



Irish in Britain Representation Group (IBRG)

Cumann Ionadaíochta na n-Éireannach sa Bhreatain

Policy Statement on Northern Ireland

Issued from IBRG 'Northern Ireland' Policy Conference held on Saturday 20 September 1986 in Birmingham, England.

The IBRG was born as a result of the wish of Irish people living in Britain for an effective voice to comment on all aspects of their lives in this country.

In realising this wish the IBRG first of all recognise that the lives of Irish people living in Britain are underscored and structured by Britain's relationship to Ireland and further recognise that this relationship has historically been one of intervention on the part of Britain. It is this intervention which has resulted in the situation in Ireland and the disadvantaged position of the Irish community in Britain.

The IBRG recognises that the statelet of 'Northern Ireland' was deliberately created by the 1920 Government of Ireland Act and maintained against the wishes of the majority of Irish people.

The IBRG also recognises that the war in 'Northern Ireland' is a direct result of British colonial policy and we therefore maintain that any just and lasting solution must include a recognition of the island of Ireland as a single, independent, sovereign political unit.

The IBRG recognises that this continuing war has led to attacks on the civil liberties and political rights of Irish people living in Britain.

We therefore see an ending of the war in the Six Counties and a political solution as a priority for all Irish people living in Britain.

In view of the above we make the following statements and demands:

1. We call upon the British Government to withdraw - immediately and unconditionally - from Ireland (militarily, politically and economically) thus allowing self determination for the Irish people as a whole.
2. We demand the rejection of all solutions other than a sovereign and non aligned united Ireland as an answer to the war in the Six Counties and deplore any attempts to reform the undemocratic, artificial statelet of 'Northern Ireland'. We recognise the right of the oppressed people in the Six Counties - just as we recognise the right of all oppressed people - to choose their own path to their liberation.
3. We maintain the right of the Irish people to continue their traditional policy of neutrality in international affairs without foreign influence.
4. While recognising that the Loyalist community are a part of our people we nevertheless deny them the right as a minority in Ireland to veto progress towards a united and independent Ireland and call upon the British Government to repeal the 1949 Government of Ireland Act.
5. As a prerequisite to withdrawal, we call upon the British Government to disarm and disband the UDR and the RUC.
6. We demand that adequate compensation be paid by Britain for the damage and hardships caused by it's interference in Ireland.
7. We condemn the Anglo-Irish Agreement which has led to increasing attacks upon the Nationalist community and the reinforcement of partition, undermining the principle of self determination enshrined in the Irish Constitution. We call on all democratic people to oppose this agreement and continue to assert the right of Irish people to a united Ireland.
8. We call upon the British and Irish Governments to end all repressive measures that deny human and political rights to Irish people, including the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Emergency Powers Act and the Offences Against the State Act.

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9. We demand the abolition of the no jury system and an end to the use of uncorroborated testimony by 'witnesses' bribed to perjure themselves with offers of immunity and money.

10. We call for the banning of plastic bullets.

11. We condemn all forms of discrimination in 'Northern Ireland' and demand the implementation of an Equal Opportunities Policy.

12. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of strip and body searching against prisoners in jails and police stations in Britain and Ireland as degrading and humiliating, recognise the fact that in recent times this has been used particularly against Irish women prisoners as a form of sexual harassment and totally reject British Government statements that it is necessary for security reasons. We demand an immediate end to such practices.

13. We demand the right of access of all Irish people to their culture and language and that the same right be accorded to all prisoners.

14. We call on the British and Irish Governments to immediately give Irish prisoners the right to opt for repatriation or relocation or to be transferred to prisons near their homes if they so wish (in line with EEC policy on such matters).

15. We condemn the extradition of Irish political prisoners from any country to face British political show trials and call on all governments to grant political asylum to people fleeing from injustice as a result of the war in Ireland.

16. We demand the immediate release of those Irish prisoners wrongly convicted as a result of the war in Ireland.

17. Further, we call on all governments, on Britain's withdrawal from Ireland, to release immediately and grant an amnesty to all Irish political prisoners.

18. We express condemnation of the biased way in which the Irish and the war are represented in the British media. We condemn the use of censorship as a British tool in the war.

19. We commit ourselves to encouraging more informed debate and discussion within Britain on issues relating to Ireland.

20. We call upon all political parties, trade unions and other organisations to support the demands and statements of this document.
