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American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the Action Irish

Vol. 7, No. 4

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER, 1982

GRAND METROPOLITAN BILL DIES IN COMMITTEE

(see below)

IMPORTANT UAP NOTICE

FOR THE UNITED ACTION PROGRAM TO BE EFFECTIVE, WE MUST ALL WRITE THE ACTION LETTER ON LAST PAGE. WE ASK THAT YOUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS BE TO WRITE THE LETTER. YOUR LETTER REPRESENTS THE VIEWS OF UP TO ONE THOUSAND PEOPLE. AS YOU CAN SEE, YOUR LETTER IS VERY IMPORTANT.

NEWS BITS

by Andy Prior

ALBANY — A Bill in the N.Y.S. Legislature which would have granted special privileges to Grand Metropolitan Ltd., an English firm with subsidiaries in Northern Ireland alleged to discriminate against Catholics, has died in committee. According to Assemblyman Sean Patrick Walsh, the major factor in the *great victory* for the Irish-American community was a selective letter writing campaign (UAP) conducted by the PEC (PEC 7/82). **UAP DOES WORK**... British MP's have signed a motion calling for an end to the use of plastic bullets in No. Ireland. The motion calls for the withdrawal of the weapon "in order to avoid further tragedies and worsening relations between the No. Ireland community and the security forces (Irish Echo 6/5/82)... Senator Alfonse D'Amato wrote Secretary Haig asking him to tell Ms. Thatcher to outlaw the UDA stating, "Violence is condemned on one side, but condoned on the other." (Irish Times 7/3/82).

The first priority of the Irish government is to promote the unity of the people of Ireland stated the Taoiseach, (*Prime Minister*) Charles Haughey, in NY on 6/10/82. Mr. Haughey added "Broad Irish-American support for our objectives will, I believe, enable the U.S. administration to play a more effective role in resolving this problem... "we intend to mobilize effectively American political and public opinion in favor of the cause of Irish Unity..." (Irish Times 6/11/82)... Allegheny International has ceased its production and distribution of plastic bullets. Reliable sources have informed the PEC that according to Clayton Sweeney, VP of Allegheny International, the reason for the company's decision was "letter writing". Through UAP, the PEC kicked off a nationwide letter writing campaign to Mr. Sweeney in the

NORTHERN IRELAND: BRITAIN'S ONE-PARTY STATE

by Anthony Bartlett

(Professor of Law, Pace School of Law)

The military struggle between Britain and Argentina over the disputed Falkland Islands (or Malvinas) has received extensive coverage from the media, and will doubtless be the subject of comprehensive documentation by historians and other such commentators. What has not been as well covered, however, is the subtle propaganda war waged by the British in which they sought to portray themselves as a democratic nation engaged in a just war for freedom, as opposed to the repressive and authoritarian Argentines. It is not even necessary to delve into

Dec./Jan. '81 edition of the Newsletter (PEC 6/82). **UAP DOES WORK.**

A British Irish National Council memorandum calls on the Irish government to show greater concern for Irish political prisoners in British jails. It says that these prisoners are subjected to "a catalogue of discrimination" and "that there has occurred and continues to occur degrees of victimization and ill-treatment". The National Council for Civil Liberties, The Howard League for Penal Reform and Amnesty International (twice) have already expressed "anxiety" about the treatment of IPP's in British jails. (Irish Post 6/26/82)... Resolutions introduced in both houses of the U.S. Congress call upon the British to stop the use of plastic bullets. The reason for this action was that 11 people have been killed and 160 have sustained "serious head injuries involving brain damage, loss of eyes and total blindness". Senator Kennedy declared, "the reason for the refusal of the British government to use plastic bullets on the mainland is as obvious as it is overriding. Plastic bullets are lethal, they should not be used in No. Ireland". (Irish Times 7/3/82)... England's Troops Out Movement has set up a sub-committee to campaign for the repatriation of 74 Irish political prisoners held in Britain. Since 1970, only 4 have been transferred to prisons in No. Ireland and that was after a long hunger strike by the Price sisters. Since 1971, 41 British soldiers convicted of crimes in N.I. have been transferred to jails in Britain. Most were transferred within days of being sentenced. (Irish Post 7/3/82).

The Dominican Sisters of Sparkill, N.Y., voted at their recent community meeting to take a corporate stand against the violation of human rights of Catholics in Northern Ireland (Catholic New York 3/7/82)... **Do the British really like us?** That was the provocative title to an article by Philip Geyelin writing from London in the Washington Post. Geyelin cited a poll over a year ago by one of Britain's leading polling organizations, Market Opinion Research International. The question posed was whether "the future of Britain should rest mainly with the Commonwealth, the United States, Europe, or none of them?" The winner was "none" with 33 percent... dead last was the United States with 6 percent. (The Wanderer 5/20/82)... How about a similar poll for Americans?... The Democratic Party has just adopted a resolution favoring a united Ireland by consent. It also called for the U.S. to adopt a more active policy for peace in No. Ireland (Irish Post 7/3/82).

the bloody, repressive, and decidedly anti-democratic history of British colonialism to give the lie to this posture. It is sufficient to refer to a one-party state which Britain created on its very doorstep and which it maintains to this day, viz. Northern Ireland.

This state was not set up to reflect the wishes of the Protestant majority in the North of Ireland; it was established instead to create a Protestant majority where it did not exist before. In their partition of Ireland the British originally intended that their Protestant state should consist territorially of the nine counties constituting the traditional province of Ulster. When they realized that the majority of the population in this proposed area was Catholic Irish and favored independence for the entire Island three counties — Donegal, Monaghan, and Cavan — were aban-

(Continued on Page 2)

OFFENSIVE ST. PATRICK'S DAY CARDS

by John J. Finucane

Eight months ago, none of the Greeting Card manufacturers were paying much attention to the individual protest of concerned Irish-Americans. Today, at least two of the major companies have either stopped or committed themselves to stopping the manufacture of the offensive cards. Why? Because we **worked together** through UAP, the United Action Program (organized, nationwide letter writing campaigns). Think of the minimal sacrifice on our part — 15 minutes per letter. Look at the positive results from such a small sacrifice.

We must continue to pressure those companies that have not yet cooperated. Let them know that we will support only the cooperating companies such as American Greetings (changes effective as of 1984) and Gibson Greeting Cards. We ask that you again write to: Norcross, 950 Airport Road, West Chester, Pa. 19380. In your letter mention that you resent all cards that make reference to drinking and that you are very concerned with the negative effects these cards can have on your children. Also, let them know that you will support only the cooperating companies. If you have already written to Norcross, *be sure to let them know*. Don't wait, write now!

(Continued from Page 1)

done in order to create a Protestant majority in the remaining six. Northern Ireland was thus established by the rigging of boundaries to produce a desired electoral bias, known as gerrymandering. The Protestants of Ireland, while a minority in the Island as a whole, now constituted a majority in this artificial jurisdiction.

The maintenance of this majority was crucial to the very existence of Northern Ireland as a political entity. Protestants therefore overwhelmingly supported the Unionist party, which stood for continuance of the link with Britain. Catholics tended to support the old Nationalists party, which advocated union with the Irish Republic. A victory by the Nationalists in elections to the Northern Ireland Parliament at Stormont would have meant the end of British rule in the North, or, to put the situation in its proper perspective, the Unionist party *had* to win every election in order to maintain the British connection — thus the survival of the state was called in question every five years. Britain had established a one-party state under the guise of democratic rule by the majority — an artificial majority.

Much of the repression visited upon Catholics then, as now, was based upon Protestant fear; fear of loss of majority and, eventually, their state. The fact that Catholics tended to have a higher birth rate served to fuel this fear, and every effort was expended to leave the Catholic minority with little choice but to emigrate. Discrimination in employment and housing, repressive legislation against republican activists (or those merely suspected of so being), police oppression, and internment without trial, were but a few of the measures designed to give Protestants a sense of security, not to say superiority, in relation to their unfortunate Catholic counterparts. The result was continual emigration by the minority, and for those who refused to budge the blatant use of the gerrymander ensured that they would not be adequately represented at Stormont.

All of this flowed not from some innate Protestant ill-will but rather from the nature of the state itself; in the words of the Sunday Times (London) Insight Team: "... the (six-county) State itself was an immoral concept. It therefore had to be maintained

from the first by immoral means — the fiddling of internal boundaries — the steady pressure on Catholics to emigrate by making it hard for them to live and work, the police bullying — and in the end the army on the streets, internment, 'deep interrogation'." The British made legislative commitments in 1949 and 1973 to remain as long as the majority wanted them to. Frequent opinion polls have shown that a majority of the British people want their government to withdraw from Ireland, but succeeding British administrations have chosen to listen only to their artificially rigged majority in the six counties.

Other Western governments might legitimately criticize the Argentine junta as authoritarian; the British, given their more modest (but nonetheless effective) authoritarian venture in Northern Ireland, are hardly in a position to do so.

WE THANK YOU

The members of the PEC wish to thank all of you who gave so generously in response to our financial appeal. We also urge those of you that have not yet responded, to please do so. The PEC depends entirely on individual donations to maintain and expand its operations. All monies raised by the PEC go back into the Irish-American community via the: information/action programs on northeastern Ireland; Offensive St. Patrick's Day Card Campaign; and Irish-American Awareness programs. Please make checks payable to: National PEC and forward to: National PEC, P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923.

SILENT TOO LONG

David R. Lowry, Professor of Law of Pace Law School, White Plains, New York

In May, 1982 some members of a new Northern Ireland group called Silent Too Long visited the United States. Most who met these visitors were impressed by their simplicity, directness and sincerity. Their message was quite straightforward and designed to counter British propaganda — they were speaking about the innocent victims of the Loyalists and the Security Forces.

During last year's hunger strike Mrs. Thatcher, the British Information Service, Loyalist politicians like Ian Paisley and John Taylor, and, of course, American television networks all misled the American public. Again and again Americans were told that the over 2,000 deaths in the Northern Irish conflict were due solely to the activities of the I.R.A. The message was clear, Americans should not waste their sympathy on the hunger strikers as they were convicted criminals, members of the I.R.A. and responsible for the deaths of 2,000 innocent people. This line of argument was completely erroneous as neither the I.R.A. nor the hunger strikers were responsible for two thousand deaths.

Silent Too Long was formed by the relatives of the victims of Loyalist violence who very much resented Mrs. Thatcher's false assertions and endeavored to highlight the fact that no amount of British propaganda can distort the evidence of British and Loyalist slaughter.

In fact over 600 of those killed have been innocent victims of Loyalist and British violence. Of course, the I.R.A. have lost nearly 100 volunteers and the Security forces have lost approximately 600 men. Neither the I.R.A. nor the Security Forces can be considered innocent in the strict sense of the term as they are essentially combatants in the ongoing civil war. Leaving aside the unexplained deaths and Loyalist paramilitaries killed in action this means that *Silent Too Long* represents the relatives of the majority of the non-combatants killed over the last twelve years.

Unfortunately the American media has a short attention span. Most American television networks and major newspapers did not follow the progress of the *Silent Too Long* representatives during their visit to the United States. The hunger strike is now over but the impact of the misstatements of the media remains. Many Americans uncritically accepted the official British propa-

(Continued on Page 4)

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Editor John J. Finucane
Assistant Editor Mary Prior

FROM THE EDITOR

In an attempt to intimidate the Irish-American community some members of the Reagan Administration, in an obvious abuse of the authority entrusted to them, have pressured the FBI into launching a campaign of *entrapment*. Enticement might be a better word to describe this shameful activity on the part of such a noble body. What they really are doing is luring the ordinary decent American into situations such as purchasing weapons for use in Ireland; the legal subtleties of which he has no idea whatsoever. In this they are preying on two of the noblest virtues any man can possess, namely, love of country and love of justice.

In these attempts at entrapment, our men of the FBI are being ordered to play the part of temptors against their fellow-Americans, thus acting not in accordance with the ideas our young people have of them, but rather like the first of all temptors, Satan himself, who for just such activities was turned into a snake and condemned to crawl on his belly and slither into the darkness of the undergrowth. Obviously, these young spirited members of the FBI really have no idea of what they are doing — working against God and justice. Those of this administration who are responsible for giving these abominable orders should know that, they too, are breaking the law, the moral law which will always take precedence over the law of any country be it America or England.

Is it not odd that similar oppressive measures are not being taken against the American supporters of the English murder groups such as the Ulster Defense Association (UDA)! A blanket group that is responsible for the murders of more innocent victims than any other force in Northern Ireland, including the English Colonial Army of Occupation! It is easy to see who is putting pressure on whom. As usual, our English "ally" is telling this administration what to do and when to do it. Just what is our "ally" leading this administration into?

Please send us the names and addresses of reliable and concerned people you feel might be interested in joining UAP. We will send them FREE the UAP Membership Kit. Write to: National P.E.C., P.O. Box 169, Valley Cottage, N.Y. 10989.

ATTENTION "NO-NONSENSE" IRISH AMERICANS

For a one year subscription of the bi-monthly PEC National Newsletter, please send a check (donation) for **\$6.00** to the National Political Education Committee, P.O. Box 169, Valley Cottage, N.Y. 10989. **At no extra cost**, through your subscription you can also become a member of UAP, the United Action Program which means *only* that you will respond to the Newsletter's *action letter requests* if you agree with them. To join UAP, simply check box provided on coupon below. This will enable the PEC to judge how many letters are being written.

YES, please enroll me for a one year subscription of the bi-monthly PEC National Newsletter. Enclosed, please find my check (donation) for \$_____.

I wish to join UAP.

Signature _____ Date _____

(print) Name _____

Address _____

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We have been informed that some subscribers are not receiving their Newsletters on time. All Newsletters are sent by first class mail during the first week of the issue date (eg. June/July). You should have received your June/July edition no later than June 15. We urge all affected, to please file a complaint at your local post office. Through your subscription donation you are paying for prompt delivery.

WE, THE GREATEST

by Bob Loughman

Music has long been considered a mark of elegance and sophistication. While many countries are renowned for some of the great works composed by their native sons, Ireland is known as a nation of musicians. Ireland is probably the only nation that has a musical instrument as her national emblem. The harp as an emblem of Ireland first appears on Irish coinage in the sixteenth century and from the seventeenth century onward the golden harp on a blue field was accepted as the arms of Ireland. It is still, apart from the national flag, the most widely used symbol of Ireland and provides the distinctive standard of the President of Ireland, a golden harp on an azure field.

Lovers of the opera are familiar with Bohemian Girl but are you aware that Michael Balfe (1808-1870), the composer, was a native of Dublin? Likewise the composer of Maritana, Vincent Wallace (1812-1865), was a native of Waterford. It is said that Ireland's John Field was the greatest pianist of Europe after Beethoven retired, and Puccini regarded Margaret Sheridan as "the perfect Mimi and the only Butterfly". Of course we all know of the great operas that were brilliantly rendered by Count John McCormack.

Most Americans are familiar with the music of John Philip Sousa but are not aware that his mentor was Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore (1829-1892), a native of Galway. In 1862 Gilmore was commissioned Bandmaster General and Chief Musician of Massachusetts. 1863 saw him named Commander of all Army Bands in Louisiana. In 1864 he organized the first monster band concert in New Orleans where he conducted an orchestra of 500 pieces and a chorus of 10,000. 1872 saw Gilmore back in Boston conducting 2,000 musicians and 20,000 vocalists at the Music Jubilee of All Nations. Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore is known for his major accomplishment in musical development of woodwind ensemble and his achievement as a creative showman. He is considered by music historians as the Father of the Brass Band.

Better known as a great composer and conductor is Victor Herbert (1859-1924) a native of Dublin. He became one of the most famous persons of music in America. In 1893 he succeeded Patrick Gilmore as leader of the famous Twenty-second Regiment Band and for six years was Permanent Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Some of his many operettas were: Wizard of the Nile (1895), The Fortune Teller (1898), Babes in Toyland (1903), Mlle. Modiste (1905), The Red Mill (1906), and Naughty Marietta (1910). Victor Herbert was also the true founder of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers in 1914. Today Ireland is still in the forefront in the world of music with such greats as Bernadette Greevy, contralto; Proinsias O Duinn, orchestra conductor; and conductor-composers Arthur Duff, Proinsias O Ceallaigh, Aloys Fleischmann, Seoirse Bodley, and the late Sean O Riada and A. J. Potter. Any update of musical greats would be incomplete without mention of the worlds greatest floutist, James Galway of Belfast. Of course when it comes to traditional music Ireland is certainly in the lead in both Europe and America. From Siamsa, Comhaltas Ceoiltoiri Eireann, Ceoltoiri Chualann, to the Chief-tains... there is no end.

All of these people and groups have two things in common; they are music greats and they are Irish.

(Continued from Page 2)

ganda line in attributing blame on the I.R.A. It is this fact which makes *Silent Too Long* a significant body with an important message for Americans.

Silent Too Long have published a short pamphlet which details many of the deaths of "innocent victims of Loyalists, Army, R.U.C. (police) and U.D.R. (militia)." While noting that the I.R.A. have been responsible for some of the violence and deaths, the pamphlet nevertheless gives its mission as dealing with the neglected victims of violence: "Since the outbreak of the troubles, however, there has been a vicious, continuous campaign of assassination against the Catholic/Nationalist people of Six Counties waged by the British Security Forces...and Loyalist paramilitary groups..."

The *Silent Too Long* pamphlet is simple and direct. It is mainly newspaper clippings giving details of assassinations at the hands of Loyalist death squads. Other clippings tell of the deaths of children through the indiscriminate use of plastic bullets used by the R.U.C. and British Army. Some newspaper reports note that the Loyalist death squads of the U.D.A. have still not been proscribed like the I.R.A. and, even after hundreds of deaths, the U.D.A. still functions openly as a legal organization. American readers will be astounded at the sheer wanton and random brutality of the U.D.A. Some of the innocent victims were viciously tortured and slowly killed. Most were killed merely because they were Catholic.

Tragically, the British Army and the R.U.C. have begun to arrest and harass members of the *Silent Too Long* group. Clearly the British are afraid of the truth getting out to Americans. It is to be hoped that *Silent To Long* survives British harassment and continues to counter the British propaganda war in the United States. It is also important that we never forget the over 600 innocent Catholic and Nationalist fatalities at the hands of Loyalist death squads and the British Security Forces.

UAP ACTION LETTER

by A. R. Doyle

We have always believed that one powerful influence which will cause England to make serious efforts to end the partition of Ireland will be pressure by the U.S. government on the English. However, in spite of St. Patrick's Day political bromides, present U.S. policy is to support England and change will come about only if American political leaders are convinced that there is a substantial body of opinion in this country which considers the ultimate reunification of Ireland as a serious issue. We must get the attention of the policy-makers. It doesn't take as much to do this as might be thought. There are indications that our United Action Program (UAP) is having influence.

The letter below is addressed to the new Secretary of State since it is hoped that he will take a fresh look at this issue uninfluenced by the pro-English attitude of former Secretary Haig and the State Department bureaucracy. Please write or type your own letter along the lines suggested below. If you wish you may simply rewrite our letter, as is, on your own stationery.

WRITE NOW...GET FRIENDS TO WRITE!

(Address)

(Date)

Honorable George P. Schultz
The State Department
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Schultz:

I believe that the U.S. government should support the reunification of Ireland and should so advise the English government publicly. I hope that you will take a fresh look at this subject when you assume office. For too long we have had our policy influenced by Whitehall on this issue. We should return to our historic anti-colonial roots and use American influence to end this historic injustice.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

PEC SEVENTH ANNUAL DANCE

On Saturday, September 18, 1982, the National Political Education Committee will hold its Seventh Annual Dance. Honored guests will be: Attorney Paul O'Dwyer; Charles J. Hynes, Commissioner, Fire Department, N.Y.C.; Professor David Lowry; Nonie Coleman, P.E.C.; John McCormack, PEC Information Director; and John Cauley, President of the Rockland Irish Cultural Center. Special guest: Thomas Morahan, N.Y.S. Assemblyman.

The dance will be held at St. Catherine's, Blauvelt, N.Y. starting at 9 P.M. Ticket donation \$12.50 per person which includes food, set-ups, beer, soda bread, coffee and tea. For reservations and/or further information call: Ann Loughman, chairperson — 914-354-2473.

**PLEASE ORDER YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE.
LAST YEAR'S DANCE WAS SOLD OUT
3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE.**

**NATIONAL
POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

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