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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 16, Number 2

February 1991

BRITISH EAVESDROPPING FROM THE SKY

by Sandy Carlson reporting from Ireland

The British government is able to monitor every phone call made in Ireland by a joint US-British intelligence venture code-named PROJECT P415. This system involves using a satellite code-named MAGNUM and an analysis system code-named ECHELON.

The satellite, which was put into orbit secretly by the US space shuttle, is capable of taking in microwaves from a point 22,000 miles above the earth. MAGNUM can pick up telephone, facsimile, telex and data transmissions. The satellite transmits the signals to a listening center in Oakley, Cheltenham, in England. At Oakley are more than 10,000 eavesdroppers who monitor the calls with the ECHELON system, which is capable of recording calls at the speed of light. Translations are then sent to the Special Branch or other intelligence for analysis. This system is staffed by 15,000 civilians and costs the British taxpayer 500 million Pounds annually.

ECHELON is capable of compiling a computerized dossier on an individual by using VAX computers, which can target specific telephone numbers. Calls that are not a priority are recorded and stored in archives.

The US and British governments usually coordinate their eavesdropping efforts to avoid a duplication of efforts (UKUSA Pact). However, the US has in the past used its sophisticated equipment to spy on the British. For example, when the British demanded the extradition of Rev. Paddy Ryan, a Roman Catholic priest, from Belgium to Britain and the Belgians refused to grant the extradition, the British planned to force the Belgian plane down when it entered British air space and capture Ryan. However, the US wanted to prevent an incident between the British and the Belgians, who are both key members of NATO. Hence, the US tipped off the Belgians regarding the British government's sabotage plans; the Belgians flew over France and avoided a confrontation.

The advances in technology have led to the blanket coverage of surveillance of Ireland's phone calls rather than the surveillance of limited targets. Although groups such as the IRA are the usual targets of such surveillance, tens of thousands of Irish calls are weekly monitored.

News of this system came out when Margaret Newsham gave secret congressional testimony, giving the details of when the system had been used to intercept internal US calls, an illegal practice by US law. Newsham had worked for Ford Aerospace and Lockheed, during which employment she had personally heard southern Republican and Reagan supporter Senator Storm Thurmond's call to Democratic Unionist Ian Paisley. Newsham said that the US is interested in monitoring such calls because it is interested in the IRA threat to its ally, Britain, and to Britain's troops in Europe. Also, the US government is interested in avoiding awkward political confrontations between allies.

TELEPHONE HOTLINE (914) 429-7849

HOW TO TELL WHEN YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES

On the top line of your address label, which appears on the mailer section of last page of the Newsletter, you will find a four-digit number. If that four-digit number corresponds with the four-digit number in the shaded box, marked *Memberships Expiring*, just above your address label, you are due to renew your membership. The first two numbers represent the year (91) and the second two numbers represent the month (02) February, (03) March, etc. 9102 means your membership expires in February 1991. If your 4-digit number begins with 90, your membership has already expired.

Don't worry about renewing early as you will always be given proper credit.

So please renew your membership on your own initiative, and save the PEC the expense of mailing Renewal Notices. To renew use Multi-Purpose Coupon on last page.

NEWSBITS by Kathy Regan

Glor na nGael continues the fight to get funding reinstated. Noirin Ui Chleirigh, chairperson of the organization, believes that civil servants advising Peter Brooke on axing the group's 90,000 Pounds grant clearly expected any protests to be a 'three-day wonder' and underestimated Glor na nGael's reputation. (Irish Post, 12/1/90)

The ordinary people of both sides suffer in the continuing struggle in northeast Ireland. For a long time, Loyalist assassins used a street called Lanark Way to gain access to a nationalist area and carry out their sectarian killings. Nationalist protests eventually resulted in this street being closed. Now, however, ambulances from the Unionist side of the road must wait for the RUC to open the gate before they can proceed to the Royal Victoria Hospital. Again, the ordinary person is victimized. You can be sure it is not the bigshots or the politicians who must wait for the gate to be opened to get medical care. (AIN-PEC).....Many people are upset by the recent appointment of Dr. Cathal Daly as Primate of All Ireland. Some have gone so far as to write to the Pope and tell him of their displeasure. To give their protest a little muscle, they have informed the Pope that they will no longer give to the annual Peter's Pence collection. Instead, they have coined the phrase 'Dollars for Des' and will send their Peter's Pence donations to Rev. Wilson to assist in his work with the ordinary people of Belfast. (AIN-PEC).....In the current review of the Birmingham Six case, forensic evidence, especially that presented by Dr. Frank Skuse, has been discredited. "Michael Mansfield, representing five of the six, told the court that, on the same night as the five Irishmen were tested, two of Dr. Frank Skuse's colleagues conducted the same tests on two passengers on a
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FROM THE EDITOR

Since we stated in the October 1990 issue of the Newsletter, "British human rights violations in Northern Ireland is not an Irish issue, but an international issue" and that we should not limit our efforts to the American Irish, we have received many communications from our members supporting that position.

Many of those communications came from members who are not of Irish extraction, many of whom are Protestant. Obviously, we are on target: British human rights violations in Northern Ireland are a concern for all people of good will.

It is also obvious that not everyone has been misled by the pro-British bias of our State Department and the American news media.

There seems to be great potential here for a national movement of concerned people. **How do we make use of that potential? How do we get those people informed? How do we make them active in the PEC?**

We must first get more of our members active to reach out to the public.

It would be a great boost to our cause and to the PEC, if our non-Irish members and/or non-Catholic members were to take an active or even a leading role in the PEC. We certainly would welcome their participation. This would greatly enhance our efforts to build a national movement, and would lend greater credibility to our organization.

We invite all our members to become more active in the PEC and urge you to think seriously about forming a PEC Support Group in your community. The PEC Support Group is thoroughly explained in this Newsletter under the title **We Invite All Members To Play An Active Role In The PEC Organization.**

OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS

by Kevin P. Murphy, Massachusetts State Director

CAUSE FOR OUTRAGE!!! According to the *Washington Post*, December 23, 1990, the Republican Party is looking for ways to attract the public's attention to its 1992 national convention. "One idea at the White House is to invite former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher to be the keynote speaker." Such an action will hurt, not help, the Republican Party.

For the Republican Party leadership to even consider such an honor for Thatcher is a gross insult, not only to millions of American Irish, but to all Americans. Is there no American worth such an honor?

Please write the following letter to President George Bush, President, The White House, Washington, DC 20500.

Dear Mr. President:....As an American citizen (also mention if you are a veteran of an American war), I am strongly opposed to any role for former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher at the 1992 Republican Party national convention. Any such honors should be reserved for worthy Americans. Further, Mrs. Thatcher has a terrible human rights record....Sincerely,

In a recent newsletter we requested letters to *Outside Magazine* regarding a slur by writer David Quammen. *Outside's* chairman of the board Robert L. Burke replied, "...We have received other letters in protest of this statement and I assure you our editors have gotten the message and will be a little more careful about the content of future articles."Massachusetts member James Harrington advises us that Mr. David Van Dyke, manager of Boston radio station WOD, has informed him that the station's newsroom will no longer use the terms Paddy and Paddy Wagon. Congratulations to Mr.

The American Irish PEC

founded 1975

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STUDENT ORGANIZER: Stephanie Finucane, AIPEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980 - (914) 947-2726.

Supported in part by the Emerald Society, NYC Fire Department.

Harrington who made the issue and to Mr. Van Dyke for his cooperation....Also from Massachusetts, member George Collier advises us that *Boston Herald* columnist **Howie Carr** still refers to the American Irish -- the people who made up half of George Washington's Continental Army, the people who gave us at least 16 Presidents -- as "Mick," "Harps," "untrustworthy" and "lazy."

SEND ALL OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS TO: Kevin P. Murphy, PO Box 8895, JFK Station, Boston, MA 02114.

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURES AVAILABLE

We have available PEC membership brochures and display units for use in stores, offices, club houses, etc. If you know of a location where they can be displayed, let us know and we will send you the kit free-of-charge.

We also have copies of the current Newsletter available at 25 cents each.

THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIP

by Sean Patrick Walsh - former N.Y. State Legislator - reprinted from *American Irish Newsletter*, April 1981

The ostensible purpose of the celebrated Rhodes Scholarship is to provide a year of advanced study at Oxford University for a select group of accomplished scholars chosen, for the most part, from among the inhabitants of former British colonies. The actual and chief effect of the Rhodes Scholarship program is to instill in these hand-picked students an exceptionally high regard for things English and to encourage their adoption of the Anglo-Saxon manner.

While foreign travel and study abroad are mind-enriching and ennobling experiences, one must distinguish between programs that foster an appreciation for another culture and those which press assimilation into that culture. There can be no doubt that the Rhodes Scholarship is an example of an assimilationist program, one that bears especially careful scrutiny by the American Irish.

Cecil John Rhodes, after whom Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was named, was an imperialist *par excellence*. He devoted a significant part of his career to swindling black Africans out of their rights to land rich in diamonds and, upon his will, he directed that the bulk of this money be used to finance what we know as the famous Rhodes Scholarships.

Each year, thirty-two "lucky" American college graduates receive this highly coveted prize for which thousands compete. Then, after an enjoyable year of study in England, the thirty-two return, invariably flushed with enthusiasm for British institutions and probably just the slightest bit sorry that George Washington was so successful. Moreover, since these freshly dubbed Oxford scholars are high achievers, they take their newly found, or in some cases rekindled, Anglophilia with them as they climb the ladder to success as doctors, lawyers, or corporate chiefs. Some of them find a ready berth in the U. S. State Department where an abiding affection for the English crown is a prerequisite for aspiring American diplomats.

For the American Irish the consequences of all this are devastating. The flower of American scholarship judges itself by English standards and the leadership of the American government is predisposed by cultural and educational ties to favor the English point of view, sometimes to the serious detriment of the national interest of the United States. Since the Rhodes Scholarship has no German, French, or other counterpart to equal its prestige, generation after generation of Americans since 1902 have heard English propaganda with an American accent from the lips of some of America's brightest young men and women. Moreover, one need only listen to the affectations of a William F. Buckley Jr., (who only went to Yale for God's sake!), to realize that you do not have to be a Rhodes scholar to be a lickspittle of the English.

With all this in mind, it is easy to understand why the cause of Irish freedom has so few allies in the United States. Anti-Catholic and anti-Irish racial bigotry are the twin obstacles not only in England, but here in America as well. Sad to say, many Americans possess an unwarranted reverence for England that not only occludes their comprehension of Irish affairs, but biases them against the French, the Spanish, the Italians or any other national group that was ever at odds with the English.

Until Americans come to grips with this insidious Anglo-American connection and learn to cultivate an independent national identity, the United States is destined to remain in 1991 just as John Quincy Adams described her in 1824: "a cockboat in the wake of a British man of war."

BEWARE BROOKLYN/STATEN ISLAND, NY

Republican Congresswoman Susan Molinari (NY 14th Dist. representing Staten Island and parts of Brooklyn) appeared on a local TV program in Washington, DC in which she expressed her view that Margaret Thatcher was her Superstar person of the year 1990; rather insensitive to her many constituents who oppose Thatcher's undemocratic policies in Northern Ireland. Give her office a call to voice your opinions: Staten Is. (918) 981-9800 -- Brooklyn (718) 236-9292.

NEWS BITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

different ferry. Both passengers tested positive but this was attributed to their coming into contact with adhesive tape. They were released." (Irish Post, 12/22/90).... **The University of Ulster**, in a survey of employment prospects for young graduates, has revealed that Protestants from Northern Ireland who graduate from third-level institutions are more likely to succeed in obtaining work commensurate with a higher-education degree, while Catholic graduates are more likely to be unemployed, or in work that could be considered menial for graduates. (Irish Times, 12/4/90)....According to **Legion Magazine** (American Legion), January 1991, the British have "6,000 troops, 58 aircraft, 12 ships [ready-for-action against Iraq]; British troop levels are expected to reach 15,000." The Bush administration and the news media, in their public statements, give us the impression that the British, "our staunchest ally," are doing more than their share. Why? The French, according to *Legion*, have in place, ready-for-action, "13,000 troops, 75 aircraft and 14 ships." Why is Britain again getting a free ride at the expense of American citizens?

"**The Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) Campaign** wants the Irish government to instruct Embassy officials in London that all Irish citizens, from north and south of the border, must enjoy full consular protection...Though police can deny detainees access to a solicitor, they have no right to stop a visit from an Irish Embassy official. According to Gareth Pierce, 'Such visits help break the isolation the police are so good at creating and lets detainees know that they do have rights...This act (the PTA) inhibits freedom. I'm thinking of anyone who, because of the PTA, decides not to take a holiday, opts not to drink in a particular pub, is scared to join in a perfectly legal demonstration, or is too frightened to voice their opinion -- in my view, anyone in this category is a victim of the Act.'" (Irish Post, 12/1/90)

On Friday, November 12, on ITV's morning program *The Time...The Place*, political columnist Edward Pearce remarked that Mrs. Thatcher, then battling to retain leadership of the Tory Party, was "as dangerous as an Irishman in a pub with a broken bottle." As this was a daytime program, most of the viewers were women and they responded fiercely with letters and phone calls to this offensive reference. The following Monday, the host of the program broadcasted an apology to anyone offended by the remark. Letter writers received written apologies. (Irish Post, 12/12/90)....**Circa 574**, Columcille (St. Columba) brought Aiden to Iona to be crowned king of the Irish in Dal Riada. He began a tradition that was to continue for centuries when he crowned Aiden on the Black Stone of Iona. The Black Stone of Iona was brought to Westminster by the Stuarts in the early seventeenth century and now forms part of the Coronation Chair used to install the British monarch. (Irish Post, 11/24/90)

JAMES DACEY: ENTREPRENEUR

by Mary Golden, Missouri

When Patrick Dacey emigrated to America from Ireland, he probably never dreamed that his son would become world-renowned for his entrepreneurship. Patrick Dacey opened a fruit and produce market in 1855 in St. Louis, Missouri. His son, James Dacey, later expanded the business into a wholesale commission firm, Dacey and Co., fruits and produce.

The commission firm was situated across the street from the Old Round Top Market, where, in particular, German and Swedish farmers brought their produce. James Dacey was interested in a well-known herb (root) brought in by the German and Swedish farmers, which had the zest and pungent taste of the European product. What was this root? It was horseradish!

Dacey discovered that, even when grown in St. Louis soil, the well-known condiment preserved its Old World tang. In this region, which is near the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, the American bottoms area, the combination of soil and climate enables the herb to retain its pungency. This is unusual in that other localities tried to produce the herb as well, but the crops lacked the tangy bite of the roots native to the St. Louis area.

Dacey began shipping his product to coastal cities in the East, as horseradish is a vital seasoning added to the sauce served with various seafood. Next, Dacey felt that a large market could be developed if he shipped to different parts of the country, from Portland to Los Angeles, as well as the East. He encouraged truck farmers to grow the root and contacted every sauce company in the United States.

The 1890s yielded a bumper crop of horseradish and, on a whim, James Dacey bought additional barrels for speculative purposes. He decided to ship a few barrels to customers in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and New Orleans. By luck, these customers were on the coast where seafood was popular and abundant. Crated and sold in the retail market, horseradish tapped into another arena of ready buyers.

Before James Dacey, no one tried to market the horseradish commercially. Needless to say, through such ingenious entrepreneurship, Mr Dacey amassed a fortune. History books should honor Dacey as the "godfather of the shrimp cocktail or the oyster shucker's best friend."

Dacey was also community-oriented. Not only was he a member of the House of Delegates, but was also Market Master of the City of St. Louis under Mayors Noonan and D. R. Francis from 1891 - 1895.

No doubt, the Irish emigre's son left an indelible mark in the American culinary field. Even today many companies merchandising horseradish are very visible in the St. Louis area and on the East side. Right over the border, Collinsville, Illinois is now designated the Horseradish capital of the world.

BIRMINGHAM SIX -- Action Request #3

The British government continues to stall on examining new evidence supporting the innocence of the Birmingham Six.

We ask all members to write to: Sir Antony Acland, British Embassy, 3100 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008. We suggest the following: *Dear Ambassador: I urge your Home Secretary to examine the new evidence which shows that the Birmingham Six were not involved in the 1974 Birmingham pub bombings and to free these innocent men.....Sincerely,*

MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES UPDATE

by John J. Finucane

ARIZONA -- PEC State Director Susan Catt advises us that State Senator Jaime Cutierrez, at the request of *Americans For MacBride*, introduced MacBride Principles legislation in January. Several other Senators and State Representatives are expected to co-sponsor the bill. Arizona's *Americans For MacBride*, formed by the American Irish PEC in September 1990, include members from labor, veterans, ethnic and civil rights organizations including political figures, as well as representatives from American Irish organizations. **COLORADO** -- PEC State Director Terry Deem Reilly informs us that, at the request of the MacBride Committee, Colorado House Speaker Charles Berry will introduce MacBride Principles legislation...**MASSACHUSETTS** -- Governor Michael Dukakis has signed into law Boston's tough MacBride Principles legislation. Boston's Mayor Ray Flynn can now withdraw public funds from American companies operating in Northern Ireland that do not adopt the MacBride Principles and invest funds only in companies that do adhere to them. No American company operating in Northern Ireland has yet adopted the Principles. Also, no funds will be invested in any US company that sells military equipment to be used in the north or to financial institutions that make loans to these companies for that purpose. There should be a lot of tough action coming out of Boston. We congratulate Mayor Flynn and Councilwoman Maura Hennigan Casey for their work on behalf of the Principles in Boston. **NEW YORK** -- On December 10 the Orangetown Town Council in New York, representing more than 60,000 people, unanimously adopted a MacBride Principles resolution. Copies of the resolution, which supports adoption of federal MacBride legislation, were sent to pertinent federal legislators including House Speaker Tom Foley and Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell.

The resolution was introduced by Council member Allan Ryff, on behalf of the *Americans For MacBride*. PEC president John Finucane and Council member Connie O'Sullivan addressed the capacity crowd regarding the history of British government civil and human rights violations in Ireland. All in attendance were provided a brochure explaining the Principles. The resolution's adoption was also covered by the area's major newspaper the *Rockland Journal News*....NYS PEC Director Kathy Regan advises us that on December 20, 1990 New York City Councilwoman Carolyn Maloney's MacBride Principles contract compliance bill was introduced in the City Council. PEC members in New York City have been conducting letter writing campaigns in support of this bill and are urged to continue doing so. This effort, initiated by the Irish American Labor Coalition with the active support of the PEC and other organizations, is taken on behalf of the *Americans For MacBride*.

Bills are also planned for other states and cities.

MacBride Support Materials Available

- . A 30 minute VHS video by Oliver Kearney, Executive Director of the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Trust, includes important background on employment discrimination in Northern Ireland, his own experiences, and suggestions on how to help. **Price \$9.95**
 - . Updated MacBride Principles brochures. **Price 10 cents ea.**
 - . A 7 page overview on the MacBride Principles. **Price \$1.**
- To order**, send check payable to American Irish PEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980 -- Phone# (914) 947-2726.

WE INVITE ALL MEMBERS TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE PEC ORGANIZATION

by John J. Finucane, National President

The membership of the PEC is made up of people from many different ethnic and religious backgrounds. We would like to reflect this diversity in our leadership and throughout the PEC.

We invite all our members, young and old, of all ethnic and religious backgrounds, to take a leadership role in the PEC, and to help us build a bigger and even more effective organization.

We have developed an effective national network of letter writers/educators (people who distribute *Reproduce & Distribute* articles). We must increase the effectiveness of that network by developing similar networks at the community level. We need to get many more people involved, including college students, in our letter writing and educational programs.

If each of our letter writers and educators were to get one or more people in their communities, colleges, etc., who do not have to be of Irish extraction, to do the same, we would at least double our impact. We already have community networks, which we call *PEC Support Groups*, operating in Massachusetts and New York. We now want to begin setting up *PEC Support Groups* in all states. **We welcome students to form *PEC Support Groups* at their colleges and universities.**

We need your help, if it is only to get one more person, maybe a family member, to join our network -- **to join the PEC.**

Below we provide a series of questions and answers to help explain our *PEC Support Group* and our *Reproduce & Distribute* program.

What is a PEC Support Group? A PEC Support Group, similar to an Amnesty International support group, is 2 or more people getting together to write a letter(s) and to mail out *Reproduce & Distribute* articles. That's it!

How many people are needed to form a Support Group? The number of people needed to form a Group is not important. What is important is the work they do. In our work, 3 people writing letters and sending out *Reproduce & Distribute* articles (R&D) to influential people, are much more effective than 30 people sitting around talking. Why? Because they are communicating and educating. What makes your Group even more important and effective is that you are one of many Groups carrying out the same work at the same time. Everybody is writing the same letter(s) to the same individual(s); everybody is sending out the R&D articles. We are all working together. So you see, whether you have 3 or 30 people at your meeting, you are being effective.

How does a Group know what letter(s) to write? The letter(s) to be written are provided through the *PEC Telephone Hotline*. One of the first priorities when forming a *PEC Support Group* is to designate a reliable member to call the Hotline (914) 429-7849 once a week. That member will record the suggested letter. That person (or another reliable person), will make enough copies of the suggested letter and make certain they are delivered for distribution at your meetings. Be certain that writing paper and envelopes are always brought to the meeting. The letters must be written **and collected for mailing** at the meeting. This way you know the letters are written and mailed.

How does the *PEC Telephone Hotline* Work? When you call the Hotline you will get a brief recording of a suggested letter, which is repeated. These messages change every Sunday night and last until the following Sunday. The Hotline is a 24 hour, 7 day-a-week service. All Groups use this same letter.

Can we use the Action Requests from the Newsletter instead of the Hotline? This is not recommended. Letters requested by the Hotline must be used at *PEC Support Group* meetings. Mem-

bers should write the letters requested in the Newsletter at home.

What do you do if some people don't want to write the letters? The letter-writing session must take place as it is a critical function of a Group. People who do not want to write letters should be discouraged from participating.

Where do Support Groups get the *Reproduce & Distribute* articles? (See *Working the Reproduce & Distribute Program* below.)

How often should Support Groups meet? Groups should meet at least once a month. The main *PEC Support Group* in Rockland County, N.Y. meets once-a-week. Some Groups meet twice-a-month. Naturally, the more often you meet, the more work you do and the better are your continuity and communications.

Where do Support Groups meet? Groups can hold their meetings in members' homes (rotating) or find a private facility such as a club or center. Avoid a situation where rent is required.

Are Support Group activities limited to letter writing and mailing R&D's? No. These are the basic requirements of a Group. There are many other activities a Group can conduct such as: setting up PEC Information tables at public functions; organizing campaigns to have MacBride Principles resolutions adopted by town/county governments and local organizations; conducting PEC membership drives and seeking locations to display PEC membership kits on a long-term basis; organizing fundraisers for the PEC; selling raffle tickets; selling journal ads for our annual Dinner Dance. Some Groups will develop their own activities for implementing PEC programs.

Must Support Groups limit their work to PEC activities? Yes. A *PEC Support Group* is a part of the PEC and its work will reflect on the PEC.

Must all Support Group members be a member of the PEC? While it is preferred that all Group members be a member of the PEC, it is not required. But we do urge you to make every effort to encourage these people to join.

Working the Reproduce & Distribute Program

Where do Support Groups get the *Reproduce & Distribute* articles? Every issue of our *American Irish Newsletter* contains at least one article marked *Reproduce & Distribute*. Many R&D's are available in past issues of the Newsletter. You can also use our MacBride Principles brochure and our *American Delegation Visits Northern Ireland* from the August 1990 newsletter issue. These articles can be used at anytime. Original R&Ds from the Newsletters should be used only for making copies.

Who should *Reproduce & Distribute* articles be sent to? Any influential person or group in your community: news editors (radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, etc.), journalists, clerics, college social science departments, human rights groups, religious groups, etc. When writing to groups it is not always necessary to have an individuals name. You may just use chairperson or president. Their addresses can be found in your local telephone directory. Just pick a few and begin writing. Once a month or every two months is fine. Never send more than two articles at a time. Too much material can deter the individual from reading. To begin, start with a few names and then add to that list.

If you would like to form a PEC Support Group or receive further information on becoming active in the PEC, contact: in New York, Kathy Regan (212) 365-0213 (evenings); in Massachusetts, Jim Brown at (508) 755-4599 (days) -- (508) 852-7304 (evenings). Anywhere else, contact the PEC national office at (914) 947-2726 or write AIPEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980.

BRITAIN'S INTERNMENT WITHOUT TRIAL

by Stephanie Finucane

----- Reproduce & Distribute -----

Internment, or imprisonment without charge or trial, is often used by governments as an emergency measure during states of war and amounts to the actual suspension of civil liberties. For example, the government of South Africa and the military government of Chile under Pinochet both practiced political detention without trial or charge, accompanied with torture, as documented by Amnesty International.

Similarly, the former government of Argentina was well known for its use of political detention in which, between 1975 and 1979, thousands of people "disappeared" who were actually detained without formal arrest or charge, denied all contact with family, etc., and underwent torture. In each case the government systematically imprisoned those individuals it "suspected" as favoring the opposition through armed activity or mere peaceful political activity. In the case of Northern Ireland, internment/detention is also part of the British war tactics.

With the initial return of internment on August 9, 1971, the objective was to remove IRA suspects and sympathizers from the streets (Internment: Detention Without Trial in Northern Ireland, Professor David Lowry). Internment was not new to Northern Ireland, as the 1922 Special Powers Act, renewed yearly until made permanent in 1933, invested the police with the power to "search, arrest and imprison without warrant or trial and gave the Minister of Home Affairs the power to intern any citizen indefinitely without the right to appeal or the right to know why he was being detained" (Britain in Ireland: The Facts, Maurice Burke). The British government used internment in Northern Ireland in the 1920s and again during the years 1956-1962.

Concerning internment of 1971, author Anthony Jennings writes, in his book Justice Under Fire: The Abuse of Civil Rights in Northern Ireland, "There were immediate and widespread complaints about the discriminatory use of internment against Republicans, about the failure to distinguish between involvement in political campaigns and involvement in violent activity, and about the systematic ill-treatment of suspects during the initial arrest operation."

The British government's 1971 Compton Report documents such ill-treatment of internees. Similarly, the government of the Republic of Ireland filed a complaint against Britain in December 1971 to the European Commission of Human Rights at Strasbourg. Seven years later, the Court of Human Rights declared Britain's systematic ill-treatment of internees "inhuman and degrading" (Disillusioned Decades, Tim Pat Coogan).

Since Britain received bad publicity internationally over internment, Lord Diplock was appointed to assess the British security operations in Northern Ireland. The 1972 Diplock Report included the following recommendations, which became law in 1973 in the Northern Ireland (Emergency Powers) Act: 1). the continuation of internment without trial, and 2). the establishment of special courts in which convictions could be more readily obtained (Jennings).

The subsequent Diplock Court system included one judge and no jury, and suspended the safeguards of common law in order to ensure quick and easy convictions; in effect, instituting mock, or show, trials. The new Act accepted as evidence confessions "previously disallowed by judges due to police misconduct" (Torture in the Eighties, Amnesty International). The courts relied on "confessions," since it was generally too difficult to obtain actual physical evidence and the testimony of witnesses, now that evidence was necessary within the new system of trial and charge.

The new Act also omitted Diplock's recommendation that the threat of physical violence be prohibited. According to Amnesty

International, "the omission could only encourage the view that a degree of coercion would be tolerated." Accordingly, the introduction of both RUC crime squads formed to specialize in interrogation and the opening of the new centralized interrogation centers in Castlereagh and Armagh in 1976 helped ensure the availability of confessions. In the first half of 1978, 75-80% of the convictions for politically motivated offences were based entirely or primarily on confessions.

Around the same time, the Prevention of Terrorism Act was passed and, along with the NI (Emergency Powers) Act, it replaced the Special Powers Act that "legalized" detention without trial. Under the new legislation, upon arrest a suspect had no rights and could be held incommunicado up to seven days, without charge, all the while interrogated and tortured (Professor David Lowry, US Congressional Record, 8/1/80).

The 1975 Gardiner Report concluded that internment could not pass for a long term policy since the large number of "Special Category" (political) prisoners, (then 1,200 out of 2,848), proved to be an international embarrassment. (Before internment began in 1971, the total number of prisoners was 727). Gardiner recommended redefining these political prisoners as criminals. Therefore, anyone imprisoned after March 1, 1976 would be treated as an ordinary criminal, denied the rights of political status granted those in prison since before March 1, 1976. Thus, old internment ended and new internment began, giving the accused a "trial" and a new criminal identity.

Gardiner's recommendation of "criminalization" was part of the Criminalization, Ulsterization, Normalization project put into action by the British government in 1976 which increased reliance on local police, (RUC and UDR), and decreased the use of British troops so as to portray the conflict as a civil war rather than a colonial war (Ulsterization); and strived to minimize the disruption of normal life (Normalization) by the war.

Part of the success of the special courts system was due to the new internal directive which differentiated between the "interview" and the "interrogation" of a suspect. While the interview of a suspect would lead to specific criminal charges and operated under the common law protection of Judge's Rules on the admissibility of evidence, the interrogation was used primarily for questioning and intelligence gathering and did not operate under such common law protection.

According to Amnesty International, two thirds of the arrests made under emergency legislation resulted in release without charge. Similarly, in 1976 assaults during interrogation "increased by approximately 85% over 1975, whereas arrests increased by only 49%." In 1978 AI confirmed complaints of torture during interrogation, stating that "physical and mental abuse by interrogators was the rule, rather than the exception" in the process of obtaining confessions (Irish Press, 5/6/78).

Whereas new internment, with the brutal interrogations, forced confessions, and show trials, has replaced the internationally embarrassing accumulation of untried and uncharged political prisoners of the old internment of 1971 - 1975, the same abuse of human and civil rights continues. In 1991 the Diplock court system still prevails alongside the common practice of internment by remand in which individuals awaiting trial are held in custody, sometimes up to two or three years.

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THATCHER AND THE MAGNA CARTA

by Ned Delaney, *Indiana State PEC Director*

On Sunday, August 5, 1990, former English Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher addressed more than 3000 people at the Aspen Institute in Aspen, Colorado on her vision of the "new Europe." It is interesting to note that, just months before, representatives of the PEC commenced MacBride activities in Colorado -- this writer also having been in Aspen last March.

This annual symposium presented Mrs. Thatcher with its Statesman Award, which recognized the prime minister's long reign and her "commitment to democracy." The Prime Minister referred to King John of England and his grant of the Magna Carta on June 15, 1215. She proposed a European Magna Carta, which would "entrench for every European citizen, including those of the Soviet Union, the basic rights we in the West take for granted." Those rights would include: the freedoms of speech, worship, access to law and the marketplace, and the freedom to hold democratic elections, own property, maintain nationhood and remain free of "fear of an overmighty state."

Whatever Thatcher's motives, it must be recognized that the UK has neither a written Bill of Rights nor a written constitution. Supreme power rests with "the Queen in Parliament." The House of Commons and the House of Lords must consent to royal decrees, which become the rule of the land. It is now accepted, however, that the monarch cannot refuse legislation which the two Houses of Parliament have drawn up.

The Magna Carta is based on the charter of liberties issued in the 12th century by King Henry II and "is similar to other charters defining people's rights granted in other parts of Europe about this same time." The Magna Carta regulated relations between the "King" and the people. It is significant to note that the origins of HABEAS CORPUS, trial by jury, have their roots within Clauses 39 and 40 of the Magna Carta: no freeman should be imprisoned or dispossessed without lawful judgement by his peers or by the law of the land and the King is not to sell, deny or delay rights or justice to anyone.

In 1628 the Petition of Right was initiated, which limited the powers of the monarchy against arbitrary imprisonment and taxation without Parliamentary authority. When the English Crown passed to William of Orange in 1687, Parliament issued the Declaration of Rights, which was incorporated a year later into the Bill of Rights. This Bill of Rights, among other things, declared that it was illegal to raise a standing army in peacetime unless Parliament consented, that there should be free elections for Members of Parliament, that there should be freedom of speech in Parliament, that excessive bail or fines ought not be imposed, or cruel and unusual punishments inflicted, and that juries should be properly empaneled.

How all this relates to Northern Ireland is another matter. It is relevant to note that "there have been no significant general documents on human rights issued by the British Parliament since 1688." Instead, Britain has opted to protect human rights through a series of Acts dating from 1640. (Each Parliament has the power to repeal any Act previously passed.) Thus, the law of HABEAS CORPUS is embodied in a series of Acts dating from 1640. The Act of Settlement of 1701 protects judges from political interference. A series of Representation of the People Acts since 1832 protects the right to vote. Anti-discrimination is addressed by the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the Race Relations Act of 1976.

It is also significant to note that the UK participates in international efforts to protect human rights, but none of the

international agreements to which it is a party have been absorbed into UK domestic law, except the United Nations Convention on Genocide and the United Nations Convention on Torture. These exceptions are significant because they entail no changes in existing UK domestic law.

Current policy toward human rights and civil liberties in the UK can be summed up by saying that people are allowed to do anything that is not expressly prohibited by law. This is somewhat misleading in that many freedoms are simply not recognized within UK law. Examples include: the freedom of information, the right to privacy, the right to strike and freedom from discrimination. There are also many social, economic and cultural freedoms which are completely ignored. The Acts of Parliament do not state any fundamental freedoms. In reality, considerable restrictions exist on people's freedoms and many gaps lie in the rights and protections conferred by the legal system. Therefore, how can the prime minister envision rights for the European community when they simply do not exist at home?

CREDITS: Committee on the Administration of Justice (Northern Ireland Civil Liberties Council), MAKING RIGHTS COUNT, published October 1990.

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ACTION REQUEST #1

by Jim Monaghan, Florida

A petition campaign is well underway by the *United Nations For Ireland International* directed to the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN). The petition calls upon the Secretary General to initiate an investigation into British colonial presence in Ireland. Similar requests have been made by the *New York Brehon Law Society*.

The UN has an obligation to institute such an investigation, more so now with the dramatic changes taking place in Eastern Europe. The UN cannot continue to turn a blind eye to British human rights violations in northern Ireland. It is appropriate that we begin writing to the UN requesting an investigation.

All are urged to write to: Hon. Javier Perez DeCuellar, Secretary General, United Nations Headquarters, New York, NY 10017. Urge your family, friends, business associates, etc. to do the same. For your convenience we print below a sample letter to be used as a guide or you can simply rewrite it as is. **When we work together we are effective!**

Dear Mr. Secretary General:

I call upon you to initiate an United Nations investigation into British colonial presence and human rights violations in northern Ireland. British presence there is illegal.

Please do not allow the British government to dictate UN policy regarding Northern Ireland. I look forward to your response on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,
signature

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