

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## IRELAND



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Discriminatory Employment Practices:

Short Bros. Airplane Manufacturers

1. A paper prepared in June 1983 by Rev. Brian J. Brady, St. Joseph's College of Education, accused Short's of discriminatory recruitment practices against Catholics. The paper received widespread circulation in the United States and foremost in their efforts to publicise the company's alleged anti-Catholic bias were the Irish National Caucus under the leadership of Fr. Sean McManus. The publicity was aimed at endangering U.S. orders for Short's aircraft and missiles and figures showing that only 4 to 5 per cent of Short's 7,000 workforce are Catholic were cited as evidence of discrimination. After extensive lobbying, a number of Congressmen and Senators supported the Caucus viewpoint, among them Alfonso D'Amate, Alan Cranston, Bill Emerson and Ernest Hollings. Neither Speaker O'Neill nor Senator Edward Kennedy supported the move.

2. In a separate development, the three-man delegation from the American trade union federation AFL-CIO visited Northern Ireland at the beginning of July 1983 and met the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Mr. Prior, representatives of the Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU and of the shipbuilding unions, as well as the author of the paper on discrimination, Rev. Brian Brady. Following their talks in Belfast, the delegation travelled to Dublin where they met the Taoiseach and Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Trade Commerce and Tourism. Mr. Terry Carlin, Northern Ireland officer of ICTU, also attended this meeting.

3. In an effort to counter the bad publicity in the US, Short's management and Senior shop stewards signed an agreement with the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Agency promising "affirmative action" to increase the proportion of Catholics in the company's workforce. Advertisements were placed in Catholic newspapers and promises were made to encourage Catholics to join either as apprentices or as skilled workmen.

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