

## Speaker says Northern Irish desire peace

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

PITTSFORD — Northern Ireland's Catholics and Protestants might reconcile if the paramilitaries allegedly defending each community would give them room to do so, according to Colin Craig, director of Corrymeela Community in the British-ruled region.

Craig spoke Friday evening, Sept. 18, in the Science Building at St. John Fisher College, 3690 East Ave. His speech was sponsored by the local chapter of the Irish American Cultural Institute, a national organization devoted to increasing knowledge and understanding of Ireland.

Partitioned from the rest of Ireland in the 1920s, residents of Northern Ireland have experienced much violent unrest since 1969 — the year a civil rights movement led by minority Catholics was met with hostile reaction from the ruling Protestant majority, Craig explained.

Located on the northeast coast of Northern Ireland in Ballycastle, County Antrim, Corrymeela since 1965 has served as an ecumenical Christian center for retreats and reconciliation sessions between Catholics and Protestants, he explained.

Although Craig acknowledged that politics fueled the violence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he noted that paramilitaries on both sides currently practice terrorism, racketeering, extortion, torture and murder for questionable motives.

He also complained that such paramilitary groups as the mainly Catholic Provisional Irish Republican Army and the mainly Protestant Ulster Defense Association oppress their own communities by forcing less militant citizens to take sides in the long-standing conflict.

"When will these people give the rest of us in Northern Ireland space to find our own reality?" he asked rhetorically.

"The reality in Northern Ireland is that we are Irish and British," Craig continued. "Northern Ireland is the bastard child of two parents. One (Britain) has had custody for 70 years. One (Ireland) has no sense of responsibility. The child is very delinquent. It

## Service honors Ukrainian victims

Wlasył Bilan, a veteran of the 1st Division of the Ukrainian National Army, salutes as the Ukrainian National Anthem is played during a service outside Irondequoit Town Hall Sept. 19. Ukrainian-Americans and other supporters turned out for the ceremony to remember the eight million Ukrainians who starved to death during a government-imposed famine 60 years ago. The state-induced famine was ordered by Josef Stalin. In addition to Rochester-area survivors, Dr. Tatiana Hardashuk of Kiev, Ukraine, came to Rochester to attend the service organized by the Irondequoit-Poltava Sister City Committee.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

doesn't know who it belongs to."

Although he predicted some form of unity between Northern Ireland and the rest of the island someday, Craig asserted that if Northern Ireland were found "under the waves" tomorrow, most of the population in southern Ireland would simply "shrug their shoulders" since they give little thought to their separated Catholic brethren.

At the same time, especially since Great Britain and Ireland signed the Anglo-Irish accord in 1985, giving the Republic a voice in the North's affairs, Protestants have realized that most Britons do not consider them British but Irish. Such a realization has made the Protestants insecure about any future in a Catholic-dominated, united Ireland, Craig said.

If Protestants are to ever accept unity with Catholics, they must be able to feel secure in such an arrangement, or they could use violence against a united Irish government in the same manner that Catholics use violence against the British government now, he added.

Places such as Corrymeela can play a vital role in unifying the bitterly divided communities because they are claimed by neither side and they create an environment where people "can tell their stories," he emphasized.

He recalled, for example, a discussion between two women — one a Catholic whose husband in the IRA killed five to six people in a hotel, and the other a Protestant whose husband killed four Catholics at random.

Both women lived in the tough areas of their respective neighborhoods in Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, he said. And each woman found that her life — stripped of the politics that divided the other woman from her — remarkably resembled the other's life.

"In the sense of knowing that, then, of course, the tears come," Craig said. Despite such hard-won signs of

hope, Craig cautioned that Catholics and Protestants will never completely reconcile until each group's more "peaceful" members realize that they will always be capable of passively, if not actively, supporting violence.

Even after 20 years in the business of reconciling differences, Craig noted that even he feels a buried indifference when his ancient enemy is beaten.

"Too often I have to deal with the fact that when a British soldier gets killed, that it doesn't have the same impact on me that hearing a member of my Catholic community got killed," he confessed.

## Widow of late Egyptian president to lecture at Elmira Notre Dame

ELMIRA — Jehan el-Sadat, widow of the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, is scheduled to visit this Southern Tier city next month.

Sadat will give a reception on Sunday, Oct. 17, at the Strathmont Bed and Breakfast, located in West Elmira, from 6-8 p.m.

She will deliver a lecture, titled "International Peace and Understanding," on Monday, Oct. 18, at Notre Dame High School, 1400 Maple Ave., beginning at 8 p.m.

Sadat lectures frequently and has received numerous international awards and honorary doctorates. She has been active in women's rights causes both in Egypt and the rest of the world, and is also a strong proponent of world literacy.

Ticket packages are available at \$150 per couple. This includes admission to the Oct. 17 reception; special seating at the lecture; and a dinner with Sadat on Oct. 18, prior to her speech at Notre



Jehan el-Sadat

Dame, at Pierce's 1894 Restaurant in Elmira Heights.

Those wishing to attend the reception only can purchase tickets for \$25. Lecture tickets are also available for \$10 (adults) and \$7 (students and senior citizens).

Sadat's appearance is being co-sponsored by Notre Dame High School and the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation. Proceeds will benefit both organizations.

To order tickets, call Notre Dame High School, 607/734-2267, or the St. Joseph's Foundation, 737-7004.



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