

Irish National Congress

PO Box No 2814, Dublin 7



Comhdháil Náisiúnta na hÉireann

PO Box No 2814 Dublin 7

JUNE 1996

REBUILD THE PEACE BRITAIN MUST MOVE

For 18 months the Irish people gave their wholehearted support to a peace process that offered the best hope in 30 years of a just and lasting peace in the North of Ireland. For 18 months the British Government stalled, delayed and sought to destroy that peace process because it had not been built on their terms but in the context of nationalist demands for inclusive talks, justice and self-determination for the Irish people to replace the failure of partition with a new and agreed Ireland. From arguments on 'clarifica-

tion' to 'permanent' to 'decommissioning' to 'new Stormont' the British Government killed the dynamic of the peace process, tried to kill any hope of progress and waited for the process to collapse.

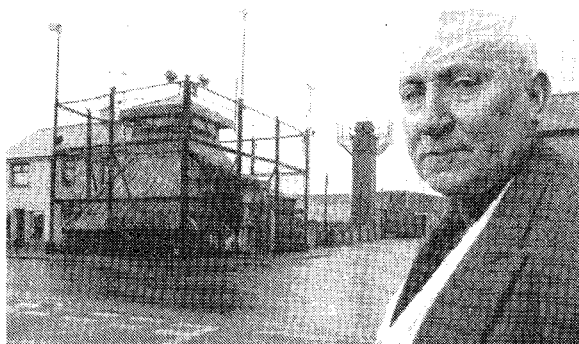
There is still hope however. The Irish people will not easily allow the British Govt's political interests to destroy the peace. It is now crucial that we rebuild the momentum for peace - focusing on what we need and demand from talks.

This newsletter focuses on the need for nationalists to set out clearly our demands. This

newsletter and the INC conference on June 8th will hopefully begin a debate, but it needs to spread throughout the island. What are our specific, immediate demands on equality, policing and the Irish language? We need to spell out the economic benefits of Irish unity. The principle of consent needs to be defined in an all-inclusive way - seeking nationalist consent as well as unionist. We must establish that any attempt to impose an internal 'majority-rule' definition of consent is totally inappropriate to a divided society, is fundamentally

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WHEN HISTORY AND HOPE COLLIDE - ARTISTS FOR IRISH PEACE



DeFever

Peter John Caraher in front of the British Military Barracks in Crossmaglen, Co. Armagh. Carahers' two sons were shot by Royal Marine Commandos after being waved through a checkpoint in the nearby town of Cullyhanna on December 30, 1990. Fergal 21, was killed, his brother Micael was seriously injured. Two soldiers were charged 18 months later with murder following the publication of an independent report commissioned by the family and local residents. They were subsequently acquitted. The family, however, continue to pursue a case against the British Government.

The above photograph is part of an exhibition "When History and Hope Collide" by "Artists for Irish Peace" which was staged in the Congress Building, Washington and in Grand Central Station, New York last year. This year the exhibition will be held in Ireland.

Conference & INC AGM

"What do we want from talks?"

Sat 8th June - 11am to 5pm
Teachers Club, Parnell Sq.

Speakers:

Gearóid O Cearralláin

(Uachtarán Conradh na Gaeilge and Eagarthoir Lá)

Emily O'Reilly

(Political Correspondent Sunday Business Post)

Oliver Kearney

(Chair, Equality)

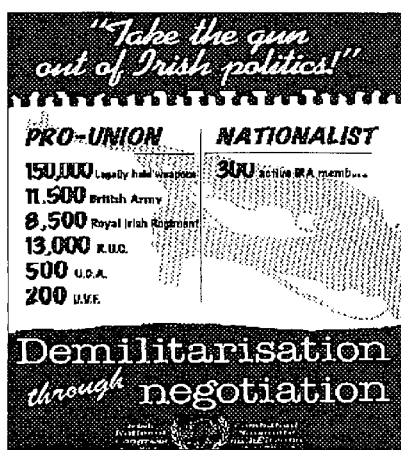
Dr. Maura Sheehan

(West Belfast Economic Forum)

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undemocratic and will only deepen the stalemate and reinforce the status quo.

The INC invites all those with a commitment to peace and justice to join with us on June 8th and thereafter in developing a manifesto for talks which can meet these requirements. Most of all the Irish Government needs to meet its constitutional and political obligations to advance these issues in a forthright manner at the talks and to mobilise the Irish community abroad and the US administration to ensure that the British Govt. is forced at last to move for peace.



Campaign to restore balance to decommissioning debate

INC branches around the country distributed leaflets and posters with the above illustration, seeking to restore some balance to the debate on decommissioning. Particular credit to the Galway and Limerick Branches for their efforts in establishing regular city centre information stalls and to the Dublin branch for a very successful leafleting session at the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis.

Remember '98

With the approach of the bicentenary of the 1798 Rising, preparations are being made for a country-wide commemoration of the brave efforts of the United Irish organisation to set up a democratic Irish republic, to affirm Irish sovereignty and to unite Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter under the common name of Irishmen. These ideals have yet to be achieved - the commemoration of the '98 rising in 1998 will focus

fresh attention on them in less than two years' time.

To set up a Dublin '98 Committee to participate in these commemorations, and to mark the capital's role in the plans of the United Irishmen and women, a public meeting will be held in The Tailors' Hall on Monday 24th June, at 8p.m. All members of the Irish National Congress in the Greater Dublin area should try to attend.

1916 Monument Unveiled on 80th Anniversary

In a year when the Irish Govt's commemoration of 1916 has been muted the INC has been to the fore in marking this important anniversary. The Laois branch of the INC unveiled an impressive new monument. The national executive held a commemoration at Arbour Hill on the anniversary and INC chairperson Robert Ballagh is one of a number of people involved in the development of a memorial to James Connolly which was unveiled on May 12th.



Editorial

British Reluctant Participants in Peace Process

Brendan Behan once observed that if it was raining soup the Irish would be out with forks! - Certainly, in matters political the famed "luck of the Irish" always seems to peter out. Students of history will recall the many episodes of both bad luck and bad weather which conspired against foreign support for the various uprisings against English rule in Ireland, and undoubtedly, in recent times, bad luck has once again played a significant role in our political fortunes.

Its fair to ask, how could the universal feelings of hope and optimism that greeted the cessation by the IRA on 31 August 1994 have changed so fundamentally to the despondency and despair that are so widespread today?

Without doubt the peace strategy that bore fruit on the 31st August, 1994 involved an enormous amount of work done, over many years, by many people and it offered an historic opportunity to address the causes of the conflict in the north, sadly, however, the window of opportunity, provided in the early months after the cease fire, was not to remain open for long. The first threat to the process was the unseating of Albert Reynolds as Taoiseach, over what now must be seen as a fairly trivial affair. Some conspiracy theorists argue that murky forces were at work, however, in spite of that, every one must accept that Fianna Fáil scored a spectacular own goal. Nevertheless, this act of political "hari - kiri" was assisted greatly by a malicious performance by the Parliamentary Labour Party, and because of the subsequent damage done to the peace process

there are many who now vow they will never vote Labour again.

As we all know, Reynolds was replaced as Taoiseach by John Bruton, who had only just survived a leadership heave against him in the Fine Gael Party. Now, the most charitable thing to be said about Bruton is that he is not one of the great intellectuals to stride the political stage, but that, in itself, would not represent an unsurmountable problem, for, in Ireland, we have a long history of surviving intellectually challenged politicians, if, on the other hand, he was surrounded by good advisors; sadly, however, this is not the case.

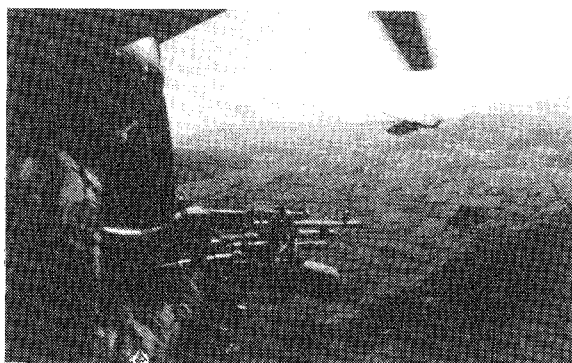
Irish-Americans have cause to remember his chief advisor's time as Irish Ambassador in Washington. Seán Donlon survived a heave against him by the Irish Government but, nevertheless, managed to alienate many in America who were campaigning for the Birmingham Six, the Guilford Four

his background, his freedom to meddle in Northern politics is not helpful at all! The political journey taken by de Rossa and his comrades makes for fascinating analysis. It would seem that they have moved from being, fundamentally, an ideologically driven political organisation to become a political party without any discernable ideology, that is of course, if you discount naked political ambition and a pathological hatred of former colleagues.

Right from the start, it would seem that the British Government were reluctant participants in the peace process, indeed there are those within the British establishment who, smarting from their failure to defeat the IRA militarily, saw the cease fire as an opportunity to pursue the war by other means, now whether John Major was of this view only time will tell, but certainly, he now finds himself totally circumscribed by parliamentary arithmetic. At the beginning of the process

his majority was in double figures, now it has fallen to one, and, as a consequence, his political survival lies in the hands of the Unionists, hardly a cause for optimism; especially since the election of David Trimble as leader of the U.U.P. Trimble is not the most stable of personalities and surely the exploitation of his disgraceful and bigoted conduct at Drumcree last year, as an election trump-card, would not inspire confidence in his ability to transcend traditional unionist intransi-

WHEN HISTORY AND HOPE COLLIDE - ARTISTS FOR IRISH PEACE



Flying over South Armagh, known as "bandit country", the British Army carry out a routine helicopter patrol. In South Armagh helicopters are forced to fly in pairs to cover each other in the event of a gun or rocket attack by the IRA.

and the MacBride principals. To them he was no friend of Ireland, and sadly, at this crucial time in our history, it would appear that Donlon is prepared to accept some form of internal settlement in the North, and any return to Stormont, whatever shape it might take, represents a recipe for disaster!

Like Conor Cruise O'Brien in the past, Prionsias de Rossa's influence in Government seems to extend way beyond his own brief and considering

gence.

In the end of the day, whether it was bad luck or bad politics which created the present depressing impasse, those who are committed to establishing the conditions for a lasting settlement must press on with added resolve.

We, in the INC, will play our part. In this newsletter we address many of the issues that must be tackled if a real and lasting peace is to be achieved.

Robert Ballagh, Chairperson.

Éamon Ó Cúiv believes there can be no final settlement without dealing with the prisoners issue

On my election to Seanad Éirean, I got my first opportunity to get actively involved in the situation in the North. As a regular visitor there since, I have got to understand the problem there and also realise that without dealing with the prisoners issue, there can be no final settlement.

The failure by the British Government to deal with the issue in a realistic way was, in my view, one of the major contributory factors to the breakdown in the ceasefire. Despite promises of a generous response if a Ceasefire came about, the response by the British Government, particularly to prisoners in Britain, has been negative and niggardly.

The prisoners issue has now become one which has attracted mass support amongst the Irish people. However, at the beginning of my involvement with it, those who were going to trials and generally showing an interest in prisoners were looked at askance.

In that connection I would like to pay particular tribute to the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas, for the magnificent work they did in highlighting the plight of prisoners abroad and the need for action in relation to them. I would also like to pay particular tribute to Gareth Peirce, for the commitment and humanity shown by her in her efforts on behalf of Irish Republican Prisoners. Without the continued and dedicated work of these people I do not feel that we would have made the progress we have in relation to this issue.

My first visit to prisoners in Britain came about after a meeting of the Forum, at which members of prisoners families outlined the deteriorating conditions in British prisons. This took place in March of 1995. Since that time I have paid ten visits to the prisoners in Britain, the North and the USA. What I saw in Britain, in particular, shocked me and is unacceptable in a civilised society. At present there are 23 political prisoners still being held in Britain. They are held in four prisons, Belmarsh Prison, near London, Whitemore Prison, in March, Cambridge, Full Sutton Prison, York, and Frankland Prison, in Durham. All of these are maximum security prisons. There are

approximately 300 Republican Prisoners in the North of Ireland and in the USA, where most of the prisoners have only short sentences left to serve, and the conditions are reasonable. It is in Britain that the worst treatment has been meted out to prisoners. The ill-treatment of prisoners includes 23 hour lock-up, detention in special secure units, strip searches, lack of medical attention and closed visits.

What a closed visit means in that even for family members, you can only talk to the prisoner through a glass screen. This, despite being thoroughly searched with a metal detector twice on entry to the prison and once on leaving the prison and the prisoners being strip searched before and after the visit.

Paul McGee, Liam McCotter, Danny McNamee, Liam O'Duibhir and Peter Sherry.

The above five are being held in Belmarsh Prison. They were the prisoners involved in the escape from Whitemore immediately after the declaration of the Ceasefire in 1995. They are being held in a special secure unit and are only being afforded one hour's exercise a day and the local MP of one of them has even been denied an open visit with them.

In the case of one of these prisoners, he has always denied his guilt of the crimes for which he was convicted and is looking to have an appeal hearing.

Patrick Kelly:

Patrick Kelly, is a cancer patient who has suffered both melanoma and lymph cancer. His life expectancy, due to his illness, is not very good.

Joe McKinney:

Joe McKinney, is the last Irish Republican Prisoner being held in Frankland Prison. He is 69 years of age and has already served 11 years of a 16 year sentence. He was recommended for parole by the Parole Board, but the Home Secretary will not grant him his release.

John Kinsella:

John Kinsella, is looking for a re-trial as his conviction leaves a lot of questions. Despite numerous applications, no decision has been made in relation to this matter, although there would seem

to be compelling evidence that such should be granted.

There are a number of other cases where serious doubts have arisen in relation to convictions and you also have other complaints in relation to prison treatment.

Present Situation:

Some progress has, however, been made. The Oireachtas has passed the Transfer of Prisoner's Act, since and this came into force on the 1st November. Two transfers have been granted to Republican Prisoners, one to Michael Martin, who was transferred in January, from the USA, and it has now been confirmed that Brendan Dowd, who was already served a full sentence, is being afforded a transfer to Ireland.

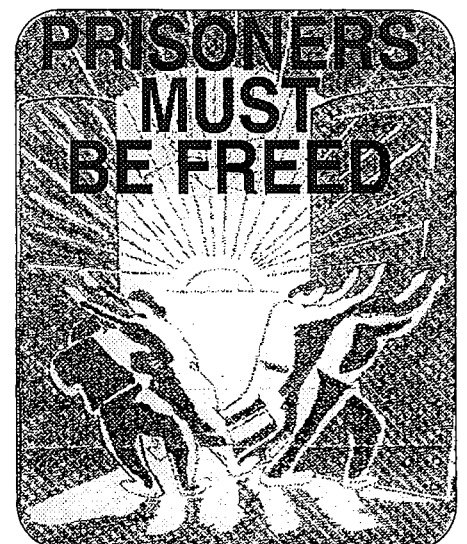
There are a number of other transfer applications on hand and continuing urgent representations have been made that the British Home Secretary would make a speedy decision in relation to them. The speedy implementation of this convention is imperative in the present climate. At the time of going to print Brendan Dowd and Patrick Kelly have been transferred to Portlaoise Prison.

ISSUES OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN

There is now an urgent need in the interest of the human treatment of prisoners and also of the Peace Process, for the British Government to address the prisoners issue in a positive way. This could be done by:-

- Immediately affecting the transfer of prisoners from Britain to Ireland where this is required.
- By the release of all prisoners who have already served long sentences.
- By the transfer of all prisoners to low

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security prisons immediately in line with the reduced security risk and in view of the part played by the prisoners in the Peace Process.

- By the ending of the regime of closed visits for all prisoners.

By the fixing of a maximum tariff for all prisoners who have been sentenced to discretionary life sentences.

By the granting of the 50% remission of this tariff to these prisoners.

That the British Government would bring into force the Geneva Conventions Amendment Act (1995), and particularly the clause in it that says "that at the end of hostilities, the authorities in power shall endeavour to grant the broadest possible amnesty to persons who have participated in the armed conflict, or those deprived of their liberty for reasons related to the arms conflict, whether they are interned or detained". This Act of Parliament was passed in July, 1995, by

the British Parliament, but has not been implemented since.

All in all there is a need for a new beginning and for the British Government to recognise that if there is to be peace in Ireland and Britain, there is a need for a positive approach to the prisoners issue and a recognition against the part played by the partition of Ireland and the subsequent discrimination of people wishing for independence in the events of the last twenty five years.

Ken Keable argues that the British left can argue the case for Irish reunification from the perspective of what is in the interests of the British people and of democratic & socialist progress in Britain.

Northern Ireland is a colonial remnant and a political monstrosity. Since its inception it has never been ruled democratically or been without "emergency" legislation. As a political project it is a failure. Its inclusion in the British state poisons our parliamentary democracy and our system of justice, and threatens the civil rights of every British citizen. It obstructs any progress towards a more open society, obstructs the reduction of military spending, enhances the power of the military establishment and the secret services in our society, costs the earth financially, and costs lives. It gives governments the perfect excuse for more repressive laws and practices. It also preserves, within our state, a hotbed of religious fundamentalism, sectarian hatred and discrimination, and political reaction. These are the reasons why we should demand decolonisation.

In short, the partition of Ireland blocks the road to a more democratic Britain. It is bad for Britain and bad for Ireland, regardless of what the IRA do or don't do.

The IRA's military campaign is not a good reason for demanding British withdrawal, but neither is it a good reason for supporting the Government in hold-

ing on to the territory, or for supporting the Unionist veto on Britain's right to withdraw.

It is argued that Northern Ireland must determine its own future. Why? It's not a nation or even a province (the Province of Ulster has nine counties, not six). Its size and shape were designed purely to ensure permanent unionist domination. And what about Britain's right to determine its own future? Britain can withdraw if it wants to, and the majority of people in Britain do want to. I am not suggesting a hurried or irresponsible withdrawal, merely that the government should change the atmosphere of the negotiations by stating its intention to withdraw. It could reassure the unionists by promising that all the people of NI can retain full British citizenship after British withdrawal - a number of nationalists in Ireland have already suggested this. It could also offer financial help and require appropriate guarantees of religious freedom and fair treatment before handing over power in an orderly fashion. After all, Britain has ample experience of decolonisation.

It is also suggested that a withdrawal would lead to a "civil war that would make the Troubles look like a tea party". How? All sides agree that disarmament of the paramilitaries

must be part of a final settlement. And anyway what would be the aim of any unionist revolt? An Orange state would have no chance of survival without the support of Britain and the European Union, and the "loyalists" are well aware of that. Beside, by population they would be nearly 20% of Ireland instead of 1.5% of the U.K.

This argument about a bloodbath has been deployed in South Africa, Rhodesia and many other British colonies. It is Britain's divide-and-rule policy which created the conditions which make it a plausible threat, so it is not a valid excuse for the continuation of colonial rule.

The Irish desire for re-unification goes largely unvoiced, for two main reasons; revulsion at the IRA's methods, and a pragmatic recognition of Britain's overwhelming power. The emergence of a visible decolonisation campaign in Britain would change that, and would also encourage the IRA to look to other methods. But it needs people with the courage to defy the media onslaught, and the clarity to see the fire through the smoke.

(Ken Keable the writer is an English independent socialist and member of the INC who lives in Co. Waterford).

Swansong for neutrality?

'A European Army and a European police force lie at the end of the road to European Union,' said Germany's Chancellor Kohl in 1992. The same year EC Commission President Jacques Delors spoke of Europe's need to prepare for 'the resource wars of the 21st century'. Last month Dick Spring's White Paper on Irish Foreign Policy indicated the Government's intention to consider signing an agreement with NATO to join its 'Partnership for Peace'.

Partnership for Peace is a kind of NATO second-class membership. PFP's founding statement says: 'Active participation in the Partnership for Peace will play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO'. Mounting the Orwellian newspeak of 'partnership for peace', Ireland's foreign policy now points clearly in the direction of sending Irish young people to fight and die in Europe's wars. The Eurofanatics and Euroenthusiasts who dominate our political Establishment are quite willing to abandon what is left of our traditional policy of neutrality, if that should turn out to be what our EC/EU 'partners' desire, as they seek to further their ambitions to set up a Euro-federal Superstate.

Sadly, experience shows that Ireland's Government policy-makers will go along with anything the larger EC/EU mem-

bers decide, so long as they maintain structural fund subvention to the State's public finances. That is the real truth behind the politicians' guff about us being 'good Europeans'. Our Establishment long ago sold its soul for Euro-lucre. But the Irish public values neutrality. Hence the need for a soft-sell about 'partnership for peace', to shift opinion away from neutrality gradually, if the subverters of neutrality are to succeed.

Dick Spring's White Paper expresses the Government's willingness to participate in West European Union military exercise having to do with 'peace-keeping' and 'humanitarian and rescue' tasks. The West European Union is the nuclear-armed military alliance which constitutes the European wing of NATO. The Maastricht Treaty designates the WEA as 'an integral part of the development' of the EU, charged with implementing European tasks that have defence implications.

'Peace-keeping' today, 'peace-making' - which is newspeak for making war - tomorrow. Step by insidious step. Ireland's foreign policy makers in Iveagh House, supported by elements in the Irish Army who want larger fields to browse in, seek to condition the public into taking on an explicit commitment to making the European Union a military power on the international scene, as well as an economic and political one.

Eurocrat propaganda about our need 'to defend' Europe is just so much nonsense. With

the end of the Cold War, no one threatens Europe. The reality is that it is in countries outside 'Europe' that need defending against EU-sponsored interference. Look at how 'our partner' Germany's intervention in former Yugoslavia aggravated that country's civil war. Or how 'our partner' France armed the Hutu government in Rwanda, which massacred 800,000 Tutsis. Or how the EU collectively backs the Russian Yeltsin's suppression of Chechnya independence. Iveagh House's commitment to EU foreign policy cooperation ties Ireland into these quasi-imperialist positions. And of course our larger EU 'partners' are frenziedly flogging arms to criminal regimes all over the Third World, without a word of criticism from Iveagh House.

Neutrality and an independent foreign policy are crucial to Ireland's interests. People should organise to oppose joining NATO's Partnership for Peace and cosying up to the West European, forgetful of our long and proud tradition of participation in UN peacekeeping. The most effective thing to do is to support local groups like the Peace and Neutrality Alliance (contact Roger Cole at Dublin 2844 765) or Irish CND (contact Sean Dunne at Cork 506411), to press politicians and media locally on these issues.

Anthony Coughlan

(Anthony Coughlan is Senior Lecturer in Social Policy at Trinity College and secretary of The National Platform).

Consent & Peace

-The Irish Peace Process

The IRA ceasefire of August 1994 was in response to the Joint Declaration by the Irish and British Governments in December 1993. Specifically, it was based on Article 4 of the Declaration, which put the conflicting concepts of sovereignty in Northern Ireland on the negotiating agenda. There was a major anomaly at the heart of the Declaration, however.

In Article 4 of the Declaration, Britain stated that it had no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland. Instead, it saw its role as encouraging, facilitating and enabling the achievement of agreement among all the people who inhabit the island of Ireland. They accepted that such an agreement might, as of right, take the form of agreed structures for the island as a whole, including a United Ireland.

It was further stated by the British that "it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a United Ireland, if that is their wish".

The British Prime Minister, on behalf of his Government, reaffirmed as a binding obligation, that they would, "for their part introduce the necessary legislation to give effect to this, or equally to any measure the people of Ireland may themselves freely so determine without external impediment".

It is obvious from this that the British Government clearly and unequivocally accepted that it was for the people of Ireland alone to consent and agree to the new political structures necessary to remove the cause of conflict and bring peace.

The anomaly or contradiction in built into Article 4, however, in its very first sentence, with Britain reaffirming that it would uphold the democratic wish of a greater number of people in Northern Ireland on the issue of whether they prefer to support the Union or a Sovereign United Ireland.

It is not possible to equate this British statement with the principle of consent, also enunciated by Britain in the main body of Article 4. In fact, it has effectively stymied consent by ensuring that Unionism cannot and will not move from its entrenched position on the Irish scene.

What Unionist leader can be seen to make any attempt to accommodate Nationalist Ireland in the circumstances? What Unionist leader is willing to be classified as a betrayer of Unionism - a Lundy - by agreeing to a principle of consent involving the people of Ireland alone, as long as Britain guarantees the status quo of partition?

Even more sinister, Britain, by its reaffirmation, has placed a virtual obligation on Unionist leaders to ensure that their supporters do not deviate from support for the Union. This is precisely the situation that gave rise to the sectarianism and discrimination that led to over twenty-five years of political violence in 1969. It is disingenuous of Britain to even

suggest the possibility of an all-Ireland solution without external impediment, while maintaining its Guarantee to Unionism. It is also disingenuous and indeed more invidious that some Irish Nationalist leaders should opt for a bogus principle of consent inclusive of the British Guarantee.

It is evident that a major factor leading to the IRA ceasefire nearly two years ago was the British emphasis on reserving consent to the people of Ireland as a whole and alone, without external impediment. It is also evident, that it was believed that there would be an opportunity to address the issue of the British Guarantee as an obstacle to the principle of consent at expected all-party talks.

At this juncture, where the IRA ceasefire has broken down, it is essential that all-party talks without preconditions, as sought by Sinn Féin, be initiated as a matter of urgency. Dialogue is what is demanded at the moment, but dialogue, with Sein Féin excluded. It is the current policy of both the Irish and British Governments that Sinn Féin participation in talks is contingent on an IRA ceasefire. If, however, the demand for a ceasefire is not acceded to, there is another and probably better peace option open to both Governments. It involves dealing with the anomaly, described above, at the very core of the Joint Declaration.

Conflict Resolution demands placing the issues causing division and consequent violence on the table and working towards a compromise based, as it must be, on the principle of mutual consent. In the Irish case, all political violence, whether Unionist or Nationalist inspired, arises from the diametrically opposed constitutional Irish and British concepts. If, however, debate on the constitutional issues is

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stymied in advance, with the outcome pre-ordained by the British Constitutional Guarantee, it is not possible to have an agreed compromise based on mutual consent. In fact, the only way that any agreement can be reached in such circumstances is by jettisoning violence. All the empirical evidence since the birth of Northern Ireland as a political entity by British Government decree in 1920 substantiates this view.

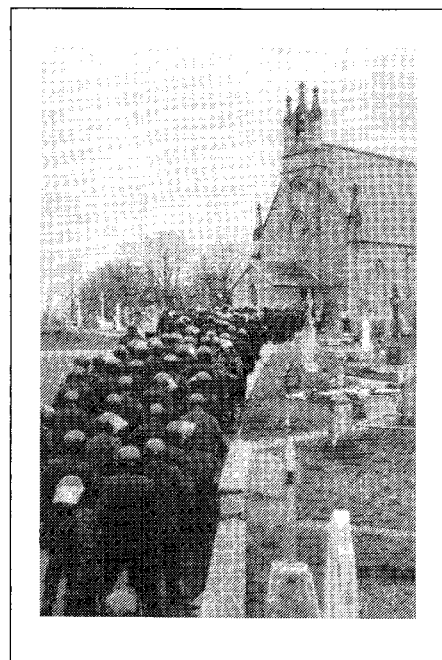
The British Guarantee has been a running sore blocking any advance towards permanent peace in Ireland through the years. This was recognised by the 1984 New Ireland Forum Report, representative of Nationalist Ireland as a whole, which stated: The Guarantee, in its practical application, had the effect of inhibiting the dialogue necessary for political progress. It has had the additional effect of removing the incentive which would otherwise exist on all sides to seek a political solution". The late Cardinal O'Fiaich referred to the Guarantee as "no policy at all. It means that you do nothing and it means that Loyalists (Unionists) in the North are given no encouragement to make any move of any kind. It is an encouragement to sit tight". Senator George Mitchell, the American Chairman of the International Body on Northern Ireland, which reported in January last, unequivocally related the principle of consent to the constitutional question, asserting that it "involves the ultimate constitutional issue of the legal status of Northern Ireland", adding: "It is plainly a political issue.

It is indeed the ultimate issue". If we are to achieve permanent peace in Ireland, it is incontrovertible that

1. The root cause of political violence must be addressed;
2. The root cause of violence is the disputed constitutional position of Northern Ireland;
3. Agreement and mutual consent are inextricably linked to the constitutional position.

Realistic peace negotiations, with the aim of achieving permanent peace in Ireland, demand that the vital constitutional issues be addressed in an open-ended manner. The British Guarantee invalidates any possibility of this by telling Unionism that if it stands firm on the constitutional position, British support is guaranteed. Further, it makes a farce of the declared British position that it will legislate for any agreement, "which the people living in Ireland may themselves freely so determine without external impediment". In the context of its Guarantee, Britain is the "external impediment".

WHEN HISTORY AND HOPE COLLIDE - ARTISTS FOR IRISH PEACE



Mac Bride

Coalisland, Co. Tyrone. Heavily armoured riot police lead the funeral cortege of two IRA men, Seán O'Farrell, 21 and Kevin Barry O'Donnell, 21, killed in controversial circumstances by undercover British soldiers near the town in February 1993. They were among a group of four killed in the incident in the parking lot of the local Catholic chapel.

Donations Needed

We have no big financial banker to pay our bills. We only survive on the voluntary contributions of our supporters. Please send what you can to the Irish National Congress, PO Box 2814, Dublin 7. All contributions will be acknowledged.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE INC, FILL IN THE FORM BELOW AND RETURN TO: IRISH NATIONAL CONGRESS, PO Box 2814, DUBLIN.

MEMBERSHIP FEE £5 WAGED / £3 UNWAGED



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