

12-1991 15:53 FROM COMPTROLLER OFFICE TO

THE CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE MAYOR DAVID N. DINKINS

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REMARKS BY MAYOR DAVID N. DINKINS
AT PUBLIC HEARING ON LOCAL LAWS
BLUE ROOM -- CITY HALL
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1991 -- 2:30 P.M.

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The first bill before me is Introductory Number 675-A, sponsored by Council Member Herb Berman, Speaker Peter Vallone, and Council Members Jerry Crispino, Robert Dryfoos, June Eisland, Jerome O'Donovan, Archie Spigner, Julia Harrison, Victor Robles, Enoch Williams, Mary Pinkett, and co-sponsored by sixteen of their colleagues. This legislation would extend the deadline for those city employees who participated in Operation Desert Storm to file their financial disclosure forms.

This past Monday, New Yorkers celebrated the men and women who served their country so bravely in the finest fashion we know, with a triumphant ticker-tape parade. It was an incredible event. However, there must be a realization that our soldiers may encounter difficulties in their return to civilian life. In order to relieve some of those pressures, I announced the creation of the "Welcome Back" benefits package for the 545 City employees who served in the Gulf. This plan includes layoff protection, extension of health insurance benefits, annual leave

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benefits and a monetary stipend. Last week, I issued a Mayoral Directive to all agency heads on the implementation of this package, effective immediately.

Intro. 675-A is another important step in providing a smooth transition from military service back to civilian life. Those City employees who served in the Gulf and are required to file financial disclosure forms should not be penalized for their service. Nor should they be expected to complete such forms immediately upon their return from active duty. This legislation provides a filing extension of four months from the time they return to active employment status. It would be effective from that time.

I will first turn to the bill's sponsors, next, to any other elected officials who wish to speak.

Now, I will turn to the general audience.

Is there anyone in the general audience to be heard in opposition?

Is there anyone in the general audience to be heard in support?

There being no one else to be heard, and for the reasons previously stated, I will now sign the bill.

The second bill before me is Introductory Number 598-B, sponsored by Council Members Carolyn Maloney, Stanley Michels and Mary Pinkett, and co-sponsored by twelve of their colleagues. This local law would apply the MacBride Principles of non-

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discrimination in Northern Ireland to companies that seek to do business with the City of New York.

Nearly 11 months ago we gathered in this room to enact historic legislation which sent a strong message to the government of South Africa that apartheid must end. Today we have a chance to make another equally important statement, namely that religious and political discrimination in Northern Ireland must cease. This is an opportunity to let our friends in Northern Ireland know that, while we in New York City work to assure continued fair treatment of all of our citizens, we expect those with whom we do business to uphold this principle worldwide.

The MacBride Principles are named for the late Sean MacBride, the 1974 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, and a tireless advocate for human rights in Northern Ireland. In addition to his tremendous efforts in his home country, Mr. MacBride has a legacy of global importance as one of the founding members of Amnesty International. The principles that carry Sean MacBride's name include several fundamental tenets, such as increasing the representation of under-represented groups in the workforce, publicly advertising all job openings and developing job training programs to assure that employees from under-represented groups have a fair chance at advancement.

Under this legislation, the City's procurement power would be put to use for this laudable purpose. Unlike the South Africa

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legislation, the intent of this bill is not to discourage economic investment in a particular part of the world. Rather, with this bill we seek to encourage companies that pursue contracts with our City and that have locations in Northern Ireland, to do their fair share in eradicating employment discrimination.

Intro. 598-B requires that contractors certify that they have no business operations in Northern Ireland, or that they will take lawful steps in good faith to comply with the MacBride Principles. Such steps would be subject to independent monitoring. The certification would be applicable to parent and subordinate organizations of the vendor to the extent that there is at least a ten percent ownership interest. If the lowest responsible bidder is unable to make this certification, and there is another bidder who can make such certification and whose bid is within five percent of the lowest responsible bid, the contract may be awarded to other than the lowest responsible bidder. Certain exceptions are permitted in cases of emergency, sole source contracts and the like.

I recognize that as in many other parts of the world, Northern Ireland is experiencing difficult economic times. However, even in the worst of times, every citizen should have the same opportunity as his or her neighbor to earn a livelihood. In fact, I believe that as more companies begin to adhere to the MacBride Principles, Northern Ireland will become a more

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our resources as the largest amount of such behavior.

Carolyn Maloney, Sal Albanese, Stanley Michels and Mary Pinkett; next, to any other elected officials who wish to speak.

Now, I will turn to the general audience.

Is there anyone in the general audience to be heard in opposition?

Is there anyone in the general audience to be heard in favor?

There being no one else to be heard, and for the reasons previously stated, I will now sign the bill.

The third bill before me for consideration this afternoon is Introductory Number 622, sponsored by Council Member June Eisland and co-sponsored by ten of her colleagues. This proposed local law would name an existing ballfield, Sean Healy Field. The ballfield is located in Van Cortlandt Park, on the west side of Van Cortlandt Park East between East 240th Street and Kepler Avenue in the Bronx.

Sean Healy, 30 years old, was a well-liked and respected Assistant District Attorney in the Bronx. On the morning of Thursday, August 30, 1990, Healy went to buy doughnuts for his colleagues in a bodega near the Bronx Courthouse where he worked. While Healy was making his purchase, a car pulled up outside and the three men inside it sprayed the storefront with bullets.

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attractive place in which to invest, thus developing wonderful new opportunities for Catholics and Protestants alike.

When I testified before the Committee on Government Operations on March 25, 1991, I reiterated the commitment of my administration to fight discrimination in Northern Ireland. New Yorkers can be proud of the strong track record of their City in this area. The City's pension funds have been among the leading advocates of the MacBride Principles since their inception. The pension funds have been active in monitoring corporate compliance with the principles, and have used their economic muscle in the form of proxy-shareholder resolutions to urge further adherence to the principles.

However, we simply cannot afford to feel comfortable with these efforts alone. Amnesty International is releasing today a Report entitled "United Kingdom: Human Rights Concerns"; it paints a frightening picture of the situation in Northern Ireland. It is deeply disturbing that the stories of human rights abuses continue to proliferate. It suggests that the action we take today is all the more urgent.

I am so pleased to have this bill before me. As an African American, I know the evils of employment discrimination firsthand. It is a demeaning experience that can stay with you for the rest of your life. It is a practice that cannot be tolerated by this City and one that has no place in any society purporting to be democratic. As such, we must continue to use

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