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## American Irish Newsletter - September 1990

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN Irish Political Education Committee

Volume 15, Number 9

September 1990

NEWS BITS by Kathy Regan

An American delegation protesting British human and civil rights violations and colonialism in Northern Ireland demonstrated at the recent Economic Summit in Houston, Texas. The protestors led by George Morrissey and Ken MacDonnell of the Texas Irish Association (both members of the PEC) demonstrated outside the Astro Village Hotel. The demonstration, an embarrassment to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, was well covered by the world-wide media and lasted one and a half hours. One of the placards used carried the message "Ireland -- Europe's Last Captive Nation".

The delegation distributed PEC *Reproduce & Distribute* articles at the World Press Table in Press Headquarters Room, in the Hotel, in conference rooms and on the street.

Ken MacDonnell participated as a panelist on radio KPFT during which he discussed the case of Joe Doherty, economics and prison conditions in Northern Ireland. (PEC 7/90)

A **lasting agreement** concerning Ireland's relations with Britain based upon an internal arrangement within the six counties which involves little change for the system from 1920 until the fall of Stormont is what Paisley, Molyneaux, and Thatcher want. Thatcher does not envisage any sort of arrangement which involves the withdrawal of British forces and British government from Ireland. These factors are often glossed over or fudged, but they are still facts. (Sunday Press, 7/22/90)....**The European Parliament's** legal affairs committee has authorized a study into the case of the Birmingham Six. Their representative will visit the United Kingdom and establish contact with the British Home Secretary, prison authorities, and the prisoners' lawyers to examine the fairness of the convictions and to look at English procedures for judicial review in the case of new evidence. (Cork Examiner 7/5/90)....**John Morrison**, former deputy governor at Wormwood Scrubs Prison in London, was ordained to the priesthood and left six empty seats at the ceremony as a show of support for the Birmingham Six. During his time in the prison service, he met with all of the Six and says that they are completely innocent....Organizers of the Roundwood Park Irish Festival, traditionally the largest outdoor gathering of the Irish in London, refused to allow a stall in support of the Birmingham Six. Attendance at the festival was down from previous years after people were urged to boycott the festival in protest. (Irish Post, 7/7/90)....**The British Home Secretary**, Douglas Waddington, is to consider the claim in ITV's *World in Action* program by a former member of the IRA who says he took part in the Birmingham pub bombings and that the six Irishmen convicted of the offense are innocent. The man gave detailed descriptions of the placement of the bombs and believed that telephone warnings would allow enough time for the pubs to be cleared. He said of the Birmingham Six,

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## NOTICE

Sandy Carlson, PEC Student Activities Coordinator, will be in Ireland until August 1991. Sandy will be conducting research on behalf of the PEC.

Her activities as Coordinator have been temporarily transferred to Stephanie Finucane. Correspondence formerly directed to Sandy should be directed to Stephanie at the Stony Point, New York, office during this time.

## JOE DOHERTY UPDATE

In reversing Attorney General Richard Thornburgh's denial of Joe Doherty's motion to reopen his asylum case, the 3-judge panel in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd District stated:

"The issue, then, is whether the attorney general based his discretionary decision on "legitimate concerns" of asylum. Despite the attorney general's broad discretion to base other types of immigration decisions on factors such as the government's political and foreign policy interests, our examination of the asylum statute convinces us that congress intended to prevent such factors from influencing asylum cases. In exercising his discretion in this case, Attorney General Thornburgh relied on just such improper factors. We therefore must reverse his order as to the asylum claim as well....

"By defining eligibility in politically neutral terms, congress made it clear that factors such as the government's geopolitical and foreign policy interests were not legitimate concerns of asylum...." This decision allows Doherty to apply for asylum from the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Congressional Representatives Dennis M. Hertel (D-MICH), Barney Frank (D-MA), Chuck Douglas (R-NH), Edward F. Feighan (D-OH), Harold E. Ford (D-TN), George Brown (D-CA) and Pete Stark (D-CA) have endorsed HCR 62 for Joe Doherty. There are now 132 co-sponsors (122 Congress & 10 U. S. Senate). The resolutions will remain pending until Congress adjourns.

**California members** are urged to write Senator Pete Wilson (R-CA), candidate for Governor, (U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510) and ask that he co-sponsor SCR 62 and the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Practices Act (MacBride Principles).

## PEC 15TH ANNIVERSARY TESTIMONIAL DINNER

Make your reservations now. Send \$40 per person payable to AIPEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980. Honored guests are Police Officer Steven McDonald and Dr. Frank Holt. For information call (914) 947-2726.



## MAKE MACBRIDE OUR PRIORITY

by John Finucane, *National President*

A major obstacle to ending British human and civil rights abuses and violence in Northern Ireland, is biased media coverage in the US. Because Americans are kept ignorant about British injustice, such as employment discrimination, they do not rally against it. They hear about IRA actions, but not about British injustice. An informed American public will oppose British injustice, just as they oppose Apartheid in South Africa.

Our most proven approach and the approach **most feared by the British government**, to winning public support and to combat media bias, is the MacBride Principles Campaign.

No matter what issue we consider our priority, we must all become active, in some way, in informing the **general public** (not just the Irish) on the MacBride Principles. This campaign gives us access to America's most influential decision makers. We must take advantage of this golden opportunity!

An example of what can be done is the recent work by Nancy

Love, Michael Gordy, Larry Nelson and George O'Neill, all delegates at the recent National Education Association (NEA) convention. They helped educate over 8000 delegates which resulted in the NEA's July 8, 1990 adoption of the MacBride Principles as proposed by Nancy Love. The NEA is the largest labor organization in the US with over 2 million members.

**Do not think that because your state has passed MacBride legislation that your work is finished.** There is much that still has to be done including passing Federal legislation. To achieve this we will need the support of our federal representatives. They must be pressured by local governments and political parties, community groups, etc.. Also, work has to be intensified in the states that have not yet adopted MacBride.

**You can start now to build pressure:** write to your Congressional Representative (House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515) and ask that he/she co-sponsor the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Practices Act sponsored by Congressman Hamilton Fish and that in their response they include an update on the status of that bill; contact your local political and community leaders; and begin educating the public by ordering copies of the PEC's MacBride Principles brochure (black on white copies at \$.05 ea. or the better quality blue on white copies at \$.10 ea.) Make checks payable to AIPEC. For information call (914) 947-2726.

### The American Irish PEC

founded 1975

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

### FROM THE EDITOR

*The most effective action we can take to end British colonialism in Northern Ireland and its inherent injustices is to promote the MacBride Principles in the United States. This is the general consensus of the nationalist community leaders we met on our recent trip there. The MacBride Principles have put more pressure on the British than any other campaign. It has even put the British government on the defensive.*

*What is most encouraging is the fact that the British government is under intense pressure, and that that pressure is the result of the work of a comparatively small group of determined Americans who, for the most part, are of Irish heritage.*

*Although we are effective, we are not yet completely successful. That is because we have not yet generated sufficient support within the American community. We have "Irishized" the issue of British colonialism in Ireland and have thereby isolated our movement and the issues we represent.*

*What would happen if we opened up our movement to the general public in America -- if we Americanized the issue of British colonialism?*

*This is exactly what has made the campaign to stop Apartheid in South Africa so popular and successful in the United States. Apartheid is an American issue and not a "Black" issue. It is an issue about injustice, which is exactly what British oppression is all about. Many Americans, if genuinely educated on the issues, would welcome the opportunity to become involved. Especially with the MacBride Principles Campaign.*

*Perhaps the time has come to Americanize the issue of British colonialism and oppression in Ireland! Perhaps it is time for American Irish activist organizations and committees to unite as one and create one mainstream American organization open to people of all religious and ethnic backgrounds!*

*Please send us your opinions on this important subject!*

## FROM THE NORTH

by Rev. Des Wilson, *Director of Conway Mill, Belfast*

Decent citizens never like to believe that everything possible has been done to get what they need, that all has failed and so from here on out only force will do.

But decent people do sometimes reach that point. Pacifists in Britain have been asking themselves for a long time at what point they conclude that all peaceful methods have been used to block Thatcherism's worst excesses, and all have failed. If they come to this conclusion, what do pacifists do then? It is a dilemma which many people in Britain are facing for the first time, hoping against hope that they can change the ruling party at the next election and in this way solve their moral problem.

At least they still have that possibility left. People in the north of Ireland have been facing the same problem for decades. Most of them have responded by inventing new methods to deal with injustice when traditional methods have been tried and have failed. A time comes, however, when even the most inventive of peaceful people reach the end of the line and can invent no more.

In Ireland, literally every known peaceful method of creating justice in society has been tried, as more than one English writer has pointed out. New "initiatives" have been created by the British government on average once every two years; all have failed. The civil rights movement of the sixties was beaten into the ground, coming after an ecumenical movement which not only failed to produce peace but was made to fail by those whose vested interest in a divided Christendom made it necessary to prevent the dissolution of old barriers.

G.K. Chesterton once said that Christianity had not been tried and found wanting, but rather had not been wanted and so had not been tried. It was a clever saying, but like much else that Chesterton said, unreal. In Ireland as elsewhere, everything, including Christian principle and practice, was tried but proved a failure in face of a politically hopeless position and could never enact or even influence legislation, still went into a parliamentary opposition and played a parliamentary game for more than fifty years. As oppression increased, they had no recourse to the press, to the courts, to international opinion. For decades nothing worked as the stranglehold of strong government on weak people not only remained in place, but increased in strength.

Anyone who reads the history of writing by black people in South Africa must be impressed by the similarity with what happened in the north of Ireland. People complained, they documented, they wrote novels, poetry, plays, reports. As time went on, the mood of the writing changed from complaint to assertion, and from assertion to assertion of rights, to a determined onslaught on vicious government, powerful statements of the dignity of the oppressed; finally, it became a definition of power.

Each of these stages in black writing, especially from the nineteen forties, met with official opposition, just as similar writing in Ireland was opposed and declared subversive.

When the oppressed had writers, novelists, poets, playwrights, on their side, the game was up. No government can resist when oppressed people come to that point. It is only a matter of time.

## DO WE NEED DISUNITY WHILE IRELAND'S PEOPLE SUFFER ?

by Kevin P. Murphy, *PEC Massachusetts State Director*

If a poll was taken amongst people concerned with Ireland's struggle to be free from British terror, what would their primary concern be? For many, it would probably be disunity within the American Irish community and Irish in Ireland.

Recently in an American Irish weekly newspaper appeared a story about how Irish police (Gardai) are concerned about a large wave of British soccer fans who are going to visit Dublin for a match. Despite the pleas of Irish citizens to ban the English fans, because of their worldwide reputation as violence prone, the Irish officials refused a ban. They did not want to be accused of being "anti-British". Despite centuries of British atrocities against the Irish, which continues today!

Obviously, Irish government leaders still have a profound inferiority complex, or is it a slave mentality, when it comes to dealing with the British.

This divisive inferiority complex is thriving amongst many of our status seeking, but mis-informed American Irish, many of whom occupy high political office.

In British occupied Northern Ireland, the Irish native is daily harassed, beaten, imprisoned, and even murdered by British forces. Yet we have powerful people like Speaker of the House Tom Foley and US Senators Edward Kennedy and Daniel Moynihan ignoring this reality. Why do they set such a bad cowardly example for other Americans of Irish heritage? Is protecting their "privileged positions" more important than opposing injustice in their ancestral homeland? Of course, on election day they become Irish for their Irish constituents. Their "blarney" is all it takes to get some American Irish votes.

This disunity is very damaging within the thinking American Irish community. While many, like PEC members, are working through the American democratic process to end Ireland's "British problem", others, who take their cue from the likes of Foley, Kennedy and Moynihan, turn a blind eye to injustice in Ireland. They are in a defacto manner supporting British terror in Northern Ireland.

We as concerned Americans who care for American ideals of freedom and democracy should urge these fellow Americans to read the facts.

The decent citizens' tragedy is that so much energy is wasted pursuing peaceful methods which government destroys. Neither citizens nor government can afford that kind of waste. A positive gain, however, is that as the struggle between vicious government and decent citizens goes on, the citizens become more and more inventive--plays, poems, novels--and new political methods appear which might never otherwise have seen the light of day. New political methods and new literary devices are created by people trying desperately to keep from tipping over that last brink into armed conflict. It is tragic, too, that people fail and armed conflict becomes inevitable.

To blame the citizens for their tragedy at that stage is to avoid the truth and to insult their dignity.

In South Africa, in Ireland, and in many other places, we have made that mistake far too often.



## THE EARLY IRISH IN MINNESOTA

by Margaret E. Fitzgerald, Ph.D.

In the 1980 census, Minnesota ranked No. 25, or midway, among the fifty states in the number of respondents indicating Irish as a specific ancestry. This was only 16.29 percent of the state's population. In comparison, Oklahoma was No. 1 with 31.20 percent; Massachusetts was No. 2 with 30.89 percent; and Arkansas was No. 3 with 28.6 percent.

Nevertheless, 16 percent is a respectable figure in a state not usually connected with the Irish in standard histories. According to the census, those indicating Irish ancestry formed the third largest ethnic group in the state, ranking behind the Germans and the Norwegians.

The earliest Irish in Minnesota may have been Culdee monks or followers of St. Brendan the Navigator, who landed on the east coast of what was not yet called America, penetrated the forests, and followed the rivers. Some controversial evidence of Ogham inscriptions and Celtic drawings have been found, but a pre-Columban presence of the Irish in Minnesota is only an interesting hypothesis.

There is, however, firm evidence of Irish trappers, traders, and explorers in the 18th and 19th centuries. French missionaries and other French settlers reported finding these wandering Gaels living alone, living with the French, and living with Indians. Their impact as Irish people was negligible, and they became only a memory when someone of mixed ancestry identified himself as the son or grandson of an Irishman.

The real history of the Irish in Minnesota began in the 1820s and 1830s, when Irish lumberjacks came from Maine and New Brunswick. They liked the fertile farmland in the valleys and the rich timber in the woods, and they brought their families west to make permanent homes. These settlers were double emigrants or "two-boat people" who spent a period in the eastern United States or Canada before going west.

These Irish pioneers often settled on land that they could not own because it was delegated to the Indians. But their heritage from Ireland was one of working land that could not be theirs, and their experience in New Brunswick was one of leasing land from Indian tribes, so they resigned themselves temporarily to squatter status.

In 1837, the United States signed a treaty with the Indians that opened land in eastern Minnesota to white ownership. The harsh winters discouraged many of the Irish-born, but the second generation who had grown up in equally harsh Maine and the Maritimes fell more easily into the eastern pattern of part-time farming and part-time lumbering.

Settlers were drawn also from soldiers at Fort Ripley and Fort Snelling who had completed their enlistments. In 1839, two Irish soldiers, John Hays from Waterford and Edward Phelan from Derry, were the first to take up land claims in the area of what is now downtown St. Paul. Two years later, Phelan was tried for the murder of Hays, but was released after a jury disagreed on the evidence.

In 1852, Dennis, Thomas, and Walter Doheny founded a farming settlement in the Minnesota River valley about sixty miles southwest of St. Paul. Since this was rich farmland, they were soon joined by almost two hundred more Irish settlers.

The first formally planned Irish settlements were made in

the 1850s by Irish-born General James Shields, a hero of the Mexican War. Shields also served as a general in the Civil War. He has earned the distinction of being, to this day, the only person to serve as a United States Senator from three different states. With varying success, Shields founded Erin, Kilkenny, Montgomery, Faribault, and Shieldsville.

Under the Homestead Act of 1862, a quarter section of 160 acres or a lesser section of 80 acres could be acquired at little or no cost by a settler who would live on the land for five years. Settlers could add to their homestead grants under timber-culture and preemption grants. In many territories, land sharks and shady practices had prevailed, but the physical conditions of the homestead areas of Minnesota were generally such that a single settler could not acquire enough public land to make it worthwhile to trade in it.

The promise of land of their own brought from the cities Irish who had been rural in their native country. One such family was that of James and Margaret Tyrrell, both born in Wexford, who had been married in Wilmette, Illinois, in 1856. In 1863, the Tyrrells purchased at \$1.25 an acre an 80-acre section in Franconia Township in the St. Croix valley north of St. Paul. Margaret's uncle, Joseph Shannon, had settled there several years before, and Margaret's parents, John and Betsy O'Leary, and some O'Leary uncles and aunts also took up land in the community. James Tyrrell's older brother Thomas would come a few years later.

Life was hard. These pioneers from Wilmette and Evanston did not have the comparative convenience of the Conestogas, but used smaller wagons to facilitate breaking through the wilderness of thick forests. James Tyrrell had no horses, but used borrowed oxen to haul his wife, children, and provisions to his homestead land. The winters were bitter and long, more so than further south where the Doheny brothers and General Shields had settled their families. The seasons were described as "one month of August and eleven months of winter."

Amidst the Swedes and Germans who still spoke in foreign languages, James Tyrrell had the comfort of an extended family group in the old Irish clan tradition. Family closeness was limited by the individual back-breaking struggle to clear one's land and by the months of being snowbound, but there were still occasions of getting together to raise a house, to uproot a huge resistant tree, and to help with childbirth.

It took Tyrrell two years to fell enough trees to begin even a small subsistence vegetable garden. He had no farm tools, other than a grub hoe for digging, in the first year. He had no way to plant except to spread seeds between trees in spots that would get some sun. Priority was given to building a rough log cabin before the first winter set in. Three more children were born in this cabin before he was able to finish an eleven-room house where five more children would be born (the first child born in the farmhouse was the grandmother of the author).

Planners such as General Shields and pioneers such as the Doheny brothers and the Tyrrell-Shannon-O'Leary extended family prepared the way for future Irish settlements. The most important of these resulted from the colonization plans of Kilkenny-born Bishop John Ireland in the 1870s and 1880s. But that is a story for another time--as is the story of how St. Paul became such a hub of Irish activity that an Irish-born mayor was elected in 1878.

## A SILENCED PEOPLE: BRITISH CENSORSHIP

by Sandy Carlson

On October 19, 1988, the British Home Secretary issued notices to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) stating, "I hereby request the [BBC and IBA] to refrain at all times from sending any broadcast matter which consists of or includes any words spoken...by a person who...represents an organization...below, or [when] the words support or solicit or invite support for such an organization." The ban affects the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the youth and women's wings of the IRA, the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), the defunct Saor Eire, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), and the Red Hand Commandos. The ban also affects two legal political parties: Sinn Fein and Republican Sinn Fein, and the legal Loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defense Association (UDA).

Broadcasters are permitted to transmit voice broadcasts only three weeks before Westminster elections and when the banned representatives are speaking on constituency matters. The British government has the power to revoke broadcasters' licenses if they violate the ban. The ban applies to statements made in other countries as well as in parliaments other than Westminster.

The British government could impose the ban on the BBC and IBA by powers conferred by Section 29(3) of the Broadcasting Act of 1981 and Clause 13(4) of the Charter License and Agreement of April 2, 1981, respectively. The Home Secretary can at any time by notice in writing require the BBC and IBA to refrain from broadcasting any specified matter. This power is not limited in scope or subject or by parliamentary power.

The British courts refused an application for judicial review of the ban on the grounds that Parliament could not have intended to pass a law allowing the Home Secretary the power to violate Article 10 of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The court stated that it would not arrogate to itself administrative power by overturning the ban. In handing down its decision, the court stated that because the ban affected both sides in the Irish conflict, it did not affect broadcasters' impartiality.

According to the Home Secretary, the language of the ban was based on that of the Republic of Ireland's Section 31 censorship legislation. The current version of Section 31 prohibits interviews and reports of interviews with the IRA, Sinn Fein, Republican Sinn Fein, the UDA, the INLA, and any organizations proscribed in Northern Ireland. Section 31 prohibits party political broadcasts, election coverage, and the transmission of actuality which includes members of banned parties from inside the Irish Parliament and the European Parliament.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), which represents more than 150,000 journalists in 44 national trade unions worldwide, blames the Thatcher government for attempting to control the media and the press. The IFJ is concerned that journalists become implicated in censorship, particularly through the D-Notice system (through which journalists are made privy to classified information as long as they agree not to publish it) and the Lobby system (through which political journalists are briefed by officials as long as they agree not to publish the information).

The ban has inspired self-censorship among broadcasters. For example, a video of a song by the *Police* was banned because, according to the *Times*, it included "a collage of Ulster street scenes incorporating urchins, graffiti, Saracens, and soldiers...." When Paul Foot asked in November, 1988 to hear "Kelly the Boy from Killane" (about the 1798 uprising) by the Dubliners, he was

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told by the radio announcer that the song was banned.

Another example of self-censorship is the BBC's cancellation in May 1989 of an interview it had arranged with Margie Bernard, author of *Daughters of Derry*. The book was too political.

In November 1988 Channel 4 announced that it was unable to broadcast *Mother Ireland* because it contained interviews with Irish Republican women. The cancellation came after the film makers refused to make Channel 4's requested changes to the parts of the film which included Mairead Farrell, whom the British Special Air Service executed in Gibraltar in March 1988. However, the executives at Channel 4 approved *Death of a Terrorist*, a documentary about Mairead Farrell which reflects British policy regarding Northern Ireland.

Before the transmission of *Death on the Rock*, a Thames Television documentary of the British-government's murder of three unarmed Irish nationalists in the colony of Gibraltar, Lord Thomson of the IBA asked the Foreign Secretary to postpone the broadcast until after the inquest, for which no date was set. Thomson sought an injunction against the program on the grounds that it would prejudice the inquest. Fortunately, the inquiry into Thames vindicated Thames Television, for Lord Windlesham and Q.C. Richard Rampton stated in their report that *Death on the Rock* would not prejudice the inquest.

At a funeral of persons who were murdered by the Loyalist Michael Stone at the funerals of the Gibraltar Three, two undercover policemen who knowingly sped into the funeral cortege at 40 m.p.h. were murdered. After the funeral, the British induced journalists to hand over their film to the government. The British government later accused certain men in the photographs of the murder, thereby calling journalists as witnesses in the case.

The British government have consistently and thoroughly enforced the ban since they implemented it. Difficulties arise, however, when a broadcaster must determine whether a person is a supporter or may make a statement in support of the banned organizations. The only safeguards available to broadcasters are prerecording messages for self-censorship or declining certain interviews altogether. Thus, where state censorship is weak, self-censorship is strong. The two work together to create an environment in which balanced reporting and open political debate are completely debased. Freedom of expression has "become a casualty by degrees. It has become the cumulative effect of many often ill-considered measures, pressures, and exigencies resulting from the conflict which have seriously eroded that freedom," according to the *Article 19 Censorship Report*.

The British government will be opening a Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington, DC, because "the voice of Northern Ireland is not heard." We who are denied balanced, objective reporting will now be confronted with an office that hopes to counterbalance some U.S. views that Britain is "an occupational force, instead of a peace keeping force in the province." Thus, the same government that stifles the media and prevents fair and objective reporting is coming to the U.S. to hand deliver the facts of Northern Ireland life as they process or create them in London.

**JOIN** The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC). For information call toll-free 800 777-6807 or write: AIPEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980.

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## BRITAIN: FRIEND OR FOE

by Bob West, Illinois PEC State Director

Americans should not be shocked by the lack of genuine support from our ally, Britain, which claims to be our "truest ally", "greatest friend", etc. Our ally's actions do not always agree with its pronouncements, for the British support us only if doing so does not conflict with their own interests.

In 1946, the British sold 55 jet engines to the Soviets, who later used them in MIG-15 fighters against Americans in Korea. During the Korean War, we sent Land Lease wheat to Britain, who resold it for cash to our enemy, North Korea. In addition, British mortars were captured from the North Koreans.

During the Cuban missile crisis, Britain was the first to ignore our blockade of trade with Cuba.

During the Vietnam War, Britain traded with the Communist North Vietnamese, supplying arms and materials while Americans were being killed and maimed. Only the Soviet Union had more ships calling on Haiphong Harbor. South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines sent troops to our aid.

In 1973, during the Arab-Israeli War and Arab oil embargo, Britain refused to let U.S. planes refuel while supplying Israel with urgently needed supplies.

During the Iranian hostage crisis, Britain traded with Iran and refused to hide escaped Americans that our Canadian friends willingly concealed and smuggled to safety. The *Chicago Tribune*, (1/20/86), reported on producer Les Harris's television documentary, *Hostage in Iran*, who said several hostages reported that the five Americans under British protection were ordered by British diplomats to leave the British Embassy in Iran. "The British were frightened that, if the Americans were caught, the enormous trade between Britain and Iran would have been lost," Harris said. "So [the Americans] went to the Canadians."

In a March 1983 speech, Ronald Reagan cited the Marxist regime's expansion of Grenada's Port Salines Airport, including a massive runway, as a potential threat to American security. In a story featured in the *Charleston New & Courier* (10/27/84), the author, Prime Minister Mary Eugenia Charles of Dominica, leading spokesperson for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, confirmed that prior to our October 1983 Grenada rescue mission, Gov. Paul Scoon, the British Governor-General of Grenada, asked the U.S. to intervene rather than his own country, much to Britain's chagrin. As citizens of the Commonwealth, Grenadians were entitled to the full protection of the Crown. Britain vilified us for the Grenada rescue. This demonstrated Britain's indifference not only to U.S. interests in the Caribbean but also to the protection of those that it considers British citizens.

Among non-communist European countries "...only the British lack guaranteed liberties at home", (*Wall Street Journal* 10/21/85), The British have no written constitution, no catalog of freedoms, recognize no supreme law, and have no inalienable rights. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "Unlike the U.S., [Britain] permits no judicial review. Neither the Magna Carta nor any other document guarantees the rights of ordinary people against an act of Parliament. The British system is founded on the legislature's absolute power..."

Even though Britain failed to aid Grenada, she immediately reasserted authority there. After 19 Americans died securing Grenada, the *New York Daily News* reported on November 5, 1983, that British authorities forced 27 soldiers of the American 82nd Airborne to take an oath of allegiance to the queen. Later, news

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organizations discovered construction of the Port Salines Airport by Cubans was being partially supervised by the British Plessey Company, a British government-subsidized firm.

At the outset of the Falklands crisis, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, then American Ambassador to the United Nations, commented on the extent of British influence in the U.S. by suggesting the U.S. State Department be disbanded and replaced by the dictates of the British Home Office! *AND* (*Europa Korrespondenz* 6/82) revealed Dennis Thatcher as main shareholder of the Falkland Company. The U.S. jeopardized its relations with South America when it sided with Britain during the Falkland/Malvinas crisis, in contravention of the Monroe Doctrine and O.A.S. treaties.

To increase their already excessive and undeserved influence in our country, Britain, in collaboration with the Reagan Administration, wished to create the perception of its dramatic support for some aspect of American policy. To accomplish this, English-based U.S. F-111s were permitted to join U.S. Navy carrier-based aircraft in our April 15, 1986 air raid on Libya. Navy aircraft (minutes away) accomplished their mission without loss, while England-based U.S. F-111s sent 1,400 miles, had a 33 percent failure rate and cost two American F-111 airmen their lives. Was the astonishingly high rate of F-111 failure the predictable consequence of driving aircraft and crews beyond the limits of endurance? Navy sources said their aircraft, equally capable and readily available, alone could have carried out the entire raid.

After the Libyan raid, our media and the Administration tried to canonize Thatcher and Britain's government for their support. Before canonization occurs, however, Americans should know that on April 16, the *London Daily Telegraph*, closely aligned with Thatcher's government, stated, "It is almost certain that the radar equipment used to track American fighter-bombers, and to programme the weapons used against them had been installed and calibrated by British technicians." The *Telegraph* also emphasized the importance of British goods exported to Libya (almost 500 million dollars worth in 1985).

In April, WBBM Radio Chicago reported radar that guided missiles against U.S. forces, knocked out during the Libyan raid, were already repaired by British technicians. Clearly, Britain has no friends, only interests. When such interests are best served by being on both sides of a conflict, then why should morality interfere?

On August 19, 1986, William V. Kennedy, former strategic analyst with the U.S. Army War College, reported in the *Chicago Tribune* that Pentagon officials attributed the decision to use F-111s to civilian officials. "Do you really think that any military officer would have asked a pilot to fly all that way?" one officer said. "I think those planners should be...strapped into those cockpits." Britain's influence thus influenced Administration decisions that "gravely miscalculated the human and strategic results of misuses of F-111's."

We support our ally, Britain, but the British do not support us unless doing so is in their own interest. We saved Britain in WW1, WW2, and in the Falkland/Malvinas, yet we continue to endure their opportunistic duplicity.

**JOIN** The American Irish Political Education Committee (PEC). For information call toll-free 800 777-6807 or write: AIPEC, Malloy Building, Stony Point, NY 10980.

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**OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS**

by Kevin P. Murphy, PEC Massachusetts State Director

Members from New Jersey, New York, Florida, and Connecticut have informed the P.E.C. of a gross insult aimed at the American Irish community. **The Gift Horse**, a golf equipment store in Bay Head, New Jersey, distributes a mailing catalogue and letter to its customers. In the letter from **William H. Peters** of the company, Peters advertises for a Golf Cart Poncho. At the end of the letter, written in bold print are the words, "**SO EASY EVEN IRISH PEOPLE CAN DO IT.**" That statement belongs to the 1840s. It is strongly urged that all members write to: Mr William Peters, THE GIFT HORSE, P.O. Box 191, Bay Head, N.J., 08742; Phone: (201)295-8991. Let Mr Peters know that the American Irish are insulted by his bigoted statement.

Member James Monaghan of Florida informs us that a slur towards the American Irish community occurred on July 16, 1990 on the Neil Rogers radio show on Miami station WIOD. While on the air, Mr Rogers described Irish people as drunken and dim-witted. This was in reference to American Irish members of his staff. Members are urged to write: Mr Mike Disney, Director, WIOD, Radio 1401, N.E. 79th Street, Miami, FL 33141. **Florida members are especially urged to write.**

Mr C. Cronin of Florida writes to tell the P.E.C. that the *Florida Times Union* of Jacksonville, Florida uses the anti-Irish slur "hooligan" to describe outlaws. Several members have sent in a copy of the "Born Loser" cartoon comic strip of July 1, 1990 that appeared in the *NY Daily News*. The comic strip, by Art & Chip Sansom, depicted an American Irish maid as a cigar-chomping, uneducated person.

W sincerely thank all members for sending in information. Without you, this column would not exist.

**SEND ALL OFFENSIVE SITUATIONS TO: Kevin P. Murphy, P.O. Box 8895, J.F. Kennedy Station, Boston, MA 02114.**

**ARIZONA SUPPORT FOR JOE DOHERTY**

On July 18 the Arizona Pinal County Democratic Committee adopted a resolution supporting Joe Doherty's political asylum request. The resolution calls for the immediate release on bail and ultimate asylum for Joe Doherty. Susan Catt, Arizona PEC State Director, the resolution organizer, and Tom Bagnall, Pinal County Democratic Committee Chairman, sponsored the resolution.

US Senator Dennis DeConncini supplied a letter of support to the sponsors of the resolution. A letter of support was also supplied by Don Callahan, President of the Phoenix AOH.

The rationale of passing the resolution by a committee not given to resolutions, was the denial of due process in Joe Doherty's case. The Pinal County Democratic Party stands firm in the belief that a man is innocent until proven guilty.

According to Susan Catt, "The aim of passing a county level resolution is to pave the way for a State Democratic Party Resolution. Other Arizona counties have been watching Pinal County closely and will be developing plans for similar support."

**NEWS BITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

"There were only two of us. These six are innocent. I have never met these guys before in my life. The first I saw of them was their photographs in the papers." (Irish Times, 7/24/90)....**A Belfast inquiry** has decided that 15-year-old Seamus Duffy was not rioting when an RUC man killed him with a plastic bullet last August. RUC officers had claimed that they only fired plastic bullets at petrol bombers after being attacked. (Irish Post 7/7/90)....**In Northern Ireland**, councils which have a nationalist majority or an equal distribution of sects are the most inclined toward cooperation and conciliation. In Belfast, majority rules, and there is little accommodation in the council, with the Unionist majority putting Sinn Fein and SDLP representatives on the gas committee, even though there are no gas supplies." (Irish Times, 7/2/90)....**During his recent visit** to Dublin, Nelson Mandela advocated peace talks between the British government and the IRA. He said of the African National Congress, "We are an organization committed to peace. If we resorted to violence, it was only because we had no other alternative. What we would like to see is the British government and the IRA adopting precisely the line that we have taken in regard to our own internal situation. There is nothing better than sitting down and resolving your problems in a peaceful manner." Reaction from London was frosty, and Mrs. Thatcher intended to lecture Mr. Mandela on Northern Ireland when they met. (Cork Examiner, 7/3/90)

**The RUC fired** over 90 plastic bullets on July 15 at young people returning home from a Wolfe Tones concert in Castlewellan. The RUC shot Geraldine Crane of the Short Strand, Belfast, in the head and in the back with two plastic bullets. After the RUC knocked her unconscious, one RUC man fired a second plastic bullet into her back at point blank range. (AP/RN 7/19/90)

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**ACTION REQUEST #1** by Sandy Carlson

The PEC has received a response to our letter to Britain's Home Office in which we requested that Home Secretary David Waddington give his attention to the new evidence which has come to light in the case of the Birmingham Six.

A.H. Chapman of the Home Office, stated in his July 17 letter that "...After a long and careful review of the matter over a period of 5 weeks in November and December 1987 (including the safety of the forensic evidence and allegations that admissions had been made because of police duress), the Court of Appeal found no grounds on which to quash the convictions. The Home Secretary cannot substitute his own view of any case for that of the courts who have heard all the evidence and argument, and must therefore accept their decision on the matter."

However, Mr. Chapman continues, "...Earlier this year, the Home Secretary received further detailed representations about the safety of the convictions, which he is examining." At the Home Secretary's request, the Chief Constable of West Midlands (the police force currently under investigation for its abuses of the Guildford Four) will produce another report and the Chief Constable of Cornwall and Devon Constabulary will carry out inquiries. After considering this new information, Waddington will consider whether his intervention is justified.

As the causes for delay mount and the Six needlessly wait, activities in support of the Birmingham Six have continued with great enthusiasm. On June 23, Birmingham Six campaigners,

led by Paddy McIlkenny (brother of Richard McIlkenny), handed over more than 110,000 signatures to the British Embassy in Dublin. More than 40,000 signatures came from Northern Ireland. The petitions were later delivered to Waddington.

**Demonstrate your continued support of the Birmingham Six by writing to British Home Secretary David Waddington. Our continued pressure on the British will lead to the release of the Six. Let us get this issue resolved and get on with the big issue -- a British withdrawal. Use the following letter as a guide:**

Your Return Address & Date

Right Honorable David Waddington  
Home Secretary, Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT ENGLAND

Dear Mr. Waddington:

Based on the testimony presented to the U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have submitted resolutions calling upon you to reconsider the evidence and to free the Birmingham Six. As a member of the American Irish Political Education Committee, I join them in urging you 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.

Respectfully,

----- Detach Here -----

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