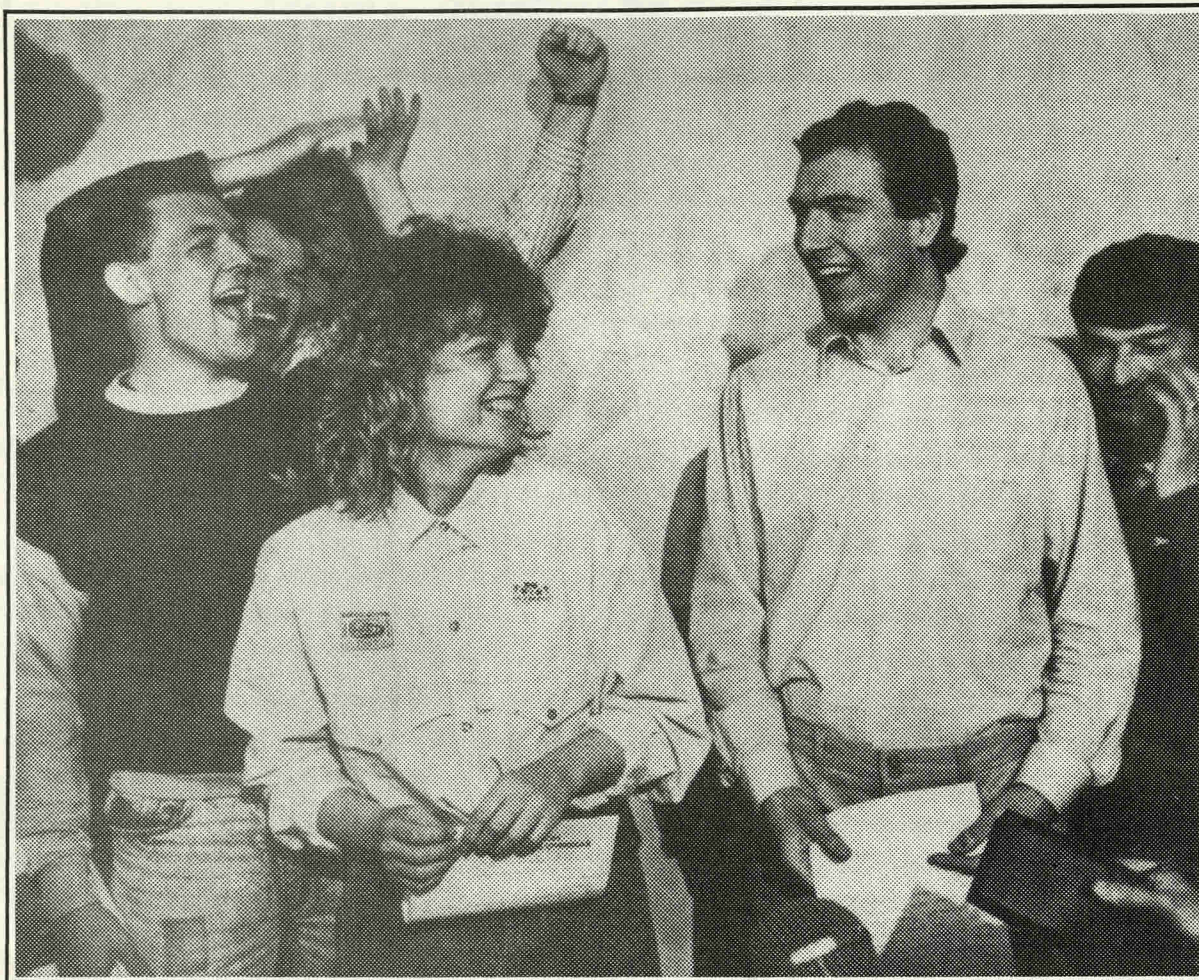


# IRISH VOICE

**Free!**

Haringey's Irish Community Magazine  
Issue No 7 June - August 1990

WINCHESTER FREED!



***Ferry Lane***

***Young and Irish in Haringey***

***Irish Youth Homelessness***

***Votes for the Irish Abroad?***



**The Irish Voice is produced by the Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group. The views expressed in articles in the newsletter are those of the authors.**

**We welcome contributions from anyone, whether it be written material, cartoons, drawings, poetry etc. Our next issue will come out in Autumn 1990 so if you have something to contribute or if you want to publicise the activities of your group, contact us at the address/number below. If you have any comments to make or want to raise a certain issue, why not write us a letter which we may then publish? We hope that you will use this newsletter as your voice in Haringey!**

**Haringey IBRG c/o Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, Crouch End, London N8. Tel: (081) 348 3351 ext 1432.**

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## VIDEOSVIDEOSVIDEOSVIDEOSVIDEOSVIDEOSVIDEOS

Haringey IBRG have a selection of over 30 videos about Ireland and Irish people which are available for hire by groups for showings. We have very low hire charges for groups and in many cases do not charge at all. Contact us on the above number for a free copy of our video list and details of hire. Videos include the following:

Suspect Community	Irish News: British Stories	The Patriot Game
Irishmen - An Impression of Exile	Off Our Knees	The Irish Question
The Irish in England	Sentenced	Mother Ireland
Second Generation	Plastic Bullets: The Deadly Truth	Stop Strip Searching
Experience	The Pure Drop	Arrivals
Building for Ourselves	Stories From Ireland	Get Out of That Garden
		Anne Devlin

## Women's Self Defence

Wednesdays 1pm to 2.30pm at the Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17. From September 1990. Free Creche. £1 per hour or 30p per hour unwaged. Contact Majella on (081) 348 3351 ext 1432 now for more details.

## Gaeilge Irish Gaeilge

From September 1990 new courses in Irish language for intermediate learners and beginners will run at the Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17. The classes will run for 26 weeks and will cost £5.00 for the entire course. The intermediate class for those who have a basic knowledge of Irish will run on Mondays from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. The beginner's class will run on Tuesdays at the same time. Tutor Noirin Ni Riordan. Interested? Contact IBRG office on 348 3351 ext 1432 now to get your name down!

**Thanks to all the workers at TCP for their assistance in the production of the Irish Voice. Thanks also to our contributors. Go raibh maith agaibh go leir.**



**Some of the regulars at the Haringey Irish Youth Club**



# Young and Irish in Haringey

*In January this year the Youth Club at the Haringey Irish Centre finally opened its doors with its first seven members. Since then the Club, open on Tuesday and Friday nights, has grown with a membership which on some nights reaches over thirty.*

*How come the Club has proved so popular with young people in Haringey? We paid a visit to the Club recently to see what the attraction was and to talk to members about what seems to be very much their own club.*

Located on the second floor of the Irish Centre while storm repairs to the Youth Floor are carried out, the Club has lots of space with two large rooms for sports, music and other activities, a lounge space and a separate room for girls' use. You know you are in the right place immediately as there is a notice announcing the club and spelling out the rules of entry as you come onto the floor. There is also a good deal of lively sounds (music?)

The club is very well equipped with a disco deck, a large record collection, electric guitar and synthesiser and a set of drums, some of which accounts for the sounds. (I believe that the workers at the Club, Mike, Eileen and Bernadette are hoping that members will set up their own band in the future.)

The young people I spoke to were anxious that I should capture the atmosphere of the place so here goes: imagine loudish music (House, Kylie....I don't know!) in one corner, chatting in another, serious pool playing in the middle and skirmishes around the doors, not so serious table tennis playing next door and the workers doing a good trade at the sweet shop and you sort of have it!

The members are a lively crowd and they seem very involved in the

running of the club, planning what to do each week and DJing the occasional discos. They drew up the rules of the Club themselves and they also decide how to spend the budget. (Although one member complained that the workers only go along with the members' suggestions if it does not go against their will!)

I was curious to find out whether or not it made any difference that the club is in an Irish Centre. Many members have Irish parents and most felt that the location of the club made no difference. They were quick to point out that young people of all races are welcome and they like it that way. Mary had this to say:

"When you come here and you hear the accent, well my Mum is Irish and it makes me feel really at home. They are much friendlier, I think."

Most people also thought people were much friendlier in Ireland than in London.

"If you see someone down the road you make friends with them. If you see someone in London you run!"

I wondered whether or not they thought there was any difference between young people in Ireland and those living in Britain. There were different views on this. Maxine found that her cousins there, although the same age as her, play skipping and things while when she goes out, she goes out to discos. She thinks this is because their parents are stricter. Emma disagreed, her cousins all go to discos and she thinks their parents don't worry so much about their children because it is safer in Ireland.

My last question to Emma, Maxine, Michael and others was what they thought of the Irish Voice. Well,

they were not impressed! Boring, not enough colour, no decent photographs. It was suggested that we jazz it up by having a more eye-catching cover and headlines, crosswords and a problem page. It was also suggested that we change the name to 'Irish People Speak Out'....Much as we like to think of ourselves as a radical and forward looking organisation, that would be just too trendy for us folks.. but what do you think of the new improved layout? One step at a time..

My overall impression of the club is that it is great fun to be there - the Youth Workers Mike and Eileen and volunteer Bernadette are easy going and seem to enjoy the craic as much as the members. Future planned activities include ice-skating, outdoor sports, drama and lots more discos. A weekend trip to Kent recently seems to have been a great success if the photos I saw are anything to go by (although the workers look exhausted)...I am sure they will do it again!

The club welcomes new members so if you are aged between 12 and 16 years then get on down on Tuesday between 6.30pm and 9.30pm or Friday between 7.00pm and 10.00pm. (Check with Mike or Eileen on 885 3490 for opening times during the summer holidays.)

I would like to thank all the young people and workers at the Youth Club who gave up time to talk to and entertain me!

Majella Crehan

Fancy volunteering at the Club? Contact Mike for details on the above number at Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17.



# '...I picked up my stuff and was out in the street'

Irish Youth Homelessness - A response from An Teach

**Almost nightly on the television and in the media we hear politicians and commentators condemning the plight of 'those - young - people - sleeping - in - cardboard - boxes - on - the - South Bank'. It is deeply shocking to see so many people sleeping out in London but even if 'out of sight is out of mind' the homelessness problem will not be solved by sweeping these people off the streets. What is needed are strategies which take into account the real nature of the homelessness problem.**

There are probably around 50,000 young people in severe housing need in London. Most of them are travelling in and out of temporary, insecure and inappropriate accommodation: hostels, B + Bs, squats, overcrowded rented flats, the floors of family and friends. Homeless people are not a homogenous group. Young people are not all the same and many have needs over and above their need for a roof over their heads. Homeless women face the dangers of sexual harassment, some face discrimination and exploitation from housing providers because of their sexuality or because they are drug users, because they have language difficulties or because of their ethnic origin.

It is estimated that somewhere between 15% - 25% of young people in housing need in London are Irish. However, it is difficult to estimate the true extent of Irish homelessness when so few agencies monitor the ethnic origin of their clients. A Single Homeless in London (SHIL) survey (1988) found that a massive 32% of 42,000 single homeless people in hostels and special needs housing projects are Irish. That survey was a study only of those agencies which

monitor ethnic origin. A Cara Irish Homeless Project (1988) survey in Westminster found that 26% of hostel users were Irish, with 42% of women users aged 18 - 26 being Irish. The 1981 census found that we constitute 6% of the population of Inner London Boroughs. Even given the dramatic increase in emigration to Britain in the 80's, it would seem that Irish people are grossly over-represented in temporary housing in London.

The SHIL survey may provide a clue to this over-representation. Their survey found that only 4% of Irish people who were nominated for permanent housing to local authorities or housing associations were actually allocated permanent housing. The conclusions we can draw are that there is a bottleneck of Irish people in temporary housing in London and that anti-Irish discrimination by housing providers is probably the cause of it.

An Teach is an Irish short-life housing association set up in 1986 to provide a period of secure, affordable housing for newly arrived young Irish emigrants aged 18-30. An Teach 'borrows' or licences houses and flats from local authorities, housing associations and private landlords/ladies. We accept property for as little as 6 months and guarantee to hand them back empty when they are wanted. In this way we bring into use properties which are usually awaiting refurbishment. (Around 4% of public housing stock is empty for this reason). For the owners, their properties are safe-guarded from being vandalised or squatted and from our point of view single young people are given access to facilities from which they would normally be excluded.

Short-life housing is not the answer to someone's housing needs but we

believe that a period of secure housing, even for 6 months, can help young Irish people, giving them time to find their way around an intimidating city like London and a chance to make contact with others in the house who are in a similar situation. It also gives them time to save for a deposit on private rented accommodation.

An Teach licencees are responsible for furnishing the properties, for paying the heating and lighting bills and for doing minor repairs. These policies were developed to keep occupation charges low - currently £20 a week - and to provide a secure environment in which people are required to take responsibility for their housing as they will be forced to do elsewhere.

As a housing strategy An Teach attempts to respond to the common and lasting experiences of loneliness and alienation felt by many on arriving in this country. Four fifths of young Irish people in a Cara (1988) survey felt cultural differences between England and Ireland made it difficult for them to integrate into this country. There are of course other dangers of homelessness: physical destitution caused by living in poor housing or being on the streets, the possibility of becoming 'criminalised' by living in squats, physical harassment by landlords/ladies who have all the power. Brendan took a flat on with a friend who then returned to Ireland:

***"He (the landlord) wanted extra money off me but I couldn't pay....I gave him £20 extra but he wanted me to pay from a few weeks back because he couldn't pay his mortgage...he started pushing me around...(they then had a fight)...I picked up my stuff and was out in the street."***



To date An Teach has licensed properties from the London Boroughs of Islington, Hammersmith and Fulham and Haringey. We currently licence 4 properties from Haringey Council. We have also worked with Metropolitan Housing Trust and Family Housing Association. With the appointment of it's first worker, funded by the London Borough Grants Scheme and Dion the Irish Government Committee for Welfare Services abroad, An Teach is looking to develop it's commitment to equal opportunities and to improve the resettlement advice we offer to licencees. We hope to extend our work throughout the London Boroughs. Even if the current wave of Irish emigration slackens off there will still be a desperate need for affordable housing sensitive to the needs of young Irish people, if they are not to become marginalised by a society which does not take their needs seriously.

We must not underestimate the long term effects of emigration. Many young people have adapted to lifestyles which will have consequences for them for a long time to come. Tom, for example left Ireland six years ago to go to the US for 6 months before coming to London. He liked being in proximity to Ireland.

*"America's a long way off....it was like being in Australia. Now, if I*

*decide, I can be home tomorrow."* He said he had been back ten times for short visits in 6 years. He feels that there is not much to go back for.

*"Most of my friends that were in my class have emigrated anyway. funerals are the only things that bring them together - and maybe weddings."*

Tony has a different experience. He lives in a squat in South London (from which he is about to be evicted) and has come over to do a Migrant Training Scheme course. He says.....

*"I'm not knocking London, it's given me a second chance that my own Government wouldn't...there are very limited opportunities for someone with my standard of education (Intermediate Certificate)"*

He is keen to return when his course is finished. *"I'm Irish, that's what I want."*

Britain has encouraged immigration for it's own purposes - labour - but has taken little responsibility for those who have given their labour in this country. In the case of Irish people we witness this in the reluctance of many bodies - including the Office of Population and Census Survey - to recognise the Irish as an ethnic minority.

We need only look at the figures for homelessness again to see that Irish people are discriminated against in allocation of housing.

An Teach was set up with the aim of working in the best tradition of Irish self-help. We hope to work in the future with pressure groups and other Irish housing groups to develop lasting strategies to break the cycle of young Irish homelessness. It is generally accepted that housing and social security legislation make it harder for young people - particularly the unemployed - to get rented accommodation and much easier to be evicted. An Teach hopes within this often hostile environment to work towards building a strong Irish community with a positive sense of identity.

*Thanks to Tom, Brendan and Tony.*

**Mike Farrell**, Co-Ordinator, An Teach Housing Association.

Anyone who would like to apply for housing should contact Mike on 365 1751 at the Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17.

## Extradition

**A fair trial for the Irish  
Maggie Thatcher would say  
So speed up extradition  
You will get fair play**

**So we've imprisoned  
And wronged quite a few  
What does that matter  
We'll soon get to you?**

**She has egg on her face  
With the Guildford Four  
May God have mercy  
How many more?**

**British Justice is down  
On the floor where it licks  
But what about  
The Birmingham Six?**

**Brian Dempsey April 1990**

# Feile Na N'Og Kilburn Irish Youth Festival

**Sunday 22 July 1990 12noon to 6pm**

**Grange Park**

**Kilburn London NW6**

**Celebrate being young and Irish in London!  
Enjoy the craic and music - Trad, Rock, Pop, Folk.**

**Stalls with info on welfare rights,  
housing, legal and health matters,  
education and training.**

**Exhibitions: Women's football  
and Irish Dancing**

**Food and Refreshments**

**Admission Free!**



## "One away" A meditation by Billy Power

I find myself alone in the exercise yard. All prisoners and guards have gone inside. I realise the significance of this. Excitedly I make for the security fence and outside prison wall. I scale both with surprising ease and drop to freedom. I have only moments. The alarm is raised.

More than fourteen years in prison and now I'm free! I speed away from the wall across the two fields to the wood on the other side of the stream a few hundred yards from the prison. If I can make it to the wood I will be clean away. Already the guards are on my trail and gaining on me. My fourteen years 'behind bars' flash across my mind. I'm not going back no matter what!

I make it to the stream. Ten seconds more across the small stream and up the other bank into the wood and I will never be caught. My mind is very clear. Less than sixty seconds behind are my pursuers. I suddenly halt! I can hardly believe my eyes. What can this be in front of me? A figure hanging on a tree crucified like Christ. My mind takes in the nails, the thorns and all, and I am very confused. Is this Christ? Is it someone else? A prisoner? Who could have done this to him, whoever he is?

He hangs there in abject misery and total suffering virtually dead. What can I do? There is nothing. He will be dead in seconds, and yet I cannot pass by. I glance to freedom on the other bank. I

look back to the prison guards. In half a minute I will be captured to face the rest of my life behind those hated bars, and yet I cannot pass on.

I hear a murmur. "Water, I'm thirsty. Just a drink of water" and in the eternity of the next moment I come to realise that this poor suffering person's drink of water is the most important thing in the world this very moment. I feel the tears rise as I stoop with cupped hands to the cool stream. I raise them to his parched lips and he tries to drink. His head falls limp. He is dead.

I am grabbed from behind and led away full of peace and joy at knowing that I did not pass 'Him' by. In this I have discovered my True Freedom.

Lord, you said: "If you make my word your home, you will indeed be my disciples. You will learn the truth and the truth will make you free." Lord, I pray for the grace and strength to open my heart to your word that I may find true freedom. True freedom that comes from meeting you wherever I may be. Amen.

You can write to the Birmingham Six at the following addresses: Patrick Hill, Gartree Prison, Leicester Road, Market Harborough, Leics. LE1 7RP  
Billy Power, Richard McKilkeny, Full Sutton Prison, Stamford Bridge, East Riding, York YO4 1PS  
Gerry Hunter, John Walker, Hugh Callaghan, Long Lartin Prison, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs WR11 5TZ.

The London Birmingham Six Campaign can be contacted at 1 Orlestone Road, London N7

## A notice to all who would be women hurlers!

Did you play camogie in Ireland? Perhaps you have never played but would fancy the challenge of a new sport. **Camogie** - women's hurling - is quite a thriving sport at the moment. London boasts over eight teams so you'll probably find that there is a team training near you. The team that I play for is Islington Irish. We train at Tufnell Park on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday - when we're not playing matches. It's great weather now to have a "puck about" in the evening, so if you fancy popping along you'll be more than welcome. You can contact Evelyn and Nora (700 1291) or Eileen (281 1630), both outside working hours. For a daytime number contact Nora on 278 4444 ext 2545. So, why not 'break a leg' - not to be taken literally!

**Maggie Durack**

## Waiting for Justice?

An account of the case of the Winchester Three, whose convictions were quashed on Friday 27 April 1990 and who were immediately re-arrested and excluded (deported) under the PTA.

Available priced £1.50 from the campaign c/o Grass Roots, 1 Newton Street, Manchester 1, Lancashire

**One Woman's Story**  
**Martina Shanahan**

## YOUNG AND IRISH: THE POLL TAX AND YOU

Thousands of young Irish emigrants have been affected by the introduction of the Poll Tax to England and Wales on 1 April 1990. The Action Group for Irish Youth (AGIY), have produced an information leaflet to meet the growing demand for information about the Poll Tax from young Irish emigrants and their advisers.

AGIY are concerned that young emigrants are likely to encounter serious problems with the Poll Tax. Nearly every emigrant over 18 years will have to pay the Tax which in most cases will cost more than that charged under the old rating system. By law everyone should register for payment of the Tax within 21 days of arriving in Britain. Many will be unaware of the new system and confusion could lead to fines being imposed and young people being

criminalised through no fault of their own.

It will also be more difficult for those on low incomes to get accommodation where the landlord is responsible for collecting the Poll Tax from them. People have to pay the Tax first and then wait weeks or possibly months before they receive a rebate. Those who do not register for payment will be breaking the law and will in practice be unable to claim social welfare or housing benefits, use council leisure services or go to a Social worker as the Poll Tax registration officer has the right to get lists of names and addresses of people in contact with any department of their local authority and with other Government agencies.

AGIY's leaflet provides a detailed outline of the implications of the Tax, registration procedures, obligation to pay, cost of the

Tax and how to pay it. It also gives information on rebate entitlement for those on low incomes and explains 'joint and several liability'. Finally, it gives the implications of non-registration and non-payment.

The leaflet is available free of charge from AGIY at the address below but for bulk orders please send £0.50 made payable to AGIY for postage and packing:

**AGIY 5-15 Cromer Street London WC1H 8LS**  
**Tel (071) 278 1665**

**For further information about this or about a new leaflet on AIDS and Irish Youth contact Dave or Joan on the above number.**



# Votes for the Irish Abroad ?

*Glor an Deorai examines the issues*

Emigration has been a prominent feature of Irish society for the last 150 years and more. Regardless of which party has been in power, no government has been able to stop the flow of people from Ireland for more than a few years.

The response of the present government to the recent exodus seems to consist of statements saying they are opposed to emigration, words belied by their lack of action. One would feel that if the government were truly concerned, they would give emigrants the opportunity to express themselves in Irish society by introducing a means whereby they could vote in Irish elections.

This suggestion is not as extreme as one is led to believe. It is only necessary to look towards other EEC countries to establish that the idea of votes for non-resident citizens is very popular and acceptable.

For example, in respect of parliamentary elections, there are nine countries within the EEC that have facilities to allow non-resident citizens to participate. Ireland, Belgium and Denmark do not. In regard to European elections, Ireland is the only EEC country which does not allow its citizens abroad to vote.

Given how widespread the idea of votes for non-resident citizens is, combined with the fact that Ireland is presently suffering from a high level of forced emigration, the rightness of the idea of votes for emigrants cannot be doubted. The only real question is, what system of voting should be implemented?

Before a system could be introduced there are a number of issues which would have to be examined:

## **Who should actually vote?**

- All Irish citizens who have left the country?

- Irish passport holders only?
- Citizens who have left in the last ten years?

## **Who should they vote for?**

- Candidates in their previous constituencies?
- Separate representatives?

## **How should they vote?**

- At embassies/consulates?
- By post?

Of course there are other areas that need to be examined such as the cost of implementation and the elimination of fraud. However, these are difficulties which occur in all elections and solutions must exist to overcome these problems.

Finally, the benefits of allowing non-residents to vote include the following:

***It would give emigrants a voice in the society they come from.***

***It would help build a bridge between Irish people living inside and outside Ireland.***

***It might have a positive effect with regard to emigration as politicians might be more concerned if the people who had to leave still had a vote!***

**Pat Wade, Glor an Deorai - Campaigning for votes in Ireland for the Irish abroad.**

Glor an Deorai, 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY, meet every Tuesday 7pm at the above address. New members and supporters welcome.

**The campaign for votes for emigrants is not confined to groups or individuals abroad. We reprint here a letter from Margaretta D'Arcy and John Arden published in the Irish Times on 30 April 1990.**

We are currently being asked to "reclaim the spirit of 1916". The Easter Rising was an attempt to create a republic, of equal citizens with universal suffrage, at a time when about two-thirds of the adult population had no votes, either because they were women, or they were too poor; and such votes as there were could only be used to elect a foreign parliament.

In the subsequent 74 years, although more than two-thirds of Ireland has achieved the parliament as well as the suffrage (leave aside the snobbish anomaly of the Senate), very many of the population who should have been enjoying these benefits - hazard a guess, two-thirds from one generation to another? - have been compelled to leave the country of their birth permanently or temporarily, and have effectively forfeited their control of it's destiny.

The cases of the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six and the Winchester Three have shown how the Irish in Britain can be treated: they appeal to the Dublin Ministers and TDs to assist them, but they cannot back up their appeal by normal political pressure because even those from the 26 counties lack the ultimate

political sanction, the power to vote them out of office.

And yet there are thousands of such exiles, still holding Irish passports, who are only overseas because they were not able to make a living where they did have that power. Their coherence as a community in Britain has been deliberately broken by the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, while Ireland now rejects them politically as well as economically.

The best celebration of 1916 would be to extend the Irish vote to all Irish citizens living abroad, and so to re-empower the unjustly disfranchised diaspora.

As afterthought: what about Irish passport holders who live in, or have had to leave, the Six Counties? For whom could they vote to represent their citizenship? Remembering how Mr Currie, for example, gained the suffrages of Dubliners and how hunger-strike candidates from Long Kesh demolished a few Fianna Fail hopes in 1981 it ought not to be impossible to work out something in the reverse direction.

Yours, etc.,

MARGARETTA D'ARCY (Irish Citizen)

JOHN ARDEN (British Citizen)

We wrote to all the major political parties in the 26 counties to establish their position on the right of emigrants to vote. This is what those who replied had to say.....

'...the matter is under active consideration by the Fine Gael Party. In the course of their consideration it has emerged that there are a number of practical difficulties in this matter.'

**Fine Gael**

'We support the right of emigrant Irish citizens to exercise their vote. We believe that all Irish people have the right to vote in their own country' **Republican Sinn Fein**

'...we support the provision of vote for Irish citizens living abroad. While there are technical problems we do not consider that these are insurmountable...' **The Workers' Party**

'...the Government Programme provides that the feasibility of granting voting rights to recent Irish emigrants will be examined.' **Fianna Fail**



*In the last edition of this magazine, we devoted two pages to the campaign to secure the release of the three young Irish people convicted of 'conspiracy to murder, with persons unknown, persons unknown' and more importantly, with conspiracy to murder Tom King, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. (Britain is the only European democracy to have 'conspiracy' type offences.)*

*Following a trial which by any stretch of the imagination provided only a mockery of justice, Martina Sbanaban, John McCann and Finbar Cullen were sentenced by Lord Justice Swinton to 25 years imprisonment.*

*The severity of the sentences was questioned by campaigners who pointed out that in November 1988 an UDR soldier, convicted of passing on information including police and military car registration numbers to a loyalist paramilitary group, received only a six month sentence.*

*The Winchester Three are now free at last and living in Ireland, although they have been excluded from Britain under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). That they are now free is due in no small part to the campaign mounted by the relatives of the three, supported by people in Ireland and in Britain.*

## The Appeal

At the appeal hearing in April, the judges Lord Beldam, Justice Fennell and Justice Tucker heard much evidence from the defence counsel as to the various means employed by the Crown Prosecution Service to convict the three defendants. Incidental to this was the time and location of the trial. At the prosecution's request, the trial took place in Winchester, home town of seven army regiments. It began on the same day as the Tory Party conference returned to Brighton four years after the IRA had bombed the Grand Hotel there. Ten days before the trial was due to begin, a widely reported commemoration service was held in Winchester for the victims of the IRA's Ballgawley bus attack.

The defence outlined three major arguments for allowing the appeal and quashing the convictions.

## Winchester Freed!



Firstly they argued that the powers given by Sir Patrick Mayhew, Attorney General, to the Special Branch to vet all members of the jury were unnecessary and unconstitutional and should have led to the dismissal of the trial jury. Secondly, they argued that there had been insufficient evidence to secure the convictions and to warrant the harsh sentences handed down.

Finally they argued that the intervention, during the trial, of Tom King MP and Lord Denning concerning a defendant's right to silence and the media coverage of their statements greatly prejudiced the trial.

In view of the fact that there was hardly a case to answer, the three defendants had followed the instructions of their lawyers and elected to observe their right to silence. On the very same day, Tom King decided to hold an unscheduled press conference to announce the Government's intention to abolish the right of silence in the North of Ireland. Mr King stated that the right to silence safeguard was being exploited by IRA members to escape conviction. Holding up a copy of An Phoblacht/Republican News with a headline 'Whatever you say, say nothing', he went on to infer that in 'terrorist' cases, silence equalled guilt. At the press conference he stated

**"Innocence pleads for a chance to make it's case and it is silence that is offering an opportunity for the guilty"**

This view was subsequently supported by Lord Denning, former Master of the

Rolls, who in another interview on the matter stated "... the hallmark of guilty people is silence."

At one point the appeal was adjourned to allow the three judges an opportunity to view a collation of news coverage of Mr King's and Lord Denning's respective interventions. They also viewed a large dossier of newspaper coverage (some of which was supplied by Haringey IBRG).

Three weeks after the appeal had finished the judges reconvened to announce their decision. At the Old Bailey they announced that they had dismissed the first two arguments put forward by the defence counsel. However, they accepted that the prejudicial media coverage and the interventions of Tom King and Lord Denning had irredeemably precluded the chance of a fair trial. They said that although the trial judge had instructed the jury to ignore the media coverage and Mr King's and Lord Denning's comments, he could not have remedied the damage that had already been done.

Before a stunned court, including the defendants (who had not been present at the appeal), their relatives and supporters, Lord Justice Beldam announced that the appeal had been successful and consequently quashed the convictions without ordering a retrial. In disbelief, John McCann leapt up in the dock and shouted "Thank you!"

Following their release the three were immediately re-arrested and served with exclusion orders under the PTA.



It must certainly have been a surprise for Colette and Brendan McCann to later find their son John on the same flight, heading home to a celebration. Martina Shanahan would celebrate her 25th birthday, free and at home in Dublin.

## The Aftermath

Since the Appeal Court's decision, Tom King, the main protagonist in the false conviction of the three, has surprisingly remained silent. If we were to follow the arguments used by Mr King at his controversial press conference, there can only be one verdict on his behaviour. That is that through his silence, Mr Tom King is guilty of having terrorised three young Irish people and their families for two and a half years.

The Irish in Britain Representation Group (IBRG), the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers and Kevin McNamara MP (Labour Spokesperson on Northern Ireland) all called for Mr King's resignation.

One wonders whether or not Lord Denning, had he been subject to the same media hype and the same level of justice as the three were during their trial, would be charged with conspiring with Mr Tom King to pervert the course of justice!

Lord Denning was not silent on the release of the three. He criticised the appeal court's decision as 'absolutely monstrous' and stated that in his view **"Justice was done at Winchester"**

He defended his actions during the trial, saying in a letter to the Times

**"Section 5 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981 gives us the right to comment on matters of general public interest, if the risk of prejudicing the particular legal proceedings is merely incidental to the discussion."**

**"I didn't know what was going on at Winchester. I didn't know the right of silence was involved. I was merely discussing the right to silence which many committees have proposed should be greatly restricted."**

However, the Irish community in Britain should be mindful of Lord Denning's statements following the unsuccessful Birmingham Six Appeal in 1987:

**"It is better that one or two innocent men remain in prison than that the British system of justice be disturbed."**

Following the release of the three, political leaders in Ireland almost fell over each other in the rush to congratulate the British judicial system. (This same system which incarcerated the Guildford Four for 15 years and which continues to hold the Birmingham Six, Judith Ward and Martin Foran.) All of them claimed that the decision would improve relations between the two countries and would hopefully facilitate the process of extradition.

The Irish community in Britain do not share these views. We continue to experience the sharp end of Britain's unjust legislation and biased judiciary and we must daily face the anti-Irish racism inherent in British society.

Unfortunately, without voting rights for the Irish abroad, it is unlikely

that our views will ever be taken into consideration by present or future Dail residents. Trevor O'Farrell

John McCann had this to say to reporters in Dublin on the day after his release:

**"My head feels blank - having suppressed our emotions for almost three years and with the tension of the past two weeks laughter seems wrong and words seem trivial. Although we want to rest and sleep, we feel it important to come here today to thank all the campaigners, through the media, for the work done to ensure that we are standing here with you."**

Finbar Cullen said that while they are now free, "it is two and a half years too late, and for many the nightmare still goes on." He called for justice for Judith Ward, Martin Foran and the Birmingham Six - who had been in the same prison as the Three at various times.

Martina Shanahan, who celebrated her 25th birthday on Saturday, expressed special thanks to the families of the Three whose support and work had been crucial for their ability to cope during their time in prison. "We wouldn't be here today if it hadn't been for them." She also thanked the legal teams and supporters in Ireland, England and elsewhere.

## Irish in Britain Representation Group (IBRG)

**The IBRG is an Irish community organisation tackling issues of concern to Irish people in Britain. We always welcome new members and ideas for new areas of work. If you would like to get involved or would like to know more, please complete the tear off slip below. Our work in Haringey has included the following:**

- ☐ Conferences on education, including one on the Irish language
- ☐ Exhibitions on cultural and political issues
- ☐ Challenging anti-Irish racism in the media

- ☐ Running video showings classes
- ☐ Organising Irish language classes
- ☐ Campaigning for the repeal of the racist Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)
- ☐ Organising public meetings and dayschools with other groups about the war in the Six Counties
- ☐ St. Patrick's Day march for justice for the Irish community in Britain and the release of our framed prisoners
- ☐ Campaigning against anti-Traveller racism and for proper provision for Travellers in Haringey

Please return to Haringey IBRG, c/o Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, Crouch End, N8. Tel (081) 348 3351 ext 1432

I would like to join the IBRG and enclose the appropriate fee £5 Waged ☐ £1 Unwaged ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



# Ferry Lane

*There are an estimated 400 Travellers living in caravans in Haringey, most of whom have been resident in the borough for at least three years. Haringey Council currently provides just one permanent site for Travellers accomodating twelve families in Wood Green. There are two temporary sites housing another twelve families. Facilities on the permanent site include bathrooms and toilets, electricity, lighting and refuse collection. Travellers on the site do not however get post delivered to their homes as the Post Office do not consider them to be secure addresses. For these services Travellers pay rent and rates/poll tax like other Council tenants. Those living on temporary sites also pay although they do not get the same 'services'.*

*One of the temporary sites is at Ferry Lane. This small site, home to six Travelling families has been going for ten years now. Haringey Council has recently sold the site to developers and the families living there now face eviction.*

*I visited Ferry Lane site with Martin Tucker of the Travellers Support Group to talk to Sam and Julia Power about their future on Ferry Lane.*

The Powers have been in England since 1958 and all their children were born here. They have been living in Haringey since 1982. They came to Ferry Lane in October 1989 and they spent much of the first six weeks working on the site, filling in holes and generally making it more habitable. I asked them what services the Council provides for the rent they pay.

*"All we have is water. They put all the electricity boxes together and when one was damaged they cut them all off."*

There are two cold water taps and two Portaloos on the site. The Portaloos are unsanitary and unpleasant, particularly in the heat of the spring and summer months. There is a major sewerage pipe nearby but the Council have not fitted proper toilets.

The site has until recently been infested with rats. "You could see up to a hundred of them if you came in at

night." The Council sent in a ratcatcher but according to Sam, he was more afraid of the dogs than they were of the rats!

The site has been surfaced to some extent but it is still unsafe. Julia Power fell on the uneven surface and hurt her leg badly while going to the toilet in the dark of an early morning. She could not walk for six weeks and still bears a three inch scar from the fall. Sam is worried about a concrete ramp-like structure installed by the Council at one side of the site which he considers a safety risk, particularly for children. The surface is uneven and a child falling on it would easily be scarred.

The size of the site is also cause for concern as the caravans are of necessity close together and if there was a fire, all of them would go up in no time. (Two children were burnt recently at a fire on a site at Clapham Roundabout.) The location of the site, on a major road, is further cause for worry as there are hazards for children and adults alike on coming out of the site.

Bad as it is, the Powers are reluctant to leave Ferry Lane unless it is for a better site. The families get on well together, they look after one another and there is a good atmosphere on the site. The children are attending school locally and are quite settled there. A forced move would mean that their schooling would be interrupted and they would probably have to face again the trauma of not being accepted in new schools. As Sam told us, when the bailiffs come, they usually come at 5 or 6 am. How can children, waking up to an eviction, go on to school?

I asked whether or not the Council had consulted the families about their plans for Ferry Lane. The answer was a decisive no. They were told in October that they would be rehoused on a new site in March 1990. (The Council then decided to drop plans for a temporary site at Coppetts Wood, Muswell Hill. The reasons given were that the site would be near to a hospital and school!)

They have heard since that they may be housed in B&B with their caravans being put in storage. There has also been talk of alternative temporary sites. Nothing is clear however and the families have no idea how long they have before being forced to leave Ferry Lane.

*"We always get the last end of the stick. We are always the last to know. We don't*

*see anyone from the Council...If the Council gets you a place for twelve months the books are lost - you are forgotten. They let you in and put you out as they want."*

Sam had this to say about the possibility of being sent to B&B accomodation. "I don't know how some people would take it. I wouldn't like it - most wouldn't like it. You would have to leave your caravan where you have been living for years. Families couldn't stay together. I'd like to stay with my sons."

He is concerned that he would not be able to look after his grandchildren if their parents had to go somewhere as it would not be allowed in a B&B.

*"Families might be falling out over something that is the Council's fault."*

There is a clear feeling that the Council does not respect Travellers nor does it accord them the same rights to housing and services as other citizens. "We are treated like dirt."

Sam took us to see an alternative site proposed by the Council. It is beside a railway line which would pose serious safety problems for children. In order to protect those children on the site, the Council would have to build a wire fence around the site. As Sam says, it would be like being in prison. He compared it to TV pictures he had seen of refugees behind the wire in Hong Kong. British Rail would have right of way on the site and they could resort to this at any time. I asked if Travellers themselves could find better sites in Haringey. "We would find a lovely site but would they give it to us?"

The Powers and the other families on Ferry Lane will fight any attempt to evict them, taking it to the High Court if necessary. Like other residents in Haringey, they expect decent accomodation with at least the basic amenities of hot and cold running water, plumbed in bathroom and toilet facilities, access to education and medical care and not to be forced to live awaiting the next eviction.

They, like many other Irish people in the borough and indeed in Britain as a whole, came here because they could not get work at home. They suffer discrimination in housing, employment, education, health and welfare provision. They are harrassed by the police and suffer the double burden of being Irish in Britain and Travellers in a prejudiced, settled community.



For Sam Power, homes and sites are a priority. "What good is a Youth Club if you have no site to live on? Get a site first, then talk about community centres and job centres afterwards - put your roots down first. You don't set the flowers before you build the house."

Three generations of Powers live at Ferry Lane. After eight years of living in Haringey, they seem no nearer to being given a permanent site. That they survive and keep intact their families and traditions in the face of discrimination, constant eviction and complete lack of security about their future is a credit to their endurance. That they should have to endure it at all is an indictment of Haringey Council.

The Council's much vaunted policy of equality of opportunity for all is worth nothing when hundreds of it's citizens are shunted from one inadequate site to another or evicted and forced to take to the road again. It is a mockery to talk of equality in education and housing when Travellers are fighting on a daily basis to survive in inhumane conditions.

There is a way to provide decent permanent sites for Travellers in Haringey, if the Council only had the will. Money is available from Central Government, land can be found and 'local opposition' should not be accepted as a reason for not going ahead with planned sites. This opposition is at best based on ignorance

about Travellers and at worst entirely racist in origin. It is past time that the Council fulfilled it's moral obligation to accord Travellers the same basic rights as all it's residents.

**Thanks to Julla and Sam Power for their hospitality.**

**Majella Crehan**

**The Haringey Travellers Support Group campaigns against anti-Traveller racism and for a proper share of resources for Travellers. If you want to get involved, contact Martin or Shirley on (081) 341 1100**

## Letters

### A Chara

I wonder how many of your readers were as amused as I was when I heard of Norman Tebbit MP's remarks concerning Britain's immigrant population and the question of which international team they should support. Mr Tebbit stated that one always had the suspicion that Asian and Afro-Caribbean people living in Britain supported the 'opposition'. (In this case India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, West Indies etc., not the Labour Party.) Mr Tebbit does not seem to realise that apart from any form of latent nationalism in these sentiments, it is common to try and back a winner!

As for myself and cricket (and I'm sure for the majority of the Irish community in Britain), Mr Tebbit need not fear. When the shadow of a cricket match threatens my television screen,

I have devised ways and means with which to deal with that eventuality. I can either change the television channel or turn the thing off altogether and pursue a more creative and profitable form of leisure activity. An example of this might take the form of writing a letter to the BBC asking why they don't follow the admirable example set by Channel Four in transmitting the All Ireland football and hurling (even if it is only the finals, meaning that I never get to see my team play!) It may be of some interest to Mr Tebbit to learn that I first developed these cunning strategies in order to defend myself against Conservative Party political broadcasts during the election period, when he was party chairman.

With England's first match in the World Cup in Italy being against Ireland on 11 July (don't miss it folks!), this problem of un(dis?)integrated ethnic groupings once

again raises it's head for Mr Tebbit to sportingly kick about. I would therefore like to publicly state for the benefit of Mr Tebbit, that as a second generation Irish man born in Mr Tebbit's constituency in Chingford, I will be shouting loudly for Ireland on that day. However, in the interests of sporting friendship and the widely advocated British sense of 'fair play', there is one English man whom I and many other Irish folk will want to wish the 'best of British luck' and the 'luck of the Irish' (whatever these cliches may mean!) in the World Cup in Italy. His name? Jack Charlton of course, as fine an adopted son of Erin that ever went fishing or wore a cloth cap!

*Name and address withheld for fear of English laager louts!*

## LONDON IRISH WOMEN'S CENTRE

59 Stoke Newington High Street, London N16  
Tel : 249 7318

Drop - in access times: Tue/Wed/Thur 11.00am - 1.00pm and 2.00pm - 5.00pm  
Welfare Advice Sessions: Tue 10.30am - 12.30 pm Please ring for appointment if possible  
Telephone advice and information: Tue/Wed/Thur 11.00am - 1.00pm and 2.00pm - 5.00pm  
Women's Counselling Session: Thur 2.00pm - 4.00pm Please ring for appointment

*The following groups can also be contacted through the Centre:*

**Irish Lesbian Network:** Meets at the London Lesbian & Gay Centre, 67/69 Cowcross Street EC1 7.00pm - 9.00pm on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month.

**Irish Women's Housing Action Group:** Meets monthly. Contact the Irish Women's Centre for details.

**Irish Women with Children Group:** Meets at the Irish Women's Centre Tues/Thurs 11.00am - 1.00pm.

**Video na mBan - Irish women's video production group:** Meets and works at the Centre and welcomes new members. Phone for details.

**Irish Lesbian Line:** Open Wed 7.00pm - 10.00pm

Telephone 01 923 4539 24hr ansaphone

**Courses and Classes in:** Video Radio Photography Irish Language Massage Dance Women in Irish Mythology Women in Irish Literature Creative Writing. Phone Centre for details.

Want to become a member of the Centre? This entitles you to use the

facilities and attend classes at the Centre, vote in elections for and stand for the Management Committee and you will receive up to date mailings on activities at the Centre.  
The Centre needs your support!

Individuals: Waged £4.00/Unwaged £1.00 Groups: £5.00

Please return this slip with your subscription to London Irish Women's Centre, 59 Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 0AR. Cheques made payable to London Irish Women's Centre.

Name..... Date.....

Address.....

Borough of Residence..... Amount.....



# Contacts Events Contacts Events Contacts Events

**Haringey IBRG meets regularly on**  
Thursdays at the Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17. Contact (081) 348 3351 ext 1432 for details.

**Haringey Irish Cultural and Community Centre**, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17 off White Hart Lane. Classes in Irish language for adults and children, in Irish music and dance including set dancing, Karate, Computing, Irish History, and Aerobics. Contact the Centre on (081) 885 3490 for more details and a copy of their free monthly programme of events. The Centre also houses an Advice Service - contact Fran on (081) 365 1125 for details or for advice on any issue.

**Haringey Irish Community Care Centre**  
72 Stroud Green Road London N4  
Tel (071) 272 7594/9230

## The Centre is open:

Mon - Thurs 10.00am - 5.00pm

Friday 10.00am - 4.30pm

Lunch break 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Luncheon Club over 60 or disabled

Mon/Tues/Fri 12.30pm - 4.00pm

Tel (071) 263 4194 Residents of Haringey subsidised

Tea Dance Last Thurs of month at the Haringey Irish Centre. **Homeless Drop in Daily**

**Haringey Travellers Support Group** meets first Monday of each month. Contact Shirley or Martin on 341 1100 for details.

**Haringey Irish Women's Group** meets every Wednesday 12noon till 3pm at the Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, Tottenham, London N17. Activities include jewellery making, Photography, Aerobics, Film Shows, Health Care, Outings and lots more. Creche available. Contact Fran on (081) 365 1125 for details or just drop in on Wednesdays.

**Mother and Toddler Group** at the Haringey Irish Centre, Thursdays 12noon till 3pm.

**Aged 12 to 16 years? Youth Club - Haringey Irish Centre**, Tuesdays 6.30pm to 9.30pm, Friday 7.00pm to 10.00pm. Activities include disco, table tennis and pool, trips away, music sessions, drama and lots more. Call Mike or Eileen on (081) 885 3490 for details.

**An Teach** Irish Youth Housing Association Contact Mike Farrell at the Haringey Irish Centre Tel 365 1751

## West Midlands PTA Research and Welfare Association

Help and advice for those arrested under the PTA. 24 hour answering service on (021) 551 0503. Has a list of sympathetic solicitors. PO Box 817 Camp Hill Birmingham B11 4AF

**Brent Irish Advisory Service**, advice and welfare centre and publishers of the Irish in Britain Directory which is a comprehensive list of Irish welfare, political and cultural organisations in Britain. Copies of the Directory and a list of other publications available from BIAS at 296 Willesden Lane, Willesden, London NW2 5HW, tel 4549 6286.

**London Travellers Forum** works towards the building of a Travellers Community Centre in London and campaigns against anti-Traveller discrimination and for the democratic, civil, political and human rights of Travellers. Contact Steve Cauley, London Travellers Forum, 5 Britannia Street, Kings Cross, London WC1X 9JT.

**Women and Ireland Group** meets regularly at 52-54 Featherstone Street, London EC1. An anti-imperialist women's group which campaigns on issues related to the war in the Six Counties. Also involved in the organisation of the annual Women's Delegation to Belfast and Derry. Write to the Group for details.

**Homelessness Monitoring Group** is an umbrella organisation of advice agencies, law centres and health workers who pool and gather information on the issue of homelessness. Contact them at 5 Britannia Street, Kings Cross, London WC1X 9JT, tel (071) 837 1436.

**Information on Ireland** publishes books and pamphlets on anti-Irish racism, plastic bullets and a range of issues to do with the war in the Six Counties, censorship etc. A full list of their publications can be had from them at PO Box 958, London W14 0JF.

**Irish Information Partnership, 11** Campion Road, London SW15 6NN, publishes data on the conflict in Northern Ireland and Anglo-Irish affairs, including statistics on the PTA, Strip Searching etc.

**Cara Irish Housing Association/ Homelessness Project** 424 Seven Sister Road, Manor House, London N4 2LX Tel 800 2744/2886.

## Irish Commission For Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) 993 9823

### London Troops Out Movement

campaigns for troops out of Ireland and self-determination for the Irish people. Haringey branch meets regularly every two weeks. Contact Troops Out office on (071) 609 1743 for further details.

**Repeal the PTA Campaign** meets regularly and works for the abolition of the racist Prevention of Terrorism Act. Produces information packs, posters and leaflets on the PTA and is working to set up a network of sympathetic MPs, local councillors and solicitors to support those arrested. Contact Mary Connolly on (081) 862 2942.

## Events

**IBRG video showing Monday 25 June 8pm Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Rd N17.** Continuing the season on emigration, two short films 'Arrivals' and 'Second Generation Experience'. Free. Disabled access. The season will resume in September on the theme of Civil Liberties/Law. Call IBRG for details.

**Troops Out Delegation to Belfast 9-13 August 1990, organised by TOM and Sinn Fein in Ireland.** Details from TOM Box 353 London NW5 4NH Tel 609 1743

**Irish in Britain Research Forum lecture Thursday 28 June 1990 5-7pm in Conference Room, PNL, Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town NW5. 'The History of Irish Music in London'.**

**Troops Out Educationals:**  
**Wed 13 June Resolution of the Conflict**  
**Wed 11 July Black People/Irish People and the British State**  
**Wed 12 Sept The Cultural struggle**  
**All at 7.30pm in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn tube.**

## Old Shillelagh Pub Crouch End

Come and enjoy the craic!  
Music sessions, food.

