



IBRG

IRISH IN BRITAIN REPRESENTATION GROUP

London Regional Council Meeting of the Irish in Britain Representation Group

M I N U T E S

A meeting of the London Regional Council of the IBRG was held at the Irish Centre, Camden on 2nd October 1983 at 3 p.m.

Those present included Jim Curran (Chairman) and Pat Delaney (Secretary). The following branches were represented: Brent, Lambeth, Waltham Forest, Westminster and Fleet Street, Camden.

Apologies for Absence

Received from: B. Riley, K. Griffin, and R. Lewis.

Minutes

The Minutes of a meeting held on 11th September 1983 at the Irish Centre, Camden were read.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

1. It was decided that some order and clarification over the convening of LRC meetings was needed in view of the fact that meetings had been held since June in the absence of elected Officers of the Regional Council.
2. At one of these meetings held on 11th September 1983 it had been decided to ask for postponement of action on the grant application to the GLC for the setting up of a central office staffed by six full-time workers.

There was a discussion on these two points. It was felt that the increasing workload of the IBRG did justify the establishment of a central office which would play an important role in co-ordinating and indeed off-loading many tasks carried out by individual branches. However, much consideration was given to concern that a central office would transfer decision-making from the individual branches and destroy their autonomy.

The meeting unanimously agreed on the following proposal by P. Delaney (seconded by P Cahill, Waltham Forest):

' That the application for a grant from the GLC for the establishment of a central office go forward after further discussion at the NEC meeting of the IBRG on 15th October, and, that a series of meetings should be held to discuss the structure, role and function of the central office in order to ensure autonomy to the branches but also their participation and representation. '

It was agreed that all branches should contribute individually to the furthering of the aims of the IBRG.

A proposal by M. Cahill (Waltham Forest) to send a circular to all branches requesting their support for the GLC application was also agreed by the meeting. It was decided too that the Chairman personally contact the individual branches on this matter.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported on the meeting with the Twenty Six Counties' Minister for Foreign Affairs, Peter Barry, at the London Irish Embassy on 26th July 1983.

Submissions made to the Minister included the price of Irish passports, the P.T.A. and Irish political prisoners in Britain. No acknowledgement of the meeting had so far been received and the Chairman had written to the Minister expressing his concern over this long silence.

One subject which the Chairman raised again in his letter to the Minister was the Council of Europe's Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons. To date the Irish Government had not signed the convention. Britain had signed it in the last month.

It was suggested that IBRG branches write to MP's and TD's on this matter.

Secretary's Report

Having received a considerable quantity of correspondence relating to various matters, the Secretary reported specifically on correspondence from Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the Irish Labour Party and Sinn Fein regarding forthcoming meetings between representatives of these parties and delegations from the IBRG.

The Secretary also reported on the Irish-American conference held on 17th July 1983 in Chicago which very successfully marked the foundation of an international link-up of Irish community organisations. The conference was attended by a delegation from the IBRG led by P. Delaney.

Correspondence

Correspondence was noted from Walthamstow branch giving support to the application to the GLC.

Letters of resignation from Collette Gregory and Bridget Sexton also supported the demand for a grant, a central office and fulltime workers.

It was noted that the 'Birmingham Six' campaign has been started. This matter will also be raised at the NEC meeting on 15th October 1983.

Report from Other Branches

Waltham Forest

An application has been made for space at the 1984 GLC Year Against Racism exhibition, and MEP Alf Lomas has been asked to bring EEC attention to

Anti-Irish Racism particularly in the media. A thousand signatures had been collected and Alf Lomas asked to present them at the European Parliament.

Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Date of Next Meeting

30th October 1983 at the Irish Centre, Camden at 3 p.m.