



British Association for Irish Studies

Institute of Irish Studies

## JOINT EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN IRISH STUDIES

*Progress Report by the AIB Bank Honorary Director*

### Irish Studies in Primary Schools

1. The Primary Working Party continues to make good progress in developing cross-curricular support materials in Irish Studies for Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum. An exemplar study unit on Communities will shortly be available in draft form, and further study units will be available, at least in draft form, by the summer of 1991.

### Irish Studies in Secondary Schools

2. A Secondary Working Party has been formed to co-ordinate the development of support materials for the teaching of Irish Studies at Key Stages 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum. The members of the Working Party include Peter Fitzpatrick (St Francis Xavier College, Liverpool), Brendan Murray (St John Fisher R.C. High School, Wigan), David Barnes (Education Officer, Cardiff), Will Colhoun (Maricourt High School, Liverpool), Dr John Dunleavy (Abingdon College of Further Education), Joe Sheerin (Carlton Bolling College, Bradford), Paul Archer (Senior Advisory Teacher, Birmingham) and David Leedham (Whitby County High School).

3. The prime aim of the Secondary Working Party will be to provide support materials for the teaching of the Key Stage 3 History Core Study Unit 19, Culture and Society in Ireland up to the early Twentieth Century, and the Key Stage 4 History Core Study Unit 32 component, Irish Nationalism.

### Irish Studies at 18+

4. The first cohort of JMB Syllabus W and X (AS) candidates, representing four centres, sat their examinations in June 1990. 24 candidates were entered for Syllabus W, The Irish in Great Britain, 1815-1914, and one candidate was entered for Syllabus X, History, Literature and the Irish Identity, 1890-1926. Overall the results were excellent and augur well for the future of Irish Studies at 18+. Indeed, current indications are that additional centres will be offering Syllabuses W and X (AS) and Syllabus WX (Advanced), Modern Irish History, in the current academic year 1990-91.



## **Publications**

5. *The Irish in Britain, 1815-1914: Perspectives and Sources* (Historical Association 1990), to support the teaching of the A/AS Syllabuses in Modern Irish History.

## **Liaison with Local Education Authorities**

6. Contacts are being developed with local education authorities to publicise the work of the Joint Education Programme and to explore ways in which the authorities might support the programme, especially by trialling support materials in schools and by involving teachers in the INSET strategy. Particularly constructive discussions have been held with advisers and officers in Birmingham, Cumbria, Durham, Gwent, Manchester and Sefton, while Cheshire has established an Irish Studies Curriculum Development Group of secondary school teachers which will work closely with the Institute of Irish Studies. Such consultations have underlined the timeliness of the Joint Education Programme, as authorities and teachers are urgently seeking assistance in implementing the National Curriculum, especially its cross-curricular demands.

## **Resources**

7. At the same time, the Joint Education Programme remains seriously under-resourced. The grant from AIB Bank, originally intended to meet the salary of the AIB Bank Director, is having to meet all the development costs as well. Moreover, the advent of local management of schools and the government's INSET policy have combined to limit the capacity of local education authorities and teachers to contribute to the development of the programme. Creative thinking and the adroit use of resources, already evident in the operation of the Working Parties, are needed to maintain the momentum of the Joint Education Programme.

**Roger Swift**  
**AIB Bank Honorary Director, Joint Education Programme**  
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