

IRISH VOICE

McAllister Family to Face Deportation Soon

October 4, 2007 By Cahir O'Doherty

MALACHY McAllister, 50, the former Republican prisoner could be back in Ireland within two weeks if he receives an expected deportation order from the Department of Homeland Security.

The father of four who fled Belfast in 1988 after the Red Hand Commando paramilitaries came within inches of killing his family, hopes the politicians in his home state of New Jersey will support his campaign to stay in the U.S.

Ominous postings on Loyalist internet sites in the last two weeks underline that the threat to his safety has not diminished.

McAllister told the Irish Voice on Tuesday, "Obviously Loyalist websites are paying very close attention to what's going on and that's very concerning given that we've been out of Ireland for so long. It seems that when you're a high profile target the threat never leaves you. My concern now is that if there were to be a breakdown in the peace agreement then someone like myself will be defenseless."

Asked what immediate steps could halt or postpone a deportation order, McAllister replied, "The position is we need a senator to introduce a private bill to hold off the imminent deportation by the Department of Homeland Security. If that's not done then we're in danger of being deported."

Senators are notoriously reluctant to introduce private bills, but McAllister argues that his is a very unique case.

"We're at a crunch stage where this can actually split us up as a family. Two of my children will also face deportation orders. The last time my youngest children were in Ireland they were both infants. That was 19 years ago," he said.

"They're American citizens now, they've been brought up here, they've been educated here, they still go to school here. Any one with any common sense will ask what will the administration accomplish by sending this family back to the land where they once fled for their lives?"

Attorney Eamonn Doran, who is representing the McAllisters, told the Irish Voice, "We are still lobbying intensely with New Jersey senators and particularly Senator Frank Lau-

tenberg to request that the Senate introduce private legislation on Malachy's behalf because that's the only device that is going to allow him and his children to remain here in the United States. Apart from that he really is only here at the greatest goodwill of the Department of Home-land Security. And we expect that goodwill is going to be exhausted soon."

Currently the Mc-Allister family could be removed any day, in response to what's called a bag and baggage letter instructing them to surrender to the Bureau Immigration and Customs enforcement, with their bags packed, on a given date.

Says Dornan, "It's crucial that a private bill is introduced in the Senate as soon as possible. Our understanding is that once it is admitted the Department of Home-land Security will respect the procedure and allow it to run its course through the senate sub committee."

Dornan suggested that interested members of the public in New Jersey should call Senator Lautenberg, or their local congressperson, urging him to pursue a private bill on behalf of the family. To contact Lautenberg call 973-39-8700.

Added Dornan, "It's our opinion that the senator has as much support as he needs from the third circuit court of appeals whereby Judge Maryann Trump Barry had begged the attorney general to provide some humanitarian relief for the family.

"The decision found the courts didn't have any legislative tools and didn't have any recourse and so they put the ball firmly back in the political arena. The judicial route is now over, the solution to this situation will be political."

