## OP is thwarting Ireland's job rights

ST. PATRICK'S DAY is the love of family and friends alive and dead. It's the celebration of heritage and our forebears' friumph over sorrow and struggle.

But there was an ironic twist to St. Patrick's Day 1988 last week — a biling edge no number of tender Irish ballads could soften. It originated in Northern Ireland and manifested lisel' in the actions of our own state senators.

The MacBride Principles are guidelines designed to end employment discrimination in Northern Ireland, where, according to the British government's Standing Advisor, Commission on Human Rights, the unemployment rate of Catholics is 21% limes greater than that of Protestants. Northern Ireland is 40 percent Catholic. particus Day 1998 last week — a ston funds there. Silling edge no number of tender brish ballads could solten. It originated in Northern Ireland and manifested listelf in the actions of our own state senators.

The MacBride Principles are modeled after South Africa's Sullivan Principles by Nobel Peace Prize with the Sullivan Principles by Nobel Peace Prize with passed or are pending in 19 states, we passed or are pending in 19 states, we passed or are pending in 19 states, with passed or

root of the violence scarring lives in the British state.
U.S. firms, including General Mo-tors, Fruehauf and Ford Motor Co, operate plants in Northern Ireland. The state of Michigan invests pen-sion funds there.



Several weeks ago, three members of the committee signed a letter that would have forced a hearing.
But Sen. Majority Leader John Engler, R-Mi. Pleasant, took action to force its cancellation.

CO-SPONSORED BY 28 of 38 senators, the bill doesn't require divestiture or quotas. It poses no fiscal implications for the state of Michigan or its pensioners. In fact, the principles bar the state treasurer from doing anything inconsistent

with sound investment policy.

The Michigan Republican leadership was told by the U.S. State Department that the principles "undarmine foreign policy," said state Sen. Robert Geake, R-Northville.

Farmington Hills attorney John Cahill is spearheading the MacBride Principles campaign in Michigan for the Irish American Unity Conference.

"Here's a bill that is aimed at re-solving one of the primary causes of violence in Northern Ireland, yet steps are being taken by the British government and Sens. Nichols and Engler to prevent a vote on the bill in the Michigan Senate," Cahill said.

"Just as the denial of our rights in 1776 led to our revolution, the denial of these rights today leads to frustra-tion among voters in Michigan and

IF NICHOLS and Engler object to the bill, it's their duty to raise those objections in public debate, Cabill said.

"Are there no democratic rights for Irish-Americans? Rather than allow us a debate and the voltag process that our Constitution guarantees us, these two men are preventing any vote at all, because they and the Brittsh government know that if there is a vote it will pass overwhelmingly because the bill is so unobjectionable. "It's baffling to contemplate why the Senate Republican leadership would thwart the democratic process to serve the interests of the Brittsh government rather than the voters of Michigan." Are there no democratic rights

Newsroom bias not necessarily bad

VOTERS CAN help stop suffering and violence in Northern Ireland by urging their legislators to pass the bill.

Individuals who own stock in com-panies in Northern Ireland can help by voting their shares in favor of re-solutions urging adoption of the MacBride Principles as corporate

poney.

City councils can do their part by passing resolutions.

If enough pressure is exerted, persons in Northern Ireland will gain the same employment rights we take for granted in the U.S.

## Be wary of 'hard sell' rental agents

Tim

Newswire last week and found this gem from Hertz Corp., which was

gem from Hertz Corp., which was not, incidentally, the company I had patronized:

Richard

OVER A beer in his Redford Township castle, good oi' John gave me some advice. "When you rent a car in Fiorida," he said, "you don't have to buy their insurance. Your own car insurance covers a rental. Just ask your agent if you're not sure."

Just ask your agent if you're not sure."

We asked, and the friendly agent on Farmington Road sald yes, indeed, our policy covers a rental. But the counter agent in the Florida agency which advertised the low-est rental rates put up a big, big fuss. "Most people," she insisted repeatiedly, buy their insurance, called, CDW for collision damage waiver, because it frees the customer from any ilability whatsoever, even the smallest scrape.

Sounded OK. My policy has a \$200 deductible. a gency which advertised the lowest rental rates put up a big, big fuss,
"Most people," also hastised repeatedly, buy their insurance called
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any liability whatsoever, even the
smallest scrape.
Sounded OK. My policy has a \$200
deductible.
Sounded OK. My policy has a \$200
deductible.
THEN C MME the bill — \$108 for
linsurance for a mere nine days. Hey,
await a second. Thait's \$12 a day or
pearly \$4,100 a year— for a compearly \$4,500 a year

"In recent months, several states
the waiver principally as a result of
the w

publications.
"Those artificially low rental rates are actually subsidized through the high-pressure sale of the damage waiver as well as add-on mandatory gas charges and airport surcharges, and unadvertised extras for additional drivers or a four-door car.

"IN FACT, we understand that counter agents at such companies earn more from CDW sales commis-sions than from wages. Their liveli-hood depends on the hard sell," he

hood depends on the hard sell," he said.

Olson said Hertz is "now prepared to support their (attorney generals') efforts — and those of other governmental agencies — to regulate the waiver sales practices.

"We have heard of instances where renters who decline CDW are discriminated against. For example, the ear they reserved may no longer be available, or the rate at which their reservation was confirmed may have increased.

"Hertz will also call for clear readable signs at every car rental counter... What we have in mind is a disclosure similar to what Hertz hiready has on the face of its rental agreement, stating that "Your own auto insurance may cover all or part of such damage. You may want to check before accepting.

IT WAS ONE of those good-news, bad-news phone calls. The woman thought a front-page story was well done, but she was unhappy with the editorial in the same issue on the

editorial in the same issue on the same topic.

Other than the satisfaction of voic-ing her complaint, the woman proba-bly didn't think she accomplished much by phoning our newspaper. I think she missed the point. Her com-plaint showed newspapers operating in their best light.



get involved in the story. In some cases, the emotions might run quite strong. You can't convince me that it is a sign of a good reporter to remain emotionally distant when hearing about child abuse, the plight of the homeless or violations of civil rights.

plaint showed newspapers operating in their best light.

Almost no newspaper pretends anymore that it is staffed by unbiased, objective reporters and edition. Detroit Free Press publisher David Lawrence made the point a couple of weeks ago in Farmington Hills during a speech at the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College.

It is naive to think differently, think of your colleagues and the people in your neighborhood. Some work Republican, some Democratic, some not at all. Some are religious, some beneratic some not at all. Some are religious the person charged with the offense when they represent a hodgepodge of benefactured to the people of the people of

ability to feel and her professional skills both came into play for her to write the accounts.

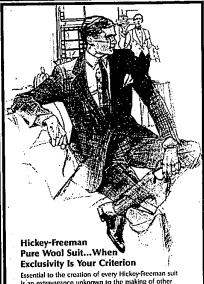
This is a roundabout way of getting back to the woman who liked our story, but disliked our editorial. She might not realize it, but it shows that our news staff can prevent opinions from getting in the way of news stories.

THE SAME editor who wrote the editorial that the woman disliked both assigned and edited the story that the woman liked. One article had to do with facts, the other had to do with opinion derived from the lacts. It is possible to reach different conclusions from the same set of

conclusions from the same set of facts.

People love to criticize newspapers for what they call blased coverage, and they often point to the editorial page to prove their point. A former publisher used to tell of a city council candidate who would lobby hard for the newspaper's endorsement. When he didn't get it, be would paper the town with flyers preclaiming that woters should't let the paper run the town.

Newspapers are far from perfect.
But namy people who complain about a paper's blas are really upset because the paper didn't turn a bias in their favor.

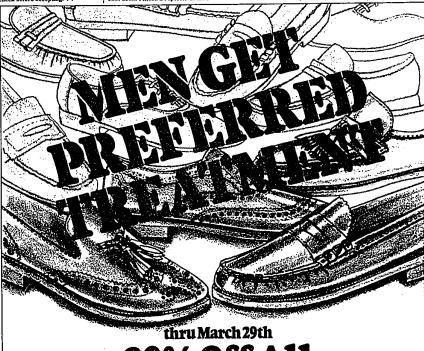


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