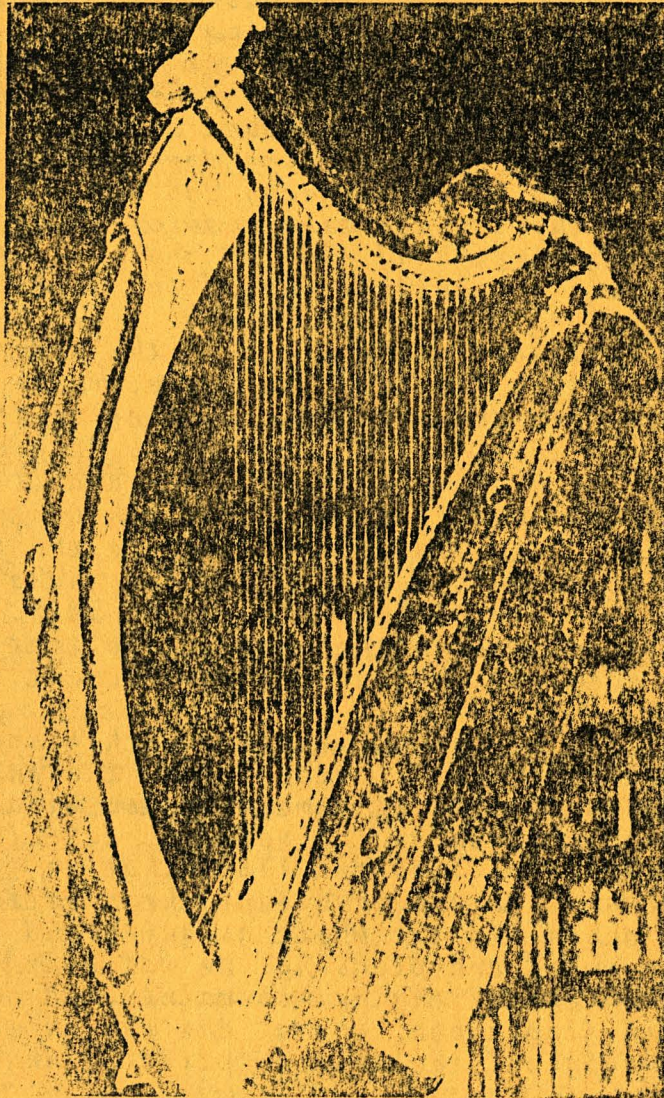


irish women's



newsletter

APRIL/MAY 1985

irisleabhar mná na hEireann

COVER ILLUSTRATION: The Brian Boru Harp, 14th Century, which is preserved in Trinity College Dublin. This harp is the oldest surviving specimen of the native instrument, and is, besides, one of the few musical instruments which have survived more or less intact from medieval Europe. It was restrung some years ago with metal strings, and sounded in the old Irish manner with long crooked nails. The sound seemingly, was extraordinarily sweet and clear, with a quality which was somewhat bell-like but with an added richness akin to that of the guitar. Unfortunately, there are no examples of the music played upon it.

The distinguishing feature of the Irish harp was its robust construction. The sound box was hollowed from a solid block of sally or willow: the fore-pillar was sturdy, curving outwards. The neck was deep and heavy and bound on either side with a metal band. The strings were made of thick brass and carried by metal pins on the left-hand side of the neck, the other ends being twisted around wooden pegs inside the sound box.

"Cláirseach", which is the modern term for the instrument, is found in 14th Century verse, while "cruit" was the early word used to describe this sort of instrument. The name 'cruit' was applied to stringed instruments long before any kind of harp was known in North-western Europe, and it was applied to the instrument which emerged around the 12th Century as the distinctively Irish harp. In Scotland, where the two names were also in use, 'clairseach' signified a harp strung with wire, and 'cruit' signified a harp strung with gut or hair. In Ireland it seems that both words were interchangeable so that the word used in modern times does not indicate a development or change in the instrument.

The harper was treated with respect and grace in Gaelic Ireland and this is evidenced by the entries in the native annals of the deaths of some harpers. Giraldus Cambrensis, who came with the invasion of the Normans, describes in his TOPOGRAPHIA HIBERNIAE of 1183 and 1185, that he found nothing about the inhabitants to praise except their skill on musical instruments. He described the music as quick and articulate and at the same time sweet and pleasing. He was amazed at the perfection with which the rhythm was maintained during passages of the most rapid fingerwork, and at the way in which the melody was preserved throughout the most complicated rhythm.

It is only towards the end of the 18th Century, when the harp was on the verge of extinction, that there is an account of the lives of any harpers, by then they had degenerated into itinerant musicians with a repertoire for the most part composed of folk airs, planxties and other compositions of Carolan. Only one harper played at the Belfast Festival in 1792 in the traditional manner with long crooked fingernails on strings of brass. Edward Bunting's "Ancient Music of Ireland" (1796), 'Ancient Music of Ireland' (1809) and "Ancient Music of Ireland" (1840) (Republished in one volume, Dublin, 1969), containing his own observations and the memoirs of one harper, are the only pieces of knowledge we possess about the last of the Irish harpers.

Next installment on Irish musical instruments will follow next month. Happy harping.

(Details taken from 'Folk Dances and Music Of Ireland' by

Brendan Breathnach, Mercier Press.)

LONDON IRISH WOMEN'S CENTRE MAILING

Since our last mailing in February, Irish women's groups from all over London held a variety of events for Irish women during the week around International Women's Day....this included films, exhibitions, conferences, ceilis etc (see photo of Macalla inside). We helped organise the funding, transport, publicity and co-ordination of these events. A full report of all the GLC funded activities for International Women's Day should be available soon.

The work on the building in Stoke Newington Church St has not yet gone out to tender because of unforeseen delays in getting the electrics and gas supplies connected and because of the stringent legal conditions attached to the GLC grant^{which} entails writing for written approvals from various GLC departments at every stage of the work. This is unavoidable but we still hope to have the work completed by the end of the summer.

We have applied for a community Arts Grant to fund an Arts section and worker in the centre. Our dancing, music and history classes are continuing so come along and bring your friends. We are currently working on a community radio project, investigating the possibility of sharing air-space in the near future with other ethnic minority groups in London. Our childworker, Imelda, is organising play activities for Irish children in the summer and possibly a holiday (for details see inside).

Many women have suggested to us that this newsletter be used to have ongoing discussions between Irish women about issues affecting us eg anti-Irish racism, sexism inside and outside the Irish community here: the war in the North: the PTA: the merits and progress of various campaigns here and in Ireland: the problems Irish children face growing up over here: the relationship between 1st and 2nd generation Irish women etc. Please write in and express your views on these or any other issue for the next mailing to start things off we've included an interesting article by Leonard Ligio called "English Origins of American Racism". Don't forget to send in your own contributions (or previously published articles) for the next mailing by the end of May.

N.B. re report on the G.L.C. women's committee election in mailing. The next election onto the G.L.C. women's committee will be in May/JUNE; a definite date has not yet been set by the G.L.C. so please ring the London Irish Women's centre for exact date and venue nearer the time. It is very important that as many women as possible come to the meeting with Spare Rib on the 15th May at 7.30 at A woman's Place to discuss S.R.'s anti-Irish racism and to suggest ways forward. (See report of last meeting inside). *BUT RING CENTRE - 609 8916 TO CHECK IF MEETING IS ON.*

TOP PRESS: Information on two jobs at Wandsworth Policing Campaign has just arrived at the office for more info call WPC 223 8655. 248 LAVENDER HILL LONDON SW11.

DATES LIST..... EVENTS.... MEETINGS.....EVENTS..... CLASSES....

- Monday 29th April: Irish Women's Music class at Caxton House 6.30
- Thursday 2nd May: Women in Irish History Highbury Roundhouse 7.30
AND Irish women's dancing class (Whittington)
- Friday 3rd May: Protest in support of Jackie Berkeley in Manchester.
For more details see news item in Mailing.
- Monday 6th: Irish women's music class
- Thursday 9th: Women in Irish History class 7.30 pm
Irish Women's Commission meet at 90 Cromer St N1
nearest tube Kings Cross. For minutes of last meeting
see mailing.
Irish Women's Dancing classes
- Saturday 11th May: May mobilisation in Birmingham to commemorate the
death of the hunger strikers. For more information contact
11th May Committee, c/o The Peace Centre, 18 Moor St
Ringway, Birmingham 4 (021) 477 5062 or 354 4852.
- Monday 13th Irish music class
- Wednesday 15th May Meeting with the Spare Rib collective at A Woman's
Place, Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment, WC2
at 7.30. All Irish Women are welcome to this meeting to
discuss how Spare Rib can improve on coverage of Irish
affairs. See mailing for further details.
- Thursday 16th: Women in Irish History and Irish Dancing class.
- Monday 20th: Irish women's music class 90
- Wednesday 22nd Irish Women's Abortion Support Group 7.30 Cromer St N1
- Thursday 24th Women in Irish History and Dancing Classes
- Monday 27th Irish Music class
- Wednesday 29th Follow up meeting about the meeting with Spare Rib
at 52/54 Featherstone St EC1 (Old St Tube) at 7.30 pm.
Reasonable disabled access. Toilet on first floor but
lift up.
- Monday 3rd June Irish women's music class
- Thursday 6th June Women in Irish History and Dancing classes.

and now ... THE BEST OF BRITISH JOURNALISM.

And now... grant for Irish lesbians

IRISH lesbians are the latest minority group to benefit from a grant by Islington Council.

The London Irish Women's Centre Group was set up in 1980 to "counter the discrimination which Irish women living in London suffer as a result of their nationality and sex."

The group's newsletter, which has been on display to the public at Islington Town Hall, says Irish lesbians are a "particularly disadvantaged group" who came to England to "escape Conservative attitudes and repressive legislation."

Mr David Hyams, leader of the Labour-controlled council's Social Democratic opposition, is sending details of the £3000 grant to the Government

committee set up this month to investigate local government abuses.

He said: "First, there was the grant to buy gym mats for lesbian self-defence courses. Then we had the conference to discuss women-only graveyards. Now the headbangers are handing over rate-payers' cash to help Irish lesbians."

Homeless

"No wonder the Government has decided to use the law to stop lunatic spending by councils like Islington."

The lesbian group has already received more than £60,000 from the GLC. The Islington grant is intended to buy games and equipment for a creche in Hackney and books on Irish history.

HOUSING Minister Mr Ian Gow has

agreed to meet an Islington Council delegation after threats to camp out on his front lawn.

Councillor Chris Calnan, chairman of the housing committee, had threatened to take 1000 tenants to lay siege to Mr Gow's home unless he agreed to a meeting on housing cuts.

Councillor Calnan said: "I am pleased that the Minister has seen sense and agreed to meet us."

"We shall be telling Mr Gow about the disastrous consequences for the homeless and badly housed of the savage cuts in housing spending that he has imposed on us."

"We hope to persuade him to come to Islington and see for himself the consequences of the actions of his Government."

Unfortunately this anti Irish, anti lesbian and inaccurate report was not only taken up by other Tory English papers but was copied by the Irish press without any verification of the facts or consultation with our group.

In fact the London Irish Women's Centre is open to all Irish women (not just lesbians) We have received grants from Hackney and Islington Councils toward setting up a creche and a library in the centre and for the purchase of knitting machines, for the use of all Irish women, (not just heterosexuals)...



MY MOTHER MADE ME A LESBIAN



WELL IF I GAVE HER THE WOOL DO YOU THINK SHE COULD MAKE ME ONE?

Support Jackie Berkeley.....

On Friday 11th March Jackie Berkeley, a twenty-one year old black women, was found guilty of charges of making a false complaint of rape and therefore wasting police time, obstruction and assaulting three police officers, and criminal damage to a police woman's shirt. These charges arose out of events on Thursday 19th April, 1984 when she was racially abused, stripped naked and raped by police officers in Moss Side police station that night.

Her trial which began on February 25th 1985, and lasted fourteen days, revealed a massive police cover-up. Police of all ranks lied, contradicted one another and at no time was there an agreement between them as to any of the details of what happened in Moss Side police station.

Expert, professional and circumstantial evidence was brought which confirmed Jackie's allegations.

The Stipendiary Magistrate, Glynmoor Jones, discarded all evidence and rubber stamped the prosecution's case. Jackie was found guilty of all charges except criminal damage to a police van.

On Friday 3rd May there is going to be a march in support of Jackie Berkeley. This is to take place at 12 noon. We will be assembling at Whitworth Park on the corner of Moss Lane and Oxford Road. The March will then go to Moss Side police station, onto the The police authority which is meeting at the county hall and on past the Manchester Evening News.

If there are enough Irish women who would like to go to the demonstration we could take the minibus up. If you want to reserve a seat please contact the L.I.W.C. on 609 8916 on or before Wednesday 1st April.

Dancing, Music, History, Dancing, Music, History, Dancing, Music, History

Classes are held each week at the following venues.

Monday evening Flute and tin whistle for absolute beginners and for intermediates. Caxton House, St Johns Way, N.19 This venue is fully accessible and has a creche. 6.30-8.30.

Thursday evenings Women and Irish History class. This takes place at the Roundhouse, Ronalds Road, N.5. 7.30-9.30. There are two steps leading up to the front door. Creche available.

Thursday evenings Ceili dancing classes at the Whittington Pk. Community centre. Absolute beginners are very welcome at these classes. A creche is available.

For more information about these classes ring L.I.W.C. 609 8916.

Policy for borrowing the minibus.

Below is the policy of the L.I.W.C. for lending out the minibus. The policy was arrived at through consultation with our insurers and Hackney Community Transport.

1. Two weeks notice has to be given to L.I.W.C. before the van is required
2. All drivers have to be over 21 yrs. with a clean license.
3. All drivers have to come to L.I.W.C. to complete the necessary insurance forms.
4. User groups are responsible for the first £50 in any accident.
5. No more than 13 passengers are to be taken in the minibus at any time. If there are more than 13 the insurance becomes invalid.
6. The cost of the hire of the minibus is 28p a mile. This is inclusive of petrol. The minibus will be full when groups collect it.
7. The minibus is to be collected during work hours.
8. The minibus is to be returned clean and tidy.
9. In order to satisfy our insurers, all drivers have to undergo a short test.

Priortizing Users.

Priority will be given to Irish Women's organisations, women's sections of Irish organisations, Organisations working with Irish children, black and ethnic minority women's groups, groups with women with disabilities. The minibus has a good wheel chair lift and will have an orange badge and parking disc. However if the badge is misused then the group responsible for the minibus will have to pay the fine. The minibus cannot be leant out for personal use. However we might be able to put you in touch with another group who might lend minibuses out for this purpose.

If you do wish to hire the minibus please get in touch with Rae Brid or Imelda on 609-8916.

Groups and Information.

The Dublin lesbian and gay Collective are compiling a book on lesbian and gay men in Ireland- Oppressions and Lifestyles. The collective are desperate for funds. The estimated cost of production is £4,000. To raise the money the group has undertaken a sponsorship campaign among groups, organisations and commercial enterprises who would like to support the publication of the book. The book is due to be published in August 1985 so the group need to be contacted as soon as possible at WOMEN'S COMMUNITY PRESS.

48 FLEET ST.
DUBLIN 2.

Phone Dublin 714749.

The book will be distributed throughout Ireland and Britain.

Advertising rates are: Full page £250.
Half page £150.
Quarter page £80
Eighth page £45.

A limited number are available. or just send a donation, contact the group via the above address. All donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged in the publication.

Fundraising done by groups will also be acknowledged. The lesbian and gay collective are also interested in receiving articles from lesbians who have had to leave Ireland.

Shouting Our Mouths Off- Writings by Working Class Women.

If any women are interested in participating in a variety of events to do with working class women's writing they can contact the group by writing to Linda Bean, 60 Quantock House, Stamford Hill Estate, London N.16 or phone Linda on 806 7096 or SANDRA on 876 5142.

Also

Common Tread Writings for and by working class women, are holding an open meeting for working class women only. Creche provided, fares pool. signers/note takers available, fully accessible.

Saturday 27th April 1.00-5.00

Hamden Community centre, Ossulton St. N.W.1 or contact Linda on the above address.

The book "Our Bodies Curselves" is being revised. The editors are keen to include articles on issues relating to women in Ireland. They are particularly interested in information on the strip search campaign. If anyone would like more information they can get in touch with Jill Rakush, 1 Richmond Road, Uplands, Swansea, West Glamorgan. Tel 0792 4119

"Hanna Sheehy Skeffington in her memoirs stated that generally the press, Sinn Fein and the clergy were opposed to the militant campaign, even though the women's violence was mostly symbolic.....the catholic clergy were not unique in denigrating the women's suffrage movement. The (Church of Ireland) dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, the very reverend C T Ovenden, refused permission for a service to be held for suffragette prisoners, and the Church of Ireland Gazette in 1914 advocated deportation for militant suffragettes"

The above quote is from "Smashing Times - a history of the Irish Women's Suffrage Movement" by Rosemary Cullen Owens, published at the end of last year by Attic Press and costs £4.95. The book is a well researched and well documented account of the struggles of women in Ireland to gain equal rights in the law, the labour movement, marriage law and most of all the struggle to gain the vote. The book outlines how the struggle in Ireland had many factors and influences to contend with which differentiated it from the English movement - how the differing social structures, religious and political affiliations were reflected in the variety of societies which evolved in Ireland between 1908 and 1914.

Below are some photographs from the book.



Mary McSwiney



Kathleen Lynne



Fullamore prisoners:
Margaret Cousins,
Margaret Connery,
Barbara Hoskins, Mabel
Purser.

The book includes an extensive bibliography at the end.

DANCE

An Irish Set dancing teacher, Eileen O Riordan, from Co. Cork is coming to London for the month of May to teach set dancing. She will hold classes 5 nights a week and two all day Saturday workshops throughout the month. The cost will be £20 and that entitles you to go to all the classes. They will be held at *venue(s) unknown yet*

For more details ring Sorcha on 328-3948 of The Irish Women's Centre on 609-8916

This is an excellent opportunity to learn a form of dancing that is fast becoming extinct.

LONDON IRISH WOMEN'S CENTRE

The following is a list of LP's released by Irish women on their own. The vast majority of them are of traditional Irish music. Christine Primrose is a Scottish woman and her LP is in Scots Gaelic. All of these are available from KAY'S MUSIC 161 Arlington Road, NW1 Tel. 485-4880. Also by mail order.

Instrumental:

- Liz Carroll.....'A Friend Indeed' (fiddle)
Kathleen Collins 'Traditional Music of Ireland'
Kathleen Collins 'With James Mahon- Violin & Piano'
Mary Bergin 'Feadóga Stáin' (Tinwhistle)
Rose Murphy 'The Milltown Lass' (Fiddle & Accordion)
Geraldine O' Grady 'My Dark Rosaleen'
'The Coulin and Other Irish Classic Irish Airs' (fiddle)
Peg McGrath & Josephine Keegan 'Cherish the Ladies' (fiddle and flute)
Macalla 'Mná na hEireann' (an Irish Women's Ceili Band) (mixture of songs & music)

Songs

- Margaret Barry 'Street Singer'
Máire Aine Ni Dhonnchadha 'Deora Aille'
Maireád Ní Dhómhnaill LP OF SONGS
Tríona Ní Dhómhnaill 'Tríona'
Dolores Keane 'There Was a Maid'
Caitlín Maude 'Caitlín'
Sarah and Rita KEANE 'Once I Loved'
Noirín Ní Riain 'Séin Aililiú'
Mary Black 'Collections'
Mary Black 'Mary Black'
Máire Ní Scólaí 'Songs'
Geraldine O Grady Songs
Maura O Connell Songs [JAZZ & BLUES]
Christine Primrose 'Aite mo Ghaoil' [SCOTS GAELIC]

GLC WOMEN'S COMMITTEE.

On June 16th, '84, at an open election for the women of London, an Irish woman, Sabina Sharkey, was voted onto the Women's Committee as one of the Black and Ethnic Minority Coopteers.

This was the first time that an Irish woman was elected, and we welcomed this representation as a positive step for Irish women.

It has been of great benefit to us throughout the year to have an Irish voice on committee, both in terms of policy making, and of resources. We also were delighted with the opportunity to have an Irish representative work closely with the other Black and Ethnic Minority cooptees, and we feel that the cooperation, support and alliances that have developed as a result of this work are of particular importance.

We recognise that it is vital to retain a voice on committee and to continue the work. The Black and Ethnic Minority presence on the women's committee will continue to implement positive changes, and we as Irish women want to contribute to and work for those changes, and to continue challenging where necessary.

The next elections onto the Women's Committee will be held in

at

We are nominating Sabina Sharkey for re-election, and it is important that as many Irish women as possible come along and vote for her to ensure continued representation.

(London Irish Women's Centre.)

JOBS AND TRAINING Hackney Council are now looking for local women as well as men aged between 16 and 17 1/2 to join one of their 3 apprenticeship schemes - electrical, Heating and Ventilation and Motor Vehicle Fitter Apprenticeship. Trainees are paid between £61.60 and £93.41, depending on the course, ^{and} age.. If you require more information quote Ref NJ299 on tel 986-3123 ext 220 (Trevor Norton). Closing date 13th May.

GATE NOTTING HILL

From 11th April

Cinema of Women presents

THE AWARD WINNING FILM

Leila and the Wolves

A film by Heiny Srour

From celebrations to rebellions they were there . . . the hidden history of Arab women



"A spectacular film" — *The Guardian*

الافتتاح

١١ ابريل ١٩٨٥

الفيلم الحائز على عدة جوائز:



سيناريو واخراج
هيئي سرور

Theatre Centre Women's Company

in

HOMELANDS

A Celebration of Two Different Struggles.

The first takes place in Crossroads, a squatter camp on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa; To the authorities Crossroads is a blot on the landscape – the shacks are to be flattened and the people removed to distant areas designated to be homelands. For three of the women Crossroads is home: – the fourth is an outsider from England, who can only watch as the women stand firm against the dogs, tear gas, bulldozers and police of a government which even tries, unsuccessfully, to stop them singing.

The second takes place in a waiting area of Belfast airport, which is the unlikely setting for Ashante drum songs, calypso music, body popping, reels and jigs through which four women, from the four corners of the globe, struggle to get on in a comic look at race relations.

Theatre Centre is one of Britain's foremost National Touring Companies. However since its work takes place mainly in schools, this is a rare opportunity to see this performance in a theatre setting.

From
Thursday
11th
April

Gate Notting Hill
87 Notting Hill Gate, W11
Notting Hill Tube
221 0220 / 727 5750
Programmes: 3.45; 5.30; 7.15; 9.00



17-27 APRIL at 8pm

at

THE DRILL HALL ARTS CENTRE
16 Chenies Street, WC1 (Box Office: 637 8270)
(Goodge Street Tube)



Free Creche Friday & Saturday Evenings
Bar & Restaurant
Access for People with Disabilities

LONDON IRISH WOMEN'S COMMISSION.

At the last meeting of the LIWC, it was decided to remove the immediate emphasis from electing a new set of officers to service the group, and to concentrate instead on what direction the commission as a whole should take.

Women felt that a series of meetings around specific issues would be beneficial. It was agreed that the next meeting would focus on the PTA and its effect on the lives of Irish women; and that a guest speaker would be invited.

This meeting will take place at Cromer Street Women's Centre on Thursday 9th May 1985 at 7.30 p.m. All Irish Women Welcome.

Report on the P.T.A. Conference.

On Sat. 20th April at the Camden Centre, Biddough St, a conference was held on the effects of the P.T.A. on the London Irish community. There was a good proportion of Irish women in attendance. The guest speaker was Dr. Moira O'Shea, who is out on bail having been arrested under P.T.A. in late '84. Members of the Irish in Britain Representation Group and the N.C.C.L. then spoke of the implication of the P.T.A. in terms of civil liberties and Irish Community affairs.

The afternoon began with a general session on Irish women and the P.T.A. This was chaired by Miriam James of Battersea and Wandsworth Irish Comm. and there were contributions from three speakers, Margaret O'Neil, Siubhan McNally and Sabina Sharkey. Margaret O'Neil began with a personal account of her experiences of detention under the P.T.A. and the subsequent and extreme upheavals in her life as a result.

Siubhan McNally of Haringay Independent Police Comm. spoke of her work on the P.T.A. at H.I.P.C. and of the P.T.A. as a method of policing Irish women,

Sabina Sharkey of the L.I.W.C. concentrated on how the P.T.A. censors, criminalises and isolates Irish women, and aims to undercut our attempts to organise and speak up as a community, and as a women's centre against this or any other types of racist legislation. A series of workshops followed and a number of resolutions were passed unanimously. These included a total condemnation of the P.T.A. and a call for its repeal, an end to strip searches, and support for Dr. Moira O'Shea.

For anyone who wishes to become involved in the Moira O'Shea support Comm., the contact address is: MOIRA O'SHEA SUPPORT COMM.
c/o 448, Stratford Road,
Birmingham . B.11.

or phone Troops Out Movemnet on 205 1293.

Report Back of the Meeting on Spare Rib. 17th April '85.

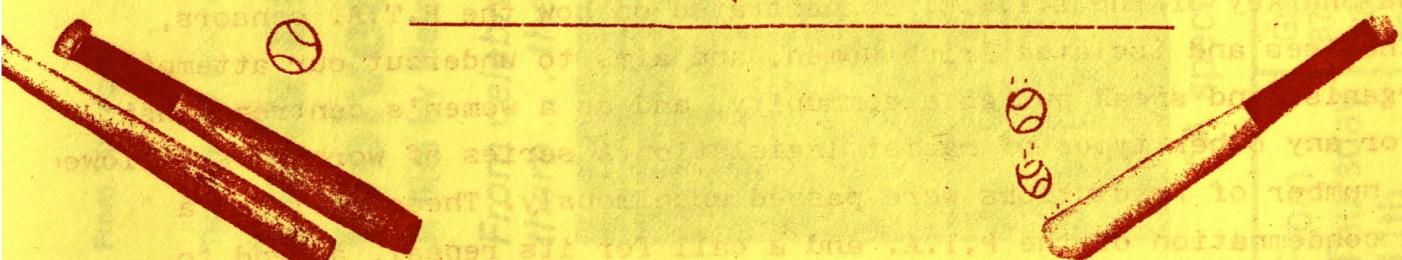
Detailed minutes were not taken of the meeting so this is just a brief report of the main points raised.

1. It was decided that all these meetings are and should be open to first and second generation Irish women and that future meetings will be advertised as such. It was also decided that the Irish women's newsletter should be used to discuss the common and/or different experience of 1st and 2nd generation Irish women and other issues arising from this.
2. We are meeting on the 24th April at 52-54 Featherstone St. with black women of colour and Jewish women to discuss racism on Spare Rib.
3. Spare Rib were asked to meet with Irish women in an accessible venue. They have advertised a meeting for anyone interested in how they cover Irish issues at A Woman's Place on the 15th May at 7.30p.m. Because this venue is not accessible at the moment we will try to change it, but if this is not possible we will meet there and it is important that as many women as possible turn to this meeting. Ring the Irish Women's Centre nearer the time to check the venue and for more information.

Rounders

Interested in a friendly game of Rounders??

If you fancy some fun and games this Sunday 28th April then come to Hyde Park (Speakers ^R _Co^Rner) at 3p.m. and watch a friendly game of rounders between a West Indian women's team and an Irish women's team. Hopefully this will be the beginning of many sporty Sunday Afternoons for women.....



IWASG

Irish woman's abortion support group

We are in a state of crises at the moment, we don't know what our future is read on for the rest

Throughout her time at Release, Isabel found that she could only spend the minimum amount of her time on the abortion work. The death of a Spanish woman in an abortion clinic due to negligence increased her dissatisfaction with the working conditions and provoked her to work to rule doing only the abortion work in the office.

Since Christmas conflicts within the Release collective have come to the surface, these are about: collectivity versus hierarchy, .
professionalism versus service
racism
abortion work

At the beginning of March all workers were told that their funding (inc. salaries) has been stopped as from the end of March. Those workers interested in working within a hierarchy have got together with the Trustees to set up a new form of Release. Abortion work will not be part of the new structure, and Isabel and the other two women who oppose what is happening are losing their jobs.

The effects of this for us are dire! Isabel loses her job, we lose Isabel, and all the facilities in Release. There is no longer a service for Irish-women coming over for abortions. In the past three months the service has been very poor and more recently stopped completely.

On Thursday last 21st March, IWASG and SWASG met with Womens Reproductive Rights Centre to make alternative arrangements. They have agreed that they will partially take over the service as from the 15th April. Their funding is insecure, we don't know how long this arrangement can last. We also don't know how this will work out, or what sort of contact can be kept up between the groups.

The IWASG co-ordinating group is small, we'd like more of us to be involved in deciding how to take things from here. We also need more women to do the rota.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday May 22 at 7.30 at Cromer St Women's Centre

If anyone can't make it but wants to go on the rota or to be involved, please contact us either by phone on the numbers below or via Cromer St Womens Centre by letter or by phone on the evening of the 22nd.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Joan Neary, Margaret Gillan
for IWASG

phone no's for contact:
Joan: 968 9139(w) 263 7263(h)
Margaret: 582 2790(h)

Cromer St: 278 0120

% 1 elgin avenue, London W9 3PR

tel: mon. tues. thurs. fri: 01-289 1123. emergency: 01-603 8654 (24 hours)

abortion support abortion support abortion support

YOUTH... YOUTH

The joint Youth Steering Group of the GLC was established as a consultative structure to involve young people up to 25 years of age from Black and Ethnic Minorities to participate in shaping GLC Youth policies.

The JYSG has planned a weekend of events at the South Bank " Struggle and Success" A number of events have been organised. The Irish representation group are looking for Irish youth groups and other Irish organisations and interested individuals, preferably under 25, to join the Irish section of the J.Y.S.G.

The next meeting of the Irish section will be held at Camden Irish Centre on Mon 29th April '85. at 7.30. For more details from John Doyle 340 4953, of Finbar Cullen 808 4375.

Summer Sessions For Children.

I (Imelda, the child worker at the women's Centre) have been looking into the possibility of getting money from Islington Council to take a group of Irish children away for a week in the summer. It looks likely that we will get a grant of about 40% from the council and have to fund raise the rest. If any women have or know of kids who would be interested could they please get intouch with us here. There is also money available from Islington to run 'special projects', We thought it might be a good idea to run sessions for children from local playschemes to come and enjoy a day Irish music, dancing, story telling, art and cooking. *SPORTS TOO!*

If any women who work with kids or are interested in these sessions could they please ring me at the office on 609 8916. Also if anyone workes on playschemes in Islington or have any information or names of good contacts could they let me kno w.

Thanks Imelda.

Pamphlet from the Irish Women's Conference.

The pamphlet report from the Irish Women's conference held in Camden in June 1984 is now available at the cost of 50p per copy. The pamphlet contains five papers presented at the conference, an account of the workshops and discussion groups, and all the resolutions that were passed. It includes the 4 papers presented by the Irish women's groups at the G.L.C. Consultative conference with the Irish community in Feb '84 For your copy of the pamphlet please complete the form before and return it to London Irish Women's Centre, TEL . 609 -8916

Cabin Y
25, Horsell Road.
N.5.

Amount enclosed

NAME.

ADDRESS
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SATURDAY 5th JANUARY 65 year old MAIRE O SHEA WAS ARRESTED
UNDER THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT (PTA)

Four days later she was charged with conspiracy to cause an explosion in the UK. She was held in solitary confinement for five weeks and then released on bail. This was just one of the several PTA arrests and charges made over the period at the end of 1984 and early 1985.

On 31st Dec. Maire's house was raided while she was on holiday in Ireland, and even psychiatric files were searched. Maire returned to England freely and openly to make complaints but was arrested a day later.

Maire has worked in the National Health service for over 30 years but as a result of these charges her contract with the clinic in Birmingham of which she was a founder will not be renewed.

Maire O Shea has committed no crime but faces up to 20 years in prison.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED.

WHAT YOU CAN DO. Write letters calling for the charges against her to be dropped to,

Leon Britten, Home Office, The Attorney General, Your local MP.
Queen Anne's Gate, SW1 A. Sir Michael Havers, House of Commons,
Royal Court of Justice, Westminster, SW1 A
London WC2 1LL

Get people to sign the petition forms and post them off to the address on the top of the form as soon as possible.

More than 6000 people have been arrested under the PTA, but only 150 of them have been charged and even fewer convicted. Under the PTA a person can be held for up to 7 days without access to family or solicitor. Other people arrested over the same period were only allowed to see solicitors 10 minutes before going into court after 7 days in custody.

Any charge after that length of time in custody has to be treated with suspicion, particularly charges made under the conspiracy laws such as Maire's. 130 miners have been charged under these laws. They are especially despicable laws when the police have little or no evidence against the accused. Three members of Luton Sinn Fein were sentenced in 1973 to 10 years for conspiring "to rob persons unknown at a time and place unknown".

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Dr. Maire O'Shea

We, the undersigned, deplore the arrest of Dr. O'Shea under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and her subsequent interrogation for four days, and her being charged under conspiracy law. We demand that the charges against Dr. O'Shea be dropped immediately.

Return by April 30th to: Dr. Maire O'Shea Support Committee, c/o 448 Stratford Rd., Birmingham B11 4AE.

Name

Address

ENGLISH ORIGINS OF AMERICAN RACISM by LEONARD LIGGIO

From 'Liberty' the voice of students for a libertarian society (U.S.A). FEB 1981.

Racism is one of the blights of modern American life. To this day, most black and white Americans live in separate cultures which interact infrequently, and then often with hostility. Leonard Liggio's essay, reprinted here in greatly edited form from the Radical History Review of 1971, sets forth some profound and important insights into the political origins of this problem. His sweeping essay demonstrates that racism began with the expansion of the nation-state through military conquest. In order to subjugate native peoples, much more was required than brute force: it was necessary to systematically assault and eliminate an entire human culture, a way of life. Culture, the shared values and norms of a society, provided the defense mechanism against domination and aggression. In order to colonize other countries therefore, the English developed an ideology of racism which dehumanized alternative cultures labeling their customs "savage" and their mores criminal. Modern racism began with the English exploitation of the Irish, was extended to the Native Americans in the New World, and culminated there in African slavery. The complete version of this article will be available from the SLS Study Guide.

A decade ago Dante Puzzo emphasized that, unlike other dominant forces in the modern world, racism has lacked sufficient study as an historical development. Racism, Puzzo noted:

"is a modern conception, for prior to the sixteenth century there was virtually nothing in the life and thought of the West that can be described as racist. To prevent misunderstanding a clear distinction must be made between racism and ethnocentrism...."

"The moral self-sufficiency of the nation-state proved of salient importance. For, in the circumstances engendered by the struggle for empire, it gave powerful impetus to the natural tendency of nationalism to become chauvinism. And chauvinism, perverting to its uses the new sciences, could become and, where conditions were right, did become racism. Racism, then, resulted from the emergence of the secular, national state struggle for empire."

When the European states embarked on their course of expansion and colonization they came into contact with peoples of cultures different than those which characterized most of Western Europe. Western European states had some contacts with cultures other than their own, especially the Italians and the Spanish with the people of Islam. Since contact with other cultures had been generally in the context of conflict or hostility, the attitudes formed toward other cultures did not tend to be amicable or appreciative. Feelings of superiority were frequently the result. We are aware that among the major European colonial powers, the French have a reputation for having the most amicable and reasonable relations with the native peoples of North America as well as with the native peoples of other areas which they dominated. It is possible that one basis for this was that the French had had almost no direct contact with peoples of other cultures before the period of European expansion.

The attitude of the English toward native peoples represented something of a paradox. How is it possible to explain the fact that the English developed the most racist attitudes toward the natives wherever they expanded or established overseas colonies, and that the most complete and absolute form of servitude developed in the English colonies of America? Contemporary research in a number of diverse areas of historical scholarship makes it possible to begin to comprehend the roots of English racism and the corollary of racism, slavery.

The English, like the Italians and the Spanish, did have close contact with a people of a different culture: the Irish. It was the English experience with the Irish which was the root of English racial attitudes. The importance of English imperial activities in Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for English activity in the New World during the seventeenth century has begun to receive attention.

Wild Irish

The nature of Irish society must be examined to understand the policies of racism, servitude, displacement and extermination practiced by the English in Ireland, for ultimately the destruction of Celtic civilization itself was the objective of English expansion. A.L. Rowse suggests that the Irish in the sixteenth century were as much from a strange and unknown culture as Indian chiefs from South America.

"No historian has brought home how different a world Ireland was...In the early days it was largely terra incognita, almost as unknown as the coast of America. The great Lord Deputy Chichester...wrote of Ulster that 'before these last wars it was as inaccessible to strangers as the Kingdom of China.'"

Gaelic Ireland was the largest society remaining of the ancient Atlantic coastal civilization of several thousand years existence. It was untouched by the intrusions into England of Romans and German barbarians. The basic element of Irish culture was the pastoral lifestyle. Wealth was in the form of cattle. Fishing was important, along with oat growing. Following the planting of the oats, the greater part of the Irish would move with their herds to summer camps (the booley) in the hills for grazing.

In Ireland, tribal lands (those not owned by freemen or chiefs) were divided among the tribe for the pastorage of their cattle. The land was not owned by the chief as a feudal domain; it was owned by the tribe and used privately following periodic divisions into pasture lands. Most of the arable land was owned by Irish freemen farmers. Tenants of only one, two, or three years -- a short time in a farming society -- gave the cattle-owning tenants freedom

manded too many cattle for the use of the land.

The pastoral nature of Irish society was understood by some Elizabethan English as well-suited economically to the mountainous, wasteland country. But the pastoral economy, specifically the mobility of the Irish and their establishment of summer camps, were viewed by the English as evil for social and political reasons. A pastoral lifestyle produced less taxable wealth and made the Irish harder to control than a settled agricultural population. Without servitude the natives could freely choose to maintain their own economic and social lifestyle. Freedom and mobility were viewed as central to Irish resistance to domination.

The brehons, or Irish tribal jurists, were an hereditary class who memorized the legal customs of the society and were consulted to settle disputes. Irish landowning concepts, marriage customs and monetary compensation in both criminal and civil cases operated smoothly through the brehons. Criminal actions, including injuries and murder, were punished by compensation, usually in cattle. To the English, the brehons were a special target for destruction. They were accused of bypassing the English courts and of encouraging actions which might be punishable by death under the rigorous legal system of Elizabethan society. The brehons provided refuge for Irishmen fleeing the execution of English legal processes. Like the Irish poets, brehons were often very mobile, traveling around the countryside to learn the law and settle disputes, and thus were accused by the English of being the originators of the rebellions and uprisings against English rule.

Especially shocking to the English were the matrimonial customs of the Irish. There were several forms of marriage among the Irish and these were dissolvable under certain none too rigid condi-

dition to concubinage was probationary marriage a year and a day, and dissolution of bonds could be initiated by a woman as well as man.

The attitude of the English conquerors toward the Irishmen was one of contempt; some asserted that it was "no more a sin to kill an Irishman than a dog or any other brute."

Yet, despite the original attitudes of superiority, more and more of the English conquerors found the Irish customs, culture and way of life superior. The Anglo-Normans were absorbed by the Irish in law, language, and civilization by free choice. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Gaelic Revival had become complete. The reaction of England's officials was profound shock. In place of the hoped-for absorption of some of the Irish into English culture, the English were assimilated into Irish culture. The attractiveness of Irish culture compared to Anglo-Norman feudalism was desperately fought by the officials. To prevent English contamination by Irish culture, officials from at least 1297 introduced legal restrictions banning Irish dress, language, trade or marriage with the Irish, keeping Irish law-sayers or poets, etc.

Henry VII's intention to subdue the "Irish savages" (1494) was undertaken more comprehensively, if unsuccessfully, during the reign of Henry VIII. The Decay of Ireland (1520s) described how ineffectual would be English attempts to gain income from Ireland since even the Pale (the area of Ireland inhabited by the first English settlers) was dominated by Irish language, customs and law. Henry VIII abandoned the policy of voluntary submission to English control and established a standing army in Ireland. But, coercion alone seemed unable to produce the results desired. The presence of the Irish in Ireland and the absence of Englishmen

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During the decades before the middle of the sixteenth century, "it was gradually realized that some permanent plantation of English settlers around strong, defense centers would probably be the cheapest and most stable means" of gaining control and producing income for the English government. In the 1550s with the reign of Philip and Mary, clearly expansionist policies were inaugurated. Warfare against the Irish and the Irishized Anglo-Saxon (now called the Old English) was carried out from the military frontier of the Pale; they were expelled from the fertile regions where the land was confiscated by the government. Forts were established and English settlers (the New English) introduced. The New English assumed a semi-military character to maintain their positions against the Irish and Old English whose lands they occupied. This "forward policy" was continued and intensified by the centralizing program of Elizabeth's regime.

There was an analogy between the early Spanish approach in American and the early English approach to Ireland under the Tudors. The conscious motivation of gain and exploitation contrasted sharply with the professed objective of civilizing and developing the natives. How the natives were treated depended on how they reacted to being civilized and developed, i.e., exploited. If they accepted it, including the destruction of their cultural life, they were "good natured." Early Tudor leaders hoped that the Irish, especially the mass of the Irish people, were "good natured," welcomed English

rule and civilization, and preferred the "freedom" of hard work for English landlords to the "slavery" of the pastoral life in communities headed by Irish chieftains. Of course, this mild policy implied that whatever minimal resistance showed itself should be ruthlessly crushed for the benefit of the majority of well intentioned Irish. Colonization by English settlers in key local areas was viewed as consistent with a mild policy. This policy was discarded once the English began to seriously attempt to establish control over the Irish. Resistance to exploitation and to destruction of culture was viewed as the action of savages of bestial temperament who had to be forced into conformity or destroyed. The debate among the Spanish, in which the name of Bartolome de las Casas figures most prominently, regarding the human nature, the character and the future of the Indians of America, was paralleled with regard to the Irish. William Thomas, an official of Henry VIII, wrote of the Irish that they were, "rude, beastly, ignorant, cruel and unruly infidels." Thomas in *The Pilgrimage: A Dialogue on the Life and Actions of Henry VIII* (1552) said:

"...the wild Irish, as unreasonable beasts, lived without any knowledge of God or good manners, in common of their goods, cattle, women, children and every other thing...nor yet any justice executed for murder, robbery, or any otherlike mischief; by the more force had ever the more reason. And thereof it followed that because their savage and idle life could not be satisfied with the only fruit of the natural unlaboured earth, therefore continually they invaded the fertile possessions of their Irish neighbors that inhabited the...English pale."

Bartolome de las Casas (1474-1566) was the principal Spanish spokesman for the rights of the Indians against a vast number of Spanish colo-

nists and Spanish theorists who argued in defense of the harsh policy applied in the New World. Las Casas' *Brief Relation on the Destruction of the Indians* which detailed the extermination and enslavement of the Indians on the Spanish road to conquest in America was published in 1552 in Seville. Its impact throughout Europe was immense.

However, the major English writers on the colonization and treatment of native peoples, such as Richard Eden and Richard Hakluyt, preferred the arguments of Las Casas' opponents that natives were savages with nonhuman customs. For Eden, natives for the most part lacked the capacity for civilization and thus the Spanish extermination, so vividly detailed by Las Casas, was reasonable. The survivors among the natives could be trained to useful attitudes. Historian David Beers Quinn comments:

"The Spanish conquerors, Eden said, were worthy of commendation 'which in their merciful wars against these naked people, have so used themselves towards them in exchanging of benefits for victory, that greater commodity hath thereof ensued to the vanquished than the victors.' But, he continues, 'some will say, they possess and inhabit their regions and use them as bondmen and tributaries, where before they were free...' He admits this, but maintains that 'their bondage is such as it is much rather to be desired than their former liberty.'"

The concept that the conquerors bring to the native people a slavery that is preferable to freedom under their own customs is used repeatedly by the English in their conquest of the Irish.

With the accession of Queen Elizabeth the new program for Ireland was administered by English officials influenced by the Spanish colonization. The major colonial

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The doctrine that the only good Indian is a dead Indian first took shape in the belief that the only good Irishman is a dead Irishman. English massacres of American Indians reflected the same methods and attitudes applied to the Irish."

project for Ulster at that time was organized in 1571 by Sir Thomas Smith, who became Elizabeth's secretary of state. Smith as a tutor at Cambridge had encouraged Richard Eden's interest in colonies. Elizabeth and Smith declared in their indenture agreement (October 5, 1571) that to repress the "wild Irish," all the Irish gentry, freemen, craftsmen and learned class were to be driven out or killed, while the Irish laborers were to be retained to work for English gentry and English settlers. The Irish laborers were to be closely controlled to protect the English settlers' dominance and to get profitable labor from them. The November 16, 1571 letters patent to Smith said:

"Every Irishman shall be forbidden wear English apparel or weapon upon pain of death. That no Irishman, born of Irish race and brought up Irish, shall purchase land, bear office, be chosen of any jury or admitted witness in any real or personal action, nor be bound apprentice to any science or art.... All Irishmen, especially native in that coun-

try, which commonly be called churls, that will plow the ground and bear no kind of weapon nor armour, shall be gently entertained and for their plowing and labor shall be well rewarded with great provision."

—However, Irish churls killed the head of the colony, the younger Thomas Smith. The failure of this colony along with that in Ulster proved to the English the need to eradicate most of the native population, and to then settle large numbers of Englishmen, who might use a few well controlled Irishmen as laborers.

The New World

Many of the figures active in Irish colonies joined with Sir Humphrey Gilbert in planning to settle English colonists in New England. When Gilbert died on this voyage, Sir Walter Raleigh assumed the leadership of the expedition.

Concerning the Englishmen's comparisons of the Irish

to other tribal peoples, Howard Mumford Jones comments:

"William Morrell in his *Nova Anglia* could make the methods of (American) Indian warfare clear only by comparing them to those of the Irish; and in 1637 Roger Williams, writing to John Winthrop, could find no worse threat in Indian warfare than that, if the savages were not kindly used, they might 'turne wild Irish themselves.' In sum, America was uncomfortably like Ireland.

—The doctrine that the only good Indian is a dead Indian first took shape in the belief that the only good Irishmen is a dead Irishmen... Unable to comprehend the Brehon laws, the English simply decided that the wild Irish were savages; the English were equally unwilling or unable to understand Indian 'laws.' Used to savagery in the one place, they looked for and provoked it in the other. Experience led them to approach Virginia and New England with the natural prepossessions gen-



"Irish slaves were viewed as more dangerous than blacks, for the blacks were 'fetched from severall parts of Africa, and speake severall languages, and by that means, one of them understands not another.' They could not, therefore, easily conspire to rebel."

erated by Tudor Conquest in-Ireland."

The well-known English treatment of the American Indians, especially in comparison with their better treatment by the French, has its origins in their attitudes toward tribal Irishmen. The nature of the tribalman, generally, was freedom in comparison with the serf in feudal society. Tudor officials greatly feared the masterless man, which in England often meant that the man had to be a vagabond. The English sought to tie such persons to an established status and place in the village by every means necessary and when these failed, deportation and enslavement became acceptable options. Finally, if the masterless resisted accepting a status or deportation in slavery, death was a necessity to preserve good order. Whenever this approach was challenged, there was total suppression of any rebellion by the slaughter of a huge number of the present or potential participants.

The experiences transferred in the early seventeenth century from Ireland to America were reinforced by the emerging attitudes of

Puritanism, which had a mutually destructive impact on the natives of American and of Ireland. Many of those concerned with the new plantations in Virginia as well as those in Ireland were influenced by Puritanism. America was viewed as a "Western Canaan" reserved for the English generally and the Puritans in particular. America was a promised land divinely set aside for a chosen people. As new Israelites the English would smite the Canaanites or natives of the country. Colonists to Ulster and to Virginia were admonished to take Joshua as their guide in clearing the native inhabitants from the lands rightfully belonging to the chosen people, the English.

The Puritan community in America, like the English community in Ireland, did not allow room for coexistence with a different social and cultural tradition. The Puritan community was viewed as surrounded by a hedge which was religious, cultural and physical. All that was good and godly was inside the hedge; all that was bad and ungodly was outside. The attempt to create an organic community, a medieval society, as the

modern age developed, was important as a motivation for the Puritans. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the static life and sense of community in England, especially in the dominant rural society of England, was coming to an end. The status quo's ending meant that the status of a large number of people, not the least the Puritans, was upset. The Puritans' settlement in America was a search to maintain a static style of life unchallenged by the diversity and change of modern society. The search for the new society in the New Zion was not merely a search for religious security but also for cultural and social security. As with the Irish, the Indians could not be integrated into that community; they were beyond the hedge and thus enemies that would have to be eliminated. The massacres of the Indians, the Pequot War, King Philip's War, etc., reflected the same methods and the same attitudes as the English applied to the Irish. Extermination was the logical conclusion. When extermination of human beings appears logical, the enslavement of human beings appears humane. In-



Revolt followed by submission was the pattern of Irish life. Here Thurlough O'Neill submits to Sir Henry Sidney after the uprising in Ulster. Behind him are his longhaired "wild Irish" subjects.

dians captured in war were placed in servitude; but as with the Irish, being in their own country and having free Indians beyond English control, the Indians were successful in escape. Almon Wheeler Lauber in Indian Slavery in Colonial Times Within the Present Limits of the United States indicates the decline of Indian slavery due to the increase of indentured servants and of white servitude of convicts, especially Irish and Scotch prisoners of war. The Indians were not used to the activities they were expected to perform and tended to refuse to learn. William Howitt suggested that Indian resistance tended to discourage the Indian slave trade especially because various tribes refused to cooperate in the enslavement of other Indians.

The experience gained by the English regarding the Indians in America was transferred to Ireland during the English Civil War and Commonwealth of the 1640s and 1650s. The Irish and the Old English undertook a nationwide rebellion against the New English of the Elizabethan settlement. This rebellion began in 1641. With the success of the Parliamentary armies under Cromwell, attention could be turned by the English government to Ireland.

However, the radical soldiers who had won the Civil War did not believe in the conquest of Ireland. These radicals or Levellers (Editor's note: the Levellers were early precursors of Libertarians) felt that the "cause of the Irish natives in seeking their just freedoms was the very same with our cause here in endeavouring our own rescue and freedom from the power of oppressors." The radical council of officers voted on March 25, 1649 that the army should not be used in Ireland to "eradicate the natives or to divest them of their estates." Three days later the Leveller leaders were arrested by Cromwell. In order to raise troops to go to Ireland Cromwell required a new kind of enthusiasm if he

were to motivate troops to the victories he achieved in England. This was provided by the heavy influx of New Englanders who were returning to England with the Puritan victory in order to assist the new government.

Cromwell's army in Ireland, often New-England Puritan led or inspired, carried out the most complete devastation that Ireland experienced until that time. Extermination became a policy. Massacres were carried out. Prisoners of war were transported to servitude in the new English colonies in the West Indies. Ireland, like New England, was taken with the Bible in one hand, the sword in the other. Lord Clarendon observed that the Cromwellian policy was to act without "any humanity to the Irish nation, and more especially to those of the old native extraction, the whole race whereof they had upon the matter sworn an utter extirpation." Cromwell determined that all the Irish would be removed to the west of Ireland, ordering the Irish to go "to hell or to Connaught." But large numbers of prisoners of war and captives were sentenced to permanent transportation to the West Indian sugar plantations.

Thus, there developed the well known horrors of the Irish 'slave-trade.' Large proportions of the Irish on the "slave-trade" ships died on the voyage to the West Indies. The experience which the Bristol merchants gained in the Irish "slave-trade" was useful to them decades later when they became a dominant force in the same activity in Africa. The role of the Irish as the initial servile labor in the English West Indies is a separate topic; but some observations can be made about it.

From the earliest English settlements in the West Indies in the late 1620s Irish servants had been imported but were quickly found to be "proved treacherous." They frequently revolted and killed their English masters, and the English tried to outlaw the bringing in of Irish servants.

Not only was the white servant class larger than the black in the English West Indies until the latter part of the seventeenth century, but the Irish represented generally the largest part of the white servile population, reaching the figure of sixty-nine percent of Montserrat. White servants as well as blacks on Barbados were prohibited from "wandering about" without written permission of the master. Anyone so found was to be whipped. Carl Bridenbaugh concluded that the white servants were worse treated at this time than the black. The Irish were viewed as much more dangerous than the blacks:

"To explain this, Ligon pointed out that (the blacks) are fetched from several parts of Africa, who speak several languages, and by that means, one of them understands not another. They could not, therefore, easily rebel."

In the following decades the white majorities were replaced with black majorities.

Finally, the consistent English complaint about the Irish was carried to the West Indies. The pastoral Irish were not used to intensive agricultural labor. It was totally contrary to their traditional customs and experiences. Not unlike the Indians to which they were so frequently compared, the Irish, as the English had constantly said, would not submit to the kind of agricultural work which feudalism had demanded. The Indian tended to escape or die; the Irish either resisted work discipline, tending toward "idleness," or they rebelled. During the early years of the West Indian tobacco plantations it was possible to function with such labor. But, with the increasing introduction of sugar and the development of large-scale plantations, Celtic servitude became either useless or a burden to the planters. The uncivilized and savage Irish had to be replaced on the feudal plantations with a work force which

was civilized and not savage. A report from the early years of the French colony of Louisiana brought out this concept forcefully. It distinguished between the "savages" (the small number of Indian slaves) and the Negroes. Africans were preferred as slaves because they were civilized and were not savage.

The English had experience in attempting to impose servitude upon the Irish and upon the Indians. However, no matter what effort they put into it the English found the results unsatisfactory. The Africans, in contrast, were civilized peoples who had agricultural experience, sometimes in the context of feudal labor. Richard Dunn in *Sugar and Slaves* has noted;

"These black bondsmen had obvious practical advantages over the unstable white labor force in Barbados.... Black slaves performed the required tasks more patiently than white servants, and this consideration more than outweighed the disagreeable prospect of living in close proximity to a people totally foreign in color, speech, religion, and culture."

But the English had already formed their racial attitudes toward people totally foreign in speech, religion, culture and, even as this had for them a cultural differentiation, color. The conflict of cultures which dominated relations between the English and the Irish in the Old and New Worlds and the English and the Indians in the New World did not have the same intensity regarding the Africans. The most extreme aspects of the racism which accompanied the rise of the nation-state and colonialism, namely the extermination which was practiced against the Irish and the Indians, was not applied against the Africans. The Irish and the Indians could not be a part of the organic community which received its

highest manifestation in the Puritan villages; the black bondsman, on the other hand, was easily incorporated in the organic community of the plantation village. The Englishman, using the Irish or the Indians, sought to recreate the English village society in which a large mass of servile Englishmen labored for the privileged feudal class. The destruction of the native Irish or Indian culture was necessary to accomplish that; their resistance meant that not only would they refuse to submit to English culture but would not accept the English seizure of the lands they considered their own. Even when transported to the West Indies the Irish and the Indians resisted. The African, on the other hand, seemed more willing to accept the cultural changes which the English wished to impose. Like the English village laborers, the Africans had been experienced agricultural laborers in the African villages. In some cases, they had experienced feudal labor discipline. The Africans' tradition of the organic community of village society, of adaptability and learning and of agricultural experience, made them the most likely substitute in the New World for the laborer of the feudal community of the old world, especially acceptable following the total failure and thus the attempt at total extermination by the English with regard to the Irish and the Indians. Unlike the Irish and Indians, whose "uncivilized" culture caused English racism to choose the extreme of extermination, the latter encounter with the civilized Africans led English racism to force them into the culture of an organic feudal community.

Leonard Liggio is Director of The Institute for Humane Studies in Menlo Park, California