

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## IRELAND



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Brief for  
Goldmint  
13.6

REMARKS BY COMPTROLLER  
HARRISON J. GOLDIN AT THE ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION, FISHER BUILDING  
3011 WEST GRAND BOULEVARD, DETROIT, MICHIGAN, MAY 24, 1985  
(ITEM NO. 7 - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES)

As Comptroller of New York City, I am the chief investment officer for the New York City pension systems. As of January, 1985 our City's five pension systems owned 1,380,915 shares in General Motors with a then market value of over \$110 million.

I have been authorized by our pension system boards of trustees to express our City's support for the church resolution on Northern Ireland before you today.

Anti-Catholic discrimination in hiring and promotion has long been cited as being one of the primary causes of Ireland's bitter divisions. The British Government's Fair Employment Agency has found that Northern Ireland's Catholics are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as Protestants. When Catholics are employed they are often relegated to the most menial of jobs and are effectively shut out of higher paying skilled and managerial positions. Finally, Catholic workers have often been confronted with fierce intimidation, threats to their physical safety and in some cases, deadly assault.

It should be noted however, that much of the discrimination against Catholics in Northern Ireland is subtle and unintended. This is especially true in the case of American companies operating in Northern Ireland. These parent companies are often not intimately involved in the day-to-day operations of their Irish subsidiaries and are, therefore, unaware of the implications of em-

ployment procedures of those firms.. We believe that it is time for the American home officers of these firms to intervene to guarantee that full equality of opportunity is afforded to all sectors of the Northern Ireland community.

A set of equal opportunity/affirmative action employment principles for Northern Ireland have recently been proposed by the distinguished Irish statesman and Nobel Peace laureate Sean MacBride, along with several associates.

These principles include calls upon corporations to work to increase the number of individuals from underrepresented religious groups at all levels of the work force, the banning of provocative religious and political emblems, and for companies to guarantee that layoff, recall and termination procedures do not, in practice, favor particular religious groupings.

We are requesting that General Motors endorse these principles for the operations of our subsidiary in Northern Ireland, Fisher Body Ltd. The Investor Responsibility Research Center of Washington, D.C. commented earlier this month that "if General Motors were to adopt the MacBride Principles it would send a strong signal of the company's concern over anti-Catholic discrimination in employment in Northern Ireland both to the British government and to other multinational and locally owned companies in Northern Ireland."

The New York City pension funds concur in this assessment and on their behalf I now second this resolution.