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POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 7, No. 1

FEBRUARY/MARCH, 1982

ST. PATRICK'S DAY CARDS ATTACK IRISH IMAGE

(see "OFFENSIVE ST. PATRICK'S DAY CARDS", page 2)

NEWS BITS

by Andrew Prior

A performance of the Scots Dragoons and Coldstream Guards at Michigan State University was protested by the Lansing area P.E.C. on Irish Affairs. (Detroit News 11/24/81) ... The latest economic figures indicate that the British Gov't is "now slowly pulling away the economic cushion on which Ulster has sat for decades. Money is not being poured into the province's roads, museums, airports and prisons with the generosity of the recent past". (Economist 11/28/81) ... It is now believed that the President of the Sinn Fein, Ruairi O'Bradaigh, was the target of the loyalist UFF gunmen who wounded two men at Sinn Fein. HQ in Dublin on 11/25/81. (Irish Press 11/29/81) ... "Why does the Nat'l. Council for Civil Liberties have three staff members working full time on the fashionable issues of rights for women and homosexuals, but not one on the multifarious threats to liberty in Northern Ireland?" (London Sunday Times 12/6/81).

On Dublin T.V. Deputy Sec'y of State (newly appointed Nat'l. Security Advisor) William Clark said that there is "hope for reconciliation between the two traditions, and certainly the hope, the prayer of all Americans that this will ultimately lead to unification" (NY Times 12/9/81) ... According to Richard Balfe, a British member of the European Parliament, the Foreign Office wants Britain out of No. Ireland because it feels British involvement there is a great embarrassment. As conditions of British withdrawal the F.O. wants agreement on territorial waters, (see below, *English oil find in Irish Waters*) a continuation of

Ireland's neutrality, a commitment that Ireland would remain in the broad family of Western nations, and a continuation of good relations with Britain. (Irish Post 11/28/81) ... The Labour Party's Committee on Ireland, which was responsible for the party's adoption of a United Ireland policy, is planning to expand its activities. Their aim is to win a Labour commitment to "full political and military withdrawal from N.I. (Irish Post 11/14/81).

Former Stormont Cabinet Minister, William Craig has castigated fellow members of the Official Unionist Party and leaders of other Loyalist parties for "being stupid in not recognizing the significant breakthrough in the move to change the Irish Constitution". (Irish Weekly 11/14/81) ... Concern is growing in Britain that the Prevention of Terrorism Act is being abused. Allegations that the P.T.A. is being used to harass Irish living in Britain has prompted the Dublin gov't. to convey its concerns to Whitehall. At least 33 Irish have been arrested in the London area. MP's, academics and civil libertarians among others have condemned the arbitrary arrests. (Irish Weekly 11/14/81).

Michigan Senator John Kelly has defended an advertisement calling on Irish-Americans to volunteer for a 2,000 strong, armed brigade, which would go as a peace-keeping force to No. Ireland if British troops withdrew and the Catholic community were endangered. (Irish Post 12/5/81) ... After considerable pressure was mounted against his proposed visit, Ian Paisley's visa has been revoked. The rest of his Unionist group still scheduled to visit the U.S. in January include Peter Robinson, Deputy leader of Paisley's D.U.P. and Nora Bradford, widow of Robert Bradford MP. (Irish Echo 1/2/81).

ENGLISH OIL FIND IN IRISH WATERS

During the summer of 1981, the British government found commercial quantities of oil off the coast of northeast Ireland. This oilfield was discovered by the British Navy in the early 1970s. The seismics, which establish magnetic fields indicating the presence of hydrocarbon basins, were done at considerable expense to the British taxpayer and the information was then made available to oil exploration agencies. The company involved in this exploration is Marathon Oil, based in Houston, Texas, which is the largest supplier to independent oil retailers in the U.S.A. In late 1981, both the Mobil Corporation and the U.S. Steel Corporation attempted a takeover of Marathon Oil. The development of this Irish oilfield is expected to begin in 1982/83. Britain's current North Sea

oil production is expected to decline from 1985, and the British government is facing imminent economic collapse. The advantage of the Irish field is that it is not in an "enclosed sea" like the North Sea. Profits will not have to be shared with other countries, but this necessitates continuing British occupation of the north.

Basic technology is already available in Northern Ireland as Belfast is an extremely good deep-sea port with major ship construction facilities which would be ideal for the construction of sunken rigs.

Britain has always said that she will not pull out of the north because the majority want to remain connected with Britain. The loyalists hold a monopoly on jobs in major industries such as the ship building enterprise Harland and Wolff. The nationalists people, who traditionally suf-

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

NEW YORK — Nationwide, Irish-American organizations are uniting to bring pressure on President Reagan to call for the reunification of Ireland. For information contact the PEC.

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fer severe job discrimination, do have one trump card in this equation. The deep-sea port facility in Belfast is operated by nationalist workers.

This combined industrial vulnerability, as well as the continuing struggle to reunite Ireland may prompt the British to keep support services for the oilfield away from the north. If the initial construction of the sunken rigs is in Belfast (*it may yet be transferred to Glasgow or another British port*) no further contact with Northern Ireland will be needed.

It is believed the British are planning to pipe the oil across Scotland to the existing oil refinery at Averdeen. This will save the cost of building another refinery in Northern Ireland and prevent the refinery from falling into the hands of the IRA if the political situation changes. It will also mean no land-based jobs for Irish people **whose own wealth** is being exploited by the British.

In fact, the only use of Northern Ireland would be that its existence as a British colony extends British territorial limits to cover this oil field. Because of the potential economic benefits the British government will probably decide it can afford to continue the present war indefinitely. Britain can not allow any measure of political independence for Northern Ireland or re-unification with the South. Britain's economic recovery **depends** on maintaining the status quo.

The Irish Republic has limited expertise in oil and mineral development. The Prime Minister, Dr. Garrett FitzGerald is an economist and former financial journalist who would understand the significance of this information **if he is aware of it**. However, the amount of money involved will no doubt encourage the southern government to support the political status quo.

On the other hand, if the Irish Republican Army wins the present military struggle and the political situation changes radically, control of this Irish oilfield would go to the Irish people. The population of Ireland is 4½ million compared to over 60 million in Britain, so if Ireland had control of its own oil it would become a much wealthier country than Britain, especially after North Sea oil ceases production.

The British ruling elite will try to stop this happening by every means possible. Money is no object; political assassination is already a specialty of the notorious SAS regiment; and the loss of Irish and British citizens is of no concern.

(The above summarizes an article supplied by the Sydney Australia H-Block/Armagh Committee. It was written by an informant, who has worked for the last 5 years on North Sea development, a world renowned geologist whose identity must remain anonymous.)

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P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923

Editor John J. Finucane
Assistant Editor Mary Prior

OFFENSIVE ST. PATRICK'S DAY CARDS

by John J. Finucane

Very soon the greeting card industry will again flood the market with those "humorous" St. Patrick's Day cards that depict the Irish as drunkards and social misfits. This industry will make millions while downgrading our image. According to a spokesperson for American Greetings (AG), 70% of the cards are purchased by Irish-Americans, 90% of who are in their mid-forties.

Some of us will ask, What's the big deal? The big deal is the affect these characterizations have on our young people. The PEC has conducted some research in this area. Generally speaking, our youth takes it for granted that most Irish-Americans are heavy drinkers and that drinking is expected of them. The PEC has also experienced this same result with school stereotype programs in which the Irish are characterized as drunkards. Couple this with what our children are taught in some schools about the Irish contribution to the world — the potato — they certainly don't have much to be proud of.

Since 1976, the PEC has been actively campaigning against these injustices, in particular, the greeting cards. This program has met with some success through our educational program. More and more of our people are taking notice. The PEC has had legislation condemning these cards introduced in the N.Y.S. Legislature, has received considerable press coverage, has protested to the Human Rights Commission, and, of course, has complained to the manufacturers. In 1980, a shareholder in AG, Nicholas Murphy, National Chairman of the A.O.H. Building Fund, attended the Annual Share Holders Meeting and protested against the production of these cards.

In December, 1981 Mr. Murphy, Owen McKiernan, President of the Minnesota Irish American Cultural Institute, and John J. Finucane, National Chairman of the PEC, met with representatives of AG at their plant in Cleveland, Ohio. The purpose of the meeting was to review the **already printed** 1983 cards. Regrettably, there will be no significant improvement in neither the 1982 nor 1983 lines. There will be some noticeable improvement in 1984, in that there will be less offensive cards. This is no smashing success. However, it is a step in the right direction when you consider **profit is the bottom line** and, according to Richard H. Connor, Senior Vice President, American Greetings Merchandising and Creative, very little protest has come from the Irish-American community.

There are several protest actions that we can take, such as, boycott, letters of protest, and education. We must inform our children, family, and friends of the offensive nature of such cards and urge them not to support the offenders.

Please protest to the following companies:

Hallmark	Norcross
2501 McGee	950 Airport Rd.
Kansas City, Missouri 64108	West Chester, PA 19380

American Greetings Corp.
1500 American Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio 44144

In your letter stress the fact that the humorous St. Patrick's Day cards are in very poor taste and portray a very poor image of the Irish-American for your children. You should mention that you will boycott all products of the company until the cards are cleaned up.

FROM THE EDITOR

In November, 1981 the PEC on Irish Affairs in Lansing, Michigan organized a public demonstration protesting an appearance in that community by the English Army's Cold Stream Guard. The protest received wide press coverage as it was the area's first Irish-American demonstration against English oppression in Ireland. Since that time, the *letter to the editor* section of a number of the area's newspapers have given considerable space to the issue.

What this means is that there is a considerable number of our people in that community who are concerned enough to do something. Many of these would probably become part of a united effort such as the PEC through the Action Letter if they were aware of our existence.

What we as responsible Irish-Americans must do is seek out these people in our communities and inform them of the PEC's united effort and encourage them to subscribe to the newsletter.

No one should doubt that organized letter-writing is effective. For instance, consider the reaction of International Telephone & Telegraph (IT&T) to the Action Letter of the Oct./Nov. issue of the newsletter. An executive of IT&T who subscribes to the newsletter attended a meeting of IT&T in New York City. The meeting was called in response to the large number of letters received alleging discrimination against Catholics in hiring practices in IT&T's facility in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland. Result; IT&T called for an immediate investigation into the allegations.

Further proof of the effectiveness of *organized* letter-writing is the State Department's ban on weapons sales to England's notorious R.U.C. and the recent cancellation of Ian Paisley's visa.

The PEC wants you to seek out those people who do write letters and those who might write letters and encourage them to participate in our united effort by subscribing to the newsletter. We must bring all these active people together. If they need education on the problem of Northern Ireland, direct them to the PEC (see "Why Not Educate A Friend" below). REMEMBER! The PEC specializes in **education** and **action**.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe for a one year subscription of the bi-monthly PEC National Newsletter, please send a check for \$6.00 to the National Political Education Committee, P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923. Please use form below.

YES, please enroll me for a one year subscription of the PEC National Newsletter. Enclosed, please find my check for \$_____.

Signature _____

(print) Name _____

Address _____

FLASH

FLASH

FLASH

Although denied a visa to the United States Ian Paisley gained access to the US public when he was interviewed from Toronto, Canada on Jan. 18th on CBS' Charles Kuralt Network *Morning* show. Fortunately, the same program contained a response to Paisley by the renowned Law Professor, David Lowry. We are pleased to say that this rebuttal was the result of the work of the PEC, principally, Al Doyle, our legal liason. To show that you appreciated Professor Lowry's comments drop a note to CBS, 524 W. 57th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10019. On the same day, Paisley appeared on NBC's *Today* show, but NBC did not present the nationalist view.

THE DESSIE MACKIN CASE

by Keara O'Dempsey, Esq.

The last day of 1981 saw the case of IRA member Desmond Mackin brought to a happy legal and human conclusion. Mackin, twenty-six, had been arrested in New York City in October, 1980 for illegal entry into the United States. Before he could be deported to his home in the Republic of Ireland, the British government requested that the U.S. extradite Mackin to Northern Ireland, where he would be put on trial for alleged IRA activities.

Mackin and seven Irish-American lawyers from the Brehon Law Society, spent the next fifteen months fighting the British request. The case would be the first test of United States judicial opinion on the present British policy of "criminalization" of the IRA. Under this policy, the U.K. attempts to characterize all members of the IRA as criminals, rather than as participants in an ongoing struggle for Irish freedom.

British intransigence on this issue led to the hunger strike of 1981, in which Bobby Sands and nine of his comrades died in the H-Blocks outside Belfast.

While his comrades lay dying within the walls of Long Kesh, Mackin endured his own long and lonely vigil in a New York jail cell, waiting to see if United States courts would accept the Thatcher criminalization program. If the federal court in New York found that Mackin was an ordinary criminal, he would have to stand trial in Belfast. If the

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WHY NOT EDUCATE A FRIEND

by John McCormack

Do you know someone who is concerned about Northern Ireland, but needs to be educated on that issue? Do you know someone who might be helpful to the **cause** if they were so educated? If so, send their names and addresses to the National Political Education Committee, P.O. Box 16, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923. Attention: John McCormack. With no obligation to them, we will send free the PEC Information Package and a complimentary copy of the National Newsletter. **PLEASE USE FORM BELOW.**

Please send the free Information Package and complimentary copy of the Newsletter to the following.

Name _____
(print)

Address _____

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court rejected the criminalization program, Mackin would fall within the U.S. political offender category and his extradition would be forbidden.

Despite heavy pressure from the British government and our own Justice Department, Federal Magistrate, Naomi Buchwald ruled that Mackin had to be regarded as a political offender. London and Washington were outraged by this decision. Mackin, although victorious, was forced to remain in jail another four months while the two governments exerted their combined might toward overturning his victory.

They failed. The federal Court of Appeals (a court second in stature only to the U.S. Supreme Court) unequivocally dismissed the appeal. The U.S. and U.K. governments had little choice but to let Mackin go home.

The case reflects an outright judicial rejection of the Thatcher criminalization program which lead directly to Bobby Sands' death. Though Irish-Americans may be justly alarmed at the deception and collaboration practiced by their Justice Department throughout this case, they may equally take pride in the courts' refusal to bend the law at the pleasure of these two powerful governments.

(Keara O'Dempsey is a member of the Brehon Law Society and argued Dessie Mackin's case before the U.S. Court of Appeals.)

ACTION LETTER

by Al Doyle

Although we often wish that our own government would do more to create conditions for a just solution to the problems in Britain's puppet state of "Northern Ireland", we should voice our support for those in our government who take steps in that direction, particularly when they are under fire. This is true, regardless of the source of the support and other political views we may have. When President Reagan sent then Deputy Secretary of State William P. Clark to Ireland as a symbol of his interest (Clark is particularly close to the President on a personal basis and has recently been named Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs) this was such a step. When Clark expressed the mild view that Americans hoped for ultimate reunification of Ireland, he was visited with a fire-storm of wrath from Maggie Thatcher, Ian

Paisley and company, particularly since Clark is an Irish-American, a very dangerous species in the view of Thatcherites. These critics included individuals within the United States government as well as the media. We wish to encourage even small steps at such high places and the suggested letter below is intended for that purpose. Remember, this is a suggested format only. The most effective letters are not "form" letters but those which show individual attention. Also, remember in writing your letter to stick to the main point and avoid personal criticism. If necessary, you may write the letter below as is on your own stationery.

(Your address)

(Date)

The Honorable William P. Clark
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
National Security Council
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Mr. Clark:

Please accept my congratulations for having the courage to say that Americans hope for the reunification of Ireland during your recent visit to Ireland on behalf of the President. I believe that this view is widely held here — and not just by Irish-Americans. It is based on the understanding by the American people of the tainted history of the "state" of Northern Ireland and the unjust nature of the regime kept in place there for 60 years after its creation by Britain. This history makes laughable the current British line that the regime will be changed only when a majority in the "state" want it. Britain deliberately created the problem by "stacking the deck" in 1920. Britain must be induced to resolve it. The United States government should not be a tool for Mrs. Thatcher's Northern Ireland policy. I urge President Reagan to come out for a policy of reunification.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

**IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT
YOU WRITE ALL ACTION LETTERS**

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