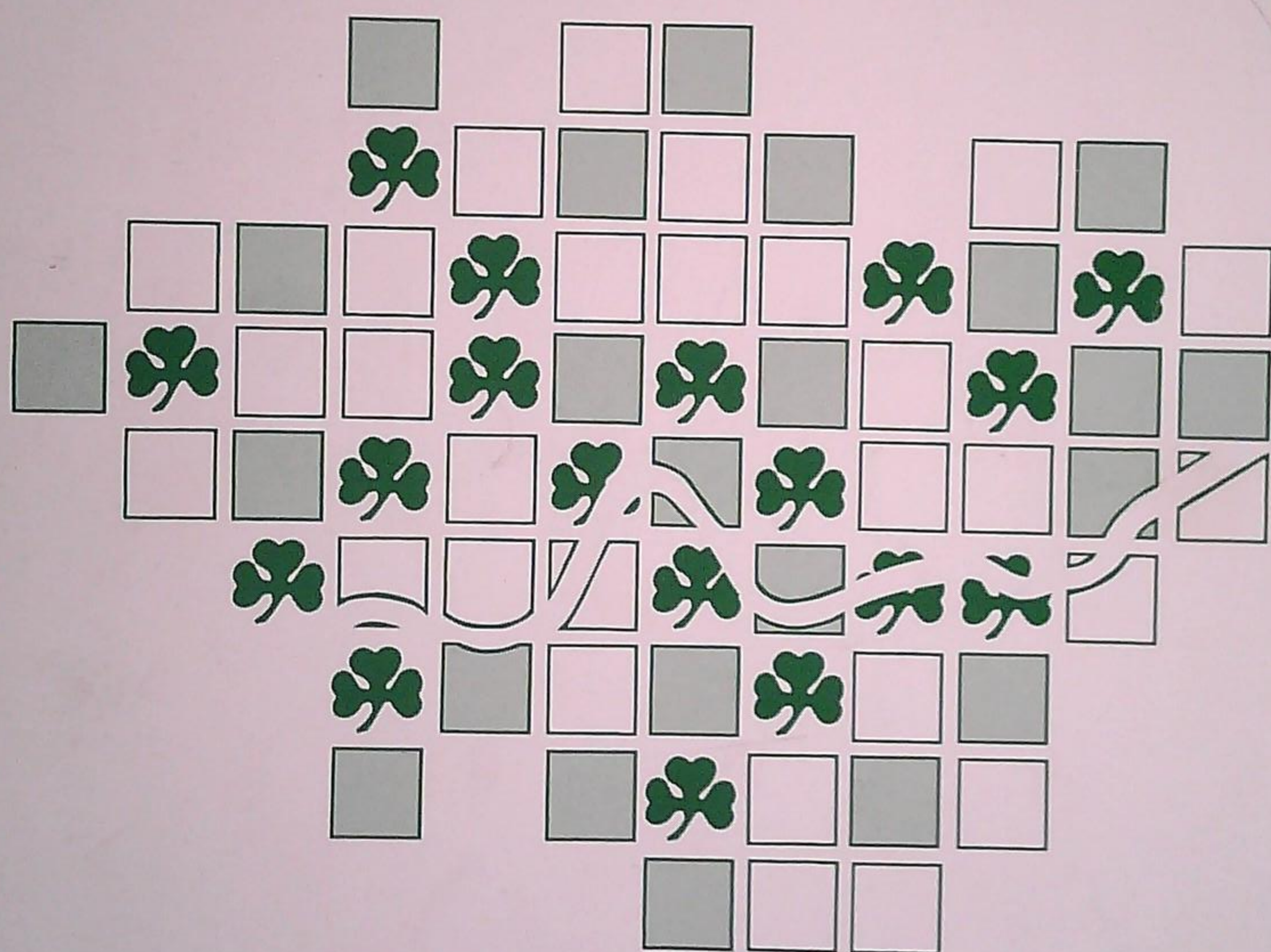


policy report on the Irish community





RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ETHNIC MINORITIES COMMITTEE

- 1** That this report be referred to the Inner London Education Authority and other London education authorities for consideration of paragraphs 26 to 32, in particular:
 - (i) that action be taken to include courses and degrees in Irish Studies in in-service training for teachers (*Paragraph 31*).
 - (ii) that links be established between Irish academic institutions and their counterparts in London (*Paragraph 31*).
 - (iii) that work be commissioned to develop teaching aids and other educational materials in this area (*Paragraph 31*).
 - (iv) that teachers centres be supplied with teaching packs and other information on Ireland and this provision be made available to resource officers and school advisers (*Paragraph 31*).
 - (v) that provision be made for the introduction of Gaelic games and An Ghaeilge (*the Irish language*) as optional subjects in those schools with a significant number of Irish students (*Paragraph 30*).
- 2** That officers submit this report to the London boroughs, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Department of the Environment, Manpower Services Commission, London Area Health Authorities, Home Office (Prison Service) and the Metropolitan Police for their information.
- 3** That this report be sent for information to London's Irish organisations and groups.
- 4**
 - (i) That the Committee recognise the Irish as an Ethnic Minority Group and to adopt the following definition of Irish for such purposes; persons who come from, or whose forbears originate in, Ireland and who consider themselves Irish.
 - (ii) That the London Boroughs be requested to adopt the definition of Irish given above for the purpose of ethnic monitoring.
- 5** That the Chair write on behalf of the Committee to the Home Secretary expressing support for the repatriation to Irish gaols of those Irish prisoners wishing to serve their sentences in Ireland. (*Paragraphs 62 to 64*).

RECOMMENDATION TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE

- 6**
 - (i) that the Head of Housing Services be asked (in consultation with the PRRA) to report urgently on ways to overcome the problems faced by the Irish community in housing;
 - (ii) that the GLC's Housing Committee recognise the

Irish as an Ethnic Minority group and that officers of the Housing Committee ensure that the position of the Irish on the housing market be adequately researched and monitored.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE STAFF COMMITTEE

- 7** That the Controller of Personnel be requested to report on the introduction of Irish as an ethnic category as outlined under recommendation 4.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE ARTS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

- 8**
 - (i) That full recognition be given to Irish arts and cultural activities in London as being the product of a distinct national culture to be dealt with as a priority by the Community Arts Sub-Committee.
 - (ii) That Irish advisers be appointed to the Arts and Recreation Committee to ensure sufficient priority be given to Irish Arts (*Paragraph 56*).

RECOMMENDATION TO THE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

- 9** That officers of the Women's Committee Support Unit with the aid of Irish womens organisations submit a report on the special problems and needs of Irish women in London.



INTRODUCTION

1 The purpose of this report is to describe the characteristics of the Irish community, emphasising in particular those areas of disadvantage affecting Irish people in London, the reasons for its existence and its relationship in economic and political terms, to British society at present.

HISTORY

2 Unlike most other ethnic groups there has been a direct involvement between the Irish and British for a very substantial period. The Irish, along with the Highland Scots, Welsh, Manx and Bretons are representative of the Celtic peoples who from early times dominated Western Europe. Of these related groups only the Irish have retained any degree of sovereignty over their home land.

3 Although Irish people have settled in Britain since pre-Roman times and were well established in London by the time of the Tudors, the first massive influx of Irish immigration to this country took place in the last century. The cause of this mass emigration was the failure, for three consecutive years of the potato crop, upon which, because of the colonial nature of Irish land-lordism, nine tenths of Irish people were dependent. Between the years 1849 and 1852, 100,000 Irish immigrants arrived annually in Britain. Of those who remained in Ireland over one million died of starvation.

4 Following a long period of political agitation and six years of intermittent warfare an Irish Free state came into being in 26 of the 32 counties of Ireland in 1922. It was mainly from the twenty six counties that the next great migration to Britain came in the 1950's. This was due to post war reconstruction in Britain for which a massive influx of migrant labour was required coupled with unfavourable economic conditions in Ireland. It is primarily these immigrants and their descendants who comprise the London Irish community today.

5 Historically, Irish people have always identified with Catholicism, and Irish immigration is directly responsible for the large number of Catholics in Britain today. In past times the clergy have often taken the role of community leaders of the Irish people. This pattern has latterly broken up and the tendency within the Irish community is now to look to secular leadership.

6 Since early times there have been varying degrees of antipathy and hostility to the Irish community in London. Some of this stemmed from anti-Catholic prejudice in the host community. However the bulk of anti-Irish sentiment hinges on Ireland's historic resistance to English rule. In times of hostility between both countries the Irish community is looked upon with distrust and resentment. The Irish community has found itself under

attack whenever Ireland's interests were seen to be in conflict with those of the host country. The most recent example of this is the Falklands/Malvinas war when the Irish government refused to endorse the action of the British government. Past examples would be the declaration of the Irish Republic in 1916 and Ireland's neutrality during the second world war.

7 The preservation of Irish culture and identity has, by necessity, become interwoven with the desire for a United Ireland. Most Irish people have a high level of understanding and knowledge of their country's history and are motivated to pass on that knowledge to their children through the medium of Irish cultural activities. An indication of the preception of the Irish community as to the importance of external events on the every day life of the community as given at the consultative conference with the Irish community 22/5/83. (EMU Item 16 EM 614)

THE IRISH COMMUNITY TODAY

8 The Irish community in London makes up an estimated one sixth of the population. At present an accurate figure cannot be given as the 1981 census does not indicate those of Irish descent. The legal definition of Irishness as affecting the Irish community in Britain is that; 'Anyone born in Britain, or elsewhere, of Irish parents or grandparents is entitled to Irish citizenship and an Irish passport on request.' (*Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of Dail Eireann 1956*). However, anyone of Irish descent, having an awareness of Irish identity, is generally recognised as Irish by the Irish community.

9 Of the Irish-born members of the Irish community over 50% are over the age of forty five. It is unlikely that further large scale migrations of Irish people will take place and therefore the onus for the survival of the Irish as a community falls heavily upon second and third generation Irish. As the traditional areas of Irish settlement become integrated, the tightly knit communities dispersed and the focal point of the parish becoming increasingly irrelevant, new methods of ensuring the survival of Londons Irish community will have to be developed.

10 Although there has been some upward social mobility amongst Irish born members of the community, this has tended to be in terms of small businesses often in building and related trades. Many elderly Irish people are living in great poverty. This is partly because the traditional extended families have largely broken up and little help may be available from relatives. A greater contributing factor is the system of 'lump' working. Many of those who worked under this system have little knowledge of their entitlement to assistance and show a marked reluctance to approach statutory bodies.

11 The political concerns of the Irish community remain quite strongly with events in Ireland in particular



north eastern Ireland. The Irish Consultative Conference (22 May 1983) placed on record the following statement as agreed by all present:

'Whereas peace in Ireland and between Britain and Ireland is precluded by the existence of the gerrymandered state of Northern Ireland, and this state is both inherently undemocratic and incapable of reform, we urge the Greater London Council to recognise that the only basis for a just and peaceful settlement of the conflict in Ireland and between Britain and Ireland is in the context of a United Ireland, established with the consent of the majority (of Ireland). We therefore urge members to declare themselves in favour of an unimpeded progress towards majority rule in the whole of Ireland.'

12 However with the growing realisation that the Irish will remain settled in Britain, Irish organisations are also turning their attentions to specific issues facing the community here. The main thrust of Irish activity in the short term will be to gain recognition as a distinct minority in Britain and to gain resources for the Irish community.

13 Irish Travellers form a small part of the Irish community in Britain. There are 1,500 families in Britain and at least 250 in London. Irish Travellers have been coming here since the middle of the last century and most of those presently living in London have been here for between 15 and 20 years.

14 Irish Travellers face prejudice from all sides. They suffer the prejudice faced by the Irish community as a whole; and yet face prejudice from within the Irish community. They face prejudice from residents who regard all Travellers with suspicion but who consider 'true Romanies' to have the redeeming virtue of having a romantic history and culture, and they face opposition from English Travellers with whom they have to compete for scarce work and places to stop.

15 Institutionalised prejudice has prevented all but a few Irish Travellers from getting places on official sites and consequently they have to live wherever they can. Living on unofficial sites the travellers often find themselves in conflict with the local community and the prejudice is reinforced.

AREAS OF CONCERN

The Media

16 The Irish community strongly resents the way it is caricatured in the media. There is also a growing anger at what is seen as a systematic distortion of events in Ireland and in general of things Irish. Caricatures of the Irish are not a new phenomena and seem to have originated in the twelfth century with Giraldus Cambrensis

(Source: Giraldus Cambrensis/Gerald De Barry: *The Irish Historie composed and written by Giraldus Cambrensis; completed in 1185, in Raphael Holinshed, The first volume of 'The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Wales' (London, 1577)*). However, with the onset of the mass media and in particular television, this stereotyping has had a noticeably negative affect on relations between the Irish community and other Londoners. Furthermore, it weakens the morale of the community itself, presenting special difficulties for Irish children of school age and for Irish people in the workplace.

17 The stereotype of the Irish as a stupid drunken, fractious and violent race has, as is mentioned above, been in force for some time. The stage Irish person has become an obligatory character in many contemporary situation comedies, while many television entertainers are equally prepared to make 'Irish' jokes a regular part of their routine. It is noticeable that although offensive jokes directed at other ethnic minority groups have somewhat diminished in recent years, the anti-Irish joke seems as popular as ever. While recognising the problems caused by this type of racism, Irish people are increasingly aware that media stereotyping serves the purpose of devaluing the import of statements made by Irish individuals and organisations on matters of major importance.

18 The mass media have failed to give accurate coverage of current events in Northern Ireland. In 1976 Jonathan Dimbleby had this to say on the subject of media reporting on the conflict in Northern Ireland:

"I do not want to go into detail about Northern Ireland, but the fact is there has not been on British television since 1968 a serious, detailed account of the history of Northern Ireland. And that is because it is very delicate, politically sensitive issues which is very difficult to do adequately on television, and therefore the job has been baulked.

It should not be baulked, and the reason why it is baulked is because of political institutions, BBC, IBA, British Government, British Opposition, who don't wish us to know too much too well about Northern Ireland."

(*What Do You Think Of It So Far?* - BBC August 1976)

19 On the same occasion Anna Raeburn refuted the idea that the Northern Ireland situation was not newsworthy saying:

"If the British public, with respect sir, are sick of the stand on Northern Ireland, it is because the news coverage of it is boring, repetitious, and non-informational and it goes out night after night and it is designed as a cop out. There has been only one major programme that I know of. There has never been another one polarised in another direction. And



that is because we are too damned scared to consider what we are doing there".
(*The Listener* - 9.9.76)

- 20** In an interview John Pilger addressed himself to the same question:

"The coverage of Ireland has been so distorted in this country that if I am going to be forced to contribute to that distortion, I may as well not go. It seems obvious to me that if there is a war going on, there are two sides and you speak to both sides. It always used to grieve me in Vietnam that I couldn't get up the other end to see what was going on".

(John Pilger interviewed in *Time Out*, 29 Sept. 5 Oct 1978)

- 21** Such statements by prominent journalists have confirmed the belief of London's Irish community that they are denied accurate and full reporting on an issue which greatly concerns the Irish in Britain. While some recent, and admirable attempts have been made to rectify British media silence on this question unfortunately these have been the exception rather than the rule. Furthermore, and of growing concern to London's Irish Community, is the extent to which media reporting on Northern Ireland recreates and reinforces negative racial stereotyping of the Irish as irrational, reckless and naturally predisposed to violence. The fact that media coverage of 'the troubles' tends to isolate events, particularly spectacular events, from the underlying context from which they arose, only serves to reinforce a distorted stereotypical picture of Ireland and the Irish which, to quote an old English proverb, believes 'an Irishman fights before he reasons'.

- 22** Likewise descriptions of 'the troubles', the so-called 'Irish problem' as an antagonism between two warring factions at each others throats, mediated by the cool, calm, level headed Anglo-Saxon is a notion utilised in past colonial outposts. This distorted imagery ignores the reality of who is fighting whom, and why.

- 23** As to John Pilger's suggestion of 'talking to the other side' on occasions, such attempts have certainly been made, but have by and large been met with scathing opposition, censorship, and inevitably in such a climate self-censorship.

- 24** Newspapers have had a decisive influence in past times upon the general public's perception of the Irish both at home and in Britain. The Punch cartoons of the last century, a direct response to the Fenian rising of the 1860's, depicted the Irish as bestial, denying them any claim to humanity. A similar theme was taken by The Standard's cartoonist in response, it was said, to the conflict in Northern Ireland. The Council responded to the complaints of the London Irish community and took the Standard to the Press Council (see *Ethnic Minorities Committee report* (10.12.82) by The Director-General item, EM179). The

Standard's cartoon is not an isolated instance. Most national newspapers have carried items equally offensive to the Irish communities. None, it seems, can resist the temptation to print Irish 'jokes' which continue to cause great affront to the Irish population of London.

- 25** Concern exists that coverage of Irish affairs relating to the current events in Northern Ireland and its overspill to Britain is frequently inaccurate. A recent case brought to the Press Council against the Sun newspaper concerned the naming of Mr G. McLaughlin as a member of the proscribed Irish Republican Army. As a result of the article some of those closely associated with Mr McLaughlin suffered assaults and harassment on such a scale that they were forced to remove house to ensure their safety. The Press Council found against the Sun in this case. Such inaccuracy, when combined with the continuing promulgation of Irish stereotypes, can only hinder good relations between London's Irish community and other Londoners.

EDUCATION

- 26** Education is important to all children in that it influences their behaviour both inside and outside of school and generally teaches them to conform to the uniformity of thought prevalent in their society. For an Irish child school should endorse their sense of Irishness which is an integral part of their family life and cultural environment. The previous pattern has been for Irish children to attend Catholic primary schools in areas of high Irish settlement. These schools usually had a high ratio of Irish pupils and teachers. At this level of education cultural integrity was usually preserved. However, with the demise of Catholic practise in the Irish community and the break up of traditional housing and employment patterns in many areas this is no longer the case.

- 27** Secondary education is more likely to be divorced from the Irish community. Although in some schools Irish children are in the majority this is not usually reflected in the staff or in the curriculum. At present history in secondary education is presented from an English viewpoint. Not only does this imply bias but it also leaves large areas of history uncovered which are important in understanding Irish social development, but are supposed unimportant to British history.

- 28** Some historical events are particularly significant to the Irish people. For example the 'Great Hunger' of 1840/47 in which three quarters of the population died or emigrated and which was responsible for the great diaspora of the Irish nation and final destruction of Gaelic Ireland. Because English people are usually unaware of Irish history conflict often occurs within the classroom. A teacher may assert in the accepted English fashion that the starvation of the Irish people in the 1840's occurred because of the failure



of the potato crop and that this was due to the primitiveness of Irish agriculture. An Irish child who knows that during this time Ireland was producing enough food to feed three times its actual population and that this food was impounded by the British army at the behest of alien landlords will be confused and uneasy. A confident child may question the teachers authority and pursue their point of view in the classroom. Another child may say nothing at this time but may later question their parents version of events.

29 The child is bound to be aware of the popular image of the Irish as uneducated and may take an instance of this sort as confirmation of Irish stupidity and conclude that the image is a true one. Whatever the result, the child undergoes an unpleasant experience and through self doubt they may begin to distance themselves from the community.

30 Although in recent years Irish studies and courses in An Ghaeilge (the Irish language) have become available in higher and adult education the primary and secondary levels of education remain untouched by these developments. These latter levels are the most important for the cultural survival of the Irish child. Some Irish National qualifications are still not accepted in Britain. Where Irish Travelling children go into schools it is important that teachers recognise them as an ethnic minority with a valid culture and history. It is suggested that provision be made for the introduction of Gaelic games and An Ghaeilge as optional subjects in those schools with a significant number of Irish students. Teachers must also recognise that schools can have a pivotal role in resolving conflict between Travellers and the resident population, and should take steps to deal with anti-Irish and/or anti-traveller abuse as they would with other forms of racism.

31 The Irish Consultative Conference (EM 614) recommended the following course of action in the GLC area:

- (a) that links be established between academic institutions in Ireland and their counter-parts in London. Cultural exchange takes place at this level;
- (b) Courses and degrees in Irish studies be established as in-service training for teachers;
- (c) Work be commissioned to develop materials in this area for schools;
- (d) A materials resource centre be established with books, films, etc, for teachers. Education packs for teachers would be useful;
- (e) The Irish Cultural Centre could provide a resource to parents in terms of archives and library facilities;
- (f) Teachers centres must be supplied with information on Ireland;

- (g) Provision should be made for resource officers and school advisers working in this area;
- (h) Access to the schools (for Travelling children);
- (i) Recognition of their (the Travellers) way of life, customs, and culture and awareness and respect for their aspirations;

32 The Ethnic Minorities Unit's funding of the Irish video project helped enable that project to begin working with teachers' centres with the aim of increasing awareness of Irish Identity and the problems faced by the Irish Community. However, despite the well articulated course of action proposed at the consultative conference with the Irish community in May 1983 little progress is evident in this area. There is a definite need for serious consideration to be given to the specific educational needs and aspirations of the Irish community in London.

HOUSING

33 The Irish born in London are predominantly over the age of forty five with 22% being over pensionable age and 58% being over forty five. We can divide the areas of concern into three areas;

- (i) The homeless
- (ii) The isolated
- (iii) Those living in hostels

34 At present two out of every seven people 'sleeping rough' are Irish. Many are in ill health. Of those living in hostels in inner city areas 23% are Irish. Suburban Hostels show a higher percentage. Many Irish people living alone are completely isolated from the community and in some cases have no contact with social services, and other support agencies.

(Source: Welfare Paper presented by Rev. Bobby Gilmore, Irish Consultative Conference (23 May 1983).)

35 A campaign to make Irish people aware of welfare benefits and social service facilities is needed. This is particularly important given the number of Irish people who worked the lump system and who may believe that they have no entitlement to assistance from the state. Similarly, many Irish people are unaware of their legal rights and are at a disadvantage in dealing with landlords, etc. These factors should also be noted by those employed on the GLC's welfare rights bus in their dealings with Irish people in London.

36 Many elderly Irish people who have spent their working lives in London wish to retire to Ireland but are prevented from doing so by the lack of a housing transfer policy between London and Ireland.

37 Because of the employment pattern of the Irish community large numbers of middle aged Irish people have been hit particularly hard by the recession. The



existing Irish hostels tend to concentrate upon the young and the elderly who have previously been those most in need of assistance. However, the large number of middle aged Irish unemployed who now find difficulty in finding accommodation are putting an additional strain on the existing facilities. An extensive programme of day care centres, housing schemes and short stay hostels will be required to redress this situation.

38 Due to the often transitory nature of Irish employment patterns and the frequently, if often erroneously, held belief among Irish people that they would not stay long, Irish people have not benefited to the full from council housing schemes. Although specific agencies do exist to help with Irish housing need they are few in number and greatly over subscribed. There is a need for sheltered and half way housing schemes and for co-operatives and associations similar to those which seek to serve the housing needs of other minorities.

39 Some mention has already been made of how employment patterns may effect the housing needs of Irish People. In a study of the housing profile of the Irish in London, Dr Maguire of the Irish in Islington Project comes to the conclusion that: "The Irish born live in considerably worse accommodation than the white British born." (*Housing Profile of the Irish Born Population of England and Wales.*) Certainly the Irish have a well below average home ownership rate and still have a very high share of the private rental sector which, as Dr Maguire points out, is: "A constantly declining sector with poor amenities and overcrowding."

40 The tables given below (table 1, Appendix 1) indicate that in London the Irish home ownership rate is below that of the Irish nationally. The Irish share of the private sector seems to be split equally between furnished and unfurnished accommodation. The statistics given in table 4 seem to indicate Irish tenants in the private sector as being less likely than tenants of any other Ethnic origin to enjoy the exclusive use of a bath and an inside WC. Equally, Irish tenants in this sector are more likely than any other tenants to be in accommodation which lacks a bath and inside WC. It is clear from the Council's own statistics that Irish born tenants in both the Council and the private sector are considerably more likely to suffer from overcrowding than white British born tenants. (*GLC Statistical Series No 11, Tables 8 & 10*). It should be born in mind that the Irish born population, as is stated elsewhere in this report, is predominantly over the age of forty five and overcrowding, in many cases, is that of adults and not children. Such information as is available indicates the Irish occupying in older, and therefore more likely to be run down, types of accommodation.

41 The degree to which anti-Irish prejudice can seriously hamper the position of the Irish in the housing and labour markets is well illustrated by Roy Hattersley:-

'... the Irish are only totally accepted in British society when they lose their Irish characteristics. If their accent is obvious and if their children being catholic - do not attend the local school, there is the underlying suspicion that sooner or later they will come home blind drunk. The assumption is nonsense. But it is nevertheless dangerous, particularly so for Irishmen who want a mortgage, promotion or public office.' (Source Kevin O'Connor - 'the Irish in Britain').

EMPLOYMENT

42 Traditionally large numbers of Irish people have worked in the building or allied trades often in small family businesses. Such information as is currently available indicates relatively low numbers of Irish people in white collar jobs. The construction industry has been hit particularly hard by the current recess and the Irish community have suffered proportionately in terms of job loss. The scale of the problem of unemployment in the Irish community is perhaps indicated by the Irish Post producing the greatest response to an advert for vacancies in the Fire Brigade during an advertising campaign in the ethnic press.

43 However the method of ethnic monitoring in use by the Council precludes monitoring the number of jobs gained by Irish applicants. It may be that Members might consider introducing an Irish category into ethnic monitoring. Should this be the case the preferable form of wording would be similar to that employed by London Borough of Hackney given below. There is a definite need for employment training and retraining schemes reflecting the special needs of London's Irish community. The London Borough of Hackney recently carried out an ethnic monitoring exercise of council employees. The definition of Irish used was as follows: 'person whose forebears originate in or recently came from Eire/Northern Ireland and consider themselves Irish'. This would seem to be the most effective criterion currently in use in terms of Irish ethnic monitoring to date. While space prohibits a comprehensive analysis of the Hackney exercise it may be said that the near 6,000 Irish born and their descendants living in Hackney are poorly represented in terms of council jobs in the borough. This was particularly noticeable in the higher pay sector.

MENTAL HEALTH

44 The Irish community finds itself under stress in many areas of mental health. It is often suggested by Irish People, that the pressures brought about by partial assimilation and cultural alienation in terms of wider British society are largely responsible for the unusually high proportion of mental illness amongst Irish people living in this country. Certainly the concept of England as the historical oppressor and the need to play down manifestations of individual Irishness in order not to



antagonise, or to gain acceptance from, the host community does impose great psychological pressure on Irish people.

45 While some health problems are recognised as having an Irish dimension, (alcoholism for instance), little attention has been paid to the overall picture of mental health within the Irish community. Work undertaken in the early 1970's by R. Cochrane, indicates very serious problems of mental ill health within the Irish community which far exceed those experienced by either the host community and nearly all other immigrant communities. The point is made that: 'Irishmen are more isolated and likely to be single and living in lodging houses than are (other) foreign born migrants and are therefore more vulnerable (to mental illness)'. (*Aliens and Alienists Ethnic Minorities and Psychiatry* R. Littlewood and M. Lipsedge). However, despite the truth of this statement, the work of R. Cochrane on mental illness amongst immigrants in Britain illuminates the problems of mental illness amongst the Irish community as a whole and extends scrutiny beyond the confines of those most at risk.

46 Table 1, Appendix 2 shows the Irish in Britain as having a suicide rate well above that of new Commonwealth immigrants and only exceeded by that of the German and Polish communities, many of whom suffered the trauma of the concentration camps during the second world war. Equally, it can be seen in Table 2 of Appendix 2 that the Irish have a disproportionately high rate of mental hospital admission in comparison to other communities in Britain. The correlation between alcoholism and schizophrenia is referred to in relation to Irish alcoholics. However, stereotypical views of the Irish may result in incorrect diagnosis of this problem. 'When symptoms of schizophrenia and alcoholism are both present, the English doctor selects the diagnosis of alcoholism alone because of the way he perceives Irish people.' *Aliens and Alienists*. R. Littlewood and Maurice Lipsedge).

47 This is perhaps a factor to be considered when assessing Table 3 of Appendix 2 in which Irish women are shown as three times as likely to suffer from schizophrenia as Irish men.

48 The information given so far, clearly shows the Irish community in Britain as suffering disproportionately from mental illness. While this information has been available for some years little work has been undertaken to alleviate the problems caused by mental illness amongst Irish people. Enquiries to the existing Irish welfare agencies reveal that up to 5% of their overall case load is comprised of problems related to mental illness. However no specific provision exists to deal with problems in this area. There is little doubt in the minds of most Irish that media stereotyping and the degradation of the Irish is a contributory factor to this problem.

49 In terms of the overall welfare of the Irish community the GLC has funded projects in six London Boroughs, in addition supporting specific groups working on a London-wide basis. A number of these projects are partly engaged in gathering information on the local circumstances of London's Irish community. This will prove of great value in assessing the long term needs of Irish people at a borough level. On a London wide basis most activity has taken place in north and west London. Developmental work has been taking place in south and east London to stimulate activity in areas where no provision for the Irish community exists. Hopefully this will come to fruition with the establishment of much needed facilities for Irish people residing in these areas.

CULTURE

50 Irish Culture cannot be examined in isolation from the circumstances which prevailed in its development over the last five hundred years. From the 1580s Irish culture, which had survived the strictures of Anglo-Norman invasion and rule including anti-Irish legislation as embodied in Poynings Law and the statutes of Kilkenny, was subjected to a new assault of unparalleled ferocity and duration. The Irish were derided as barbarians in the works of Shakespeare, Spenser and Deryck and Irish culture judged as equally worthless.

51 During the next 350 years culture for the Irish became extremely important as a means of expressing resistance; often it was the only form of resistance possible. Irish culture still plays this role in present times in that it remains a legitimate and legal outlet for feelings and opinions otherwise prohibited. Irish cultural activities bring Irish people together enabling the community to maintain its strength and cohesion and enables the community to resist the erosion of its identity by the dominant culture of England.

52 The role played by Irish culture in preventing the acquiescence and assimilation of the Irish into the host culture has not been ignored by the Establishment of this country. Although Irish culture has traditionally been denigrated by the English in both England and Ireland the more acceptable and accessible parts of the Irish cultural tradition have been removed from their political and historical setting and annexed by the English Establishment.

53 While the works of writers of the stature of Yeats, Wilde, Joyce and O'Casey are frequently taught in schools and are to be found in libraries their Irishness is diminished, they have become 'English literature'.

54 The process of annexation has become automatic. A Guardian review described the well known Irish poet Seamus Heaney as a British Poet. Heaney's refusal of this denial of his Irishness was met with irritation and scorn in the correspondence which followed.



55 The response of the Guardian's readership who are predominately middle class white Anglo Saxon protestants to Heaney's resistance of the process of appropriation is interesting in that it suggests that Heaney's maintenance of his Irishness was in itself offensive to Guardian readers. Certainly one of the main criticisms of Heaney and his work from English critics has been his unwillingness to condemn the Irish Republican movement.

56 Irish culture is a part of the normal life of the Irish community, it is accessible and participative. Irish artists and performers, however much their skill may be appreciated and valued, are not elevated to an elite status; they remain a part of the community. This has ensured the survival of Irish Culture, it is a living tradition with each generation participating in it. Even those areas of London which in terms of the Irish community are neither particularly strong or well organised are able to support schools of traditional Irish dancing. The process of annexation weakens this relationship elevating Irish performers and artists to the level of cult figures of media personalities and distancing them from the Irish community and therefore from its context and origin.

57 It should be pointed out that those who would consider themselves of an anti Imperialist/Establishment persuasion feel able to act in this way. The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist, a novel by Robert Noonan, is acknowledged as a classic of socialist writing. Noonan wrote under the pseudonym of Tressell and his work was not published until after his death. Noonan was born in Dublin, and was, according to his daughter who survives him, an ardent Irish Nationalist who fought in McBrides Irish Brigade against the British army in the Transvaal. Until his centenary year in 1983 Noonan's Irish origin and politics were totally ignored by the English Labour movement and in probability would have remained so if not for a vigorous campaign by surviving members of his family, the Irish Post newspaper and concerned groups and individuals in the Irish community. Given this situation and the lack of any acceptance of Irish Arts and culture by the arts establishment it is important that the council gives support to Irish cultural activities and events in London.

58 Irish cultural heritage is very rich possessing, in addition to an internationally known and respected musical tradition, the oldest sports in Europe and the second oldest European living language. Organisations promoting all aspects of Irish culture exist in the Greater London area and are well supported by the Irish community and growing numbers of other Londoners. However these are voluntary organisations relying entirely on members support in terms of resources. Provision should be made for Irish cultural bodies to have access to local government facilities including sports grounds and recreation centres. Council support would enable such

organisations to respond fully to the demands placed upon them, which at present they are often unable to meet due to financial restrictions, by the community.

59 The question of how to best assist Irish cultural groups and the need for discussion on how to deal with Irish applications was initially raised in E/AR13. While some progress has been made in terms of support for the Brent Irish Cultural Centre and the Irish Video Project there seems to be a lack of coherent policy to meet the needs of the Irish community in this area.

60 Currently a number of Irish groups have applied to Arts and Recreation for grant aid. It is important that these applications are given priority as the current system seems to exclude Irish projects from Ethnic Arts. A policy report considering the needs of the Irish community would be welcome. Irish advisers should be appointed to the Community Arts Panel as a matter of urgency.

PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT

61 It is generally felt by London's Irish community that the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has failed in its given intention, and is used solely to harass Irish people, and to prevent legitimate political involvement by Irish people and those outside the community active on the National question. The reports prepared by Council officers dealing with this legislation, (PC 103 18.2.83); EMU (7.10.83) and its proposed successor outline serious misuses of the powers of the Act and clearly show the failure of the PTA to prevent bombings in London. Furthermore, the threat of exclusion under the powers of the Act can clearly be shown as a system of internal exile and is contrary to any notion of basic human rights. While resentment of the PTA has always existed among members of the Irish community, increased vocal criticism has been evidenced in recent months. At the consultation conference with London's Irish community the 80 delegates, representing all of London's major Irish community, cultural welfare and political groups were unanimous in condemning the legislation.

PRISONS

62 Concern exists within the Irish community regarding the treatment of Irish prisoners in British gaols. This concern is general to all Irish prisoners and not merely to those convicted of offences of a political nature. Currently British prisoners in Northern Ireland, particularly soldiers, are transferred to prisons in England or Scotland to serve their sentences nearer home. Between 1969 and 1979 of 65 British soldiers convicted of offences in Northern Ireland only seventeen served their sentences wholly in Northern Ireland. Figures covering the period from 1968 to 1983 indicate that 52 soldiers convicted in Northern Ireland were transferred back to Britain to serve their sentences. (Source



written parliamentary question from Joan Maynard MP 28.11.83). This is not the case with Irish prisoners convicted in this country, who are usually required to serve their sentences in Britain. This causes great suffering for prisoners relatives in physical, emotional and economic terms. This suffering is accentuated by the system of transferring Irish prisoners from prison to prison often without informing relatives of the prisoners whereabouts. While allegations of physical mistreatment of Irish prisoners while in prison are not infrequent, the most alarming incidents are probably those concerning the Birmingham six. The men in question were convicted of the Birmingham bombings in 1974, which led to the introduction of the PTA. All maintained their innocence claiming to have been beaten into signing confessions. Once in prison all of the six prisoners claim to have been subjected to incredibly vicious assaults by prison staff. In Frs. Murray and Faul's investigation of the assault, a recently released prisoner made the following statement:

'At the basement level (each of the six) was pushed wearing their brown prison clothes into the bath filled with scalding hot water and then taken out again. Their clothes were ripped off and they were forced back up to their cells all the while being beaten and kicked on the way'

(*The Birmingham Framework Fathers Murray and Faul*)

63 The Irish community is well aware of the racism likely to face any Irish prisoners, whether political or criminal, in the British penal system. While the incident referred to above represents ill treatment of Irish prisoners at its most extreme, it is felt by the Irish community that less serious assaults are more likely to be common place. Certainly, PROP, Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners (National Prisoners Movement) the ex-prisoners association, believes that the ill treatment of Irish prisoners in British gaols to be an important issue. Some individuals held under the PTA have claimed that police officers threatened them with ill treatment by prison officers owing allegiance to the neo-facist National Front. Any such threats would be likely to be taken seriously by Irish detainees given the experience of the Irish prisoners. Furthermore there is growing concern that negative racial stereotyping of the Irish and the degree to which such imagery is deeply embedded and taken for granted by the 'host' community, has resulted in many miscarriages of justice involving Irish prisoners especially, but not exclusively, in cases of alleged drunken behaviour, crimes of violence and disorderly behaviour. This situation is often exacerbated in times of heightened nationalist resistance in Ireland.

64 While Irish community organisations are committed to work on the issue of Irish prisoners the bulk of day to day work on this issue is undertaken by the London based Friends and Relatives of Prisoners Group. Two campaigns, one relating to the strip searching of women in Armagh

gaol and the second on the 'Birmingham Six' referred to above are currently under way nationally.

IRISH WOMEN

65 The problems faced by Irish women should not be under estimated. Coming from a very different cultural background they are often placed in the position of having to deal with representatives of statutory bodies who have no knowledge of Irish ways. Added to this is the increasing problem of Irish women coming to London for abortions. While many of those who come to London for this purpose do return to Ireland a sizeable number of Irish women choose to remain. Those who do so often find themselves isolated and unsure of how to seek assistance or make contact with other Irish people.

66 Those Irish women who come to London for work often follow the traditional pattern of employment and enter the nursing profession. While once again little information is available discussions with Irish nurses seem to indicate that little progress can normally be expected in terms of promotion for most Irish nursing staff. It would be a worthwhile exercise to investigate this area of employment, certainly individual Irish nurses have complained of racial discrimination.

67 Amongst the Irish born in London women actually outnumber men, yet little provision exists to meet their needs. The struggle for newly arrived Irish women immigrants to establish themselves is undoubtedly harder than it is for men. At a London Irish conference which gave consideration to the problems faced by Irish women in London these difficulties were dealt with in a paper entitled 'Irish Women Speak Out'.

68 "What is the reality when we arrive? Looking for work and living accommodation are the first problems, as they are for Irish men. But Irish women do not have the social network that Irish men have - where they can go to certain pubs, get a 'start' and usually find accommodation through the same channels.

For Irish women, unless we have relatives here, it is a much harder battle - because there are no known or 'understood' places for Irish women to go to get support and help from each other and because there are no Irish women contractors willing to employ other Irish women. The search for a job and living accommodation has to be undertaken alone.

As we all know, it takes a long time in London for Irish people to find their feet. We are confronted with different accents a different culture which either ignores or despises our, plus all the added shock of being in a huge and alienating city. But men at least have their pubs to go to where they can meet other Irish men in similar situations to



themselves. But pubs are still very threatening places for women to go to, especially alone.

Again, a lot of organised social events in the Irish community are geared towards couples – the single woman is not catered for and feels excluded from a lot of activities within the Irish community.

In areas such as housing, employment and under the law, the Irish face discrimination because of the prevalence of anti-Irish racism. But Irish women also face discrimination on the grounds of their sex, i.e., in the social security system and employment because of the deeply rooted sexism in this society.

Many of these areas overlap, and Irish women may find themselves losing a job or being brow-beaten by the health or legal system because they are *Irish and women*". (*Irish women speakout*)

69 The conference, which was mixed, also debated the issues of the problems faced by Irish lesbians in London and the need for abortion. However, it was felt by Irish womens groups that there is a need for a London Irish women's conference to consolidate and co-ordinate work undertaken.

CONCLUSION

70 The nature of relations between Britain and Ireland, Britain as the colonising power, Ireland as the colonised country have in the past and continue today to underscore relations between the Irish and the host community. Britain's attempts to colonise Ireland and Irish resistance to this process, has continued for a length of time unparalleled by any other colonial/post colonial relationship in British history. As a consequence, the British image of the Irish both in Ireland and in Britain, has been a negative one and popular prejudices against the Irish are long and deeply held. Whilst post-reformation English antipathy to Catholicism can be used to explain certain periods of extreme prejudice against the Irish, who are largely Catholic, this factor has waned sufficiently to be almost non-existent at present. Yet prejudice against the Irish still exists and at times, when inflamed by the media, can have the most dire effects on Irish people living in Britain. If we accept the religious factor as negligible then it follows that such prejudice is racial in its essence. Certainly there is a long and well defined tradition of anti-Celticism in English society which pre-dates the establishment of modern Britain as a nation state. The media in all its forms, actively perpetuates this tradition although as the Scots and Welsh are deemed sufficiently absorbed as to constitute no threat to the primacy of Anglo-Saxon culture, and Irish are singled out as the main target. The effect of this near constant pillorying of things and individuals Irish is two fold. Firstly, it ensures that the bulk of the host community

remain singularly ignorant and scathing of things Irish and secondly that the Irish themselves are made to be defensive about their very identity.

71 It is popularly held, and with some justification, that other immigrants to Britain have inherited the prejudices initially directed against the Irish on the part of the host community. This does not mean that racial prejudice against the Irish has substantially abated, but merely that more readily identifiable targets for English racism now exist. The fact that those of a racist persuasion may regard people of Afro-Caribbean origin as lazy and violent does not imply that they have ceased to regard the Irish in this manner. It should be mentioned here that many who would consider themselves free of the taint of racism still believe it legitimate to indulge in racism against the Irish.

72 The overall picture of London's Irish community in this report indicates a community poorly housed, and suffering from a disproportionately high incidence of mental illness in relation to its size. It is a community baited by the media, suffering constant attacks on its cultural and social identity and deterred from political mobilisation by the threat of imprisonment and exile under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The root of these problems lie in racism against the Irish, a factor yet to be acknowledged as a major problem in British society.

73 It would seem that British society has greater difficulty in recognising its racism against the Irish than against other immigrants to this country. However, certain steps can be taken to help redress some of the problems faced by the London Irish which will, it is hoped, help the process of recognition and ultimately the resolution of these difficulties. It is important that the needs and problems of Irish people in the education system are redressed. Statutory bodies should be acquainted with the problems faced by the Irish community. The Irish should be recognised unequivocally as an ethnic minority with a unique and identifiable cultural heritage and should be included in all initiatives to improve the quality of life of London's ethnic minorities. Support should be given to those Irish prisoners seeking repatriation. Work should be undertaken to redress the problems faced by Irish people in housing. Support should be given to Irish cultural events and organisation. The needs of Irish women must be given full consideration.

74 The aim of the Council's grant strategy has been to make money and resources available to disadvantaged and under-resourced communities. In terms of London's Irish community the bulk of support has been given in response to the demands of the community. This effectively means that areas of Boroughs where the Irish community is strongest or best organised are more likely to receive assistance than those where the community is not so concentrated or organised.



75 While accepting that neglect of the needs of the Irish community have been common place in all areas of London some areas are notably less well provided for in terms of venues and amenities than others. East London and south London are areas with a substantial Irish population but with one or two exceptions, scarce provision exists for the Irish community.

76 The Irish community has never before had access to substantial funds for voluntary sector activities and consequently has until recently lacked a working knowledge of how to obtain this type of support. This may explain the relatively small number of applicants for grant aid in the financial year 1983/84. However during that period Irish projects or organisations working locally have been funded in eleven Boroughs. On a London-wide basis the Council has supported the establishment of an Irish Women's Centre and the Brent-based Irish Cultural Centre. Funding has also been made available for groups working or specific areas of concern to London's Irish community including the Irish video project, information on Ireland, the Irish in Britain History group and Grannemaol. Council support has also enabled work to be undertaken on the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

77 The current financial year has seen a great increase in Irish applications for grant aid. This can be explained in terms of developmental work on the part of the Ethnic Minorities Unit, the publicity given to those groups already grant aided and an increased awareness amongst Irish organisations of how support may be obtained. Many of the applications received are from areas which lack any provision for the Irish community. The programme of consultative conferences has also increased demand upon the Council.

78 It is important that the Council follows up its clear policy of support for the Irish Community responding in a favourable and co-ordinated manner to the needs of that Community. Especially important are the areas of work which have so far been neglected, Irish Arts and Cultural groups and those geographical areas where scant provision for Irish people exists. This should not be taken to imply a shift of policy on the part of the Council. The work in establishing locally based Irish projects is crucial to the development of the Irish in London. However it is important that Irish applications are not limited to the Ethnic Minorities Committee. All sections of the Council's grant making committees must be harnessed to meet the needs of London's Irish community with research to establish need, outreach work to develop projects; and grant aid to support initiatives.

Furthermore, although this report does not deal with the specific issues of how the Industry and Employment Committee and the Greater London Enterprise Board are responding to the particular employment and training needs of the Irish Community, it is suggested that the Director of Industry and Employment and Chief Economic Adviser, in conjunction with the PRRA consider steps which the board and the Committee can take in this regard.



APPENDIX 1

A Comparative Housing Profile of the Irish Born Population in England and Wales and London

NB Unless otherwise stated all figures given are percentages.

Key to abbreviations used in the following tables.

All total population for specified area or sample.

UK persons born in the United Kingdom; including N. Irish born – corresponds to Islington ethnic housing group 3.

RI persons born in the Republic of Ireland; corresponds to Islington ethnic housing group 3.

Carib-persons born in the Caribbean – corresponds to Islington group 1.

Med-persons born in the Commonwealth Mediterranean countries – corresponds to Islington groups 5 and 6.

NC-persons born in the New Commonwealth – corresponds to Islington groups 1, 2, 5 and 6.

NC/P-persons born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan; as above.

Table 1 Housing Tenure in England and Wales by Birthplace of Household Head

Tenure Type	Birthplace of Head of Household						
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED	NC	NC/P
Owner occupier	58.1	58.2	43.8	42.9	60.9	58.7	60.9
Rented from local authority/New Town	28.8	29.1	38.5	44.7	24.9	25.8	24.3
Other rental mostly private	13.1	12.6	17.7	12.4	14.2	15.5	14.8

Source: Compiled from data in the 1981 Census Housing and Households Volume, Table 11

The Irish in Islington Project does not, as yet, have any information; derived from the 1981 Census, specifically relating to ethnic minority housing in London but Table 2 derived from 'Social and Economic Characteristics of Ethnic Minorities in Greater London'; GLC Statistical Series No. 11, Table 9 does give an indication of their comparative housing situations in London (1971).

Table 2 Housing in London by Tenure Type and Birthplace of the Head of the Household

Tenure Type	Birthplace of Head of Household				
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED
Owner occupier	40	41	26	41	49
Council rental	25	27	25	19	15
Private rental					
Unfurnished	24	25	26	13	18
Furnished	10	7	23	27	18

Conditions of tenant's accommodation; amenities/lack of

Table 3 Amenities; Local authority tenants

Amenity/lack of	Birthplace of Head of Household						
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED	NC	NC/P
Exclusive use of bath and inside WC	97.6	97.6	97.3	97.6	97.9	97.5	95.4
Lacking bath	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	10.4
Lacking inside WC	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	0.7	1.2	2.8

Table 4 Amenities; Other rental tenants (mostly private)

Amenity/lack of	Birthplace of Head of Household						
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED	NC	NC/P
Exclusive use of bath and inside WC	82.0	82.5	72.9	80.1	76.5	76.9	76.6
Lacking bath	7.3	7.9	6.2	2.7	3.6	2.6	2.8
Lacking inside WC	8.5	9.2	5.4	2.0	3.1	2.4	2.7

(Tables 3 and 4 compiled from data in the 1981 Census, Housing and Households Volume, Table

NB These figures do not add up to 100% owing to the nature of the criteria used by the Census.)

Overcrowding

The Census measures the extent of accommodation overcrowding in terms of a person per room occupation ratio greater than 1.5 persons per room and similarly records under-occupation in terms of under 0.5 persons per room.

Table 5 Room Occupancy: Council tenants

Number of persons per room	Birthplace of Head of Household						
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED	NC	NC/P
Over 1.5	0.7	0.6	1.9	3.3	2.1	5.3	5.6
1 to 1.5	4.9	4.4	9.6	12.1	12.0	16.0	16.5
0.5 to 1	45.2	44.7	51.5	54.4	59.3	54.4	54.1
Up to 0.5	49.2	50.3	37.1	30.1	26.5	24.3	23.8



Table 6 Room Occupancy: Other tenants; mostly private rental

Number of persons per room	Birthplace of Head of Household						NC/P
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED	NC	
Over 1.5	1.2	0.9	2.9	3.8	4.2	7.6	7.9
1 to 1.5	2.3	1.8	4.3	7.1	6.5	8.4	8.7
0.5 to 1	38.3	36.9	50.7	51.8	53.9	51.0	50.7
Up to 0.5	57.9	60.2	42.1	37.2	35.4	32.9	32.7

(Source of Tables 5 and 6 as for Tables 3 and 4)

The Irish in Islington Project does not, as yet, have any information; derived from the 1981 Census but Table 7 (source as for Table 2) does give an indication of the ethnic minority housing overcrowding problem in London.

The above information (Tables 1 to 6) is taken from the Irish in Islington projects Memorandum to the Islington Council joint race relations and Housing Committees meeting (8.12.83).

Table 7 Percentage of households having more than 1.5 persons per room; by tenure type and birthplace of household head.

Tenure type	Birthplace of Head of Household				
	ALL	UK	RI	CARIB	MED
Owner occupier	0.9	0.2	1.7	7.7	4.8
Council rental	2.3	1.6	6.4	17.4	9.4
Private rental unfurnished	2.7	1.4	9.3	28.0	16.3
Private rental unfurnished	12.8	6.9	14.1	32.2	18.5
Average household size number of persons per household	2.72	2.63	3.14	4.05	3.90 - NB not percentaged

(Information derived from 'Social and Economic Characteristics of Ethnic Minorities in Greater London': GLC Statistical Series No. 11, Tables 8 and 10.)

APPENDIX 2

TABLE 1
Country of Birth and Suicide

	Standardized Morality Ratio	
	Men	Women
All Countries	100	100
Scotland	138	145
Ireland (all parts)	154	149
West Indies	85	60
India and Pakistan	100	122
Germany	177	239
Poland	221	207
USA	98	198

From Cochrane 1977 (72). Figures are estimated suicides (including official suicides, undetermined suicides and accidental poisoning) in England and Wales by country of birth, for men and women over twenty 1970-72.

TABLE 2
Country of Birth and Mental Hospital Admission (per 100,000)

	Men	Women	Both Sexes
England and Wales	434	551	494
Scotland	712	679	695
N. Ireland	1391	1102	1242
Irish Republic	1065	1153	1110
West Indies	449	621	539
India	368	436	403
Pakistan	294	374	336
Germany	356	513	439
Italy	272	400	340
Poland	610	790	704
USA	359	576	473

From Cochrane 1977 (72). Rates are age/sex-adjusted for the population over fifteen years old (England and Wales 1971).

TABLE 3
Country of Birth and Mental Hospital Admissions for Schizophrenia and Alcoholism

	ALCOHOLISM		SCHIZOPHRENIA	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
England and Wales	28	8	87	87
Scotland	218	46	90	97
N. Ireland	349	69	96	160
Irish Republic	265	54	83	254
West Indies	14	7	290	323
India	34	9	141	140
Pakistan	10	14	158	103
Germany	23	3	99	130
Italy	4	2	71	127
Poland	33	9	189	301
USA	49	38	76	133

From Cochrane 1977 (72). Rates are of admission per 100,000 population over fifteen years (England and Wales 1971). The category of schizophrenia here includes schizo-affective and paranoid psychoses; alcoholism includes alcoholic psychosis.



Irish Groups and Organisations Consulted

Irish in Britain Representation Group
Federation of Irish Societies
Connolly Association
Irish Video Project
Information on Ireland
Irish in Islington Project
Waltham Forest Irish Project
Irish Studies in Britain
Green Ink Writers
Irish Community Arts
Irish Cultural Activities in London
Friends and Relatives of Prisoners
Rough Justice
Irish Chaplaincy Scheme
Irish Women's Centre
London Irish Cultural Commission
Battersea and Wandsworth Irish Committee
Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann
Gaelic Athletic Association

GLC CALLS FOR NEW DEAL FOR IRISH IN BRITAIN

"The most wide-ranging and important official document ever produced on the Irish in Britain has just been issued by the Greater London Council. It amounts to a bill of rights for the Irish community and calls for the vigorous preservation in Britain of Irish culture and identity."

IRISH POST

Why the Irish living in London are angry

The report recommends: "The Irish should be recognised unequivocally as an ethnic minority with a unique and identifiable cultural heritage and should be included in all initiatives to improve the quality of life of London's ethnic minorities."

STANDARD

7/8/84

The Policy Report on the Irish Community says that although the community has been established in the capital since the 16th century, it still suffers widespread discrimination, with housing, unemployment, education, mental health and media stereotyping as serious problems.

WEMBLEY OBSERVER

& WEMBLEY NEWS

17/8/84

Move to make Irish 'ethnic minority'

Ken Livingstone said: "The racism and the conditions that the Irish community face today are deeply rooted in British history. Although it has varied in degree, anti-Irish sentiment is directly linked to Irish resistance to English rule in Ireland."

As a community representing one in six of London's population, the needs of the Irish community cannot be ignored any further by the GLC or other institutions committed to racial harmony. We welcome this report and the wide-ranging recommendations it has made towards improving the social and economic position of Irish people and altering distorted images of the Irish, which can so easily inspire prejudice and racial discrimination."

PADDINGTON
TIMES

10/8/84

... (it is no accident, though mildly amusing, that the report condemns the Prevention of Terrorism Act as a threat to the "Irish community").

DAILY TELEGRAPH

28/8/84



**LONDON
AGAINST
RACISM**

keep

GLC

Working for London