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# "IRISH-AMERICANS FOR CLINTON/GORE"

## FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS ON IRISH ISSUES

February 1993

**Raymond L. Flynn**  
Mayor of Boston  
*Co-Chairman*

**Bruce A. Morrison**  
Former Conn. Congressman  
*Co-Chairman*

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## **"IRISH-AMERICANS FOR CLINTON/GORE" STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**February 1993**

Irish-Americans for Clinton/Gore (IACG) was created in 1992 in an effort to mobilize the support of Irish-Americans and others concerned with Irish issues. Its members are for ending the senseless violence in Northern Ireland and replacing it with peace, justice, and economic opportunity, for fair American immigration laws for the Irish, and increased cooperation between the Republic of Ireland and the United States.

Co-chairs of the IACG are former Connecticut Congressman Bruce Morrison and Boston Mayor Raymond L. Flynn.

The blueprint for IACG is Bill Clinton's letter to Bruce Morrison and the Irish-American community on October 23, 1992, where, in addition to opposing terrorism and violence of any kind, he outlines the following:

- . Appointment of a Special Envoy to Northern Ireland
- . Elimination of foreign interference in the American Judicial system
- . Attention to human rights abuses in Northern Ireland
- . Continuation of visa opportunities for Irish citizens and
- . Support of the MacBride Principles and economic investment in Ireland.

Since November 1992 the IACG has solicited input from elected officials, policymakers and diplomats, academicians, human rights advocates, and business people on the best way to contribute to an American policy of peace, justice, and economic development in Northern Ireland. The IACG is hopeful that a renewal of the peace talks in Northern Ireland will include every point of view, and will result in a resolution which is ultimately determined and endorsed by all of the people of Ireland.

The IACG is not affiliated with any other organization. Its role is to facilitate the genuine good will of all Americans who believe in a just resolution of the problems besetting the Irish and the Irish-American communities.

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## L. SPECIAL ENVOY TO NORTHERN IRELAND

For the past decade, Irish-Americans have united around the need for a Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, an area suffering from one of the world's most ancient animosities, with its focal point of dispute vacillating among sovereign nations (Great Britain and Ireland), national identities (British versus Irish) and religions (Protestant and Catholic).

Mindful of the constructive role that Envoys have played in mediating disputes that appear intractable — from the Middle East and Vietnam to South Africa and Bosnia — Irish-Americans believe that the United States, given its special alliance with Great Britain and Ireland, can spearhead a purposeful series of negotiations leading to an agreeable resolution of issues that divide Northern Ireland.

This role is consistent with the larger global responsibility which the United States and the United Nations have assumed in the post-Cold War era: to mediate ethnic and political strife throughout the world. Increasingly, elected officials, factional leaders, clergy, physical force proponents and ordinary citizens are sitting down together — often through the influence of the United States — attempting to break political deadlocks that drain the economic, cultural, and social vitality of these nations.

Northern Ireland, with a history of failed initiatives, stalled peace talks, and the crude violence of rage, is poised for redemption from the failures of history. Its people yearn for a mechanism which holds the promise of peace, justice, and reconciliation.

The United States, charged with the task of helping to guide global reconstruction, can provide the framework, expertise, and commitment required to begin the process of peace in Northern Ireland. A Special Envoy is the mechanism to begin this task in earnest.



## II. MISUSE AND ABUSE OF THE AMERICAN JUSTICE SYSTEM

The American justice system, as it relates to the Irish, must be de-politicized and returned to its constitutional function of enforcing American law and dispensing equal justice under the law. It is widely perceived in the Irish American community that the U.S. State Department is overly influenced by and responsive to the British government, an influence which has unfairly and unjustly targeted Irish Americans for persecution.

The recent communication from the British Embassy to the State Department's Under-Secretary for Political Affairs, regarding the Jim Smyth case, is but one example of interference by a foreign government in the U.S. judicial system. The revocation of Smyth's bail, despite the fact that no Irish defendant has absconded in twenty years, is characteristic of the zeal with which State Department officials respond to cases involving Irish prisoners.

The Smyth case is not an isolated incident, but rather is part of a pattern which includes misuse of grand jury subpoenas, intimidation of undocumented aliens, and almost continuous personal and electronic surveillance of segments of the Irish-American community.

On one documented occasion, personnel from Northern Ireland's Royal Ulster Constabulary were physically present in New York with FBI agents to harass and intimidate an undocumented alien, Kevin Corrigan, in an effort to recruit him as an informer for the FBI/RUC (details available).

Numerous Irish-Americans and Irish citizens have been arrested or detained in a concerted partnership between the U.S. State Department and the British Government (details available).

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During the Presidential campaign, Bill Clinton stated that he would not interfere with the Judicial branch of government, and further, that he would have allowed Joe Doherty to have the hearing repeatedly ordered for him by the federal courts. President Clinton can satisfy his own campaign pledges and a fundamental concern of the Irish-American community through the following actions:

- \* Cessation of the persecution of Irish-Americans by the careful selection of State and Justice Department leaders
- \* Respond to direct requests from the British government for the State Department to undertake costly and concentrated investigations of law-abiding Americans and Irish aliens by giving U.S. criminal justice concerns priority
- \* Renegotiation of the US/UK Supplementary Extradition Treaty to reflect American ideals and principles, and to effectuate the repatriation of William Quinn
- \* Request the British government to grant credit to Joe Doherty for the nine years of imprisonment he served in the U.S. at the behest of the British government.

### III. HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Human rights abuses in Northern Ireland, especially by the British government and security forces, are a major cause for concern among Irish-Americans. A number of respected agencies, including Amnesty International, the Helsinki Conference, and the European Court for Human Rights, have documented these abuses, especially over the past 25 years. Yet the State Department's annual report, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, continually understates and minimizes these abuses. This suggests that the U.S. government does not consider the problems in Northern Ireland documented by responsible human rights agencies to be equal to those of other nations.

A more specific, comprehensive, and detailed profile of Northern Ireland's human rights abuses must as a matter of international equity be documented by the State Department reports, addressing the following issues:

- \* Extracting confessions by torture and emotional stress
- \* Altering or withholding material evidence
- \* Using one-judge, no jury courts (Diplock)
- \* Using paid perjurers
- \* Employing a shoot-to-kill policy by security forces
- \* Using plastic bullets
- \* Excessive strip searching of women prisoners
- \* Collusion between security forces and loyalist paramilitaries
- \* Threatening and intimidating lawyers.



The proliferation of abusive security operations violate the civil rights of Northern Ireland citizens: destructive house searches without warrants; holding prisoners incommunicado without benefit of legal counsel for up to seven days; situating spy posts in nationalist locales; and harassing workers engaged in political activities.

Finally, the United States must apply in an outspoken and evenhanded manner its policy regarding human rights standards throughout the world. This policy, if applied unequivocally, will reinforce the need for fundamental changes in how Northern Ireland is governed, and will ease the perception which Irish-Americans have that the State Department is an indifferent observer to the human rights problems in Northern Ireland.

#### IV. IMMIGRATION STANDARDS FOR THE IRISH

The plight of Irish immigrants living illegally in the United States during the 1980s was largely abated through the Donnelly and Morrison visa programs, which set aside thousands of visa slots for the Irish.

The Clinton Administration should encourage the major effort now underway to extend the Morrison Visa program beyond its three year limit, which ends in 1993.

In a separate vein, the Irish-American community is disturbed that a number of prominent Northern Ireland leaders, notably but not exclusively from Sinn Fein, have consistently been denied visas to visit the United States. Despite recent amendments to the United States Immigration Act, specifically the Frank Amendment to the Immigration Act of 1990, denial of entry to the United States on ideological grounds is still being used to bar Northern Ireland citizens.

Visa denial on ideological grounds is contrary to the Free Speech principles of the United States. It also deprives U.S. citizens of their right to hear differing points of view. The policy of exclusion of Irish activists has even extended to depriving members of Congress from hearing such individuals. Absent a threat of unlawful activities in the United States, there is no justifiable reason to deny these people visas.

The Clinton Administration is urged to uphold the spirit and letter of the law, as defined in the Immigration Act of 1990.

## THE MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES AND ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

Since 1985, legislation has been enacted in 13 states and over three dozen municipalities requiring pension fund investments and public entities to adhere to the MacBride Principles. Similar legislation is pending in a number of jurisdictions and in the U.S. Congress. Unlike the anti-apartheid movement, the MacBride campaign does not call for U.S. corporate divestment from Northern Ireland. Investment is encouraged provided strict anti-discrimination standards are upheld. Increased investment is an important component of any effort to promote employment equality.

The MacBride Principles - consisting of nine fair employment, affirmative action principles - are a corporate code of conduct for U.S. companies doing business in Northern Ireland. Statistics from Northern Ireland's Fair Employment Commission (FEC) confirm that Catholics are two and one-half times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants in Northern Ireland, a ratio that recent FEC reports show has not changed over the past decade.

The MacBride campaign has focused the attention of the British and Irish governments on the need for change in this area and was instrumental in persuading the British government to adopt a stronger anti-discrimination statute in 1989. However, current British law does not permit the full-blooded affirmative action which has been successful in promoting broader economic participation among women and minorities in the U.S., and which is necessary if employment inequalities are to be adequately redressed. The Clinton Administration, as a matter of policy, should support statutory changes in the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Act to allow for such affirmative action along the lines suggested by the British Labour Party.

In addition, the Administration should examine the actions of two U.S. agencies who have impeded the ratification of the MacBride Principles:

\* Since 1985, the State Department has lobbied intensively against city, state, and federal enactment of MacBride Principles legislation. This lobbying must cease.

\* In a recent change in policy, the Securities and Exchange Commission has held that shareholders no longer can put resolutions dealing with equal employment opportunity matters on corporate annual general meeting ballots. SEC officials have indicated that shareholder activism specifically relating to Northern Ireland is a target of this new policy. The Clinton Administration's SEC appointees must act to restore fundamental shareholder rights in this area.

In addition to the MacBride Principles, the Clinton Administration can take a number of positive steps to help ensure that economic development takes place in both parts of Ireland.

\* Reform the International Fund For Ireland (IFI) so that it more effectively stimulates job creation in both communities and among both traditions in Northern Ireland. Political screening of IFI grant applications must be abolished, and a right of appeal must be established. The Clinton Administration should state its willingness to increase the U.S. contribution to IFI above the current \$20 million a year if there is accompanying political progress toward peace, justice, and reconciliation.

\* Support economic investment in Irish infrastructure projects which have the goal of more closely integrating the economies of north and south, and preparing the island economy to compete effectively in the single market of the New Europe.

- \* Support proposals to create a Belfast-Dublin economic corridor to provide an additional stimulus for growth.
- \* Urge our allies in the European community to target increased structural fund money to Ireland, North and South, to enhance cross-border economic progress.