



IBRG

LAMBETH

IRISH IN BRITAIN REPRESENTATION GROUP

01-622-7498

12, Cresset Street,
London, SW4 6BP.

23 Samhain 1984

Judy Peddle,

Cardiff,

Judy, a chara,

Thank you for your letter dated 8 Samhain and received by me on 22 Samhain relating to the last Prisoner's Sub-Committee meeting.

As you are aware, I missed the last Árd Choiste meeting due to an unfortunate difficulty with my car which broke down outside Manchester. I was concerned, therefore, to note criticism of my actions relating to the booking of a venue for the Prisoner's Sub-Committee, when I read the latest Árd Choiste minutes. I have always expressed the view - even at the height of the Pat Delaney difficulties - that the IBRG is a democratic organisation, and is therefore concerned for all its members and, in keeping with this, should not allow any IBRG individual to be criticised without s/he being present to respond. In my case, given that this was the first Árd Choiste meeting missed by me since accepting the post of Leas-Rúnaí, it would only have meant deferring these comments until the next meeting. However, as this criticism was not only allowed but minuted, I take the opportunity in replying to your letter to also inform all IBRG Branches (who presumably received and read the Árd Choiste minutes) of the actual events.

You say in your letter that I was not given much notice to find a venue. This is, of course, quite true. To be exact, I had 2½ weeks notice of your intention to meet in London and of your desire that I should find a venue. During that 2½ weeks An Comhcomhairle took place as did my own Branch Árd Fheis. However, that is irrelevant as I did accept the responsibility to make the arrangements and raised no objections.

You are, however, completely incorrect to say that the 'London Branches' failed to find a room for the meeting. I explained to you at An Comhcomhairle (one week prior) that I intended to book at County Hall (GLC) but had yet to contact the relevant officer. When Peter Lynch rang me on the Friday night I explained that this had proved impossible due to the illness of the officer in question. I also explained that it was necessary to find a venue fairly central to London as transport is difficult on a Sunday and it would be unfair for people to travel into a mainline station, and then spend ages trying to cross London to reach a distant venue. For this reason Branches such as Harrow or

Waltham Forest were impractical. When I spoke to Peter Lynch I was in the process of contacting the Brent Irish Cultural Centre. However, I did not do so because Peter advised that he would first speak to the Sub-Committee to find out if members still wished me to continue my endeavours on their behalf. When he phoned back later it was to tell me that the venue had been switched to Cardiff. I am confident that Peter relayed all the above information accurately to the Sub-Committee and I am therefore totally at a loss to understand how your letter can state 'the meeting was only small and we feel that it must have been possible to find a room of some sort in London'. Of course a room could have been found - at the very worst you would have been offered a room in Lambeth - but the question did not arise. The meeting was switched from London to Cardiff by a decision of your Sub-Committee and not because I failed to find a room (although I accept that it might not have been a totally satisfactory meeting-room!).

I therefore have no hesitation in totally rejecting the comments made in your letter as a gross distortion of the truth, and I shall be seeking for a correction of the comments and information given in the Árd Choiste minutes.

The final paragraph of your letter informs me that the Sub-Committee will again be heading London-ward and 'if London branches have problems in finding a venue the current members will make their own arrangements'. I hardly think that such a statement, and the inference of such a statement, is in keeping with the spirit of co-operation which has existed in IBRG these last months. Nor do I think that it is very constructive. All I can say is that, given sufficient notice and no unforeseen circumstances, I will do my best to ensure you a satisfactory venue. I am not prepared to give a commitment on behalf of any Branch, even my own, because I do not have that authority (nor do I wish to have such authority).

I would suggest that future meetings of the Prisoner's Sub-Committee are booked two months in advance (e.g. February booked in December) and you liaise and consult with the area or Branch involved before confirming the venue. That way you may be assured of knowing any geographical problems, etc., which may arise, as well as guaranteeing trouble-free bookings.

I hope that both you and the Sub-Committee will accept that this letter is intended to set the record straight and make some constructive suggestions. We all have enough work to do in building our movement without getting involved in recriminations or whatever. For my part, I will accept that there has been a serious misunderstanding and I assure the Prisoner's Sub-Committee of my continuing support for their aims and objectives.

Go n-éiri leat,

Gearóid MacGearailt
Leas-Rúnaí



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IRISH IN BRITAIN REPRESENTATION GROUP

Cardiff

8 Samhain 1984

Gearoid MacGearailt
Lambeth IBRG

Gearoid a chara

I'm writing at the request of the Prisoners' sub-Committee to convey the Committee's grave concern at the failure of the London branches to find a room for its meeting last Sunday. We realise that you didn't have a great deal of notice, but if there were difficulties we could surely have been warned earlier than the Friday before. Also, the meeting was only small and we feel that it must have been possible to find a room of some sort in London.

As stated in my letter accompanying the Ard Choiste Agenda, the sub-Committee would very much like to feel it had the full support of the IBRG and we certainly need more members. We hope therefore that it may be possible to recruit more London-based members in the near future - the lack of them at present is worrying.

In any event, we will be holding ^{one of} the next Prisoners' sub-Committee meetings in London, and if London branches have problems in finding a venue, the current members will make their own arrangements.

Slán agus beannacht

Judy Peddle
Judy Peddle
Runaí - Prisoners' sub-Committee