



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
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Prime Minister Rishi Sunak
10 Downing Street
London, United Kingdom SW1A 0AA

14 June 2023

Prime Minister Sunak,

During your recent joint press conference with President Biden, you stated, "*One thing that won't change is the strength of our partnership, our friendship, and we will put our values front and center as we have always done to deliver for the British and American people.*"

The continuing advancement of the U.K.'s "Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill" through Parliament flies in the face of that statement. One of the core values shared not only between the British and American people, but amongst all civilized nations, is that no one is above the law and that justice is accessible to all. This core value is the foundation of not only the Good Friday Agreement but of Magna Carta. Yet the U.K.'s Legacy bill would create a protected class and give an amnesty for murder. The bill is rooted in the cynically irrational belief that those who have hidden their crimes in the shadow of injustice, oftentimes enjoying stolen valor based on false narratives, will now step forward and admit to their crimes.

The United Kingdom has committed numerous times in international treaty, starting with the landmark Good Friday Agreement, to providing justice to the families of the victims of the conflict in Northern Ireland. For half a century, they have stalled and equivocated, and now they have the nerve to tell the world that too much time has passed, and it is time to "turn the page." It should be noted that this urgency to "turn the page" began almost simultaneously with the findings by British Courts that the massacres at Ballymurphy and Blood Sunday were unjustifiable. Recent amendments to this bill would halt judicial proceedings currently in process to find the truth behind those horrific events and countless others. The U.K. legacy bill does not 'turn the page'; it is an attempt to tear out the page of the U.K.'s true role in Northern Ireland.

"Ireland unfree shall never be at Peace"

While we agree that the U.S. and the U.K. must stand together to condemn Russian aggression and human rights abuses in Ukraine, we find it more than a little hypocritical for your government to be simultaneously advancing legislation to airbrush from history similar acts perpetrated by British forces. The United States cannot condemn the atrocities currently being committed by Russia in Ukraine or civil rights abuse in China while being silent on similar abuses in Belfast. Such silence is not indicative of a 'special relationship'; it is the complicity of an accessory after the fact.

Earlier in the same press conference, you invited people to "judge [the U.K.] by its actions." No one should wish to be judged based on the action of denigrating the core principles of justice that the Legacy and Reconciliation Bill represents. This bill is an affront to the core values of the United States, an affront to the Good Friday Agreement and threatens the US "special relationship" with the UK. **We, therefore, ask you to pull this legislative travesty immediately if you seek not one a favorable judgment by the American people but by the world and history.**

Respectfully,



Daniel J O'Connell

National President

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About The Ancient Order of Hibernians

Founded in 1836 with membership in all 50 states, the Ancient Order of Hibernians is the oldest and largest Irish-Catholic Organization in the United States.

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