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AN EC SOLUTION TO AN IRISH PROBLEM!

EC Freezes Fund Flow to Ireland.

An EC decision yesterday to halt all funds to Ireland and Great Britain, pending decisive progress in the Northern Ireland deadlock has led to a flurry of positive activity on both sides of the Irish Sea.

Ian Paisley and Gerry Adams held an all night marathon drinking session last night, concluding in the Reverend Paisley's dramatic recoining of the age-old Ulster battle cry; „Ulster won't fight and Gerry is alright“. There was a slight setback in negotiations, however, with jealous outbursts by John Hume to the effect that Gerry had promised to be his friend only.

In the meantime, Albert Reynolds and John Major sent a joint bouquet of flowers to Adams, congratulating him on his first full television appearance which was syndicated on all Irish and British television channels simultaneously. As a further goodwill gesture, President Robinson decided to withdraw a solicitor's letter she had sent demanding that Adams return her Claddagh ring which he had kept as a keepsake after their famous handshake.

Jaques Delors flew into Ireland early this afternoon to check on progress and mediate if necessary in any disputes which might arise. „Zeese leetle country is causing uz Europeans much too much ,eadache. Eet iz time zat zeese peoples come togezer in 'armony. I mean, why fight about a united Ireland, zeese terrorists should be ,helping us fight for a united Europe. As for zeese silly Breetish, zey must realize zat ze colonial days are over. Eet iz time for zem to stop telling zee Irish what to do and at ze same time to let' err Kohl et moi to tell all of Europe what zey should do.“ He continued by saying that civilised Europeans had „ze Nase voll“ and that a not a single German groschen was going to find its way into a British or Irish pocket „unless ...“ It was appropriate, he continued for Great Britain to sacrifice something to Ireland as a little „sorry“ for 800 years of „uncivilised English cooking, which ,as ruined a potentially excellent kitchena trajedee, it breaks my' eart.“

Meanwhile, the other Jack, Charlton, was frantically trying to get through to the World Football Association, to find out what will happen now that the entities Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland will no longer exist. „They've told me that we're through to the finals“, he told this reporter, „but I'll be damned if I can choose a team from a squad of 42 players, without at least one blazing row among the players.“

The Republic's catholic hierarchy met in Dublin to discuss a possible return of the old celtic trial marriages of one year and one day, after which time either partner could dissolve the marriage with the words, „I divorce thee“ (repeated three times). The clergy decided that a return of this ritual was permissible – if – and only if the couple did not „couple“ (have sex!) during this trial period.

In a revolutionary move, the clergy voted to support the use of condoms for all age groups, provided they had already passed their sell-by date. In an environmentally-motivated motion, the bishops concluded that the surplus could be used as baby soothers for the resulting population explosion. This policy they reasoned would prevent an EC „condom mountain“. (Following their conference, the Bishops proceeded to eat and drink their way through part of the EC's meat and wine mountains).

In an attempt to meet halfway, the Ulster Unionists decided to abolish Orange Day on July 12th, moving it instead to March 17th, where the addition of uileann pipes would they believed lead to the representation of both traditions. (This concession was subject to St Patricks Day being completely abolished!).

The I.R.A., fearing massive unemployment, should a lasting solution be found, have begun drawing up a business proposal for a „Combat Adventure Centre“ for tourists. The Adventure Centres are planned all over Northern Ireland and there will be Interpretative Centres at the entrance to each. The Interpretative Centres will treat visitors to a nostalgic look-back at the heady days of paramilitary supremacy in Northern Ireland. It is hoped to persuade some British soldiers to remain behind at the centres as „real life target practice“ for the tourists.

Former I.R.A. Commander Daithi O Daithi says that there will be no problem with start-off capital for the new business idea. „There's is still quite a wee bit of money left in the bank accounts“, he smiled. Speculation that the loyalist paramilitaries are interested in a joint venture arrangement with the I.R.A. has been confirmed by a spokesman for the U.V.F. „We terrorists have been the most active people in Northern Ireland over the past twenty five years“, said the spokesman, „We're not all going to take up knitting now!“

The same positive note did not echo from British Army members, who are asking themselves where they will find work in another trouble spot so close to home. „I got home to England every two months“, said Officer Bloggs based in Belfast. „Now I'm faced with being posted much further away. I mean even Germany isn't an option for us anymore“.

Margaret Thatcher has however promised to incorporate at least some of Northern Ireland's British soldiers into her new private force, to be called the „Thatcher Brigade“. The role of this Brigade has not yet been disclosed, but Lady Thatcher has assured that it will not involve threatening bookshop visitors to buy her memoirs „or else“. Former members of Lady Thatcher's cabinet have suggested that at least one third of the British Army barracks could temporarily be used as a warehouse for the millions of unsold „Thatcher Memoirs“.

This move is being opposed by the Republic's catholic hierarchy, who had hoped to use these barracks for a „Condom-Soothe Conversion“ factory, which they plan to set up as a joint venture with the Virgin Megastore.

The British Prime Minister called a secret cabinet meeting to decide what could be presented to Ireland as a form of reparation. A promise by the British to release a secret recipe for steak and kidney pie with boiled cabbage was narrowly defeated by Irish parliamentarian Michael D. Higgins who is vegetarian.

The Highlands and Islands of Scotland were, the British cabinet decided, too important to the Kingdom, as they were „marvellously funded by the damned EC“. The decisive moment came when somebody decided that the „bloody Eurotunnel“ was the perfect gift for the Irish. „After all, they're still emigrating by the thousands – the poor buggers – the tunnel offers them the perfect way out – and at the same time facilitates German house-buyers in getting quickly to Ireland before the Irish currency increases in value again.“

This reparation offer was greeted with enormous triumph in Ireland (and in Germany) and a team of civil servants and engineers are

presently deciding on the best way to transport the tunnel from Calais directly to Dublin.

Perhaps, one of the saddest sights of all on this most traumatic of Irish days was the sight of a bunch of „rebels without a cause“ marching up and down O Connell St in Dublin and holding banners with such pleas as „Down with Justice“ – „Give us back our Gripe“ and „The EC's a Meddler“. Among the sorry lads sighted were Germany's own Ralf Sotscheck and the entire Wolfe Tones group.

„They've taken the bread and butter out of our mouths“, claimed the Wolfe Tones, who've decided to rewrite the words of „A Nation once again“, changing the title to „A rebel cause once again“. Herr Sotscheck is investigating the prisons of Great Britain and Ireland in the vain hope of finding one last wrongly held prisoner. There is one gleam of hope for Mr Sotscheck however, stemming from an invitation to spend a number of years reporting in Inishkillane (Charlie Haughey's island), where near extinct golden eagles and Irish red deer may be cause enough to revive his flagging rebel spirit.

Meanwhile, as a crafty Irish precautionary measure, Irish Tanaiste Dick Spring is busy preparing a three day whizz tour of the United States, where he hopes to present an application for Ireland to become the 52nd state of the union, if the EC decided to put the foot down permanently. With 40 million Irish descendants in America, there could be a very strong chance of a „first-generation“ Irish-American president. „Then, we'd show them who's boss!“ grinned Spring. Who the „them“ was – he did not specify.

Eileen Murphy

Liebe Leserinnen und Leser,

diese Satire über ein allzu ernstes Thema, nämlich die wieder zunehmende Gewalt im Nordirland-Konflikt verdanken wir einem Brain- oder besser: Textstorming in der Redaktion. Wir haben uns für den irischen Vorschlag entschieden, weil dieser Text (Eileen, forgive us!) dem Chesterton-Wort über die Iren „whom God made mad – whose wars are always merry and whose songs are always sad“ entspricht. Wir erlauben uns, diesen irischen Galgenhumor hiermit weiterzugeben.

Wir nehmen diesen Konflikt ernst. Dennoch – im Wechsel von Gesprächen und Gewalt scheint es in Irland eine wellenförmige Bewegung zu geben, eine zyklische Wiederholung. Wir setzen unsere Hoffnung darauf, daß es bald eine Aufwärtsbewegung zurück an den Verhandlungstisch geben möge – und werden in der nächsten oder übernächsten Ausgabe – hoffentlich aus zeitlicher Distanz – die Ereignisse der letzten Zeit rückblickend kommentieren.