

· the irish in haringey ·

an assessment of need
and a programme for action



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report of haringey irish consultative conference
november 1987

✳ HARINGEY COUNCIL ✳

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REMOVE**

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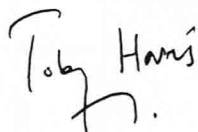
FOREWORD

Leader's Office

* HARINGEY COUNCIL *

Despite the long history of Irish immigration to Britain, and in this instance to Haringey in particular, there has been to-date very little policy analysis of the Community and its needs. What does exist has largely come from the Irish community itself. This report in small part attempts to break through that mould, in that this is the first policy orientated report on the needs of the Irish community by any British Local Authority. That said, the report that follows arrives not before its time. Its analysis and recommendations bear witness to a clear legacy of neglect and discrimination against the Irish community in Britain. It is my commitment as Leader of Haringey Council, now that the Irish community has unequivocally placed its needs before us, to endeavour to address and respond to the recommendations in the following report. It is fair to say that to-date Irish issues and needs have not had the priority they should or might have had. Indeed, the creation of the posts of Irish Liaison Officer and the commissioning of this report is a first recognition of this past neglect in Haringey. Now that the Irish Liaison Officers are established in post and the issues of concern to the community have been identified, we must continue the commitment to the Irish community. This commitment needs to be made all the more clearly at this time of financial stringency.

In conclusion, I hope that each relevant Service Committee within the Council, together with the Ethnic Minorities Joint Consultative Committee will as a matter of priority consider and respond to the recommendations in this report, in keeping with this Council's commitment to, and furtherance of, our equal opportunities policies and Race Equality Strategy.



COUNCILLOR TOBY HARRIS,
Leader of Haringey Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

Irish Unit

*** HARINGEY COUNCIL ***

A report such as this is, by its very nature, the result of much communal effort and co-operation. Indeed the consultative conference, and this report arising therefrom would not exist without such a high level of co-operation. We would however, like to say a special thank you to the following:— The Leader of the Council, Councillor Toby Harris, The Mayor, Councillor Andreas Mikkides, the Chairs and Speakers of the main talks, the workshop leaders and spokespersons, the Management and staff of Haringey Irish Centre, the staff of the Press and Printing sections of the Council who looked after all our publicity requirements. And finally, a thank you, to all those who attended, contributed to and otherwise participated in the conference proceedings. Without your input this report could not have been published.

To you all we say,

Go roimh mile maith agat.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO HARINGEY COUNCIL

The following sets of recommendations in 6 specific service areas were voted upon and unanimously recommended to Haringey Council by the Irish Community at the Consultative Conference on the needs of the Irish in Haringey held on November 28, 1987.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Haringey Council reaffirm its commitment to recognising the racial disadvantage experienced by the Irish community in Haringey, and the ethnic minority status of that community.
2. That Haringey Council as a matter of priority provide for all relevant employees a programme of Irish awareness training in keeping with the Council's commitment to race equality and equal opportunities in Haringey.
3. That Haringey Council as a matter of priority provide for all relevant employees a programme of Travellers Awareness Training in keeping with the Council's commitment to race equality and equal opportunities in Haringey.
4. That Haringey Council facilitate and support the development of an Irish Workers Group in the Council, as a legitimate group to articulate the concerns of disadvantaged employees within the Council.
5. That Haringey Council, through its membership of bodies such as the ALA and London Boroughs Grants Committee, and the AMA should as a matter of priority actively encourage other London local authorities to undertake an assessment of need in their Irish community and devise appropriate programmes of action.
6. That Haringey Council should actively encourage the development of, and support Irish community groups and organisations in the borough.

HOUSING

On Housing, the following recommendations were agreed by Conference to go before the Council's Housing Committee:

1. That the Housing Service monitors and analyses the information on ethnicity to ensure that Irish people receive equality and equity in housing allocations and transfers.
2. That staff in the Housing Service undergo a programme of Irish awareness training to enable them to respond sensitively to the needs of Irish people.
3. That the Housing Service introduce an Irish dimension to advice work and resources; and advice materials to include information on the local Irish community support services and facilities.
4. That the Housing Service carry out a detailed review of the recruitment and responsibilities of Irish employees in the Service and resolve their under-representation as appropriate.
5. That under the current recruitment freeze, any redeployment scheme should take into account the needs of the Irish community and consider secondments of Irish staff to positions beneficial to the Irish community.
6. That the Housing Service redirect a portion of its training resources to allow Irish staff to develop the knowledge and skills to take on positions of greater responsibility.
7. That the Housing Service give a high priority to improving conditions in the private sector, particularly houses in multiple occupation.
8. That the Housing Service explores ways of encouraging landlords/landladies to provide and improve properties for rent.
9. That the Housing Service stops issuing travel warrants to priority homeless Irish people as a means of discharging its duties under Part III of the Housing Act 1985; where an application from an Irish person is

challenged, the Housing Service should refer that person to an independent Irish organisation for advice.

- 10.** That the Housing Service obtains commitments from all housing organisations in the borough that they are meeting the needs of Irish people as part of their equal opportunities strategies.
- 11.** That the Council encourage and support Irish Housing organisations in the borough.
- 12.** That the Council continue to pursue:—
 - the creation of permanent sites for travellers with the Department of the Environment and vigorously oppose any moves to force travelling people into settled housing;
 - campaign through the appropriate bodies such as the ALA, AMA, Institute of Housing, etc. for other authorities to meet their obligations to travelling people.
- 13.** That Housing staff receive training on the rights and cultural traditions of the travelling community to enable them to respond more sensitively to travellers' needs.
- 14.** That the Council recognises the anti-traveller prejudice that is prevalent in the borough and takes active steps to eradicate it.

EDUCATION

On education the following recommendations were agreed by Conference to go before the Council's Education Committee:

- 1.** That the recommendations contained in the IBRG Survey 1986 and put to the Education Committee be reviewed and implemented in areas where no action has been taken.
- 2.** That the post of Education Officer in the Irish Liaison Unit be unfrozen in order that much needed work on Irish educational issues can be undertaken, and that earlier recommended actions can be promoted and their implementation constantly reviewed and monitored.
- 3.** That Haringey Council undertake a re-evaluation of the borough's curriculum in

order to make recommendations for the eradication of all materials with an anti-Irish bias.

- 4.** That the Council seek to recruit or second an Irish Education teacher/specialist to work in the Multi-Cultural Curriculum Support Group as a means of:
 - furthering the Council's equal opportunities policy in relation to the Irish community, and
 - eradicating anti-Irish bias in existing educational provision.
- 5.** That Haringey Council seek to recruit Irish teachers to teach within Haringey's schools, and that a working party be set up, to include representation from the Irish Embassy which would examine this issue, and in particular the recognition of Irish trained teachers qualifications in Britain.
- 6.** That the Education Service provide and actively encourage, teachers and related staff to participate in courses on Irish Awareness training and anti-Irish racism as a matter of priority.
- 7.** That Haringey Council support the development of single sex schools within the borough, in particular at second level, as research shows girls to have higher educational attainments within single sex schools.
- 8.** That Haringey Council undertake a re-evaluation of its present education provision for travellers and seek to make provision for the education and training needs of older Traveller children and adults and that the Education Service incorporate educational material on travellers culture so that all children in the borough can be educated with some knowledge of the realities of the Travellers culture, in keeping with the borough's multi-cultural education policy.
- 9.** That relevant book lists and addresses of specialist Irish bookshops be collated and passed to teachers and made available to parents and children.
- 10.** That the Education Service commission the production of teaching packs, videos, and exhibitions for development and use in schools to help combat anti-Irish racism.

11. That Haringey Council seek to include courses in Irish studies as part of in-service training for teachers, and that Haringey seek to create Irish studies options at both 'O' and 'A' level. And further that Haringey support the development of teaching aids and other educational materials in the area of Irish studies for use by teachers throughout the borough's educational establishments.
12. That teachers centres be supplied with teaching packs and other information on Ireland and this provision be made available to resource officers and school advisers.

SOCIAL SERVICES

On Social Services the following recommendations were agreed by the Conference to go before the Council's Social Services Committee:

1. That Haringey Council set up for Social Services personnel a programme of Irish Awareness Training as a matter of priority in keeping with the promotion of its equal opportunities policies in relation to Race Equality.
2. That Haringey Council set up for Social Services personnel a Travellers Awareness Course to be provided on an ongoing basis as a matter of priority.
3. That Haringey Council's Social Services Department and Irish Liaison Officers undertake ongoing research into the social service needs of the Irish community, and that it further examine how existing social services could be more utilised by and accessible to Irish people.
4. That Haringey Council undertake a programme of active recruitment of Irish staff at all levels in Social Services, but in particular at social work practitioner and policy-making levels as a matter of priority.
5. That Haringey Council's Social Services Department do all in its power to ensure that the cultural background of Irish clients and their community support structures always be taken into account when dealing with Irish people.
6. That the Social Services Committee as a matter of priority unfreeze the two posts of Community Social Worker with the Travellers, in maintaining their commitment to the needs of the Travellers, and as a means of furthering its equal opportunities policies in respect of a severely disadvantaged sector of the population.
7. That the Social Services Department provide a culturally appropriate social work response to Irish people with HIV and AIDS in the borough.
8. That the Social Services department urgently explore the means through which it could provide a culturally appropriate social work service to Irish lesbians and gay men, and to make appropriate provision in due course.
9. That the Social Services Department explore, facilitate and actively support the development of day care and other forms of social service provision for older Irish people that is culturally appropriate. It is further recommended that the Council provide adequate transport to and from these provisions.
10. That the Social Services department explore as a matter of priority the social service needs of Irish people with mental health problems affected by the closure of Claybury and Friern hospitals, and further, that the service work closely with Irish community organisations in the borough in making appropriate social service and housing responses to their needs.
11. That the Social Services department provide fostering and adoption services that are culturally sensitive to the needs of Irish children and families. This sensitivity should be realised in culturally appropriate placements of Irish children in Irish families, and in the active recruitment of Irish foster and adoptive parents.
12. That the Social Services Department undertake research on the particular fostering and adoption issues as they affect families and children from the Travelling community.
13. That Haringey Council facilitate and support the development of Irish Workers Group(s) among Social Services employees, in realisation of the services recognition of, and commitment to, the Irish community as an ethnic minority community within the workforce.

SOCIAL & CULTURAL

On social and cultural needs of the Irish, the following recommendations were agreed by the Conference to go before the Council's Community Affairs Committee:

1. That the Community Affairs Department should ensure that the needs of the Irish community are incorporated in all aspects of the departments work, including service delivery, planning and recruitment.
2. That despite recent cutbacks that Haringey Council make a firm commitment for ongoing support to the development of the Irish Cultural and Community Centre.
3. That Haringey Council, through the Arts and Entertainments Department should actively explore means of developing Irish arts in the borough.
4. That Haringey Council should support the development of and financially assist classes in Irish language, music and dance in the Borough.
5. That the Council should ensure that an adequate and representative stock of Irish books is carried at all times by the borough's libraries.
6. That Haringey Council should support and financially assist the development of Irish sports in the borough, in particular sports such as camogie for Irish women.

POLICING

On Policing and the Irish community the following recommendations were agreed by the Conference to go before the Council's Police Sub-Committee.

1. **Prevention of Terrorism Act**
 - That Haringey Council should strive at all levels towards revoking of the Act.
 - That close monitoring of the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act in Haringey be undertaken as a matter of urgency by the Council's Police Unit.
2. **Policing of Travellers**

That Haringey Council refrain from the use of Section 39 of the Public Order Act as a

mechanism for moving travellers as it is felt to be highly discriminatory in effect.

3. Policing and Anti-Irish Racism

- That research on the effects of anti-Irish racism in the Police Force are undertaken by the Police Unit as part of an overall report on policing and the Irish community.
- That Haringey Council recommend to the Police Training Authorities that Police working in areas with substantially high Irish populations should undergo Irish Awareness Training as part of their inservice training.

4. Safety in the Community

That Haringey Council encourage the provision of extra foot police in order to protect vulnerable sections of the community i.e. women, travellers, the elderly and vulnerable youth.

EMPLOYMENT

On employment the following recommendations were agreed by the Conference to go before the Council's Employment and Borough Economy Committee:

1. That Haringey Council in its recruitment practices must actively seek to recruit employees from the Irish community, by advertising always in Irish community press and other Irish community media.
2. That Haringey Council should target training opportunities within the Council for Irish staff as one of the most severely disadvantaged minority communities in terms of employment disadvantage in London.
3. That Haringey Council's Economic Development Service in liaison with the Irish Unit undertake ongoing monitoring of employment and unemployment patterns amongst the Irish community in the borough.
4. That Haringey Council's Economic Development Service undertake the necessary work to ensure that Irish firms as appropriate are included on the Council's various approved lists.
5. That Haringey Council should seek to financially support the establishment of a post of Employment Specialist/Advisor with the

Irish community to be based at Haringey Irish Centre. This post is needed in recognition of the high levels of unemployment experienced by the Irish community generally, and in particular in recognition of the employment needs of young newly arrived Irish emigrants.

- 6.** That Haringey Council through its Economic Development Service should seek to provide and facilitate the provision of pre-employment and work orientation courses for recently arrived Irish people seeking work in Haringey.

- 7.** That Haringey Council should formally recognise the contribution of the Irish community to the development of London's economy over time. That this contribution should be appropriately recognised by Haringey Council financially supporting in conjunction with other funding sources the establishment of an Irish Labour History Centre in the borough with a London-wide focus.

INTRODUCTION

The following report arises from a Consultative Conference held by Haringey Council on November 28, 1987, as an initial attempt to establish the needs of the Irish community in Haringey, in order to facilitate the Council in the furtherance of its equal opportunities policy and race equality policies at all levels as they affect the Irish community. What follows is both a report on the proceedings of the Consultative Conference and a recommended policy report on the needs of the Irish community in Haringey.

The purpose of the Consultative Conference was to:—

1. provide the local Irish community with an opportunity to articulate their needs across a range of services to the Council;
2. to act as the initial stage in an ongoing consultative process with the borough's Irish community. At this Conference, Haringey Irish Consultative Forum was launched, an ongoing consultative forum to exist between the Irish Liaison Officers in the Council, and the local Irish community;
3. to provide the basis for a policy report on the needs of the Irish community in Haringey, and to act as the basis of a series of future projects within the Council on issues affecting this community;
4. to provide Haringey Council with an opportunity to hear first hand what the needs of the borough's Irish community are, and thereby hopefully facilitate the Council in the furtherance of its equal opportunities policies at all levels as they affect this community.

A full copy of the **Conference Programme is attached in Appendix 3**. The basic format of the Conference consisted of 4 talks in the morning session on Housing, Education, Social Services and Social and Cultural issues each chaired by a Chief Officer from the respective services. The afternoon session consisted of a series of workshops, which explored the needs of the Irish community in greater detail. The final session consisted of a series of recommendations being presented to the Conference, and ratified across a range of service areas. The Conference requested that these recommendations in due course should be placed before, addressed and responded to by Haringey Council and its relevant committees.

ANTI IRISH RACISM IN BRITAIN

If one is to understand the contemporary situation and experiences of the Irish in Britain, as outlined elsewhere in this report, it is essential to acknowledge and address the fact of anti Irish racism that pervades British society.

Anti Irish racism is institutionalised in British society; it forms a constituent part of the dominant ideology of Britain. In order to further understand this pervasive anti Irish racism, one must examine the colonial and historically exploitative relationship that has existed between Britain and Ireland.

Britain has invaded Ireland on a number of occasions in the past but it was in the 17th century under the rule of monarchs such as Queen Elizabeth I, and with the direction of people such as Cromwell, that the colonisation of Ireland was fully enacted. This colonisation process took the form of a carefully concerted plantation process, with the British forces invading Ireland, taking vast areas of land from the Irish people and handing them over as vast estates and plantations to British settlers. This colonisation of Ireland was quite similar to the colonisation process undertaken in other regions of the world by Britain and other colonial powers. In most instances, the colonisers imposed a form

of semi-feudalism in the conquered territories through establishing haciendas as in South America or plantations as in Ireland. In all instances of British colonisation, the British colonial system was intrinsically racist in that it was fundamentally based on notions of racial, cultural and religious superiority.

Racism thus developed at this time as an ideology or belief system in order to legitimise the actions of the colonisers. It is only in this historical context of the interaction between British colonial conquest of Ireland, imperialism and racial oppression, that we can fully understand anti Irish racism as an ideology which legitimised Britain's exploitation of Ireland and Irish people's experiences of anti Irish racism in Britain today.

From the 17th century onwards, the central elements of the ideology of anti Irish racism began to take shape, although anti Irish racist attitudes and practices can be traced back to the 12th century. However, from the 17th century onwards they were so extensively propagated by the dominant British institutions that they became part of everyday "common sense". It became part of the British common sense view to see the Irish as inherently treacherous, untamed, and requiring civilisation, dirty,

lazy, drunken, wild and violent, and as a security threat to Britain.

Many of these stereotyped attributes assigned to the Irish in the 17th and 18th centuries are still pervasive today. Indeed, it is self-evident that much of the British media today is a powerful purveyor of these self same dominant racist images of the Irish, and Irish people in Britain have to live with the consequences of, and seek to counteract the effects of being so labelled. In 1860 a British man in Ireland wrote that: "I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw along the hundred miles of horrible country. I don't believe that they are our fault. I believe that there are not only many more of them than of old but they are happier, better, more comfortably fed and lodged under our rule than ever they were."

In fact, the racism went far beyond racist attitudes and sentiment. It was realised in directly oppressive racist practices which have varied over time. Such practices include the Penal Laws enacted in Ireland, which were directly anti Catholic in effect by banning Catholic Church services, the ban on speaking Gaelic language in schools, and the punishment of those pupils who did, although Gaelic was their first language, and the banning of many Irish cultural activities such as the ban on Irish dancing in Cromwellian times. All of these racist practices lead eventually to a widespread denigration of Irish culture, way of life and traditions.

Today, the Irish community must live with the consequences of this colonial legacy the most obvious

manifestations of which are the under developed and neo colonial development of contemporary Ireland, the ongoing problems in Northern Ireland and the still prevalent anti Irish racism in British society.

Addressing the reality and existence of anti Irish racism by British society and institutions has met with much resistance and has only been conceded after much pressure. Haringey Council is the first British Local Authority to make a firm commitment to tackling anti Irish racism by the creation of an Irish Liaison Service.

British authorities have been slightly more receptive, although not very willing either to face the reality of racism experienced by Black people in Britain. However, the dominant response here has only ever been a partial one; it has concentrated on the racism focussed on a persons colour. Seldom has the issue of culture being addressed.

The reality of anti Irish racism challenges British society to face the fact of racism founded on colonialism *per se*. In the struggle to have racism addressed in this context the Irish, Black and other ethnic minority communities must work together to have both communities racist experience addressed for what it is; an ideological belief in the superiority of a particular race (in this case, the British) which seeks to legitimise the actions of that race in relation to other national, racial or ethnic groups.

THE IRISH IN HARINGEY

In Haringey, 1 in 7 of the population are of Irish origin, making the Irish one of the borough's largest ethnic minority communities. The Irish in Haringey are quite widely dispersed throughout the borough, but with the highest concentrations in South Hornsey and Stroud Green areas (1981 Census). The demographic profile of the Irish in Haringey and in London generally, has until recently, contrasted strongly with other immigrant communities. The last big wave of Irish emigration to London took place in the 30's, 40's and 50's giving for a larger proportion of older people than amongst other immigrant communities. However, this demographic profile is changing very rapidly due to the new wave of Irish emigration to London with estimates of 50,000 leaving Ireland each year. Most of the Irish people now coming to Haringey are young single men and women, although increasingly there are young recently formed families arriving as well.

Over the years the Irish community have contributed to life in Haringey at all levels. There has been active involvement by the Irish community in the political, economic and social life of the borough for sometime.

Whilst this has been so, the Irish community has, over the years, had to fight long and hard in order to have many of their basic needs addressed let alone met. The Irish community have in the past met with hostility when they asserted their ethnicity within Haringey and sought to have Haringey Council respond to their distinct cultural needs. However, such experiences have not put a halt to a community in defence of its rights, and in the past 10 years, we have witnessed a mushrooming of Irish community based voluntary agencies and community groups, all of whom in various ways are addressing very real needs in the Irish community. There are at present 9 existing Irish community organisations in Haringey,

a number of which cater for the housing and social service needs of those members of the community requiring these services. Whilst these Irish community organisations do meet important needs, there are many needs that the Irish community justifiably expect the local authority in Haringey to respond to and meet. In this regard the Irish community lobbied effectively over a number of years to have an Irish Liaison Unit set up in Haringey, and succeeded to the extent that the Council established such a service in July 1987.

SOME FACTS ON THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN HARINGEY

- 1:6 of the population in Britain is estimated to be of Irish origin making the Irish the largest ethnic minority group in the country.
- 1:7 of the population of Haringey is Irish making the Irish the third largest ethnic group in the Borough.
- 13.9% of the population in Haringey are Irish with highest number in South Hornsey and Stroud Green.
- In 1981 54% of the Irish population were in the 35-59 age group.
- In recent years the massive emigration (estimated at over 30,000 a year) has resulted in a greatly increased young Irish population.
- 10.9% of the Irish population in Haringey are registered unemployed.
- 59.9% are employed in the unskilled or semi-skilled occupations.
- 9.5% of the Haringey Council workforce are of Irish origin with 72.9% in the lowest two grades.

COUNCILLOR TOBY HARRIS, LEADER OF HARINGEY COUNCIL'S ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE

The conference was officially opened by Councillor Toby Harris, Leader of the Council. In his address he raised a number of issues with respect to the Irish community and highlighted areas of concern for the Council in the present climate of financial restrictions.

Councillor Harris briefly emphasised the importance of the Consultative conference and the idea of a Consultative Forum which would form part of an ongoing process to ensure that the views and ideas of the Irish community were passed on to the Council. However, he outlined the difficulties facing the Council at present in that over the past few years the Government has been placing local authorities in extremely difficult positions vis a vis finance, the removal of grants to the tune of £100 million,

ratecapping which has led many authorities into debt and in the case of Haringey the budget deficit is £45 million, whilst pressure by the District Auditor to balance the budget has led the Council to draw together a whole series of proposals for reductions from every area of the of the Council's activities.

Councillor Harris further outlined the importance of the conference in enabling people to keep hold and track of fundamental commitments in the light of these reductions and the effects on the people of Haringey in terms of the services to which they have become accustomed. These fundamental commitments for the present Council in Haringey are, that they are committed to do something about disadvantage in our community. The Council hopes

to redress the balance and therefore it is important that the Council is made aware of the issues as they affect the Irish community. He further stated that it was particularly important that those messages and points which emerge during the day are received, understood and responded to by the galaxy of Council Officers and other Senior Officers of the Council present on the day.

Councillor Harris went on to state that over the years the Council had not paid enough attention to the needs of the Irish as a minority community within Haringey and for that reason the Council has now sought to put some priority into the needs of the Irish community and whatever changes in the next few months took place in the way they organise, for example, the work of the people in the Irish Liaison Unit, they will continue to give these needs a priority. However, we must remember that not all the services used by the Irish community will be

protected in their entirety but we will respect and take account of the needs of the Irish community as part of our commitment to Equal Opportunity Policies.

Councillor Harris further stated that he wants to give his pledge as Leader of the Council that they will be taking account and perhaps more importantly in the period which follows the decisions that will take place in the next few weeks about next years budget they will be listening to the views expressed in the Irish community in Haringey and about how they implement those decisions and about the way they continue to operate the services we shall be left with after the dreadful decisions which have been forced upon the Council by Government policy.

Councillor Harris finished his address with thanks to the Community for the opportunity of saying a few words and directed the conference to the business of the day.

PRIORITISING NEEDS IN A CLIMATE OF SCARCE RESOURCES

In many ways it is a very difficult time for any ethnic minority community or disadvantaged group to be making their needs known to Haringey Council with a legitimate expectation that the local authority responds to those needs. However, it must be stated that the needs and concerns of the Irish in Haringey as expressed throughout this report have been experienced for a long time and indeed some have been accentuated through past neglect. It has only been with the creation of the posts of Irish Liaison Officer in the Council that the opportunity has been provided to this community to make their broad ranging concerns known to the Council in the format outlined in this report.

One might be tempted to respond to a report such as this in a climate of severe financial constraints with a mere of acknowledgement of the needs, but little else on the grounds that resources are not available to meet these needs. However, *as the Leader of the Council in his address to the Consultative Conference stated, the needs of the Irish in Haringey have been neglected in the past and furthermore there must be a commitment to the Irish now and in the future. This commitment he stated "needs to be made all the more clearly at this time of financial stringency"*.

At present Haringey Council is undergoing a process of severe financial reductions, resulting in cutbacks in Council services. These cutbacks are affecting all sectors of the community in Haringey. However, Haringey Council has pledged itself to a maintenance of its equal opportunities policies, and in doing so has accorded the principle and practice of equal opportunities a high priority in the restructuring of resources and needs that has recently taken place. In such a reprioritising programme it is clear that the needs of the Irish community as outlined in this report must be accorded a high priority in keeping with a continued priority for race equality and equal opportunities. *Not to accord these needs a priority now even in a time of severe financial constraints, can only serve to exacerbate the disadvantage that the Irish in Haringey will face in the future.* In

In conclusion of this section it should be noted that many of the needs of the Irish in Haringey, do not demand enormous financial resources to attempt to meet them. But they do require a reconstructing of priorities, and a focussing of resources on a previously excluded group. This is in keeping with members recently stated priorities. What is now needed is a little in the form of finances but a lot in terms of will and priorities.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Introduction

There are at present a number of distinct areas of concern for the Irish community in Haringey, and in the consultative conference, we sought to cover a number of these key areas of concern in both the conference talks and workshops. The areas of concern which were covered in the conference were Housing and the Irish Community, Education, Social Services, Social and Cultural Issues, Employment, and Policing and the Irish Community. Some of these issues (Social Services, Housing, Education and Social and Cultural Issues) were dealt with in both conference talks and workshops, whilst 2 areas of concern, Employment and Policing were dealt with only in a conference workshop. The conference talks followed the following format:

Each talk was chaired by the Director or senior representative of the appropriate service. The Chair of

the talk gave a brief introduction to the broad issues affecting their service in Haringey at present, then this was followed by a paper from an Irish worker in the field. In the afternoon session there was a series of workshops on these stated topics. Each workshop was requested to discuss their particular workshop topic in some detail and to come up with a set of recommendations to be put before and ratified by the conference. Each workshop was asked to give particular attention in their discussions to the following groups as applicable and in keeping with the Council's commitment to equal opportunities:— the elderly, Irish youth, Irish travellers, Irish women, the Irish disabled and Irish lesbians and gay men.

What follows is a synthesis of the conference and workshop proceedings in all of the above areas.

Bitterness after camp site raid

Irish social workers in London are bitterly critical of an early-morning raid last week by police and DHSS officials on eight camp sites occupied by Irish travellers.

They say the operation was designed to humiliate and terrify travellers' families and a formal complaint is being made to the local council's police committee.

The raids took place at 6.00 a.m. on Wednesday of last week on eight camp sites for travellers in the north London borough of Haringey.

The Haringey Travellers' Support Group estimates that forty fraud squad personnel from the DHSS and at least twice that number of police were used in the operation.

Sites were blocked off by police cars, says the group, and caravans were searched without search warrants being produced. It is also claimed that families were forced out of bed; birth certificates and other documents were demanded; and notes were taken on vehicle registrations.

Sister Joan Kane of the Haringey Travellers' Support Group was later informed by officials that the operation was mounted to investigate eighty-five DHSS claimants.

"There was no justification for these raids and they would not happen to any other section of the community", she says. "As to investigating DHSS claimants, it is a fact that no travelling family may get supplementary benefit without a thorough investigation, which includes visits to camp sites."

She added that in some cases travellers are not getting their full entitlement and many more do not claim benefits.

"Last week's incidents have done irreparable damage to relations between the travellers and the settled local community, and can only fuel prejudices."

No arrests were made in last week's raids on matters relating to DHSS claims, but a juvenile from one site was arrested and charged with theft.

A joint police/DHSS operation similar to last week's took place on Haringey travellers' sites in the same week last year.

NO TRAVELLERS
OR CARAVAN DWELLERS

SALOON
BAR

found himself convicted of helping to organise a hand-grenade attack on a Jewish synagogue official's home in Brighton. Hoogstraten explained that he had been owed money and defrauded. He was jailed for four years, prompting Justice Winn's remarks.

"There was nothing anti-Semitic about it," said Mr Hoogstraten when I first brought the subject up. "I wouldn't do the same thing again. I'd get someone to cut off his bollocks."

The photographer Mike Goldwater arrives at our Inn on the Park meeting 'Goldwater: Not Jewish, is he?' inquires Hoogstraten. "I hope he's not going to put a swastika on my forehead." "Why?"

"Don't worry about it. A lot of people think I'm anti-Semitic. I'm not anti anything. I'm anti everything. I'm more anti-Irish than anything, but that's being a landlord. You're not Irish are you? Scottish"

That's all right. The Scottish did quite a lot of good for us in the colonial days.'

Nicholas Hoogstraten did quite a lot of time at the Scrubs. One fellow prisoner recalls him as being rather supercilious, seeing himself as superior to other prisoners, hanging around with another wealthy inmate, Benno, a Jewish restaurateur. Hoogstraten is remembered as having a neatly pressed uniform, as never being short of essentials.

"Who told you about that? It wasn't someone who had his legs blown off in the green fields of Surrey? A dirty weasel. Running with the fox and hunting with the hounds. A very dangerous game. I was the lender of the last resort. Anyone could borrow from me without paying any interest. It wasn't an ounce at the beginning of the week and an ounce and a half back. It was an ounce at the beginning and an ounce at the end. I wasn't making any money out

Hoogstraten sees most of his critics as 'sickos... dogsmeat'

HOUSING

Introduction to the Housing Session by Mr. Gurbux Singh, Borough Housing Officer

In introducing the conference's housing session, Gurbux Singh spoke briefly about the Housing crisis in Haringey and the various constraints imposed upon the Council which prevented it from responding in the most appropriate way.

The speaker firstly reminded the conference that Haringey had declared a housing crisis in 1986. In addition to the massive reduction in finance from Central Government there had been a considerable take-up of the Right to Buy. The latter had meant that around 17% of the housing stock had disappeared, usually the better end of the stock. On the allocations side, the Housing Service had in the region of 2,000 lettings in the previous year but this year this figure is likely to dwindle to only 600.

Secondly, homelessness posed one of the biggest problems for Haringey. Two years ago, the Council had some 230 families in bed and breakfast but this is now over 600 and that is apart from other sources of temporary accommodation. As a result the Housing Committee has had to make decisions which, by implication, reduce the options for other people, that they would wish to help, for example, there is likely to be no movement in transfers or waiting list applications.

In terms of the future of housing in Haringey, Gurbux Singh alluded to the Government's new Housing Bill which he said poses a major threat to the Council in its role as provider of public housing.

Finally, the Borough Housing Officer welcomed the conference as an opportunity to consider these and other issues that affect the housing needs of the Irish community in Haringey.

The Housing Needs of the Irish in Haringey by Ms. Ada Burns, Director of Cara

I want to look at the Housing needs of the community as a whole, and at the measures that can be employed to ensure that they are addressed.

Housing as an issue is often neglected, and relegated far down the list of social and public concerns. I feel that this neglects the crucial place which decent housing has in enabling folk to enjoy a good quality of life. For immigrants, it could be argued, secure housing is

particularly important in assisting them to establish themselves in a new and perhaps alien environment.

In discussing what housing needs the Irish have, I would say first and foremost that we need what all communities need — decent, secure, affordable housing. From that starting premise, we must investigate and ensure that we are getting a fair share of the decent housing which is available.

The local authority has, for a while longer at least, an important part to play in helping people to get access to, and maintain themselves in good housing. Their ability to fulfil this role depends upon elected members and officers throughout the council having a real understanding of what housing needs particular groups of people might have because, for example, of their age, gender, ethnic origins, etc. There may be many reasons why this understanding does not happen, or does not permeate through all levels of the authority. I believe that this conference, and the establishment of the Liaison Unit, gives us, the Irish community, a real opportunity to ensure that our needs are understood, and are reflected in policies and service delivery.

To look at what needs we have, I believe that we must first put together a picture of the Irish in Britain, London, and locally, here in Haringey. That must include a look at what sort of housing we have. Sadly, this is not an easy task, primarily because Irish people are seldom counted separately from white British born people in any research or official monitoring which is done.

Monitoring the effects of equal opportunity policies, while it has grown over the last few years is a welcome, if overdue, response to the racism in our society, tends to limit its concern to the disadvantage experienced by black ethnic groups. While I would not wish for one moment to detract from the importance, and urgency of this work, it must be acknowledged that disadvantage and discrimination operates on many levels, and may be based upon factors other than colour.

The history of Ireland, its structure, its religion and economic history has given Irish people a cultural legacy very different to that of white English people.

That legacy expresses itself through art, literature and music, through the way we communicate with each other and with the society in which we live.

Furthermore, Ireland's relationship with Britain, based upon a colonialism no less brutal than that operated in New Commonwealth countries, has inevitably shaped the contemporary attitudes and perceptions which both peoples have of each other. Very simply, I do not believe that the experience and lives of Irish people in Britain

can be regarded as synonymous with those of white British-born. Consequently, their access to, and use of, public services cannot be regarded as being synonymous, they may have different needs, they may experience discrimination.

Central to an assessment of the housing and other needs of Irish people in Britain must be a recognition of their ethnic status, and the implementation of procedures to record their experience.

Characteristics of the community; with the last big wave of emigration taking place in the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's there is a large proportion of older, and elderly people, contrasting strongly with other immigrant communities.

Another statistic reveals that there is a larger proportion than average of Irish people over the age of 45 who are unmarried.

The gender split is roughly 50:50

Ireland is now experiencing a new wave of emigration, with estimates of 50,000 leaving a year. Most of these will be young single people, although there are families leaving as well.

In terms of housing, Dr. Michael Maguire did some analysis of the census figures which demonstrated that Irish people are over-represented in privately rented housing; are under-represented in home-ownership; and more likely than other sections of the community to live in overcrowded housing, and in housing which lacks or has shared W.C. and bath.

Cara's research had indicated that there are alarmingly high numbers of single Irish people, young and old, living in hostels for the homeless or sleeping out on the streets.

Looking at the position here in Haringey, many of the characteristics of the London wide picture apply.

The Irish are the third largest ethnic group, at the most conservative estimate they represent 4.8% of the borough's population. They are fairly evenly distributed across the borough with particular concentrations in Hornsey Vale and South Hornsey wards. As a long established local community, there will be many second and third generation Irish people who are missing from the census figures.

There is a large proportion of the local Irish community who are over 40; while at the same time we are seeing our share of the new arrivals. It is known that there are many young people staying with friends, squatting or living in hostels in the borough.

Again the proportions of men and women are roughly equal.

With regard to housing, local statistics again point to a

large number in private rented accommodation. At the same time 40% are in owner occupied housing, and 30% in local authority housing.

While these figures appear to suggest relatively stable housing, the age profile of the Irish needs to be borne in mind, and the fact that many Irish people will not have been counted. Furthermore, the 1981 English House Condition Survey found that in every category of 'unsatisfactory dwellings', including 'unfit' and 'serious desrepair' the largest proportion were owner occupied.

We know that there is a high incidence of overcrowding amongst the Irish in the borough (8.6% of all overcrowded households) and also that there are many people having to share W.C. and bath, or whose homes lack these amenities.

As the borough does not have any direct access hostels, it is difficult to gauge the numbers of single homeless people but welfare agencies are aware of large numbers of Irish men and women sleeping out in the Finsbury Park, and the Green Lanes areas.

Broadly speaking then, we can conclude from the information we've got, that the Irish community has a particular set of housing concerns — for elderly people in overcrowded and insecure housing; for the mental and physical wellbeing of men and women forced to live in Victorian institutions for the destitute; for young people struggling against enormous odds to create a better life for themselves; and concerns for the future of children brought up in a cramped room in a hostel or hotel.

It should also be borne in mind, that Haringey's travelling population includes a very high proportion of Irish people who have specific housing needs.

What I would like to do now is to consider how this profile of need relates to council policy and service.

One general point which can have an enormous impact in making sure that the understanding of our communities needs permeate throughout the council relates to the representation of Irish people in the workforce. Irish staff can play an important role in increasing an awareness of the concerns and traditions of our community, although Irish workers can not, and should not, be expected to bear the full burden of responsibility for advice and advocacy on Irish issues. All sections of the housing service must look at their awareness of the local Irish communities needs, and how these are reflected in service delivery, and in effective liaison with representatives of that community. Where the Irish are under-represented in the workforce, particularly at senior levels, then a plan of action to increase their numbers must be devised and implemented.

With regard to families there are a number of factors which affect their housing options.

- Is council policy, and staff sensitive to a tradition which places great importance on the family, and where larger than average families often result?

- Is it sensitive to a tradition of hospitality, to family or friends in need, which can easily result in overcrowding and stress?

- Is it sensitive to a tradition of self-reliance and independence which may mean that people remain unaware of their legal rights or of where they can receive assistance.

These traditions form an important and valuable part of Irish culture, but care must be taken to ensure that they do not become a passport to disadvantage or official neglect.

A number of measures can assist in preventing this, or in assisting those families who may be living in sub-standard accommodation.

- There needs to be a review of how the allocations and transfer policies take account of Irish traditions.

- There should be an investigation of how Irish people can be more effectively targetted in advice work/literature which informs them of their rights, and of local resources.

- There needs to be special attention given to the needs of people living in private rented housing and how they can be supported; and how can more effective action against bad landlords be taken.

- Again, the whole issue of Irish awareness of staff in the service needs to be examined, especially amongst management staff, private sector caseworkers, advice workers etc.

These measures combined add up to what should be a vital element in the council's policies regarding homeless people — prevention.

Homelessness needs special attention, partly because we are experiencing a crisis of homelessness, and partly because the impact of being homeless can be devastating and long lasting.

Immigrant groups are often motivated by a desire to start a new life, to give their children greater opportunities, and the Irish are no exception. That tradition of independence and self-reliance had led thousands of Irish people to Britain to work so that they can care for, and support their families.

An experience of homelessness shatters this, and deprives the individual of dignity and self-respect. An urgent priority for us as a community must be to ensure that all possible steps are taken to alleviate the distress suffered by those who lose their home, or who are unable to secure any accommodation.

To highlight some of the issues involved I shall draw on monitoring done by the council's homelessness section, HEG on people approaching them for help. This ethnic monitoring is fairly recent, and inevitably limited, but it does produce some useful pointers. The exercise found the following about the Irish.

- an above average number of Irish people were homeless because they had lost privately rented accommodation.

- an above average number of Irish people have young children.

- an above average number of Irish people needed emergency housing while waiting for their applications to be processed.

These findings bear out the general profile of housing need which I referred to earlier, and they need to be responded to by the service.

- The HEG must ensure that Irish families have an equal access to the different forms of temporary housing available, for example, in many instances a local authority run hostel will be more appropriate than a hotel, especially where young children are involved.

- HEG must liaise with other council departments and the voluntary sector to ensure adequate support to families placed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

- HEG must continue ethnic monitoring of cases of homelessness, and make sure that the results are analysed, with plans of action to redress any inequalities identified in the treatment of different sections of the community.

This latter point is especially important in view of the practice of certain local authorities in London of giving Irish homeless families travel warrants to go back to Ireland. There is strong justification for describing this practice as discriminatory and contrary to existing housing legislation and E.E.C. law.

While Camden council has openly defended its adoption of this policy, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that other councils have offered travel warrants to homeless Irish families.

The Irish community must call on Haringey to make public any cases where it has issued travel warrants, and to give a formal undertaking that it will not adopt this unequal and potentially racist practice.

Another group of Irish people whose reception by the local authority may be cause for concern are travelling families. There is concern that the lack of sites results in families being forced to park on unauthorised sites. Where this results in eviction, and homelessness for the family, HEG must ensure that they receive equal access to advice and assistance as any other family or individual.

- There must be a review of the current provision of sites for travellers with regard to the actual needs of the travelling population.

In addition, there must be a review of the use of the Public Order Act to evict travellers from unauthorised sites. The use of this legislation on a particular section of the community instead of the usual civil court proceedings for eviction must be called into question.

I would like to consider briefly the particular needs of single Irish people. The major problem which they face is the failure of housing law to grant them rights to housing, or to give local authorities, except in a few instances, any responsibility to provide housing for single people. As a consequence, single people are frequently concentrated in the worst private sector housing, and increasingly, in hostels for the homeless, squats, and even on the streets.

I have already referred to the large proportion of older and elderly people in the Irish community, many of whom will have no family, will have very limited financial resources, and will be very isolated.

The local authority has a vital role to play in meeting the needs of vulnerable older Irish men and women.

- There should be a review of the housing needs of the Irish elderly, to include: details of the representation of Irish people in sheltered housing, discussion of cultural sensitivity and Irish awareness in their staffing and management; mechanisms for targetting elderly Irish home-owners for advice on Care and Repair schemes, improvement grants and rehousing options, and methods of working with the community to ensure that isolated Irish people receive access to council services.

At the opposite end of the spectrum we are seeing a flood of young Irish people coming into London. While many are able to establish themselves as a community we must be concerned for those who are in need of support and assistance.

Haringey had a policy of regarding all young homeless people between the ages of 16 and 18 as being automatically vulnerable, i.e. in priority need of housing; it had agreed to develop a hostel for young homeless people; it supported the recommendations made in a report which Cara produced on the needs of young people which went to Housing Policy Sub-Committee earlier this year.

These very positive steps are being abandoned at a time when the numbers of vulnerable young Irish people are increasing. There must be a call for the council to clarify how it intends to meet the needs of young Irish people who are homeless in the light of these policy changes.

Finally, there are general issues where the local authority

has a role to play in addressing the housing needs of Irish people. The council has guaranteed nomination rights into housing association accommodation; it has strong links with local housing associations. Measures should be developed to encourage these associations to themselves, examine the needs of the local Irish community, and to include the Irish within the scope of their equal opportunities policies.

The council should encourage and support initiatives from within the Irish community to address the housing needs of Irish people. This must include financial support, and we look to the housing service to review the proportion of its revenue grant budget which is being allocated to Irish community groups to ensure that the needs of this community are being acknowledged.

Haringey is a member of the A.L.A. and has a representative on the London Boroughs Grants Scheme. These forums are important in helping to promote a London-wide understanding of the housing needs of the Irish as an ethnic minority community. I would call on the council to develop its role vis a vis representation of the local Irish communities needs on a London-wide platform.

I recognise that there are many specific housing needs which time has not enabled me to consider; the housing needs of those recovering from mental illness, the particular housing needs of women amongst others. I would hope that these and other issues can be discussed in the workshops this afternoon, so that we can use this opportunity to present to the local authority, to the Irish Liaison Unit, a clear statement of our housing needs and demands, and a way forward for discussing how these can be met.

Housing Workshop and Recommendation

In the Housing Workshop a number of themes arising from the main talk on the housing needs of the Irish in Haringey were discussed, along with some particular concerns of the Workshop participants. To start with, there was a short discussion on ethnic monitoring of allocations and the need for the Housing Service to ensure that the data is properly analysed in respect of Irish people. This then led into a discussion on the lack of awareness by Housing staff to the particular needs of Irish people. It was also felt that the non-recognition of Irish ethnicity was further compounded by the under-representation of Irish employees in the Housing Service. The needs of Irish homeless people were considered and the Council's response in issuing travel warrants to priority homeless Irish households was seen as insensitive

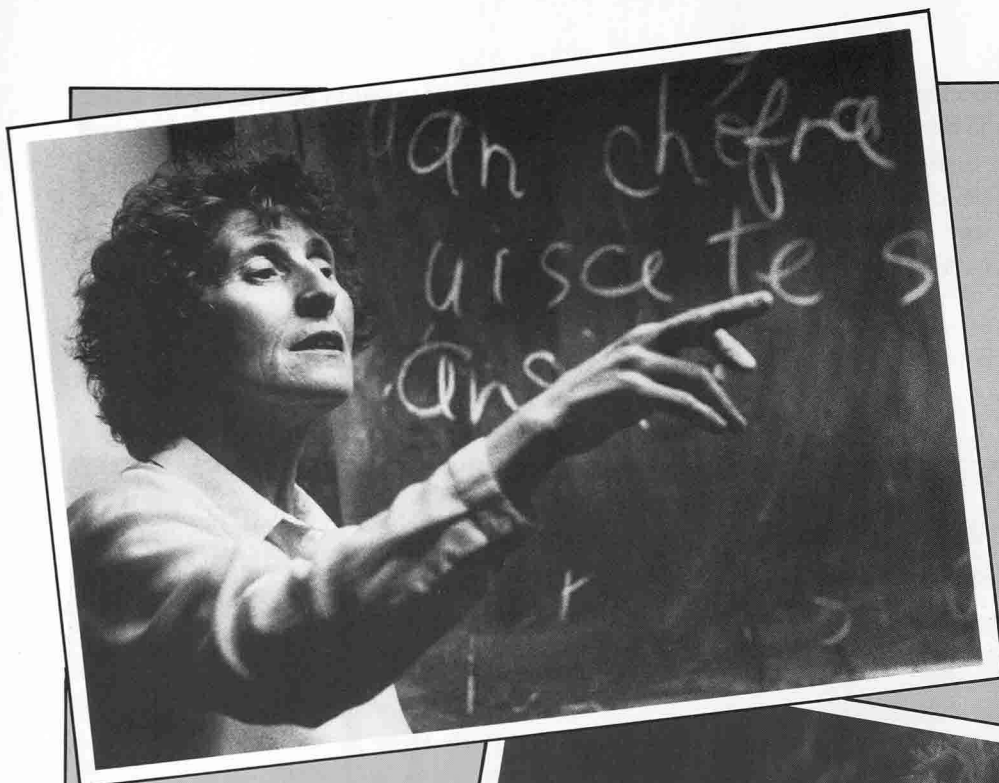
and discriminatory. There was also a lengthy and lively discussion on travellers rights in the borough and it was felt that Haringey, although better than most boroughs, could do more to profile the rights of travellers with appropriate bodies. A further key concern in the Workshop group was on the bad conditions in the private

sector where Irish people tend to be over-represented. A number of other concerns and issues were mentioned but the Workshop felt that there wasn't enough time to consider them properly. However, the following recommendations were agreed as the major items to be put before Conference.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

On housing, the following recommendations were agreed by Conference to go before the Council's Housing Committee.

1. That the Housing Service monitors *and* analyses the information on ethnicity to ensure that Irish people receive equality and equity in housing allocations and transfers.
2. That staff in the Housing Service undergo a programme of Irish awareness training to enable them to respond sensitively to the needs of Irish people.
3. That the Housing Service introduce an Irish dimension to advice work and resources; and advice materials to include information on the local Irish community support services and facilities.
4. That the Housing Service carry out a detailed review of the recruitment and responsibilities of Irish people employed in the Service and resolve their under-representation as appropriate.
5. That under the current recruitment freeze, any redeployment scheme should take into account the needs of the Irish community and consider secondments of Irish staff to positions beneficial to the Irish community.
6. That the Housing Service redirects a portion of its training resources to allow Irish staff to develop the knowledge and skills to take on positions of greater responsibility.
7. That the Housing Service give a high priority to improving conditions in the private sector, particularly houses in multiple occupation.
8. That the Housing Service explores ways of encouraging landlords/landladies to provide and improve properties for rent.
9. That the Housing Service stops issuing travel warrants to priority homeless Irish people as a means of discharging its duties under Part III of the Housing Act 1985; where an application from an Irish person is challenged, the Housing Service should refer that person to an independent Irish organisation for advice.
10. That the Housing Service obtains commitments from all housing organisations in the borough that they are meeting the needs of Irish people as part of their equal opportunities strategies.
11. That the Council encourage and support Irish housing organisations in the borough.
12. That the Council continue to pursue:—
 - the creation of permanent sites for travellers with the department of the Environment and vigorously oppose any moves to force travelling people into settled housing;
 - campaign through the appropriate bodies such as the A.L.A., A.M.A., Institute of Housing, etc., for other authorities to meet their obligations to travelling people.
13. That Housing staff receive training on the rights and cultural traditions of the travelling community to enable them to respond more sensitively to travellers' needs.
14. That the Council recognises the anti-traveller prejudice that is prevalent in the borough and take active steps to eradicate it.



Photos: Joanne O'Brien/Format

EDUCATION

Introduction to Education session by Mr. Richard Jones, Chief Education Officer

In his introduction to the Education session, the Chief Education Officer spoke briefly about a number of key issues in education both nationally and locally at the moment.

He traced the present debate about the need for a national curriculum back to 1978 and a speech made by Jim Callaghan in Ruskin College, Oxford, when he expressed concern about the curriculum in schools not meeting the needs of the nation. Since then successive governments have been calling local authorities to account, and to develop very clear curriculum policies for their schools. Most recently they have been called to account by an Education Bill, now in parliament, which will bring radical changes in education in Britain and the structure of services which deliver it. These changes will be the most radical and revolutionary re-organisation of education that this country has ever experienced since the 1870's when the concept of state education first arose. With these proposed changes there is to be a national curriculum laid down with some scope for area policy but real power will now be with the governors and head teachers, as they will have control over finances, and over hiring and firing of staff. In the future, the Area Education Authority will become little more than an agent of government in general and the DES in particular. This is the most fundamental issue in the background to any discussion of education today.

A further important issue raised by the Chief Education Officer was the attempts to provide an education service, that is multi cultural in its approach and content. This is a particularly important issue in a borough like Haringey which is a truly multi-racial community. However, to date, it is fair to say that little progress has been made on the Irish dimension in Haringey's curriculum. There has been some progress, however, on the education of the Travellers. This is a recent development in the past two years and more needs to be done here.

A final background issue that was raised by the speaker was the fact of a major consultancy review that has been undertaken into Haringey's Education Service. This consultancy has recently reported and they have re-emphasised some of Haringey's existing key priorities in education:— equal opportunities and anti racist practice, community education and effective delivery systems.

The speaker concluded by stressing that all of these three

points of a national curriculum, multi culturalism in education, and major departmental review and reorganisation are important in setting the scene to the discussion of the education needs of the Irish in Haringey.

The Education needs of the Irish in Haringey (synopsis of a talk given by Peter Murray, Haringey IBRG)

Background

As a predominantly working class community, the Irish in Britain have many common educational aims with the wider working class, namely the need for a well resourced and high quality education service affording equality of opportunity for all our children. This is important to state because it is a mistake to think that Irish parents and teachers are only interested in an 'Irish dimension' to the exclusion of all else.

However, the Irish community do recognise the denial of access to their own culture through the education system and that schools have presented a negative image of Ireland and the Irish and have further attempted to assimilate Irish children into the British population.

The process has been equally thorough in Catholic Schools despite greater Irish input into the staffing and school population of such schools. There is a clear connection between this attitude towards the Irish dimension in the curriculum in British schools and the continuing conflict in Ireland.

The aims of the British state in Ireland, supported in general by the British mass media, make it extremely difficult for teachers to challenge accepted notions and stereotypes regarding the Irish.

Recent developments

The Irish community in Britain in recent years become increasingly organised with regard to its twin educational demands:

- That Irish culture be positively celebrated and
- That anti Irish stereotyping and bids should be positively challenged.

Since 1984, National Conferences on the Irish dimension in British education have emphasised these 2 demands and have attracted large numbers of teachers, parents and administrators. The Irish in Britain Representation Group (IBRG) organised a National Conference on Education, held in Haringey in 1986, and the Irish Commission for Culture and Education in London organised a conference in Brent in early 1987.

Following pressure from the Irish community the ILEA recently established a panel to examine and respond to Irish educational needs, whilst in Manchester, the Irish education group completed a large scale survey of the community and its educational concerns, and continue to pressurise their Council to implement their recommendations.

The Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group conducted a survey into the promotion of Irish culture within the Haringey school curriculum, and its recommendations were put to the Borough's Education Committee in 1986. Many of these recommendations still need to be addressed.

The specific educational needs of the Irish in Haringey

The general position regarding the Irish dimension in Haringey's educational structures and institutions can be indentified as follows:

Primary Schools - the principal concern here is how teachers can best integrate the Irish dimension into their teaching programmes.

Secondary Schools - the principal concern here is an examination of the ways in which schools present the Irish dimension in various subject areas, in particular History, Literature, Language, Games and Music. A further concern here is seeking to establish how the anti racist policy of a school reflects the educational needs of the Irish?

Tertiary College and Adult Education - the principal concern here is the need for courses to be provided in all areas of Irish interest and Irish studies.

Training and Resources - the principal issue here is the need to provide teachers with appropriate training and adequate resources to implement policy and recommendations on Irish education issues. Without appropriate training and adequate resources teachers will be unable to implement policy recommendations.

Curriculum and Course Development

- That an urgent re-evaluation of the school curriculum and teaching materials be undertaken with the twin aims of eradicating material currently used in school which has an anti-Irish bias and examining ways in which the Irish could be positively portrayed in all subject areas.

- That steps be taken to create an Irish Studies option at both 'O' and 'A' level.

- That the Education Service investigate ways in which provision could be made for adult Irish language (Gaelic) studies classes for those wishing to rediscover their cultural heritage.

- That provision be made for the introduction of Gaelic games and an ghaelige (the Irish language) as optional subjects in those schools with significant numbers of Irish students.

Secondment for Teachers

- That teachers be granted secondment to courses on anti-Irish racism or other relevant courses. This is necessary to obtain the maximum participation of the largest number of teachers possible.

- The existing provision of peripatetic teachers for Travellers' children be continued and possibly augmented and that every possible effort be made to help these children to be incorporated and made welcome in Haringey schools.

Funding for Teaching Materials

- That Haringey Education Committee either reallocate or make new funds available for the following areas:

- The commissioning of teaching packs, videos and exhibitions that could be developed and used in schools to help combat anti-Irish racism.

- The promotion of existing resources and the distribution or availability to all teachers.

- Information packs on Ireland which would be available to teachers of all subjects and which would outline the dangers of presenting only the "English" perspective especially in the teaching of English, Politics and Sociology.

- That teachers be supplied with information packs on anti-Irish racism (e.g. Lis Curtis' book "Nothing But the Same Old Story") to make them more aware of the issues involved.

- That booklists and addresses of specialist Irish bookshops be collated and that this information be passed on to teachers and made available to parents and children.

Travellers Education

- That the Council undertake a re-evaluation of its present education provision for the Travellers, outline any existing issues and problems that need attention, and also seek to make provision for the educational and training needs of older Traveller children and adults.

- That the Education Service incorporate educational materials on the Travellers culture in the borough's curriculum, so that Haringey children can be educated with some knowledge of the realities of the Travellers culture, in keeping with the Borough's multicultural education policy.

- That the existing provision of peripatetic teachers for Travellers' children be continued and augmented and that

every possible effort be made to help these children to be incorporated and welcomed in Haringey schools.

Links with Ireland

- That active links be forged with academic institutions in Ireland and their counterparts in Haringey. Currently links between Britain and Ireland are minimal, and some qualifications gained in certain colleges in Ireland are not even recognised in Britain.
- That the Education Service explore the possibility of school twinning with schools in Ireland, which with the support of Headteachers could lead to exchange visits and even exchange in certain project work being undertaken.
- That co-operation take place through a town-twinning programme, allowing a cultural exchange between an Irish University town and Haringey.

Education Workshop and Recommendations

This group was lively and eager to discuss many issues affecting the Irish community. However, given that time was short, the group focused in on particular areas of concern within education addressing issues raised in the talk in the morning, reviewing, revising and adding to these.

Given the importance of education, and in particular the curriculum, it was vital to seek a re-evaluation of the present schools curriculum within Haringey in an effort to eradicate anti-Irish bias and promote a positive image of Irish culture. Following on from this a discussion took place on the area of recruitment and in particular of Irish teachers, the need to encourage teachers already within the system to participate in courses on Irish Awareness and Anti Irish racism training as a matter of priority. Given the whole area of evaluation it was important to have good back up support mechanisms and a whole assessment of present resources was necessary to achieve a fair balance.

Concern was expressed over the need for clarification on the recognition of Irish qualifications as some teachers were finding it difficult to obtain employment within the present system.

Given the nature of education, some concern was expressed with the impact of this upon vulnerable groups within our community i.e. women, travellers. The issue of single sex schools was questioned and whether it was appropriate to pursue this in particular for girls given that research has shown that this group's educational attainments are much higher within such a setting. This particular area was seen as a sensitive one. Another area which causes concern and distress is travellers education.

Given that travellers suffer extreme disadvantage and that formal schooling has not been part of this culture it was important to sensitively approach this issue. After much discussion on this area it was felt beneficial to evaluate the present system of education for travellers and make sure that educational materials on travellers culture are incorporated within the curriculum in line with multi-cultural education policy.

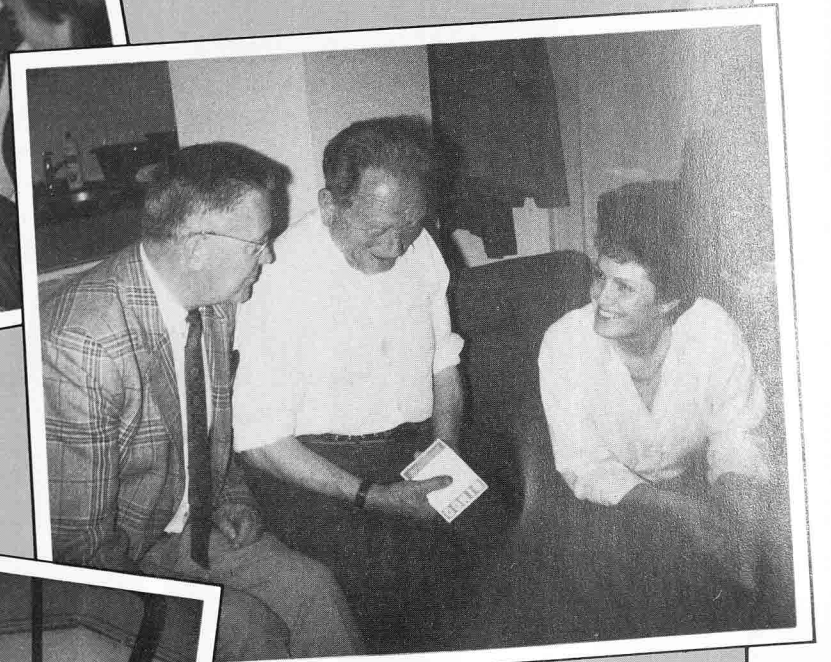
Present structures within the Council had to be addressed — Irish Liaison Unit — the post of Education Officer in the Irish Liaison Unit must be unfrozen and filled in order that much needed work on Irish education issues can be undertaken and that earlier recommended actions can be promoted and their implementation constantly reviewed and monitored.

As regards the Council's Multi Cultural Curriculum Support Group — the group was unanimous in their views that the Council seek to second/recruit an Irish teacher/specialist to work in the Multi Cultural Curriculum Support Group as a means of:

- (a) furthering the Council's equal opportunities policy in relation to the Irish Community, and
- (b) eradicating anti-Irish bias in existing educational provision.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the recommendations contained in the IBRG Survey 1986 and put to the Education Committee be reviewed and implemented in areas where no action has been taken.
2. That the post of Education Officer in the Irish Liaison Unit be unfrozen and filled in order that much needed work on Irish educational issues can be undertaken, and that earlier recommended action can be promoted and their implementation constantly reviewed and monitored.
3. That Haringey Council undertake a re-evaluation of the borough's curriculum in order to make recommendations for the eradication of all materials with an anti-Irish bias.
4. That the Council seek to recruit or second an Irish Education teacher/specialist to work in the Multi-Cultural Curriculum Support Group as a means of:
 - furthering the Council's equal opportunities policy in relation to the Irish community, and
 - eradicating anti-Irish bias in existing educational provision.
5. That Haringey Council seek to recruit Irish teachers to teach within Haringey's schools, and that a working party be set up, to include representation from the Irish Embassy which would examine this issue, and in particular the recognition of Irish trained teachers qualifications in Britain.
6. That the Education Service provide for and actively encourage, teachers and related staff to participate in courses on Irish Awareness training and Anti-Irish racism as a matter of priority.
7. That Haringey Council support the development of single sex schools within the borough, in particular at second level, as research shows girls to have higher educational attainments within single sex schools.
8. That Haringey Council undertake a re-evaluation of its present education provision for travellers, to seek to make provision for the education and training needs of older traveller children and adults and that the Education Service incorporate educational materials on travellers culture, so that all children in the borough can be educated with some knowledge of the realities of the travellers culture, in keeping with the borough's multicultural education policy.
9. That booklists and addresses of specialist Irish bookshops be collated and passed to teachers and made available to parents and children.
10. That the Education Service commission the production of teaching packs, videos and exhibitions for development and use in schools to help combat anti Irish racism.
11. That Haringey Council seek to include courses in Irish studies as part of in-service training for teachers. The creation of Irish studies options at both 'O' and 'A' level. The development of teaching aids and other educational materials in the area of Irish studies for use by teachers throughout the borough's educational establishments.
12. That teachers centres be supplied with teaching packs and other information on Ireland and this provision be made available to resource officers and school advisers.



SOCIAL SERVICES

Introduction to Social Services Session by Ms. Loretto Lynch, Acting Assistant Director of Social Services

In the Introduction to the Social Services session the Acting Assistant Director of Social Services talked briefly about some of the major issues facing social services in Haringey today; the impact of severe financial cutbacks; major departmental reorganisation; the impact of psychiatric hospital closure on social services resources; and the issue of equal opportunities in terms of social service planning, delivery and staffing of services. The speaker noted that all of these major issues would be likely to have real and serious consequences for the Irish community.

The Acting Assistant Director then went on to mention briefly some of the key issues in the nature and delivery of social services. She pointed out that social services intervene at highly sensitive points in people's lives. This is so because social services are often involved in entering people's homes, and in the delivery of services to people in their own homes. It is obviously of fundamental importance to be aware of, and sensitive to, what it is like to have someone coming into your home to offer a meal, to help with domestic tasks, or personal assistance. All of these services need to be designed as sensitively as possible, and cultural and ethnic sensitivity in these areas is of basic importance. She then went on to mention briefly social services involvement in key areas of family and personal life, in the provision of substitute care and alternative care for dependent children or adults. The extent to which these services are designed and delivered in an ethnically sensitive way are increasingly important. The experience of the consumers of all of these services is very important, and in the talk that followed, she anticipated that the speaker would address the experiences of Irish consumers of Haringey's social services and the extent to which they use, do not want to use, and experience these services.

The Social Service needs of the Irish in Haringey. Synopsis of talk by Joan Kane, Co-ordinator Irish Community Centre, Stroud Green

The first point that needs to be made in setting out to examine the social service needs of the Irish is that the Irish community in Britain constitute an ethnic minority community with a different culture, history, traditions and belief system to the dominant indigenous British culture. This point needs to be emphasised because often

the mere fact of sharing the same language and skin colour as the British population is cited as a reason for denying Irish people the right to assert their distinct ethnic identity and ethnic minority status.

A second point, basic to an understanding of the experience of Irish people in Britain, is the historical relationship is a relationship between a colonising power and a colonised nation. That colonial legacy influences relationships, interpersonal and otherwise between peoples from both cultures to this very day. This historical relationship has given for a colonised mentality amongst Irish people, with an attendant low self esteem and negative identity.

A final basic point that needs to be made at the outset is that many people emigrating from Ireland at present are not emigrating through choice. At present we are in the midst of a massive wave of emigration from Ireland, unparalleled since famine times of the last century. Those who are leaving today are caught up in a complex web of economic factors such as the economics of the European community, which dictates that people leave the periphery of Europe and move to where capitalism chooses to locate production. Contemporary Irish emigrants are at present inextricably caught up in this mass movement of labour throughout Europe.

It is quite beneficial to look at the experiences of Irish emigrants in Britain upon arrival here in terms of the concept of 'culture shock'. Furnham, from the Psychology Department in University College, London, has identified the culture shock syndrome as a 6 sided phenomenon, which can be applied to Irish emigrants experience in Britain. This syndrome is as follows:

- (1) strain
- (2) a sense of loss and feeling of deprivation with regard to friends, possessions and status
- (3) a feeling of rejection upon arrival
- (4) a strong sense of confusion
- (5) reactions of surprise, anxiety and sometimes even disgust and indignation occur and
- (6) a feeling of impotence often prevails due to not being able to cope with the new environment.

What you find is that emigrants tend to cope with the culture shock experience in a number of different ways: some cope by a rejection of their new environment, others by an acceptance of the difference between cultures and a striving to positively live in a multicultural environment whilst some others attempt to cope by a rejection of their own culture, through a loss of culture, accent, and attempt to assimilate into the host culture.

All of the issues around the culture shock experience of Irish emigrants need to be addressed by the Council and other services the Irish person comes in contact with upon arrival here. Unfortunately, to date, existing Council services in Haringey and Britain generally, have not been able to respond to this basic experience of Irish emigrants. They are not designed with emigrant and minority ethnic communities in mind.

Bearing all of these background factors in mind, the following are the social service needs of the Irish in Haringey that I have identified:

1. There are **the needs and concerns of Irish pensioners**. The striking reality is that Irish elderly people in Haringey rarely have contact with the Social Services through choice, and very few attend statutory luncheon club facilities. Why? It is our experience as social workers with Irish people that they do not attend because they are not culturally appropriate. The fact that they do not attend does not mean that Irish elderly do not require such a facility. They do, but it must be culturally appropriate. It is worth noting that up to 70 elderly Irish people each month attend a social gathering at the Irish Community Care Centre. In another London borough, the Local Authority does attempt to provide ethnically sensitive social facilities for Irish elderly and large numbers of Irish elderly do attend. We would contend from experience that the same would be the response in Haringey if it were to devise appropriate services. Therefore, there is a basic need for more culturally appropriate day care and social facilities to be funded by or provided by Haringey Council for Irish elderly people.
2. There are a number of concerns and needs in relation to **Adult Fostering or Adult Care Placements** operated by Social Services. At present under this scheme in Haringey, you find that there are a significant number of Irish landladies and landlords involved in the scheme, and there also are a substantial number of Irish people placed on this scheme. What you need here is a much more conscious matching up of Irish people for placement with Irish households than occurs at present. The Council also must acknowledge the contribution of Irish adult carers who provide their services to the Council.
3. There are a number of issues and concerns with regard to **Irish people referred to Part III Residential Care**. It is essential when placing an elderly Irish person in such accommodation that their ethnic support network is taken into account. It has been our experience in dealing with Social Services that Irish people have been placed in residential placements without sufficient regard to their cultural and support systems. The result is that the move into residential care has been doubly traumatic for some. This could be avoided perhaps by greater sensitivity towards the cultural background of the person, and closer liaison with Irish voluntary sector services.
4. There is the issue and pressing need for **social work provision for the Travellers**. This specialist need was recognised by Social Services with the department's earlier commitment to create 2 specialist posts of Social Worker with the Travellers. These posts have now been frozen due to the present financial climate. In the present cutbacks, and reappraisal of services and priorities, it is clearly stated that commitment to race equality in service delivery is to be a top priority. In keeping with this priority the 2 posts of Social Worker with the Travellers should be unfrozen and filled as a matter of priority. It would be my hope and understanding that in the post cuts era, that the social work needs of the Travellers would be a real priority in recognition of the disadvantage of this ethnic group, earlier commitments and recently stated priorities.
5. There are a number of issues concerning mental health, mental illness and the Irish community. The Irish are amongst the immigrant communities most likely to suffer from mental illness in Britain. In a survey for the Journal of Social Psychiatry, Raymond Cochrane concludes that over 1% of Irish immigrants in Britain, born in the Republic, will receive mental hospital treatment in any one year, three times that of English adults and "by far the highest of any immigrant group". He goes on to point out that the Irish are more likely to suffer from depression, personality and alcohol related disorders than any other immigrant group, and are second only to immigrants from the Caribbean for schizophrenia. They also have the highest rate of suicide amongst the larger immigrant communities. Despite these facts, there has been relatively little interest in the mental health of the Irish in Britain, and little awareness of this at the level of Local Authorities like Haringey. There have been few serious attempts to make the links between racism and mental illness. There is a need for Haringey Social Services to research the mental health experiences of Irish people in Haringey, and to go beyond this to make provision for ethnically sensitive social work provision for Irish people experiencing mental health problems.
6. There are a number of issues in the broad field of child care that need addressing. These include:
 - the provision of creche facilities and play groups
 - fostering and adoption services, and
 - children in care.

It is essential that all of these services when provided for Irish people need to be underpinned by a clear acknowledgement of Irish people's separate cultural identity and with positive attitudes to Irishness.

As regards fostering and adoption, there is a need to:

- actively recruit Irish foster parents and adoptive parents through Irish community press and Irish community networks and to place Irish children in culturally appropriate placements.
- a need to examine further the fostering of Traveller children, and explore the possibilities of the Travellers being fostered within their own community.

7. There is the very important issue of staffing recruitment and equal opportunities in Social Services as they affect the Irish community. Irish employees at a first glance seem to be reasonably well represented in Social Services in that they comprise 12.5% of the workforce. But investigation shows that they are overwhelmingly concentrated in the 2 lowest grades, i.e. 79.5% of Irish employees in Social Services are in manual and craft scales. Haringey Council must address these facts and this employment disadvantage in our community.
8. Finally, there is the need for ongoing research by the Social Services department into the social services concerns and needs of the Irish community, research that would examine all of the above issues in more detail, and also to look at other new and changing needs.

In conclusion my main recommendations are:—

1. That a programme of Irish Awareness training be developed within social services for all staff as a matter of priority.
2. That a Travellers Awareness Course be developed within Social Services for all staff as a matter of priority.
3. That an ongoing programme of research into the social service needs of the Irish community be undertaken.
4. That Social Services undertake a programme of active recruitment of Irish staff at all levels, together with a targeting of training and career development opportunities for Irish people on lower grades.
5. That the distinct Irish cultural background and ethnicity of clients, and their own community support structure should always be taken into account when dealing with Irish people.

Social Services Workshop and recommendations

In the Social Workshop, there was a lively and animated discussion that covered a broad range of issues and needs. There was much discussion on the social service issues affecting the Travellers and the inadequacy of the statutory response to date. There was a discussion on the social service needs of Irish elderly, and it was strongly stressed that day care and other social service provision for Irish elderly must be culturally sensitive, otherwise it will not be used. There also was some interesting discussion on the needs of Irish lesbians and gay men, the needs of HIV infected people, and many other issues besides. It was further felt that there was insufficient time to explore all of the many real needs in sufficient detail. However, the Workshop in the time available reached the following set of unanimous recommendations.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.** That Haringey Council set up for Social Services personnel a programme of Irish Awareness Training as a matter of priority in keeping with the promotion of its equal opportunities policies in relation to Race Equality.
- 2.** That Haringey Council set up for Social Services personnel a Travellers Awareness Course to be provided on an ongoing basis as a matter of priority.
- 3.** That Haringey Council social service department and Irish Liaison Officers undertake ongoing research into the social service needs of the Irish community, and that it further examine how existing social services could be more utilised by, and accessible to, Irish people.
- 4.** That Haringey Social Services undertake a programme of active recruitment of Irish staff at all levels in Social Services but in particular at social work practitioner and policy making levels as a matter of priority.
- 5.** That Haringey Council's Social Services do all in its power to ensure that the cultural background of Irish clients and their community support structures always be taken into account when dealing with Irish people.
- 6.** That the Social Services Committee as a matter of priority unfreeze the two posts of Community Social Worker with the travellers, in maintaining their commitment to the needs of the Travellers, and as a means of furthering its equal opportunities policies in respect of a severely disadvantaged sector of the population.
- 7.** That the Social Services department provide a culturally appropriate social work response to Irish people with HIV and AIDS in the borough.
- 8.** That the Social Services department urgently explore the means through which it could provide a culturally appropriate social work service to Irish lesbians and gay men, requesting such a service and to make appropriate provision in due course.
- 9.** That the Social Services department explore, facilitate and actively support the development of day care and other forms of social service provision for older Irish people that is culturally appropriate. It is further recommended that the Council provide adequate transport to and from these provisions.
- 10.** That the Social Services Department explore as a matter of priority the needs of Irish people with mental health problems affected by the closure of Claybury and Friern Hospitals, and further that the service work closely with Irish community organisations in the borough in making appropriate social service and housing response to their needs.
- 11.** That the Social Services department provide fostering and adoption services that are culturally sensitive to the needs of Irish children and families. This sensitivity should be realised in culturally appropriate placements of Irish children in Irish families, and in the active recruitment of Irish foster and adoptive parents.
- 12.** That the Social Services department undertake research on the particular fostering and adoption issues as they affect families and children from the travelling community.
- 13.** That the Haringey Council facilitate and support the development of Irish Workers Group(s) among Social Services employees, in realisation of the service's recognition of, and commitment to the Irish community as an ethnic minority community within the workforce.

Irish Ways and Irish Laws

64

One night after a Hearts gig in the Baggot Inn, Dublin, John Gibbs the author of the song sent up an empty Major packet with this song written on the back of it. We were so taken with it that we started rehearsing it the same night and two years later found that it had passed into the tradition. Of all the songs I have ever done this and 'Only Our Rivers Run Free' were the songs that became part of the general Irish repertoire in a very quick time.



Once upon a time there was
Irish ways and Irish laws,
Villages of Irish blood
Waking to the morning,
Waking to the morning.

Then the Vikings came around,
Turned us up and turned us down,
Started building boats and towns,
They tried to change our living,
They tried to change our living.

Cromwell and his soldiers came,
Started centuries of shame,
But they could not make us
We are a river flowing
We're a river flowing

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LONDON-IRISH NEWS NOVEMBER 7, 1987

EDITORIAL HARINGEY DOES IT IN STYLE

The Haringey Irish Centre which has opened the doors on its first phase — a lavish entertainment floor — it's an example of the burgeoning Irish community in London.

The centre will be the biggest in Britain next Spring when the other three floors in this entertainment and cultural complex are refurbished.

It is a great credit to the hard working centre committee who have striven diligently to ensure those they aim to serve get the best facilities available.

A large proportion of the people who will use the centre will be newly arrived young Irish immigrants. It is heartening to see London-Irish centres responding to the needs of these young people. It is also most welcome to see women getting special consideration, especially in the way of creches which will enable them to develop their potential temporarily freed of the often burdensome task of child minding.

Congratulations are certainly due to the Haringey Irish Centre organisers for these and the myriad of other facilities their new centre will soon provide.

Song taken from 'The Christy Moore Songbook'
Copyright © Brandon Book Publishers

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES

Introduction to Social and Cultural issues in Haringey by Howard Simmons, Chief Officer, Community Affairs Department

The speaker began by outlining the responsibilities of the Community Affairs Department in Haringey. He noted the Department is one of the largest in the Council with responsibility for sports and recreation facilities, libraries, museums, community buildings and a range of work developing social and community policies.

Regarding the social and cultural needs of the Irish community, he pointed out that it was vital to recognise firstly, the reality of anti-Irish racism and the massive social and racial inequalities which permeate society. It was only within this context that the impetus and work for more equitable access to resources and facilities could be understood. He noted that resources were going to be much fewer in the future and that in light of this it was going to be all the more important for community needs to be delineated and communicated clearly to the Council. The struggle for recognition and the struggle to get rights respected was now going to be more imperative than ever.

He complimented the Irish community on its long struggle to get the Irish Centre set up and resourced and noted that the task in hand now was to defend these resources and other vital resources in the Irish community which were under threat. In this context, he stressed that the setting of priorities within the overall situation of reducing resources was a crucial one and that it was vitally important that a divide and rule situation be avoided in the competition for reduced resources. He welcomed the idea of a consultative conference as a means through which the Irish community could explore its needs and set priorities.

The Social and Cultural needs of the Irish in Haringey

In the morning session a talk on the Social and Cultural needs of the Irish in Haringey was given by Donal Kennedy followed by an open discussion from the conference floor. There was then an afternoon workshop on issues raised in the morning talk and other key issues chaired by Pat Reynolds of Haringey Irish In Britain Representation Group. The workshop led to a series of recommendations all of which were unanimously passed by the conference.

In his opening, Donal talked about the richness of the Irish heritage and noted the resilience of a culture which

has survived to this day despite invasions, cultural oppression, famine and mass emigration.

He noted that the Irish history is one of the oldest in Europe. The first settlers in Ireland arrived 8000 years ago around 6000 BC in the middle Stone Age period. They landed mainly in the north-east of the country and they were primarily hunters, using primitive implements. The next colonists were farmers who raised animals and cultivated the soil. They belong to the Neolithic or New Stone Age and their remnants include excavated houses, pottery and implements. Their most striking remnants, however, are the great megalithic tombs the most famous of which is the renowned tomb at Newgrange in Co. Meath one of the finest of its kind in Europe.

Prospectors and metal workers reached Ireland around 2000 BC and remnants from this era, in tact, include pottery, axe heads and jewellery. The Celts, however, made the greatest impact in Ireland — bringing with them the Celtic language, religion and traditions, many of which are recognisable today in many aspects of Irish life. In the case of the Irish language, it is unique today in being the only one of all the Celtic languages — Scots, Welsh, Breton, Manx and Cornish — in having an independent state to support it. Celtic Ireland was united by religion and language rather than politics. The religion was Druidism administered by a priesthood of Druids. When Ireland was later Christianised many of these pagan customs were retained or incorporated in the Christian ethos accounting for some of the distinctive aspects today of Irish Catholicism.

Society in the Celtic time was regulated by an elaborate code of laws, known as the Brehon Laws. These laws were founded on the concept of the tuath as the political unit of society and the Fine or extended family as the social unit. Politically, the society was not centrally united but divided into five provinces and 150 little kingdoms. Four of these provinces survive today, but the concept of nationhood has replaced the loose political configuration of kingdoms.

St. Patrick is associated with the spread of Christianity to Ireland (492). Early Irish Christianity was distinguished by the important role of monasticism and great monasteries such as Glendalough and Clonmacnois were famed for their culture and learning. This era is also responsible for the production of magnificently illustrated manuscripts, such as the Books of Kells and Durrow, and also for the beautiful ornamentation and jewellery, the most famous of which is the Tara brooch, High crosses and Round Towers are typical monuments of this era, and along with the Harp and Shamrock have become symbols

of Ireland. It was through the monasteries that Ireland exerted its influence on English and European culture. Many monks left Ireland to found monasteries abroad e.g. St. Columcille to Iona; St. Kilian to Germany. St. Fursey to Peronne in France.

This era from the 6th to the 9th centuries is aptly described as the golden era of Irish culture and earned for Ireland its name as the 'Island of saints and scholars'. However, from the end of the 8th century to the 10th, the attacks by bands of Viking marauders lead to the decline of the monastic tradition. The Vikings, however, did much to develop trade in Ireland and founded major towns like Dublin, Limerick and Waterford. They also introduced coinage to Ireland, better ship building techniques and new styles in art, and forced the loosely knit Irish to organise themselves politically.

With the defeat of the Vikings in 1014 by Brian Boru, Irish culture and arts flourished and prospered until the Anglo Norman invasion of 1169. They started a political connection with England which has lasted to the present day. They had a major impact in the 13th century, developing in Ireland, the parliament, systems of law and administration of England. Culturally, however, they began to adapt to the native Irish ways to such an extent that in 1366, the Statutes of Kilkenny were passed forbidding them to use Irish names, marry into Irish families, use the Irish mode of dress, adopt Irish laws or play hurling (the native Irish sport).

By the 15th century, the depredations of the Irish and the gaelisation of the leading Norman families lead to the English owning only a small area around Dublin known as the Pale.

The destruction of the Gaelic Order, however, was ruthlessly achieved in the era of the Tudor Monarchs. Henry VIII attempted to introduce two new elements into Irish life — direct political control from London and a new religion imposed from outside.

Following on this, the flight of the Gaelic Lords (known as the flight of the Earls), the plantation of Ulster, the massacres of Cromwell and the ruthless implementation of the Penal Laws lead to the total repression of the native Irish. The 18th century was a time of deep distress and poverty in Ireland reflected in the laments of the Gaelic poets of the time.

With the defeat of the United Irishmen in 1798 and the Act of Union in 1800, the rest of the century was marked by campaigns and agitation for Catholic Emancipation, Home Rule, and ownership of the land by the people who worked it. In the middle of the century occurred one of the greatest calamities in Irish history which virtually annihilated the population and almost destroyed the Irish language. The Great Famine of 1845-1848, with the death of 1 million people and emigration of a further 1 million,

precipitated a national decline leaving the country broken and poverty stricken. The evictions, starvation, mass emigration and callous attitude of the English rule to all of this remains one of the most searing memories in the national consciousness to this day.

With the later execution of the 16 leaders of the Easter Rising 1916 rising in Ireland, nationalist fervour swept the country, marked by a revival of traditional culture and language. With the signing of the Anglo Irish Treaty in 1922, the ethos of self-reliance and independence was prominent leading to the promotion of all things Irish, and a revival in Irish folk traditions, language and literature. This revival extends down to the present day when despite mass commercialisation and Americanisation, Irish sports, traditional music, literature and dance enjoy a huge popularity in Ireland and abroad.

Donal Kennedy, in his talk, noted that those with the good fortune to grow up in Ireland, and who were educated there, enjoyed the benefits of the culture first hand. However, he felt that support for the rich aspects of Irish culture, including hurling and camogie, Irish dance and music and literature should receive the support of Councils like Haringey if this cultural heritage were to live on in Irish emigre communities and be passed on from generation to generation. Since the time of the GLC and its Irish initiatives, there had been a growth in the pride of Irish people in terms of Irish culture, but this was not fully reflected in Haringey where there was a lack of provision in classes and facilities. Given that the Irish Centre was now in operation, he felt that this would be the ideal focus for such cultural activities.

Social and Cultural Issues Workshop and Recommendations

A lively discussion took place in the afternoon workshop on issues of concern in the area of Irish Cultural development. It was noted that the Irish Cultural Centre was now a great asset in the development of cultural activities but it was felt important that the vital support needed for its ongoing development should not be effected by the cutbacks. The need for the strategic development of Irish arts in the Borough was stressed and concern was also expressed about the lack of Irish language and music classes available for the Irish children of the Borough and within Adult Education.

The following recommendations to the Council were proposed by the workshop and passed unanimously by the conference:

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.** That the Community Affairs Department should ensure that the needs of the Irish community are incorporated in all aspects of its work including service delivery, planning and recruitment.
- 2.** That despite recent cutbacks that Haringey Council make a firm commitment for ongoing support to the development of the Irish Cultural and Community Centre.
- 3.** That Haringey Council, through the Arts and Entertainments Department should actively explore means of developing Irish Arts in the Borough.
- 4.** That Haringey Council should support the development and financially assist classes in Irish language, music and dance in the Borough.
- 5.** That the Council should ensure that an adequate and representative stock of Irish books is carried at all times by the Borough libraries.
- 6.** That Haringey Council should support and financially assist the development of Irish sports in the Borough, in particular sports such as camogie for Irish women.

No Time For Love

62

Written by Jack Warshaw when he came to visit Belfast in 1977 and regularly updated, I learnt it from the singing of a group called the Men of No Property, now called the People of No Property.

Musical score for 'No Time For Love' in 3/4 time. The score consists of six staves of music with guitar chords written above the notes. The chords include F, C, F, G, Am, C, F, G, F, C, F, C, C, F, G, F, C, G, C, EM, F, G, C. A 'REPT. AS BEC.' marking is present above the first staff.

They call it the law; we call it apartheid, internment, conscription, partition and silence.
 It's the law that they make to keep you and me where they think we belong.
 They hide behind steel and bullet-proof glass, machine guns and spies,
 And they tell us who suffer the tear gas and the torture that we're in the wrong.

Chorus

No time for love if they come in the morning,
 No time to show tears or for fears in the morning,
 No time for goodbye, no time to ask why,
 And the sound of the siren's the cry of the morning.

They suffered the torture, they rotted in cells, went crazy, wrote letters
 The limits of pain they endured, but the loneliness got them inside
 And the courts gave them justice as justice is given by well-meaning
 Sometimes they fought for the will to survive, but more times

Chorus

They took away young Francis Hughes and his cousin
 They came for Patsy O'Hara and Bobby Sands and so many more
 In Boston, Chicago, Saigon, Santiago, Warsaw and Berlin
 And places that never make headlines, the list never ends

Chorus

GUILDFORD



FOUR

Four innocent young people remain in prison after 12 years, the victims of a tragic miscarriage of justice. Their heartrending story demands action to redress this wrong.

A poster titled 'JUSTICE FOR THE BIRMINGHAM 6'. It features a central image of a scale of justice and portraits of the Birmingham Six. Text on the poster includes: 'Freedom and exoneration is their right', 'Innocence and justice their due', and 'CONTACT: Birmingham Six, c/o MATS, 25, Clapton Terrace, Kilgerton, London'. There is also a small 'CONTACT:' section with a name and address.

POLICING AND THE IRISH IN HARINGEY

In the afternoon session a workshop on policing and the Irish community was held.

During the workshop a detailed discussion on areas of key concern took place to the Irish community, such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act, strip-searching and the policing of travellers and a number of recommendations were made for Haringey Council to act on.

The following is some background on the areas of concern which arose during the workshop discussion.

— Prevention of Terrorism Act:

This was introduced in 1974 as an emergency temporary measure in response to the Birmingham bombings. It allowed for greatly increased police powers in terms of detention and also contained clauses allowing for prescription of suspicious organisations and exclusion of suspected terrorists. Since its introduction its powers have been extended.

Since 1974 over one quarter of a million Irish people have been screened under the Act, mainly on entering and leaving the country. To date 6545 have been detained for over an hour with less than 3% charged with any crime. Of this 3% charged, only 4% were found guilty. Exclusion orders, one of the most controversial of the powers, has resulted in 107 exclusions to date.

Grave concern was expressed in the workshop about the continuing harassment of Irish people under this Act and the great erosion of civil liberties experienced daily by Irish people. Haringey Council was called on to work toward the repealing of the Act and to initiate, as a matter of urgency, ongoing monitoring of the situation in Haringey.

Strip Searching

Concern over the increased use of strip searching has been mounting in the Irish community. The issue was first raised in relation to the strip searching of Irish Republican prisoners in Armagh and then Maghaberry Prison in Northern Ireland. It was then further highlighted in 1985 by the cases of Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer — the Irish Republican prisoners on remand in Brixton. (Between July 1985 and August 1986 Martina Anderson was strip searched 381 times and Ella O'Dwyer 388 times). The official justification is on security grounds despite the fact that no offensive weapons have been found to date and despite the fact that prisoners are generally in top security wings where electronic surveillance

renders the practice obsolete. The practice has been widely condemned by Irish groups, trade unions, women's groups and Amnesty International yet continues to be used to debase and humiliate Irish women.

Use of Plastic Bullets

Plastic bullets were first introduced in the North of Ireland in 1975 when they replaced rubber bullets. Since their introduction they have caused four times the number of injuries and deaths that were caused by rubber bullets. Thirteen people have been killed, three of whom were children and hundreds more injured and maimed. To date, no member of the security forces has been convicted of a crime in relation to the use or misuse of plastic bullets. The campaign against plastic bullets continues within the Irish community and concern about their use grows in Haringey subject to their first use in Britain in the Broadwater Farm Riots in 1985.

Use of Firearms

The workshop endorsed the widespread concern in the Irish community about the use of firearms by the security forces in the North of Ireland. Between July 1969 and June 1984, 253 civilians were killed at the hands of the security forces and in only one of these cases has an Officer been convicted of a killing. The issue obtained international recognition in May 1987 with the death of nine men in Loughgall at the hands of the SAS. Since the conference took place concern over the use of firearms has escalated with the failure of the RUC to discipline Officers implicated in the Stalker/Sansom Affair and with the controversial killing of three Irish people in Gibraltar at the hands of the British security forces.

Harassment and Surveillance of local Irish communities

Great concern was expressed at the workshop at the degree to which surveillance and intimidation of the Irish community was preventing the community from organising socially and politically.

The powers under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for information gathering combined with the surveillance by the Special Branch and M15 have resulted in a detailed and intimate picture being built up of the Irish community. General developments in the field of policing, such as community policing, and the existence

of Territorial Support Groups to deal with riots and public order, have also had detrimental effects on the morale and security of the community.

The net effect of this fear has been a reluctance to join in legitimate political activity or even to register for the DHSS or for national insurance. Increasingly, there is growing concern among community groups at the harassment of newly arrived youth in areas of high Irish population including Finsbury Park and the Holloway Road and it was pointed out that research, needs to be undertaken on this issue.

Miscarriages of Justice

Many cases exist where Irish people have been the victims of what are seen by the Irish community and others besides as serious miscarriages of justice at the hands of the British Judicial system.

The better known of these cases in recent times are those of The Maguire Family, The Guildford Four and The Birmingham Six. All of these serious occurrences have given rise to a prevalent view in the Irish community that there is no justice for Irish people in the existing British Judicial system.

Policing of Travellers

Great concern was expressed in the workshop about the harassment of travellers in Haringey. In October 1986 a dawn raid of a travellers site in Lordship Lane led to finger printing and photographing of all travellers on the site and the arrest of two adults and children all of whom were released without trial. The rationale for this raid was that it was a routine part of a murder investigation. In October 1987 police in Haringey co-operated in an early morning DHSS raid on all travellers in Haringey. Information was fed into a computer and number plates of all vehicles recorded. Not one case of DHSS fraud was discovered.

In April 1987 Haringey Council began to use Section 39 of the Public Order Act in order to evict Travellers. This has resulted to date in 21 evictions. Members of the Travellers Support Group in Haringey have continually opposed the use of the Act pointing out that the Act discriminates greatly against the travelling community and that it has resulted in travellers living continually in a climate of fear. This fear of the Police in turn has resulted in a lack of confidence in the police and a failure to seek support in times of racist attacks and in instances of domestic violence.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were proposed by the policing workshop and passed unanimously by the conference.

1. Prevention of Terrorism Act

- That Haringey Council strives at all levels towards revoking of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.
- That close monitoring of the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act in Haringey be undertaken as a matter of urgency by the Council's Police Unit.

2. Policing of Travellers

That Haringey Council refrain from the use of Section 39 of the Public Order Act as a mechanism for moving travellers as it is felt to be highly discriminatory in effect.

3. Policing and Anti-Irish Racism

- That research on the effects of Anti-Irish racism in the Police Force be undertaken by the Police Unit as part of an overall report on policing and the Irish community.
- That Haringey Council recommends to the Police Training Authorities that Police working in areas with substantially high Irish populations should undergo Irish awareness training as part of their inservice training.

4. Safety in the Community

That Haringey Council encourage the provision of extra foot police in order to protect vulnerable sectors of the community i.e. women, travellers, the elderly and vulnerable youth.

STORM OVER DOCKLAND WORKFORCE

The £600-a-week

Dublin
brickies
move in

DEVELOPERS are recruiting bricklayers in Dublin at £600 a week for London's Dockland because they say they can't find the right workers in Britain.

And a Brighton builder has had to advertise in Australia to find the £17,000-a-year surveyors he needs to take on new contracts.

The Building Employers Confederation says recruitment in Ireland is the only way members can cope with the shortage of skilled workers caused by the building boom in the South-East.

They will also be offering £370 a week for joiners, £500 for roofers and £300 for plumbers to work on projects including the 800ft building at Canary Wharf which will be Britain's tallest skyscraper. But the move has sparked a political controversy with Dockland developers being accused of ignoring the jobless on their own doorstep.

Labour employment spokesman Barry Sheerman described it as a 'national scandal' and he has written to Employment Secretary Norman Fowler to protest.

He said: 'One of the central objectives of London Dockland development was to have been the enhancement of opportunity for local people.'

'Yet with 17 per cent jobless in Tower Hamlets and Newham we see employers scavenging abroad for labour and offering wages of up to £600 a week.'

By JOHN FISHER

Mr Sheerman called for a major Government initiative to train local people in building skills and demanded a tough policy preventing Dockland development without a cast-iron commitment to employ and train local labour.

But the same recruitment problem has forced Brighton builder Bruce Park to look half way around the world for the 76 surveyors he desperately needs.

'We looked everywhere and

realised that there is a tremendous shortage of skilled workers in this country,' he said. 'We thought about advertising in Europe but then we would have come across language barriers.'

'America did not have the skill we wanted either so I advertised in an Australian national newspaper'

His new recruits have just started work in Britain for 5 per cent more than they would get at home of them, Brian Fottle from bane, said: 'In Australia the downturn in the economy means much work for us.'

Skill shortage

THIS morning's story that Dockland builders are recruiting £600-a-week bricklayers in Ireland, and construction firms elsewhere have to import surveyors from as far away as Australia, is a curious commentary on Britain and its still-high pool of unemployed. Is it really impossible to find brickies in Tower Hamlets, where unemployment stands at 17 per cent? Labour's employment spokesman Barry Sheerman describes the hiring of Irishmen as "a national scandal" and demands a crash government programme to train up local people for the docks jobs.

Surely the problem lies in deeper waters, where Mr Sheerman may be reluctant to trawl. If there are no brickies in Tower Hamlets, or none interested in jobs worth £600 a week, it is surely because too few Britons today want to be a bricklayer. It is rather condescending to regard our unemployed work force as a supine mass of motiveless coolies, unable to decide on what jobs they wish to do until the government comes along and trains them up.

If any government action is required, then perhaps it is in the area of simple careers advice to remind young people that some key trades, such as bricklaying, will always provide a good living—and may in the long term be preferable to less-skilled jobs in the service industries. It could do wonders for our economic health.

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EMPLOYMENT

Employment, unemployment and training are all major issues in Haringey today, and within Haringey these are major issues for ethnic minority communities, including the Irish community. The overall unemployment rate for December 1987 was 14.1% overall. This reflects a male unemployment rate of 17.5% and female unemployment rate of 9.7%. Youth unemployment in Haringey, while actually falling, remains a very serious problem. Figures for July 1987 show 22.2% of 16-19 year olds to be unemployed and 26.2% of 20-24 year olds. Since the early 1970's job losses in the manufacturing sector in the Borough have been devastating. A Haringey T.U.C. Support Unit report, based on the census of employment figures shows that in 1971 manufacturers provided 48% of jobs, in 1981 25% and in 1987, it was estimated to be below 20%.

There has to date, been relatively little data produced on unemployment amongst the ethnic minority communities. However, what has been published points to much higher rates of unemployment amongst the ethnic minority communities, including the Irish community. A recently published research report by the London Strategic Policy Unit, which they undertook over the past 2 years points very clearly to *serious employment disadvantage experienced by the Irish in London*. They point out, however, that their data is 5 years old now, but they contend that the situation for ethnic minorities including the Irish is likely to have worsened in the interim. The LSPU report points out that "The basic problem.... is that ethnic minorities (including the Irish) and women occupy certain disadvantaged sectors of the labour market — low skilled and non-manual work.

These groups are constrained from developing career patterns leading to better jobs because of the 'structure' of the labour market".

They go on to point out how migrant labour has been recruited actively at particular points in time to meet the fluctuating needs of the wider labour market. They state that "The boom during the 1950's created a situation in which migrant labour was openly and actively encouraged. There had been a history of Irish migrant labour in Britain, of course, since the famine of the 1840's. What was different about the 1950's was a constructed economic system geared towards full employment. Social mobility and job stratification meant that migrant labour would increasingly slot into the worst jobs in the labour market. Precisely those jobs that many of the indigenous population were fast moving out of. Rebuilding of the infrastructure involved a need for increased unskilled and semi skilled labour in certain sectors of the labour market. Statistics show that the areas of industry most occupied by the Irish were construction, transport, distribution and service industries... Irish women mostly occupied jobs in manufacturing and service industries... Most jobs for Irish males were in the construction industry, which collapsed during the early seventies".

And now to turn to the more recent employment and unemployment situation of the Irish in London. The data below is drawn from the 1981 Census, GLC Special Tabulation DT8256 as reproduced in the LSPU Report, 'The London Irish' (London 1988).

Unemployed and Looking for Work

| | UK | Ireland | Caribbean | Asian | Other NCW | Rest of the World |
|--------|------|---------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------------------|
| All | 4.2 | 7.6 | 11.7 | 7.5 | 7.1 | 4.7 |
| Male | 70.4 | 75.6 | 62.7 | 65.6 | 65.2 | 63.6 |
| Female | 29.6 | 24.4 | 37.3 | 34.4 | 34.8 | 36.4 |

What these figures illustrate is that those born in the Caribbean have the highest proportion of unemployed followed by *the Irish with the second highest proportion of unemployed*. The Irish and other groups have nearly double the percentage of unemployed relative to the UK indigenous population. The Irish show the highest percentage of male unemployed (75.6%). As regards part time work, women have overwhelmingly the largest share

of part time work in London, with Irish and Caribbean women having the highest percentage.

Part time Work

| | UK | Ireland | Caribbean | Asian | Other NCW | Rest of the World |
|--------|------|---------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------------------|
| All | 9.5 | 9.7 | 7.0 | 3.9 | 4.7 | 7.7 |
| Male | 12.2 | 8.7 | 8.8 | 14.6 | 15.4 | 18.5 |
| Female | 87.8 | 91.3 | 91.2 | 85.4 | 84.6 | 81.5 |

The LSPU report concludes that a consistent pattern emerges between the UK, Irish and Caribbean groups with "higher percentages of unemployment found among the latter two groups. **In terms of the whole of London, those from Ireland and the NCWP are almost twice as likely to be unemployed as the UK born**".

It is clear from the above data that the Irish community in London is one of the ethnic minority communities

experiencing the most severe employment disadvantage. Despite this severe disadvantage, no London local authority to date has specifically addressed or responded to the experiences of the Irish community in employment and their unemployment. In light of this the following recommendations from the **Employment Workshop** at the consultative conference demand a priority response from Haringey Employment and Borough Economy Committee.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Haringey Council in its recruitment practices must actively seek to recruit employees from the Irish community, by advertising always in Irish community press and other Irish community media.
2. That Haringey Council should target training opportunities within the Council for Irish staff as one of the most severely disadvantaged minority communities in terms of employment disadvantage in London.
3. That Haringey Councils Economic Development Service in liaison with the Irish Unit undertake ongoing monitoring of employment and unemployment patterns amongst the Irish community in the Borough.
4. That Haringey Council's Economic Development Service undertake the necessary work to ensure that Irish firms, as appropriate, are included on the Council's various approved lists.
5. That Haringey Council should seek to financially support the establishment of a post of Employment Specialist/Advisor with the Irish community to be based at Haringey Irish Centre. This post is needed in recognition of the high levels of unemployment experienced by the Irish community generally, and in particular in recognition of the employment needs of young newly arrived Irish emigrants.
6. That Haringey Council, through its Economic Development Service should seek to provide and facilitate the provision of pre-'employment orientation' courses for recently arrived Irish people, seeking work in Haringey.
7. That Haringey Council should formally recognise the contribution of the Irish community to the development of London's economy over time. That this contribution should be appropriately recognised by the Council financially supporting in conjunction with other funding sources the establishment of an Irish Labour History Centre in the Borough with a London wide focus.

ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE

Among the many participants who attended the consultative conference on the needs of the Irish community, were representatives of the following organisations and groups.

Cara, Irish Homeless and Rootless Project
MIND in Haringey
Haringey Irish Community Care Centre, Stroud Green
Haringey Environmental Health Service
Haringey Housing Service
(1) Wood Green Area Office
(2) Senior Management Team
Haringey Creche Service
Camden Council, Library Service
Haringey Health Authority's, Health Visitors Service
Community Affairs Service, Haringey Council
Education Service, Haringey Council

AN Teach, Irish Short Life Housing Group
Travellers Housing Officers, Haringey Council
Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group
Haringey Irish Association
The Irish Embassy, London
Hornsey Advice Bureau
Haringey Community Recreation Service
The Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin, Ireland
The Irish in Islington Cultural and Community Centre
Edge Hill College of Higher Education, Lancashire
Haringey Planning Service
Travellers Support Group, Haringey
London Irish Centre, Camden
Haringey Lesbian and Gay Unit
Wood Green Advice Bureau

Appendix 2

A PROPOSAL TO SET UP HARINGEY IRISH CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Arising from this conference, it was proposed to launch an ongoing consultative forum with the local Irish community. The conference voted unanimously to move forward with the proposal to set up this forum. It is to be an ongoing consultative forum that will exist between the Irish Liaison Unit in Haringey Council and the local Irish Community. The purpose of the forum is to

1. act as a consultative framework between the Irish Liaison Unit Officers and the Irish community.
2. to provide the local Irish community with an ongoing opportunity to keep the Irish Liaison Officers aware of its concerns and changing needs.
3. to provide a forum through which representatives of the local Irish community together with the Irish Liaison Officers can identify work priorities for the Liaison Officers and report back on the Officers work programmes on a regular basis.
4. to provide a forum through which the Irish Liaison Officers can be accountable to the local Irish community.
5. to facilitate the development and furtherance of close working relationships between the local Irish community and the Irish Liaison Officers.

It is proposed that the consultative forum should meet once every three months and should be comprised as follows:—

- (A) 2 representatives from each of the existing Irish Community organisations/groups in the Borough.

That is

| | |
|--|-------|
| Haringey Irish Cultural and Community Centre | 2 |
| Haringey IBRG | 2 |
| Haringey Irish Association | 2 |
| Cara, Irish Homeless and Rootless Project | 2 |
| AN Teach, Irish Short Life Housing Group | 2 |
| Haringey Irish Community Care Centre | 2 |
| Irish Women in Tottenham | 2 |
| Shannon Rovers Gaelic Football Club | 2 |
| Travellers Support Group | 2 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 18 |

This gives a total of 18 representatives from existing groups.

- (B) Additionally, the following shall also be representatives on the Forum

Irish Community representatives on the Ethnic Minorities Joint Consultative Committee (2 of which must be women) 4

- (C) There will also be representatives on the forum from the following sectors of the Irish community

| | |
|--|-------|
| Irish women in the Borough | 2 |
| Irish elderly in the Borough | 2 |
| Irish travellers in the Borough | 2 |
| Irish lesbians and gay men in the Borough | 2 |
| Irish youth in the Borough (one first generation, one second generation) | 2 |
| Irish carers in the home in the Borough | 2 |
| Irish workers in the Council | 4 |
| Irish people with disabilities in the Borough | 2 |
| Irish single parents in the Borough | 2 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 20 |

This gives a total of 42 representatives on the forum from the Irish community.

THE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Programme

9.30 Conference assembly and Registration

100.00 to 10.15 Official opening of Conference by Leader of Haringey Council, Councillor Toby Harris

Brief introduction to the conference format, proceedings and purpose of the day by Seamus Taylor, Co-ordinator, Irish Liaison Unit.

10.15 to 10.45 The Housing Needs of the Irish in Haringey

1st speaker from Cara, Ms. Ada Burns
Chaired by Borough Housing Officer, Mr. Gurbux Singh.

10.45 to 11.00 Break for tea/coffee

11.00 to 11.30 The Educational Needs of the Irish in Haringey

2nd speaker from IBRG, Mr. Peter Murray
Chaired by Borough Education Officer, Mr. Richard Jones.

11.35 to 12.05 The Social Service Needs of the Irish in Haringey.

3rd speaker from Haringey Irish Community Care Centre, Sr. Joan Kane
Chaired by Assistant Director of Fieldwork, Ms. Lorreto Lynch.

12.10 to 12.40 The Social and Cultural Needs of the Irish in Haringey

4th speaker from Haringey Irish Centre, Donal Kennedy
Chaired by Head of Community Affairs, Mr. Howard Simmons.

12.45 to 2.00 Lunch.

2.00 to 2.15 Introduction to afternoon sessions and workshops — Staff of Irish Liaison Unit.

2.15 to 3.30 Conference breaks up into 6 workshop groups to discuss in more detail the following issues:

- (1) Housing and the Irish Community
- (2) Education and the Irish Community
- (3) Social Services and the Irish Community
- (4) Social and Cultural Needs of the Irish Community
- (5) Employment and the Irish Community
- (6) Policing and the Irish Community

Each workshop will discuss the particular issues in some detail, and is asked to give particular attention to the needs of the following groups in their discussion as applicable:— the elderly, Irish Youth, the travellers, Irish women, the Irish disabled and Irish lesbians and gay men.

3.30 to 3.40 The groups reassemble into a final full session of the conference.

3.45 to 4.00 Report back from Housing Workshop — What must be done
Workshop speaker.

4.00 to 4.15 Report back from the Education Workshop — What must be done.
Workshop speaker.

4.15 to 4.30 Report back from Social Services Workshop — What must be done.
Workshop speaker.

4.30 to 4.45 Report back from Community Affairs Workshop — What must be done.
Workshop speaker.

4.45 to 5.00 Report back from the Policing Workshop — What must be done.
Workshop speaker.

5.00 to 5.15 Report back from Employment Workshop — What must be done.
Workshop speaker.

5.15 to 5.30 A Statement of Irish Community demands to Haringey.
The Way Forward — Setting up Haringey's Irish Consultative Forum. Gearoid O'Meachair, Consultant

IRISH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS WORKING IN HARINGEY

Haringey Irish Community Care Centre,

72 Stroud Green Road
Finsbury Park, London N4

Phone: 272 7594

The Irish Community Care Centre is a professional social work, advice, information and drop in service for Irish people in the Haringey and surrounding areas.

Haringey Irish Association

c/o 2a Brabant Road
Wood Green, London N22

Phone: 886 7126
886 6579

The Haringey Irish Association is an Irish community organisation which campaigns on behalf of the Irish Community across a broad range of issues. Over the years the HIA has addressed the issues of anti-Irish racism, social services and the Irish, and the social and cultural needs of the community.

An Teach, Irish Short Life Housing Group

c/o 13-15 Tollington Way
London N7

Phone: 263 3159

An Teach is a short life housing group aiming to provide short life housing for young single Irish people. To date an Teach have a number of properties in management, with a number of proposals for expansion.

Cara, Irish Homeless and Rootless Project,

13-15 Tollington Way
London N7

Phone: 263 3159

Cara, the Irish Homeless and Rootless Project is a registered housing charity, whose principle aim is to provide supported housing for single homeless Irish women and men, wherever in London that a need is identified. This is achieved by working in partnership with registered housing associations which purchase and rehabilitate properties for management by Cara. To date Cara have 3 houses in management, with many other projects in preparation.

Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group

c/o Hornsey Library
Haringey Park
London N8

Phone: 348 3351

Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group is an Irish community organisation which is fundamentally concerned with tackling anti-Irish racism in Britain. The group is concerned with campaigning on a broad range of issues on behalf of the Irish community such as the PTA, the cases of the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four. The group is concerned with researching the needs and concerns of the Irish community and have, to date, produced a survey into the Education Service with a view

to eradicating any anti-Irish bias that may exist.

The group also produces Haringey's only Irish community magazine, the Irish Voice.

Haringey Irish Cultural and Community Centre

Pretoria Road
Tottenham, London N17

Phone: 885 3490

Haringey Irish Cultural and Community Centre is a social, cultural and community centre which seeks to provide a broad range of facilities and services for the Irish community in Haringey. The Centre opened for the first time in October 1987, and since then, the Centre has provided a range of recreational and cultural facilities for the Irish Community. It is proposed to develop the Centre in various distinct phases. The forthcoming phases will concentrate on developing provision for Irish youth, Irish women, and educational facilities for all sectors of the Irish Community. It is also proposed to have in the near future an Advice Service for Irish people established in the Centre.

Tottenham Irish Womens Group

Haringey Women and Young Girls Project
Selby Site
Selby Road
London N17

Phone: 885 4707

Tottenham Irish Womens Group is a group of first, second and third generation Irish women who meet as a self help support and advice group for Irish women in the Tottenham and surrounding areas.

Shannon Rovers (Gaelic Football Teams)

11 Sterling Road
London N22

Phone: 881 0401

Shannon Rovers is a Haringey based Gaelic football club who provide a range of Gaelic sports facilities for the people of the Borough.

Travellers Support Group

c/o 72 Stroud Green Road,
London N4

Phone: 272 7594

The Travellers Support Group is a voluntary organisation which seeks to defend the rights, support and campaign on behalf of the travellers in Haringey. The group is comprised of Members of the travelling community in Haringey together with workers working with the travellers, and other settled people concerned about the situation of the travellers.

Appendix 5

CONFERENCE CONCLUSION, MOTIONS ETC... BY GEAROID O'MEACHAIR

I have now before me the somewhat unenviable task of drawing together some of the main threads of our conference discussions and recommendations. The first thing to note is that the Irish Liaison Officers have as a result of this conference got a very clear mandate from a broad cross section of the Irish community in Haringey, a mandate that allows them to move forward and raise within Haringey Council our clearly stated concerns and needs. In raising these concerns, and attempting to have them addressed, the Irish Liaison Officers must remain in close ongoing contact with, and must remain accountable to, the local Irish community, and with this in sight, we have today unanimously agreed to and welcomed the setting up of Haringey Irish Consultative Forum, a consultative Forum to exist between the Irish Liaison Officers and we, the Irish community in the borough. Through this Forum, the Irish Liaison Officers mandate can be extended and appraised as appropriate, and their accessibility and accountability to the Irish community can be guaranteed.

Today, a large and representative cross section of the Irish in Haringey, in terms of age, gender, politics and class have come together for the first time, explored their community concerns and needs in some detail, and made them unequivocally clear to Haringey Council. These concerns and needs span a very broad area, some transcend particular service areas, and concern issues such as equal opportunities in employment, awareness training for staff, and ethnically sensitive service delivery to the Irish community. Other needs are more specific, and concern issues in particular depts, such as the current issues around Irish homeless families.

What we now want to see is the response to these concerns and needs from Officers and Councillors within Haringey Council. Haringey Council has made an initial recognition of the discrimination towards, and neglect of, the Irish community's needs by the creation of the posts of Irish Liaison Officer. They have now gone a step further in hosting today's conference, and giving us the opportunity to clearly state our needs to the Council. This has been done and done unequivocally. We will now await the next stage with close observation.

The implementations of these proposals is what matters most to our community. It is the response from Haringey Council to our community's clearly stated issues and concerns. The role of the Irish Liaison Officers in

monitoring and advising us of these responses will be crucial in the time ahead.

Before finally concluding the conference there is one very important issue that has loomed large in the background today, and that is, the future existence of the Irish Liaison Unit within Haringey Council which is now seriously under threat. Amongst the many cuts proposed in the present period of financial cutbacks within Haringey is the proposal to disband the Irish Liaison Unit and redeploy its staff to the services. I have before me a motion received from the floor which clearly states to Haringey Council, why this proposal should not go ahead. I will now read this motion and put it before the conference. It reads:

"This conference reaffirms our community's view that the central strategic co-ordination function of the Irish Liaison Unit as originally agreed and set up should remain unaltered, and further calls on the council to honour its earlier manifesto commitment to the Irish community to set up such a liaison unit". That is the motion from the floor, which has been seconded and now unanimously agreed by this conference. In putting this motion clearly before Haringey Council there are a number of questions which we must ask them —

Why is the Irish Unit being 'disbanded', 'dismembered' or 'devolved' to the services at this particular point in time?

Is this a money saving proposal? Is this proposal due to a mere lack of office space to house the unit? or is the Irish Liaison Unit now seen in some quarters as a potential political embarrassment?

The present leadership and council members must answer these questions clearly for the Irish community. We were consulted on the needs of our community and we unanimously agreed that an Irish Liaison Unit was the most appropriate means of meeting these needs. Why should it now be abandoned? Are we to conclude that the so called listening Council is not listening to us?

On that rather pessimistic note we must conclude what has been a very fruitful and worthwhile conference. Indeed the success of today's conference is due in no small part to the contribution played by everyone who attended today's conference. However, there are a number of people without whom the days proceedings could not have run so smoothly. These include the staff and management of

the Irish Centre, for the facilities they have provided us with today, the conference speakers, and council chief officers who chaired the talks, the workshop leaders, and the staff of the Irish Liaison Unit, who in the organising of this event has shown themselves to be very much of our community. To each and everyone of you, we are grateful. Go roimh a mile maith agat go leir.

DO NOT
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ROGER CASEMENT IRISH CENTRE
131 ST. JOHN'S WAY
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