

/Commentary

British army not Ireland

By JEFF BRYANT

The presence of British troops in Northern Ireland is currently under much criticism. Irish nationalists and British loyalists alike condemn the interference of the British Army in the war-torn province of Ulster. Westminster, however, emphasizes the peace keeping role played by the troops and predicts a blood bath if they withdraw. As England follows her current position in Northern Ireland, opportunity for a lasting peace is nonexistent. Torture and death are common and much of this results from public reaction to military occupation. A lasting and just peace will never realize until all British soldiers withdraw from Northern Ireland.

It is true that the original entry of British troops in Northern Ireland, 3 years ago, lubricated the communal friction existing. The soldiers buffered clashes between Catholic-civil-rights-marchers and protestant loyalists. The need for the buffering influence however, is perpetuated by the government who is sending it there. If Westminster consents to equal voting and housing rights for Catholics, the need for demonstrations disappear. Archaic laws prevent Ulster's Catholic population from voting on equal terms with a protestant businessman. A person owning property or a business is entitled to several votes while a non-

business owning person (usually a Catholic) votes only once. Gerrymandering is evident in heavily Catholic populated areas of Ulster as British II loyalists often represent a fierce anti-British constituency.

Predictions of a civil war and blood bath if the troops withdraw are also probably correct. A civil war and blood bath rage now and the likelihood of its termination upon departure of the last British soldier defies the most optimistic imagination. As England decides to remove her troops however, the foundations of a lasting and durable peace will rise.

Reconciliation between the people of Ulster is then only possible as the problem is an all-Irish problem and must ultimately be solved by them. The British troops in Ulster only serve to support a contrived majority in Parliament which is the root of the conflict. A temporary period of increased violence is preferable to the slow and tortuous death of the province under present conditions. The people of Ulster must loosen their grasp on the inept, incompetent marriarch whose favoritism and inefficacy produced a neurotic child.

As British troops emerged in Northern Ireland an increase in violence on both sides arose. A recent fire fight in Belfast between British soldiers and the ultra-protestant Ulster Defence Association is

one testimony to this. Loyal British subjects question the value of British troops as the death toll climbs above 800 in three years of violence. Many of these deaths result from inappropriate and ill-managed police measured of British soldiers. Two years ago, panicked British soldiers shot down 12 Catholic demonstrators in Derry. An English enquiry court found the soldiers guilty of murder but considered punishment 'impractical' as identification proved difficult.

Military force cannot enforce peace in Northern Ireland. Repressive measures applied to all extremist organizations only serves to raise recruitment. Current polls of the daily newspaper, *The Belfast Newsletter* show that membership and morale of the Provisional Irish Republican Army is higher now than at any stage of the conflict. The newly formed Ulster Freedom Fighters are self-styled executioners who specialize in retaliations for protestant deaths. Attacks on British soldiers by both protestant and Catholic extremist groups are commonplace.

The opinion of the Provisional I.R.A. is that the British people will not allow involvement in the near future of British troops in Ulster, because of attacks by self-described loyalists on soldiers. The attacks increase in number and brutality as England attempts concessions to Catholic demands. Some British politicians

threaten a time limit for withdrawal of troops if cooperation is not obtained from these groups. Withdrawal of troops is a vital political issue as English citizens ponder the purpose of dead British soldiers. Public antipathy increases in England and no end is in sight as Ulster tortuously evolves into Britain's Vietnam.

Regardless of the reaction of the English People, the British Army has no moral or legitimate right to enter Ulster. The historic and dominant role of Great Britain in regards to Ulster is no longer appropriate, if in fact it ever was. Eight centuries of inept governing and systematic repression keeps the Irish problem festering while England balks at relinquishing an important colony. History show that any intervention in Irish affairs by the British results in rebellion and bloodshed. British domination of Ulster is selfish exploitation and insensitive governing at the expense and detriment to the Irish people. Restitution for past mistakes and injustices is hardly possible and is not suggested, but the blessings of peace in Ulster cannot and will not form until the last British soldier evacuates Northern Ireland.

Jeff Bryant is a senior and an Emerald staff writer.

Letters

Open Letter

Dear Giovanni Batista Montini, self-proclaimed Paul 6, Vatican City, Rome, Italy,

In your stead, I had five weeks ago to proclaim myself Pope PROman 1. This was more publicly announced in the *Springfield (Oregon) News*, issue of June 29, 1973.

As you know, I have quite a number of times writ you to your face to say your character is not that of a pope but of an antipope. There is no one of us 525 million baptized Vatican City Catholics who needs to do actual penance as much as you do. Here follow two items of your unretracted wrongdoing:

When your alleged encyclical letter, "Of human life" flouted both Biology and common sense, you made a hasty pilgrimage to the tomb of the only pope who ever resigned. That indicates the penance we think you are capable of doing: resigning. Hopefully my assumption of papal authoritativeness, in opposition to your antipapal authoritarianism, will bring the needed pressure to bear and you will indeed follow precedent and submit your resignation. Don't be guilty of such awful hypocrisy, bigotry, unrealism that you are too proud to apologize publicly for your mistakes. "Pride goes before a fall," says the true folk saying. The Church has always taught that pride, unwillingness to do actual penance, is the most mortal (death-causing) of the seven mortal antiman wills ("sins" being the indefinite, religious as distinguished from moral, pre-scientific term).

Even the resignation of Richard Nixon is not so much needed as yours. That's because his wrongdoing was largely contingent on your consistently having done so much wrong...your having called the Beirut bombing "a black day," for instance. I wrote you and Jean Villot at the time to disavow such language as criminally assaultive. To say in effect: "If a thing is black, it is automatically bad" is criminal libel against every Negro in the planet. Your misguided misleadership of 45 millions of Americans (whose Catholic allegiance is also to Vatican City) was the major factor in embroiling the U.S.A. in so futile a fiasco as the Indochina war.

My election as Pope PROman the First was by direct action of the Holy Spirit, which is to say (in the language of Science) PROmanism, the invincible will that nothing antiman may live in this planet. If you may care to unbend so far as to submit

to me the subminimal courtesy of a reply via Archbishop Bob Dwyer of Portland in Oregon, I will take cognizance of it by agent.

TRULY,
PROman the First, POPE.

Amateur review

RE: Bob Blair's comments on the Carnival Theatre production of "A Day in the Death of Joe Egg," July 5.

As a veteran of seven years of published dramatic and film criticism in college and commercial newspapers, I must take exception to the publication of Blair's thoroughly reprehensible and lamentable attempt at reviewing. The only taste the *Emerald* has shown in the matter lies in the fact that the piece was not labeled as a "review."

Blair's misunderstandings and mistakes are too legion to list or correct. Suffice to say that anyone who could sit through an entire play and still not hear correctly a phrase which is repeated at least four times is not paying enough attention to what is going on. The phrase, Mr. Blair, is

not "sitting around like Joe Egg;" it is "stuck in like Joe Egg," and it is not a "British idiom for someone bored with himself." It is, as the play explains, had you cared to listen, a phrase used by Brian's mother to express Brian's current situation. This, in itself, is a small point; but it is symptomatic of Blair's basic problem: he did not understand the play (evidently because he wasn't listening) and did not care to admit it.

By the same token, his concentration on the relatively unimportant fact that Freddie is a socialist seems to indicate that when he did hear something he could immediately understand, he made snap judgments without considering either the context of the lines or the microcosm within which the play exists.

As to Blair's comment on the acting ("...some fine clowning on stage."), I can only say that this is the comment of a person who might consider Jerry Lewis a "fine comic actor" but does not recognize fine acting when he is presented with an entire stage full of it. The line between clowning and acting is very broad, but Blair cannot see across the gulf.

His comments that British drama is not

acceptable or understandable on the west coast of America do not deserve the dignity of a reply. If we were to lose the British Theatre, we would have precious little to view on the stage, save established plays, a flood of New York-oriented musicals, and a very rare new American play. Obviously, there are some Americans who cannot understand British drama: Blair is one. But there are many more who have no trouble understanding a universal when they see it. Perhaps because they are listening and thinking.

Blair owes the director, cast, crew, and audience of "Joe Egg" an apology. More, the *Emerald* owes the same persons an apology for publishing the piece in the first place. Let us hope it does not happen again.

And I hope no one missed the delightful experience of seeing this excellent production because of the publication of Blair's amateurish venture into a field which, for the moment, at least, is far beyond his grasp.

Sincerely,
Dan Hays
Graduate Student (PhD)
Theatre



'CONGRATULATIONS! WE FORCED HIM TO COMPROMISE!'