

Irish Welfare Bureau

HAMMERSMITH - LONDON

to reflect over a year
our staff and voluntary
times of great economic recession; how the stress caused by so much
and insecurity made even greater demands on our limited resources;
and how, despite the hard times and the responsibilities we already had, we
were able to cater for 600 new cases, many of them needing a lot of care and
help. Among these new cases were some deplorable instances of irresponsible
immigration - not only single people arriving unprepared and without any
financial resources, but families with young children as well. It does not
seem to matter how loudly we preach the gospel of suitable preparation, some
of the wind is apparently still falling on rocky ground.

However, when someone calls to the Bureau the debate about suitable
preparation ceases. We endeavour to offer all callers a service that will
benefit each individual, and this service is now based on our years of
experience, during which we have built up a wealth of information which is
available to the client if he wishes to co-operate with us. The fact that we
do not dispense financial aid in the form of a cash handout can very quickly
show whether the caller's problem is genuine or not. Looking back at some of
these past years we can see the progress which we have now made in our
work and our staff.

Sixth Annual Report 1976

This year has seen the highest total income yet from fund-raising
activities and has had many notable achievements. A first among these was
the 25th Anniversary. Not only did it prove a tremendous financial success but it was
also a wonderful exercise in human relations. The spirit with which the workers
planned and carried out their job speaks well for the future of the Bureau and
its development programme.

Our Jubilee Sales also proved very successful, and I am pleased with their
popularity among our workers, because they not only provide an income but
are a definite service to the community, especially to parents with young
families.

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DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

Presenting the Sixth Annual Report gives cause to reflect over a year of struggle and survival. It recalls the work of our staff and voluntary workers in times of great economic recession; how the stress caused by so much uncertainty and insecurity made even greater demands on our limited resources; and how, despite the hard times and the responsibilities we already had, we were able to cater for 600 new cases, many of them needing a lot of care and help. Among these new cases were some deplorable instances of irresponsible immigration - not only single people arriving unprepared and without any financial resources, but families with young children as well. It does not seem to matter how loudly we preach the gospel of suitable preparation, some of the seed is apparently still falling on rocky ground.

However, when someone calls to the Bureau the debate about suitable preparation ceases. We endeavour to offer all callers a service that will benefit each individual, and this service is now based on our years of experience, during which we have built up a wealth of information which is available to the client if he wishes to co-operate with us. The fact that we do not dispense financial aid in the form of a cash handout can very quickly show whether the caller's problem is genuine or not. Looking back at some of these past instances, and noting the more astute way in which we are now able to handle them, makes one realize how much the years have taught us about sob stories and soft touches.

This year has seen the highest total income yet from fund - raising activities and has had many notable achievements. A first among these was the Bazaar. Not only did it prove a tremendous financial success but it was also a wonderful exercise in human relations. The spirit with which the workers planned and carried out their job speaks well for the future of the Bureau and its development programme.

Our Jumble Sales also proved very successful, and I am pleased with their popularity among our workers, because they not only provide an income but are a definite service to the community, especially to parents with young families.

We were again part of the Festival Day at Chelsea, but, considering the time and energy spent on something that proved unentertaining as well as financially unrewarding, it was decided that the Bureau would in future take no part in it.

The dances and support from London-based Irish parish - and county - organisations continue to be the source of our regular income.

No report of mine would be complete without thanking Sr. Jane Frances, the Staff, and the loyal team of voluntary workers, for their continued dedication and support. I am also extremely grateful for the decorating of the Bureau. Finally, my thanks and warm appreciation of the help from the Hammersmith Borough Council, from Fr. Pat O'Herlihy and fellow chaplains, and from my brother priests in St. Augustine's. With God's help we look forward with great hope to the coming year.

Brian Lawlor.

24 families with problems

18 individuals with personal problems - mental, alcoholic and ex-offenders

95 persons who kept in constant touch with the Bureau for various other reasons

147

The number of clients arriving in the first week of contact was 147. This was probably due to the prevailing unemployment situation in Great Britain. We had many referrals by phone and letter from friends and parents in Ireland asking us to contact people whose families were concerned about their welfare.

SOCIAL WORKERS REPORT

The statistics for 1976 show a marginal decrease as compared with the figures for 1975. There was a decided growth in the number of cases needing casework support at a deeper level, with families and individuals with problems.

The following statistics can only give a very inadequate picture of the volume of work done by the staff of the Bureau. A 'once only' contact could involve working with one person for a whole day.

New Cases	601 (this figure covers 654 persons not including the children of 76 families)
Number of cases carried forward	248
Total no. of cases	<u>849</u>

We also had 2820 telephone enquiries.

Most of these cases were dealt with in a few interviews during the first week of contact or re-application for help. However in 147 cases more continuous supportive casework was given to families and individuals. Such support was given to:

- 24 families with problems
- 28 individuals with personal problems - marital, alcoholic and ex offenders
- 95 persons who kept in constant touch with the Bureau for various other reasons

147

The number of clients claiming to have arrived from Ireland for the first time was only 98. This was probably due to the prevailing unemployment situation in Great Britain. We had many referrals by phone and letter from Agencies and parents in Ireland asking us to contact people whose families were concerned about their welfare.

Many new arrivals came to London totally unprepared, but on the other hand there was an encouraging increase in the number of enquiries re the employment and accommodation situation by people who were thinking of emigrating from Ireland. This is a very welcome indication of a more responsible attitude to emigration. In the present economic and unemployment situation we do all we can to discourage young or 'not so young' Irish people from emigrating.

Young unmarried Irish women who find they are pregnant ought to think twice before they panic and come to England. There are facilities for unmarried mothers in Ireland and they compare very well with those in Great Britain.

Accommodation for single women is very scarce and expensive and unfortunately pregnant women are not welcome tenants. Contrary to most of their expectations they will be expected to pay for their ante and post natal care in Hospital. This could run into a few hundred pounds. Pregnancy is not an 'illness' and therefore they cannot expect to get free hospital treatment under the National Health Scheme. Persons counselling unmarried mothers ought to encourage them to find the solution to their problem in Ireland.

The possibility of families getting accommodation grows less and less every year. Should parents insist on coming to this area with their children on the off chance of getting accommodation they will find to their distress that the only help they will be offered is to be sent back to Ireland. The problem of homelessness is a major one and housing priority must be given to local people.

Our advice to anyone who is thinking of emigrating to England is 'don't'. If you insist you'll need sufficient money to keep you for a few weeks, and in these days of high inflation that means a considerable amount of money.

Employment is hard to find and you have to wait a long time before you get a job. References are also vital. We cannot even begin to help people to find employment unless they have valid up to date references which can be checked. Birth Certificates are needed when applying for a National Insurance Number.

Our 'Boutique' i.e. (clothes, shoes, furniture and household items) continues to be a very popular service especially with the single homeless men and families in need. I appreciate the co-operation of the W.R.V.S. clothing stores to whom I refer clients when there is nothing to fit them in our store. Many of the recipients of the service contributed small financial donation to our funds. May I say a big 'Thank You' to all our benefactors who answered our various appeals for clothing etc. Your help is greatly appreciated.

The meal voucher service was cut down this year as it was felt that in many cases it was being abused and was not meeting a genuine need. A substantial number of these were provided where there was an obvious need. Groceries were supplied to families who needed them. Christmas parcels were distributed to needy families and elderly persons.

Help towards holidays was given to a limited number of unsupported mothers and elderly people. This was made possible by the co-operation of Benefactors, County Organisations and Charitable Funds. The high cost of travel at present will put further limits to this service.

We had many appeals from colleagues in the Statutory Social Services and Voluntary Agencies for financial help towards rent, light and gas arrears. We regret that we had to refuse most of these requests as due to our commitment to repay a heavy debt on The Hostel project our funds are very low. Several small grants were given in answer to appeals from colleagues in local Social Services.

The service given by the Irish Welfare Bureau was made possible by the co-operation of the Staff of the Bureau, our voluntary helpers, colleagues in other agencies, hostels and guest houses. I assure them of our appreciation and offer them our sincere thanks.

Sr. Jane Frances, Hons. Dip. Soc.,
& Econ. Stud.
CMW.

SIMPLE ANALYSIS OF REFERRALS

Age Groups:

15-17	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Not known
21	42	114	85	133	92	80	53	34

<u>Types of problem:</u>	Nov-Dec		
	<u>1973/4</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
New arrivals from Ireland	41	96	98
Financial	254	207	213
Accommodation	241	229	199
Employment	67	58	71
Information	46	32	29
Advice	74	54	33
Material Aid (clothing, food vouchers etc)	98	157	160
Personal	50	28	30
Marital	35	22	21
General welfare	61	45	24
Emotional and Mental	28	33	31
Ex-offenders	26	21	27
Alcoholic, drugs etc	21	20	17
Pregnant and unmarried mothers	18	21	14
Repatriation	18	9	10

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Males	436	465	447
Females	332	229	207
Families	121	95	76
Cases continued from previous years	149	246	248
Domiciliary visits	185	385	416
Hospital visits	52	80	70
Prison visits	10	10	10
Supportive appearances in Court	-	-	8
Continued supportive work	48	64	147
Telephone enquiries	2400	2450	2820
Escort to trains, planes etc. for repatriation.	-	28	17

SOURCES OF REFERRALS

	<u>1973/4</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>		<u>1973/4</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
AA	-	1	7	Irish Club	-	-	1
Acton's Womens Aid	-	-	2	SW1			
Blenheim Project	-	1	2	Irish County Ass.	-	-	4
Catholic Social Welfare Bureau	7	11	4	Legion of Mary	-	1	1
Centre Point	51	30	7	London Borough of Hammersmith	63	14	21
Chas	-	1	-	London Transport Guild	-	-	1
Chiswick Womens Aid	2	3	-	Medical Social Workers (Hosp.)	15	6	10
Citizens' Advice Bureau	4	3	-	Metropolitan Police	-	-	1
Clergy	172	183	172	Personal App.	197	194	171
Crac	-	-	1	Probation Service	5	-	1
Crusade of Rescue	-	-	1	Relatives	-	24	6
Cyrenians	3	1	-	Roof	-	1	1
DHSS	-	2	2	St. Vincent de Paul	-	1	1
FSU	-	-	2	Samaritans	5	3	-
Family Welfare	-	-	1	Shac	-	2	2
'Friend'	137	127	174	Shelter	-	-	1
Gen. Practitioners	-	-	1	Wandsworth Women's Aid	1	1	-
Health Visitors (LBH)	6	1	-				
Irish Centre Camden Town	6	2	4				

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OTHER LONDON BOROUGH

Barnet	-	2	1	Greenwich	-	1	-
Bow	-	-	1	Islington	-	-	1
Brent	1	6	-	Kensington & Chelsea	3	1	1
Camden	-	3	1	Walthamstow	-	1	-
City of Westminster	5	2	3	Wandsworth	3	7	4

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COUNTIES OF EIRE AND NORTHERN IRELAND

COUNTY	1973 - 4	1975	1976
Antrim	36	19	22
Armagh	10	5	5
Cavan	5	4	5
Carlow	4	1	4
Clare	9	16	8
Dublin	103	62	75
Cork	102	65	56
Derry	7	9	5
Donegal	20	25	17
Down	9	1	7
Fermanagh	-	4	4
Galway	40	30	27
Kerry	22	29	17
Kildare	4	11	4
Kilkenny	12	12	14
Laois	-	-	5
Leitrim	8	3	5
Limerick	8	26	28
Longford	3	6	9
Louth	6	4	7
Mayo	23	31	21
Meath	5	4	12
Monaghan	8	6	3
Offaly	5	8	-
Roscommon	8	3	8
Sligo	9	15	16
Tipperary	21	23	28
Tyrone	-	6	7
Waterford	22	12	20
Westmeath	11	6	5
Wexford	8	11	13
Wicklow	2	4	11

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OTHER NATIONALITIES

<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>1973/4</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
England	83	78	68
Scotland	25	33	40
Wales	4	8	3
Australia	4	2	-
Brazil	-	-	1
Burma	1	1	-
Canada	2	1	-
Ceylon (Sri Lanka)	-	2	1
Egypt	2	1	-
Fiji	-	1	-
France	-	2	3
Germany	-	-	1
Gibraltar	-	1	-
Guyana	1	1	-
India	1	1	2
Iran	-	-	1
Italy	-	-	2
Jordan	-	1	-
Malta	-	1	-
Mexico	-	1	-
Philippines	-	1	-
Poland	1	11	1
Rhodesia	-	-	1
South Africa	-	2	1
Spain	-	-	2
West Indies	5	4	3
Venezuela	-	1	-

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Nationality unknown : 3