**AMERICAN BREXIT COMMITTEE**

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*John M. Corcoran Esq, Chairman*

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June 24, 2023

Honorable Charles E. Schumer

Majority Leader

U. S. Senate

Capitol Building, S-221

Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Schumer:

On behalf of the 300 members of the ABC we share our concern for Britain’s fundamental attack on everything the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) has stood for in providing a crucible for peace, justice, and the rule of law. The bi-partisan support from American political leadership has proved an effective counter to British efforts to undermine the principles and progress of the pact.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak wishes to perform a final act of indignation by pushing through a Legacy bill in Parliament which: a.) unilaterally grants impunity to the killers of more than 1100 Irish citizens/British Subjects in Northern Ireland and Ireland; b.) ends all investigations/ prosecutions of those crimes placing all related documents under the Official Secrets Act; and c.) absolves the British government of all liability for those crimes. Sponsor Lord Caine attempts to justify the bill thus: ***“The reality of the situation in which we find ourselves in respect of criminal prosecutions, for example, is vanishingly clear.*** In the Kings English that would translate to an urgent need to cover up State sponsored criminality in N. I. on an industrial scale.

The bill is opposed strongly by a bi-partisan mix of Members of Congress who recognize the threat it poses to the GFA and peace. More importantly, all parties in Ireland remain opposed even after ‘concession’ amendments were recently incorporated. The hypocrisy of one amendment is breathtaking. It would extend the time for investigating and prosecuting those responsible for killings until May, 2024; knowing, the Ministry of Defense will continue to deny, redact, or obstruct the information requests from victims’ families until that date or any other.

This legislation is not intended to address the conduct of security forces in combat in foreign lands governed by the Geneva Convention rules of war. Britain has always treated the conflict in Ireland as a domestic, internal matter, or in the words of President Putin, as a “special military operation.” These 1100 civilians killed bear the signs of a unique and deadly partnership.

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Loyalist gunmen joined by MI-5, the British Army, and N. I. police in systematically eliminating presumed enemies of the State i. e., those who held certain religious or political beliefs, lawyers, and elected office holders. It is time to expose State sponsored terrorism NOT give it blanket immunity.

In 1998 as part of the Irish delegation to the peace talks, former Irish Ambassador to Canada Ray Barrett stated bluntly: “… the biggest injustice to this country [Ireland] was for the UK to ignore the democratic mandate of 1918/1919.” One hundred years later Britain is still at it. Taoiseach Micheál Martin stated in May of this year ***“we are currently witnessing a denial of democracy.”***  Tánaiste Coveney emphasized ***“…the British do not accept democratic decisions.”***

Former U. S. diplomat Richard Holbrooke summarized author Margaret MacMillan’s 570-page book **PARIS 1919** thus: ***“It is a study of flawed decisions with terrible consequences many of which haunt us to this day***.” Surprisingly, the 1918 Irish election victory of Sinn Fein for an independent Ireland, seen by many as the beginning of the end of the British colonial empire, merited not one reference. Perhaps not so surprising was the fact that the gr. granddaughter of Lloyd George, author MacMillan, chose to make a one sentence reference to Ireland having nothing to do with the watershed election victory of Sinn Fein.

The lingering legacy of that crushing defeat for democracy required decades of N. I. destabilization policies: restricting the vote franchise to property; employment and housing discrimination; corruption of every facet of law and justice from Coroner Inquest restriction exclusive to NI and juryless trials and, of course a fury of violence. Many punishing measures were implemented not by a democratic vote but by a Privy Council consisting of aristocratic and military individuals and a Viceroy-like character who shared a hereditary dislike of the Irish. The 2016 Northern Ireland vote to remain in the EU must be respected as must the GFA obligation of the Unity referendum/poll. The Conservatives, however, have other ideas. By abandoning the rule of law and adopting this ‘legacy’ bill, PM Sunak hopes to purge the poison of Britain’s N. I. governance, focusing instead on a future of ‘perfecting partition.’

Only America can dissuade British from such a policy. In the words of former U. S. Ambassador to UK Raymond Seitz, the U. S. pretty much let Britain define America’s Ireland relationship. Frankly, we owe Ireland big-time! The Senate oversight role in foreign policy must be deployed to make Britain accountable not only for its deadly past but for a future that restores the 32-county election mandate and builds a peace with its neighbor based on the rule of law. Sincerely,

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ATTACHMENTS