or woman is a member. Membership carries a penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment.

The Gardai admit that 80% of 'serious crimes' are 'solved' through 'statements', i.e. confessions, obtained after being held incommunicado and, interrogated¹ by the Special Branch. In 1977, Amnesty International reported that "maltreatment is systematically carried out by detectives who appear to specialize in the use of oppressive methods of extracting statements from persons suspected of involvement in politically motivated crime." The Report went on to say that "the Special Criminal Court ap-

IRISH WHO MADE AMERICA GREAT

by Kevin P. Murphy, (PEC, Massachusetts)

In all of American-Irish history few can surpass the heroics of County Waterford born Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher. Meagher came from a prominent Waterford family. He was educated in England's finest schools. Meagher in the 1840's became a leader of the "Young Ireland Movement". His eloquent speeches advocating Irish freedom became famous throughout Ireland. He once said, "the British invaders will never have peace as long as Ireland is kept in her shackles". After a Young Ireland inspired rebellion in Tipperary, Meagher was sentenced to death. His sentence was commuted to deportation to Tasmania. He escaped Tasmania and came to New York where he became a successful attorney. He continued his agitation against English rule in Ireland among the American-Irish community.

At the start of the civil war in 1851, Meagher recruited thousands of Irish immigrants in New York into the U.S. Army. Meagher's exploits at Gettysburg, Antietam and Gaine's Hill earned his *Irish Brigade* many honors from President Lincoln. After the war Meagher was appointed Governor of Montana. He became beloved by the people of the territory. He was credited with ending corruption and ridding the territory of roving bandits. At the young age of 44 Meagher drowned in the Missouri River as a result of a riding accident. At the Montana State Capitol at Helena a large statue of Brigadier General Thomas Francis Meagher rests on the front lawn. It should be noted that Meagher is credited with introducing the tri-color flag to Ireland. In 1963 President Kennedy presented Eamonn De Valera General Meagher's U.S. Army Irish Brigade battle flag. Meagher's flag now hangs in Leinster House, Dublin is the seat of Dail Eireann, the Irish Parliament. Meagher was an Irish-born American who had profound impact on both Ireland and his adopted land of America.

pears thus far to consistently accept police testimony as against that of the accused or doctors."

Other Legislation

1976 saw collaboration between the Orange State and the Republic, already at a high level, increased even further. The Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act of that year allowed for a person accused of political 'crimes' in the North of Ireland to be tried in the South of Ireland by the Special Criminal Court. The testimony of RUC torturers was quite acceptable to the Green street judges. In addition, more and more people are being unconstitutionally extradited to the North by the Southern Judiciary.

Finally, the new Criminal Justice Bill, passed in January 1985 permits 10 out of 12 verdicts, whenever there actually is a jury trial.

The Republic of Ireland has special powers of arrest and detention, special courts, and a special prison for political prisoners (Portlaoise). These powers and the courts are not reviewable by the Dail, although the original reasons given for the setting up of these institutions have long since disappeared. In short, under Garrett Fitzgerald and his predecessors, a police state has been created and continues to expand and, under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, no one can even talk about it on the television or radio.

¹ Between November 1974 and October 1984 for example 5,896 Irish people were detained under the PTA — Prevention of Terrorism Act — for up to 7 days. Only 147 of them were ever charged with even a misdemeanor. On January 23, 1985 Free State foreign minister Peter Barry, criticising the PTA, stated that he "hoped that we never have to introduce such legislation in Dublin whereby people can vanish from the streets for 48 hours." The Free State's Offences against the State Act permits exactly that — and is used on a daily basis against Republicans in the South of Ireland. Perhaps someone should tell the Minister?

ACTION LETTER (URGENT)

by Albert R. Doyle

As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, your letters have already had a tremendous impact in stemming the tide of the British Administration attempt to rush through the Senate the changes in the U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty which would have ended the political offense exception and reversed U.S. Court decisions denying extradition of Irish Nationalists. At the publication of this edition of the Newsletter the issue is still pending before the Senate. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has not always been sound on issues involving a reunited Ireland. Nevertheless, he is recognized among his peers (along with Senator Kennedy) as being knowledgeable on the issue and his position will be followed by many other Senators. For this reason it is of the utmost importance that you write and call him urging he come out against the proposals, as did his fellow New York Senator Alfonse D'Amato (Senate phone # (202) 224-3121). Please write the letter below as is or, preferably, in your own words and get your family, friends and organization(s) to do the same.

Your address and date

Senator Daniel P. Moynihan
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Moynihan:

As an American and a member of the National Political Education Committee (PEC), I urge you to come out publicly in opposition to the changes in the U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty now pending before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There are sound reasons for opposing this proposal which would reverse traditional U.S. policy on the political offense exception. The Senate has previously rejected Administration attempts to eliminate judicial review in this area in connection with the Philippine treaty and a legislative proposal to allow the State Department to resolve such cases. As an American Irish leader, your views will be accorded great respect by your fellow Senators. Please oppose this un-American proposal.

Sincerely,

ON TARGET

by Kenneth C. Clinton (PEC New Jersey)

It always amazes me to see the Irish surnames on the letters sent to your Voice of the People (NY Daily News). If one would take the time to count, one would find the majority of letters are signed by people of Irish heritage. These letters deal with every subject imaginable, but few ever deal with the ongoing rape of the people of Ireland by the British government. So many Irish people ignore (as do the media) the plight of these unfortunates.

**BOOK
SALE**

THE GUINEAPIGS

by Sean McGuffin

Regularly \$5.95 plus \$1.50 P & H
SPECIAL PRICE ONLY \$4.50 + \$1.00 P & H

A powerful expose of Britain's "official terrorist tactics". The purpose of this book is to deal with the treatment meted out to fourteen Irishmen by British 'security forces' in the period from August to October 1971 — the beginning of Internment. It will show how these men, who were scooped up without charge, were selected as unwilling and unwitting subjects upon whom Army psychiatrists, psychologists and 'counter-terrorist strategists' could experiment in the particular field known as Sensory Deprivation. The author has the distinction of being the only non-Catholic interned at that time.

To order your copy, send a check or money order (outside US please use postal money order made out in US dollars) for \$5.50 payable to NPEC and mail to same at Malloy Building, Two North Liberty Dr., Stony Point, NY 10980. Attn: Books.

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NO. IRE.

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. Mario Biaggi (D-NY) today (Sept. 16, 1985) said he has received a "mixed message" from the Administration on his bill, H.R. 2597, to provide \$500 million of U.S. economic assistance to Northern Ireland once the British declare their intention to withdraw from Northern Ireland.

Biaggi, Chairman of the bi-partisan 112 Member Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs said the Administration comments came in a letter from the State Department.

The Administration said they do not disagree "with the underlying assessment" of the Biaggi bill which is "that economic as well as political proposals can assist in promoting peace and reconciliation in the Northern Ireland setting."

However, the Administration also said in their letter to Biaggi that they were "unable to support H.R. 2597 because of the required linkage of U.S. government assistance to British withdrawal from Northern Ireland and unification of the North with the Republic of Ireland..."

6

**NATIONAL
POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE**
Malloy Building, Suite 201
Two North Liberty Drive
Stony Point, N.Y. 10980

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Garnerville, N.Y.
Permit No. 13

FIRST-CLASS MAIL