



Castlereagh Borough Council

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NORTHERN IRELAND

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YOUR REF.

OUR REF. JW/SS

*Copied to
Business Office
26.9.96*

4 September 1996

Mr John Gorman
The Chairman
NI Forum
3rd Floor
Interpoint Centre
York Street
BELFAST BT5 1AQ

Dear Sir

At a meeting of Castlereagh Borough Council on Thursday 25 July 1996 the following motion was proposed by Councillor Tommy Jeffers, seconded by Alderman Mrs Myreve Chambers and following a lengthy debate carried by 12 votes to 3.

"That this council deplores the erosion of the Protestant ethos, culture and heritage by Sinn Fein/IRA, public bodies and others and calls on the Secretary of State to immediately set up a commission to investigate this discrimination".

There are obviously widespread concerns within the membership of the Council about what is seen as a concerted attack by Nationalist elements in the community spurred on by the bigotry of Sinn Fein/IRA. In addition there are grave concerns that there is a underhand campaign being orchestrated to promote Irish culture within Northern Ireland to the detriment of the majority Protestant or Scots/Ulster culture which has developed over many centuries.

The history of settlements in Ireland particularly Northern Ireland extends beyond the 17 Century. Prior to this period there was a constant movement of people between the Mainland particularly from Scotland and the Province of Ulster which established a very distinctive culture in this part of the Island.

In addition to the actions of Nationalist activators there is deep concern about the actions of various Government backed organisations and the media in promoting the Gaelic culture in the Province. These concerns encompass the following:

- * The actions of the BBC and UTV in supporting and promoting the Irish language and Gaelic sporting events despite the discrimination by the Gaelic Athletic Association in prohibiting members of the Security Forces from participating in these sports.
- * The promoters of the Irish culture in Northern Ireland by the Arts Council in comparison to the pittance provided for the Ulster/Scots language and cultural traditions. (Details of the grants made are included herewith as Appendix II).

Cont'd

JIM WHITE
TOWN CLERK AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

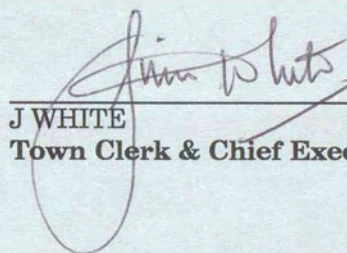
- * The promotion of the Gaelic games by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland while ignoring a sport such as soccer which has a major following across the age spectrum.
- * The encouragement by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland of integrated education in the Province at the expense of state schools. The Council has highlighted on many occasions the need for upgrading of many state schools which are totally inadequate to meet demand.
- * The reduction in the role of Protestant Clergy on the Boards of Governors of state schools while Roman Catholic Clergy play an increasing role on the Boards of Catholic Maintained schools.

I also append (appendix I) a fuller statement of the effects of the discrimination referred to above.

While the Council fully deplores those elements of the Protestant community which caused so much damage in July, it believed that the stand-off at Drumcree and the attendant civil disturbance throughout the Province is caused by fears of the majority community about the manner in which their culture is being eroded. While republicanism is constantly acceded to.

The Council request that the Northern Ireland Forum discusses this vital issue fully and as a matter of urgency to enable all shades of opinion to be heard.

Yours faithfully



J WHITE
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Encs

Discrimination and sectarianism in funding of culture, language and identity

There is no doubt that there is a clear and deliberate policy of discrimination and cultural cleansing against the Protestant culture, language and identity in favour of the Irish culture and language, aided by the British and Irish Government, and comes to fruition through funding bodies education, public bodies and cross border committees and Diktats such as the Anglo Irish agreement and the British-Irish Inter Parliamentary Body and the European Common Market.

This cultural cleansing begins at the Anglo Irish Diktat which is really a body set up to rubber stamp any demand from Sinn Fein and the SDLP through their mouthpiece the Irish Government and the capitulation of, at the best a neutral British Government. These demands usually centre around the promotion and support of the Irish Language, Gaelic Culture and the G.A.A. (known as the Great Apartheid Association) an anti-British, anti-Unionist and anti-Orange organisation. There is absolutely no one at the Diktat to promote Ulster Scots and Orange culture, hence cultural fascists are having a field day in their very successful attempts to have one culture, an Irish Gaelic one in this island.

The facts speak for themselves:

- 1 The discrimination in funding. The attached figures show that the Irish Language and Gaelic Culture has received nearly four million pounds, whilst the Ulster Scots language and culture has received a mere ten thousand pounds. The figures for Irish Language and culture are what we know of, they do not include funds that have not come to light, claims in the pipeline and grants to the G.A.A.
- 2 Irish Government representatives at the Anglo Irish Diktat are always promoting Irish Language and no one is putting forward the Ulster Scots case.
- 3 The Fair Employment Agency refuses to enquire into the discrimination that the G.A.A. ruthlessly employs against members of the Police and the Security Forces.
- 4 The report from Committee D on Culture, Education and Environment of the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body whose terms of reference includes:

Co-operation with regard to the Irish Language and related activities. The report made clear the following points:-

- A Deliberation of Committee. The Committee met with many groups including the G.A.A. and the Gaeltacht. Not once did they meet with Orange or Ulster Scots groups.
- B Arts and broadcasting. The Northern Ireland Arts Council and the Arts Council of the Irish Republic are both keen to adopt an Irish Nationalists arts identity and are promoting at the 1996 Books Fair the Irish Nationalists theme of the Irish Diaspora.
- C There is on going co-operation between the BBC (NI) and RTE to promote the Irish Language. Joint broadcasting productions of Irish Language have been made. The Irish Government is setting up an Irish Language Television Channel (Telefis na Gaelige) and the Committee is taking active steps to see that this television channel is available throughout N.I.
- D Culture. The Committee makes it clear throughout their report that there is only one culture that they approve of and that is Irish Gaelic, and that Ulster Scots is to be completely disregarded.
- E Irish Language. The Committee agrees with cultural cleansing of the Ulster Scots by being completely behind Gael-Linn and the Ultracht Trust in their programme of introducing Irish Language and Culture into Protestant schools.
- F Sport. The Committee urges sport to be organised on an all-Ireland basis which is an Irish Nationalist ideal.
- G The Committee urges Unionists to take part in the G.A.A. which in fact means that Unionists should give up their identity, nationality and culture.
- H Conclusions. The Committee were encouraged to see the growth in the Irish Language in Northern Ireland and that all spheres of sport, art, broadcasting is moving to an all-Ireland basis.

The report from Committee D reads like a manifesto from the Irish Language and cultural groups, and fills Ulster Scots, with utter despair. Despite the fact that terms of reference as set out in the introduction to the report, mentions cultural diversity and parity of esteem within Northern Ireland, not once was Orange or Ulster Scots Language or culture mentioned.

We urge the Forum to discuss the following:-

- (i) Why is Ulster Scots Language and Protestant culture discriminated against?
- (ii) Why do Irish Language and Gaelic cultural groups receive so much money and favour?
- (iii) Is there a deliberate policy by both governments to culturally cleanse the Ulster Protestant and British to make them Irish Gaels so making a United Irish inevitable?
- (iv) To enquire from the Sports Council, Arts Council, National Lottery, Making Belfast Work, International Fund for Ireland and Cultural Traditions Group, the Community Relations Measure of the European Physical and Social Environment Programme and the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation how much funding has gone to Irish Language and Culture the G.A.A and Ulster Scots Language and Culture?
- (v) To enquire from the Community Relations Measure of the European Physical and Social Environment Programme is their grants towards Gael-Linn to promote Irish Language and Culture in Protestant schools being made to achieve Culture Cleansing, and to even the balance will it give same grants to the Ulster Protestants to promote their language and culture in Roman Catholic schools.
- (vi) Why do shops belonging to the N. I. Tourist Board sell souvenirs that are overwhelmingly Irish Nationalist in nature with little or no Ulster British items on sale.
- (vii) To ask Committee on Culture, Education and Environment of the British Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body's report dated April 1996 for an explanation for their most one-sided, biased, discriminating and sectarian report that is akin to the Nazis treatment of Jews.

To do something to halt this vicious sectarian and discriminating policy that is going on and which is actively creating an even bigger polarisation of the communities, we urge this Forum to discuss:

- a) All funding to the Irish Language and culture and the G.A.A. to be frozen until Ulster Scots receive 60% of all funding.
- b) That an Equality of Funding be set up on the lines of the Fair Employment Agency.
- c) To enquire from the Sports Council, the Arts Council, the National Lottery, Making Belfast Work, the International Fund for Ireland, the Cultural Traditions Group, the Community Relations Measure of the European Physical and Social Environment Programme and the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, how much funding they have given to the Irish Language and Culture, the G.A.A. and Ulster Scots Language and Culture?

Finally everyone should realise that the Ulster Scots, their identity and culture are not going to go away, we are not going to accept discrimination and marginalisation. We want our place in the sun and the sooner it is recognised that there are two cultures in this Island, then the sooner there will be peace. The words of Mairtain O Cadhain, an IRA activist who states "The reconquest of Ireland will begin with the reconquest of the Irish Language", puts everything that is happening into perspective.

NORTHERN IRELAND ARTS COUNCIL

1995/1997

Grants to promote Irish Gaelic Language Culture and Traditions

1.	<u>Magazines and publication</u>	£
	Coisceum Furste (Northern Ireland Publisher in Irish)	10,000
	An Tultach (Irish Language Magazine)	11,000
	Celtic Pen	1,000
	Cuisle na Ngael (Newry)	2,000
	Irish Language Writer (UU & QUB)	20,000
	An Clochan (Celtic Books and Magazine)	<u>5,000</u>
		49,000
2.	<u>Arts</u>	
	Cardinal O'Fee Arts Centre	101,000
	Aon Drama Aisteora (Irish Speaking Theatre)	35,000
	Irish Gaelic & Scots Gaelic Arts Festival	1,300
	South Armagh Centre for Irish Language Arts	13,000
	Newry and Mourne for Irish Language Arts Programme	<u>6,000</u>
		156,300
3.	<u>Classes and Workshops</u>	
	Glor Na Na Gael	<u>3,000</u>
4.	<u>Awards and Bursaries</u>	<u>3,500</u>
5.	<u>Recording Ventures</u>	
	Comcheal	<u>4,000</u>
6.	<u>Instruments & Equipment</u>	
	Newcastle	7,000
	Portglenone	7,000
	Glens of Antrim	<u>3,000</u>
		17,000
7.	<u>Music</u>	
	Belfast Traditional music	14,000
	Hampey School	<u>9,000</u>
		23,000
8.	<u>Buildings</u>	
	South Armagh (for building a centre for Irish Language and Cultural in Northern Ireland)	<u>350,000</u>
	TOTAL	<u>£605,800</u>

Grants for Irish Language and Cultural Traditions

	£
Schools for Irish Language on-going 1995 - 1997	2,700,000
Arts Council	215,633
Europe (EPGS) (To GAEL-LINN) (To promote Irish Gaelic language and culture in Protestant schools)	81,000
Arts Council (Lottery)	390,167
Making Belfast Work	100,000
Community Relations Council	<u>436,000</u>
TOTAL	3,922,800

These are the figures that are known. There could be funding that has not yet come to light.
It does not cover grants to the G.A.A.

Grants for Ulster Scots Language and Cultural Traditions

	£
Community Relations Council	10,000