



IBRG

Paddington
LAMBETH

IRISH IN BRITAIN REPRESENTATION GROUP

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF AN ÁRD CHOISTE HELD DE DOMHNAIGH 9 MEÁN FÓMHAR 1984 AT
93 SOLIHULL ROAD BIRMINGHAM

Those present were:

Maire O'Shea	Birmingham
Arthur Devlin	Bolton
Seamas Carey	Leas Cathaoirleach
Judy Peddle	Rúnaí
Caitlín Wright	Internal Co-Ordinator
Jim King	Cathaoirleach
Gearóid MacGearailt	Leas Rúnaí
John Martin	Uachtarán
Joseph Mullarkey	Leas Uachtarán
Michael O Cnaimhsi	N.E. Lancs
Alan Wallace	Cisteoir
Séamas O Coileáin	Lambeth

Apologies received from:

Mary Duckett	Harrow
Rosaleen Walshe	Manchester
Pat Reynolds	Caidreamh Poiblí

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Caitlín Wright and seconded by Joseph Mullarkey that the Minutes be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings. This was agreed.

2. MATTERS ARISING

An Rúnaí advised that the letter sent to Gerry Gallagher advising his of his impending expulsion and of his rights under the Constitution, had been returned undelivered. She questioned whether the expulsion was still valid. It was agreed that it should stand, unless Gerry Gallagher contacted in the future.

An t-Uachtarán questioned whether it was felt acceptable for members to have contact with those who had been expelled. It was agreed that the implications of expulsion related solely to their role within IBRG and any other contact was of no concern to the movement.

An Rúnaí advised that she had received two 'holding' letters from the Ambassador with regard to our demands on the PTA. It was agreed that An Rúnaí respond and advise him that if no reply, or an inadequate reply, had been received by 1st October the IBRG would take appropriate action to support its demands. It was agreed that An Leas Rúnaí would formulate an Information Sheet and petitions.

It was noted with concern that no replies had been received from Branches with regard to support of the various Sub-Committees set up at the last meeting. It was felt that this could have been due to the holiday period. It was agreed that Caitlín Wright should be the sole contact with the Ambassador on issues relating to Welfare.

It was agreed that our new Travel Sub-Committee, and its functions, should be publicised in the press. Maria Wynne of Haringey will be the contact for the South and Caitlín Wright the contact for the Midlands/North.

An Leas Runai gave details of his correspondence with Channel 4 and RTE with regard to the format of 'Irish Angle'. This was being pursued.

It was noted that An Árd Choiste had still not debated the New Ireland Forum (although the PRO had given a public response). It was agreed to raise the matter under AOB. A discussion took place regarding the 18th August Demonstration and there was general agreement that the day had been a success.

3. OFFICER'S REPORTS:
CATHAOIRLEACH:

Jim King confirmed that the opening of the new Wigan Branch had been successful. He felt, however, that the movement had reached a plateau from the point of view of the national movement and that this was possibly due to Branch issues taking precedence on the time of many people, potentially useful nationally. He identified a number of areas requiring attention - the identification of moribund Branches, and their revitalisation; the involvement of new second-generation members; fundraising; production of publicity information; the introduction of a European perspective.

He read a letter relating to support for Ken Livingstone which he proposed sending to the 'Irish Post' (with the approval of An Ard Choiste). This was agreed on the basis that IBRG were supporting the policies of the present GLC Administration and not necessarily the Labour Party as such.

RÚNAÍ:

An Rúnaí advised that Donall MacAmhlaigh intended to write an article on IBRG for Ireland's Own. Branches to send details to him of anything they wished to be included in this article.

South London Irish Solidarity Committee had written requesting that IBRG support a two day event which they were organising for 13/14 October. After some debate it was agreed that An Rúnaí should reply indicating that IBRG Branches would be circulated with details and would be asked to consider supporting.

CISTEOIR:

It was confirmed that An Rúnaí had received £40 as agreed at the last meeting. An Cisteoir advised that he was still experiencing difficulties with the bank regarding the change of Cisteoir. He also advised that as of 1 Meán Fomhar IBRG was £109 overdrawn in the bank (mainly due to the cost of the Árd Fheis). Arrangements had been made to organise the relationships between An Cisteoir and An Runai Ballraiochta (Fionbarra O Cuillin) so that money received for membership was now put directly into the bank account and not via An Cisteoir.

An Cisteoir had arranged for a substantial number of Standing Order forms to be printed and suggested that Branches should encourage members to support this method of fund raising.

It was agreed that we hold a National Raffle around Christmas time in support of the Ard Choiste, with a number of prizes including at least £50 in cash. It was agreed that we encourage Branches to donate prizes and also write to the Irish organisations looking for support. It was agreed that 10,000 tickets should be printed and sold in books of 5 (10p each). An Cisteoir agreed to organise.

It was suggested that we actively encourage Branches to hold dances in support of An Ard Choiste and advise them to contact An t-Uachtarán if they need assistance. It was agreed that we support a sponsored bike ride around Ireland by An t-Uachtarán. He agreed to organise the event and report back to An Ard Choiste.

An t-Uachtarán advised that Fr. Malone of the Camden Irish Centre had offered the Centre free of charge to the IBRG for a social, and that the bands Shegui and Irish Mist had agreed to perform - also free of charge. London Branches to investigate and organise or report back.

INTERNAL CO-ORDINATOR:

It was noted with concern that new Branches were still being set up without receiving prior approval of An Árd Choiste and without the Internal Co-Ordinator being informed. It was reiterated that she must be notified, via An Árd Choiste, of the opening of every new Branch so that copies of the Constitution, etc., could be forwarded to them.

It was agreed that Coventry IBRG would be re-activated at a Public Meeting.

It was noted with concern that many Branches were still not supplying copies of their meeting Minutes.

CAIDREAMH POIBLÍ:

In the absence of the PRO An Leas Rúnai gave a brief report on his behalf. He read out a statement on the Sean Downes killing which had been issued by the PRO the day after the event. He also gave details of correspondance between IBRG and Aer Lingus regarding their continued advertising in the 'Standard' newspaper - particularly in view of the withdrawel of advertising revenue by the GLC. As there was some debate regarding the advantage of threatening Aer Lingus with a picket on this issue, the following Motion was proposed by Dr. Maire O'Shea and seconded by Joseph Mullarkey:

'that An Árd Choiste supports the tactic of threatening (and implementing) a picket of Aer Lingus unless a satisfactory conclusion is reached regarding their withdrawel of advertising from the 'Standard'

This Resolution was passed. Voting: 11 in favour 1 against.

4. COMHCHOMHAIRLE:

It was agreed that this will be a one-day event held on 22 Deireadh Fómhair (October) from midday to 6.30.p.m. preferably in the Digbeth Hall, Birmingham. Maximum cost of the hall was estimated to be £30 and it was anticipated that approximately 150 people would be present. Observers would be encouraged to attend. Registration would be at 11.00.a.m. and there would be a half-hour break from 3.30.p.m. to 4.00.p.m. A creche would be provided and Birmingham members would investigate disabled access. A system of coloured cards would be provided to identify delegates as opposed to observers. The numbers of delegates entitled to be sent by each Branch would be notified by An Rúnai Ballraiochta and Branches should then submit the names of delegates in advance to the Internal Co-Ordinator. It was agreed that Coventry would be the only new Branch accepted for registration at this Comhchomhairle. The Lambeth IBRG banner would be on display. There would be an appeal for donations to cover the cost of organising, at the end of the day. A map would be sent to each Branch showing details of car parking, train stations, etc.

It was agreed that all M.P.'s and MEP's who are members of IBRG should be invited to attend, and after some debate it was proposed by An Rúnai and seconded by Michael O Cnaimhsi that:

'the Mayor of Birmingham be invited to open the day at 11.45.a.m., followed by Claire Short, M.P. (assuming she is agreeable) followed by the commencement of business at 12 noon sharp'. This was agreed.

The PRO to advertise the event nationally and the Birmingham PRO to deal with the local press. It was also agreed that it should be an open affair and that reporters should be invited to attend.

5. LONDON BRANCHES:

It was confirmed that all London Branches had now been contacted but that, for a variety of reasons, the investigating committee had been unable to meet. There had been very few responses from those Branches who had been the subject of concern. After a brief debate it was agreed that the following Branches should be considered disbanded:

BRENT: WESTMINSTER: SHEPHERDS BUSH:
KENSINGTON: MARYLEBONE: EALING

It was agreed that London Branches should arrange Public Meetings in those areas to form new Branches and that those Meetings should be chaired by non-London Ard Choiste members.

6. YOUTH:

Michael O Cnaimhsi gave details of a draft Job Description which he had drawn up for the Youth Officer, together with some ideas on the way the post could operate. It was agreed that these documents should be circulated to Branches for their comments at the Chomhcomhairle.

He also gave details of correspondance he had received from the Community games Organiser who would be coming to Britain later in the year. He suggested that a conference be organised nationally next year for the participation of all interested groups, and where this Organiser could speak. It was proposed by Caitlín Wright and seconded by Alan Wallace that:

'Michael O Cnaimhsi investigate this possibility further and report back to the Árd Choiste'. This was agreed.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

It was proposed by Caitlín Wright and seconded by Gearóid MacGearailt that:

'IBRG organise a coach to Dingle around Easter or October of next year for language learners'. This was agreed.

An t-Uachtarán advised that he was investigating the possibility of a 'Gaeltacht' holiday in Wales for next year.

An Leas Cathaoirleach gave details, received from NALGO, concerning the case of Muhammad Idrish who is facing deportation. It was proposed by Seamas Carey and seconded by Gearóid MacGearailt that:

'IBRG write indicating support for this campaign'.

This was agreed on the understanding that An Leas Rúnaí indicate in the letter our concern at the lack of priority given to the issue of Ireland by successive NALGO conferences.

An Leas Rúnaí gave details concerning the plight of Jonathon Bloch, a South African, who is facing deportation following publication of his book on the role of Britain's secret service (including in Ireland). He proposed and Seamas O Coileáin seconded that: 'IBRG write to the Home Office expressing concern on this issue'.

This was agreed.

It was agreed that IBRG should have a presence at this years Terence McSwiney Mass and that this should be publicised in the 'Irish Post'.

NEXT MEETING: 10 SAMHAIN (November), BOLTON