



**BRITISH-IRISH
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY**

**COMHLACHT IDIR-PHARLAIMINTEACH
NA BREATAINE AGUS NA hÉIREANN**

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

No. 69 — February 2000

The Work of the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body

Introduction

1. This is the fourth Annual Report of the Body since it was decided at the 11th Plenary Session in May 1996 that such a Report should be made. The current Report summarises the work of the Body in 1999.

2. 1999 began in an atmosphere of considerable uncertainty for British-Irish affairs. Following the conclusion of the Belfast Agreement on Good Friday, 10 April 1998, its ratification by referendums in both jurisdictions on 22 May and elections to the new Northern Ireland Assembly on 25 June, work began on implementing the Agreement. Both sovereign Governments, together with a number of others including General John de Chastelain and Senator George Mitchell, made considerable efforts to resolve the impasse over the establishment of the Northern Ireland Executive. After further complex negotiations and a Review of the Agreement by Senator Mitchell, which began on 6 September 1999 and concluded on 19 November, the Assembly met on 29 November 1999 and ten Ministers were nominated for the new Northern Ireland Departments. Departmental Committees of the Assembly were also established. The necessary legislation formally to devolve legislative authority passed through the Westminster Parliament. On 2 December, by an exchange of notifications between the two Governments, the British-Irish Agreement came into force, and powers were then devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly. At the same time, the North-South Ministerial Council, British-Irish Council and British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference were established, Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution were amended in accordance with the result of the 1998 referendum, and the Government of Ireland Act 1920 was repealed.

The Work of the Body

3. In accordance with the Rules of the Body, two Plenary Sessions were held in 1999: from 29 to 30 March in Drumoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, and from 14 to 15 September in the Garden House Hotel, Cambridge.

4. During the year there were several changes to the Membership of the Body on the British side, due partly to appointments either to the front benches at Westminster or election to the new Scottish Parliament, and partly to the abolition of the automatic right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords. Sadly, two Members of the Body died during the year: Roger Stott CBE MP, who had been a very active Chairman of Committee D, and Senator Paddy McGowan who was also a long-standing Member of the Body. Both will be much missed, both for their contribution to the work of the Body and their good fellowship.

Eighteenth Plenary

5. At the Plenary in Newmarket-on-Fergus in March, the Body was addressed by the Minister for Justice, Mr John O'Donoghue TD. His speech is set out in full in the Report of Debates for the Session. The first day of the Session was spent discussing Committee Reports and Government Responses to previous Reports. The Plenary also took note of the Third Annual Report of the Body, and held an informal discussion of how the Body was likely to develop if, as was hoped, the continuing inter-party talks were to reach fruition. The Plenary also agreed to amend the Rules so as to regularise the position of the (hitherto informal) Working Group on the Future of the Body.

6. On the second day, the Body held a wide-ranging debate on the progress of negotiations over the implementation of the Belfast Agreement-which were still at a critical stage. Much of the debate centred on the problem of integrating the decommissioning of terrorist weaponry with progress towards establishing a devolved Executive in Northern Ireland. An Amendment proposed by Mr David Wilshire to make explicit reference in the Motion to the need to *begin the decommissioning of arms and explosives at once* was defeated. The text of the Body's Resolution, which was agreed unanimously, is as follows:

That the Body commends the two Governments and the political parties in Northern Ireland for the progress made in implementing the Good Friday Agreement, in particular the further agreements reached on the Government Departments in Northern Ireland and the North/South Implementing Bodies; further supports the four supplementary International Agreements providing for the establishment of the North/South Ministerial Council and Implementation Bodies, the British-Irish Council and the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference which were signed in Dublin Castle on 8 March by both Governments; welcomes the approval expressed in both Parliaments of the British-Irish Agreement and the Supplementary Agreements; reaffirms its faith in the Agreement as the only way towards a new future of peace and cooperation; looks forward to the early transfer of devolved powers to the Assembly in Northern Ireland; and calls on all parties to maintain their commitment and ensure the implementation of all aspects of the Agreement.

7. The Body took note of the Report of the Committee on Culture, Education and the Environment [Doc. No. 65] on matters relating to Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland, which was subsequently forwarded to the two Governments for their observations.

8. The Body debated Responses from the two Governments to two Reports debate at the previous Plenary:

- to the Report of the Committee on Economic and Social Affairs [Doc. No. 63] on matters relating to the Road and Rail Links on the Island of Ireland; and

- to the Report of the Committee on European and International Affairs [Doc. 64] on matters relating to International and European Union Involvement with the Peace Process.

Nineteenth Plenary

9. The Nineteenth Plenary took place in Cambridge at the same time as Senator George Mitchell was carrying out his review of the progress of the Belfast Agreement. The Plenary began with the debate on recent political developments, during which two themes emerged: the hopes of the Body for a successful outcome to Senator Mitchell's review, and the content of the Patten Report on the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The following Resolution was agreed to with one dissident:

That the Body, while welcoming the progress that has been made so far in implementing aspects of the Belfast Agreement, nevertheless notes with regret that it has not so far proved possible to form an Executive under the terms of the Agreement; continues to believe that the Agreement still represents the best way forward for the peace process; and calls on all parties to the Agreement and both Governments to redouble their efforts towards reaching a lasting settlement.

Following that debate, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Right honourable Dr Mo Mowlam MP, addressed the Assembly and answered oral questions from Members. A summary of her speech can be found in the Report of Debates for the Session.

10. The following day's sitting began with a further debate on the future of the Body, in the light of progress on the Belfast Agreement and the fact that the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales were now in full operation, while the New Northern Ireland Assembly was operating in shadow form. The Body took note of a further Discussion Paper by the Working Group on the Future of the Body [Doc. No. 66] entitled 'The Future of the Body: Options for Development'. At the conclusion of the debate the Body was addressed by Lord Alderdice MNIA, Initial Presiding Officer of the Northern Ireland Assembly (and an Associate Member of the Body itself) and Mr George Reid MSP, Deputy Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament. An invitation had also been extended to Lord Elis-Thomas AM, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales, but it had been impossible for him to attend because of Assembly business.

11. The Body took note of the Report of the Committee on European and International Affairs [Doc. No. 67] on matters relating to Common Agricultural Policy Reform, which was subsequently forwarded to the two Governments for their observations; responses are awaited.

12. The Body also took note of the Responses of both Governments to the Report of the Committee on Culture, Education and the Environment [Doc. No. 68] on matters relating to Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland. At the

conclusion of the debate, the Acting Chairman of the Committee, Mrs Marian McGennis, said that she would write to both Governments asking for further clarification of their responses. Replies are awaited.

Steering Committee

13. The Members of the Steering Committee during the year were Mr Michael O'Kennedy TD and Mr David Winnick MP, Co-Chairmen, and Mr Charles Flanagan TD, Mr Michael Mates MP, Mr Kevin McNamara MP, and Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD, Vice-Chairmen. The Committee met on four occasions.

Committees

14. During 1999 Reports were debated from Committee B (European and International Affairs) on CAP Reform and from Committee D (Culture, Education and the Environment) on Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland. In view of the fast-changing nature of the political situation throughout most of 1999, Committee A (Political and Security Affairs) continued its policy of not presenting formal Reports; instead, it maintained a watching brief on developments, with the Chairman of the Committee making oral Reports to the Plenary.

15. The Working Group on the Future of the Body met on two occasions, immediately after meetings of the Steering Committee. The Co-Chairmen made an oral report to the Eighteenth Plenary on the progress made by the Working Group, and the Group's second Discussion Paper was noted at the Nineteenth Plenary.

Prospects for 2000

16. It is expected that Committees B, C and D will all produce Reports during the course of the coming year: Committee B is looking at transport links to and from the island of Ireland, Committee C has finished its study of the future for small farms in the rural economy, and Committee D is following up its inquiry into the development of integrated education, education for mutual understanding (EMU) and the development of teaching in the medium of Irish with a brief Report on the Warrington Project and the Columba Initiative. Now that the Belfast Agreement is in firmly in place it may once again prove possible for Committee A to produce formal Reports.

17. Now that devolution to the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly is a reality, and the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales are in full operation, it is hoped that the Body can devise some mechanism for linking the work of the devolved institutions with those of the two sovereign Parliaments. A start has been made in this direction by inviting guests to previous Plenaries from the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the devolved institutions. Progress depends at least in

part on the goodwill of the two sovereign Governments - but both the previous Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the present Taoiseach have given the idea of broader inter-parliamentary cooperation a fair wind. The Body has already given considerable thought on how things might be taken forward: it is hoped that closer links will be achieved during 2000.

APPENDIX 1
MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH-IRISH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY
Ireland
Members of the Body - December 1999

<i>FULL MEMBERS</i>	<i>ASSOCIATE MEMBERS</i>
Mr Michael O'Kennedy TD (<i>Co-Chairman</i>)	Mr Bernard Allen TD
Mr Charles Flanagan TD (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>)	Mr Liam Aylward TD
Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>)	Senator Enda Bonner
Mr Andrew Boylan TD	Mr Paul Bradford TD
Senator Joe Costello	Mr John Brady TD
Ms Mary Coughlan TD	Mr Matt Brennan TD
Mr Seymour Crawford TD	Mr John Browne TD (<i>Carlow-Kilkenny</i>)
Mr Austin Currie TD	Senator Frank Chambers
Mr Jimmy Deenihan TD	Mr Proinsias de Rossa TD
Mr John Ellis TD	Mr Seán Doherty TD
Senator Edward Haughey	Senator Mary Henry ^[3]
Ms Cecilia Keaveney TD ^[1]	Senator Tony Kett
Senator Helen Keogh	Senator Ann Leonard
Mr Tony Killeen TD	Senator Maurice Manning
Mr Séamus Kirk TD	Mr Michael Moynihan TD
Mr Conor Lenihan TD	Ms Breedá Moynihan-Cronin TD
Mr Brendan McGahon TD	Senator Francis O'Brien
Ms Marian McGennis TD	Mr John Perry TD
Mr Dinny McGinley TD	Mr Gerry Reynolds TD
Senator Paschal Mooney	
Mr Caoimhghín O Caoláin TD	
Mr Brian O'Shea TD	
Mr Michael Ring TD	
Senator Shane Ross ^[2]	
Mr Brendan Smith TD	

One vacancy^[4]

United Kingdom
Members of the Body - December 1999

<i>FULL MEMBERS</i>	<i>ASSOCIATE MEMBERS</i>
Mr David Winnick MP (<i>Co-Chairman</i>)	Mr Nick Ainger MP
Mr Michael Mates MP (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>)	Lord Alderdice
Mr Kevin McNamara MP (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>)	Mr John Austin MP
Mr Harry Barnes MP	Ms Jean Corston MP
Mr Joe Benton MP	Mr Jeff Ennis MP
Mr Gerry Bermingham MP	Lord Glentoran CBE
Lord Blease	Mr John Grogan MP
Rt hon Peter Brooke PC MP	Mr Nick Hawkins MP
Mr Dennis Canavan MP	Ms Helen Jackson MP
Mr Michael Colvin MP	Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC
Mrs Maria Fyfe MP	Lord Lyell
Dr Norman Godman MP	Mr Andrew Mackinlay ^[9]
Mr Robert Jackson MP	Mr Eddie McGrady MP
Mr Seamus Mallon MP	Mr John McWilliam MP
Rt hon Lord Merlyn-Rees PC	Rt hon Sir Brian Mawhinney PC
Mr William O'Brien MP	MP ^[10]
Mr Lembit Öpik MP	Ms Margaret Moran MP
Lord Rathcavan	Baroness O'Cathain OBE
Lord Redesdale ^[5]	Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP
Ms Geraldine Smith MP ^[6]	Mr David Tredinnick MP
Mr Robert Walter MP ^[7]	<i>One vacancy</i>
Mr David Wilshire MP	
<i>One vacancy</i> ^[8]	

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- 1 Replaced the late Senator Paddy McGowan. [Back](#)
 - 2 Replaced Senator Mary Henry. [Back](#)
 - 3 Replaced Senator Shane Ross. [Back](#)
 - 4 Resignation of Senator Pat Gallagher. [Back](#)
 - 5 Replaced Lord Holme of Cheltenham CBE [Back](#)
 - 6 Replaced Mr John Home Robertson MP [Back](#)
 - 7 Replaced Mr Andrew Robathan MP [Back](#)
 - 8 Caused by the death of Mr Roger Stott CBE MP [Back](#)
 - 9 Replaced Ms Kate Hoey MP [Back](#)
 - 10 Replaced Mr Robert Walter MP [Back](#)

APPENDIX 2
REPORTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS APPROVED BY THE BODY
Eighteenth Plenary, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, 29-30 March 1999

EDUCATION AND INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS - A STUDY OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1995

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Report of the Committee on Culture, Education and the Environment [Doc. No. 65] on matters relating to Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland, and agrees with the conclusions and recommendations of the Report, which should be forwarded to both Governments for their observations.

ROAD AND RAIL LINKS ON THE ISLAND OF IRELAND

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Responses of both Governments to the Report of the Committee on Economic and Social Affairs [Doc. No. 63] on matters relating to the Road and Rail Links on the Island of Ireland.

INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN UNION INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PEACE PROCESS

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Responses of both Governments to the Report of the Committee on European and International Affairs [Doc. 64] on matters relating to International and European Union Involvement with the Peace Process.

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Third Annual Report of the Body [Doc. No. 61].

Nineteenth Plenary, Cambridge, 14-15 September 1999

CAP REFORM

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Report of the Committee on European and International Affairs [Doc. No. 67] on matters relating to Common Agricultural Policy Reform, and agrees with the conclusions and recommendations of the Report, which should be forwarded to both Governments for their observations

EDUCATION AND INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS - A STUDY OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1995

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Responses of both Governments to the Report of the Committee on Culture, Education and the Environment [Doc. No. 68] on matters relating to Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland

FUTURE OF THE BODY

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Discussion Paper by the Working Group on the Future of the Body [Doc. No. 66] entitled 'The Future of the Body: Options for Development'.

APPENDIX 3 WORK OF COMMITTEES Committee A Political and Security

1. Given the uncertainty about the development of the political and security situation in Northern Ireland and the consequent difficulty of "trying to hit a moving target", Committee A continued during 1999 to undertake a general monitoring role, rather than producing full Reports on specific inquiries. The Committee met formally on 6 occasions, 4 times as part of working visits and twice during plenary sessions.
2. The Committee visited Belfast in February for discussions with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, a briefing on the security situation by Northern Ireland Office officials, and a meeting with the then Minister of State, Paul Murphy MP. Discussions covered decommissioning; demilitarisation/normalisation measures taken in response to the diminution in the level of threat from terrorist organisations since the cease-fires and the Belfast Agreement; the work being done to try to resolve the situation in relation to parades; prisoner releases; and the current political situation and prospects for progress in talks between the parties. Following its meeting at the Dromoland Castle Plenary in March, the Chairman reported orally to the Plenary on the Committee's work.
3. The Committee visited Belfast again in May, in advance of the main "marching season" for a discussion with the Parades Commission about its work. The Committee had met the Parades Commission a year earlier, in May 1998, when the Commission was just becoming established in its statutory role. This second meeting provided an opportunity to assess how the Commission had operated and developed in the intervening year, and the members of the Committee were very favourably impressed.

4. Following its meeting at the Cambridge plenary in September, the Committee decided to seek a series of meetings to discuss the issue of demilitarisation/normalisation and as a result travelled to Belfast in November to meet the Security Minister, Adam Ingram MP; Brigadier Balfour, Army Chief of Staff in Northern Ireland; and RUC Assistant Chief Constable Tim Lewis. A short visit to Dublin followed to meet the Commissioner Pat Byrne of the Gardaí . Discussions at these meetings were wide-ranging, covering not only the demilitarisation/normalisation issue but also an overview of the ever-changing security situation in Northern Ireland.

5. The Chairman of Committee A, Mr Charles Flanagan TD, will make an oral report to the Body of the Committee's continuing work at the plenary session in London in February.

Attendance at meetings of Committee A in 1999

Meeting in Belfast, Friday 26 February 1999:

Mr Charles Flanagan TD (Chairman), Dr Norman Godman MP (Vice-Chairman), Mr Dennis Canavan MP, Senator Joe Costello, Mr Michael Mates MP, Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD

Meeting at Dromoland Castle, Monday 29 March 1999:

Mr Charles Flanagan TD (Chairman), Rt Hon Peter Brooke MP, Senator Joe Costello, Lord Glentoran (*substitute*), Senator Helen Keogh, Mr Dinny McGinley TD, Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD

Meeting in Belfast, Friday 7 May 1999:

Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD (Acting Chairman), Rt Hon Peter Brooke MP, Senator Joe Costello, Lord Glentoran (*substitute*), Senator Helen Keogh, Mr Tony Killeen TD, Mr Michael Mates MP

Meeting in Cambridge, Tuesday 14th September 1999:

Mr Charles Flanagan TD (Chairman), Dr Norman Godman MP (Vice-Chairman), Mr Paul Bradford TD (*substitute*), Mr Dennis Canavan MP, Lord Glentoran (*substitute*), Senator Helen Keogh, Senator Ann Leonard (*substitute*), Mr Michael Mates MP, Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD, Lord Redesdale

Meeting in Belfast, 1 & 2 November 1999:

Mr Charles Flanagan TD (Chairman), Dr Norman Godman MP (Vice-Chairman), Mr Dennis Canavan MP, Senator Joe Costello, Senator Helen Keogh, Mr Tony Killeen TD, Mr John McWilliam MP (*substitute*), Mr Michael Mates MP, Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD

Meeting in Dublin, Tuesday 7th December 1999:

Mr Charles Flanagan TD (Chairman), Dr Norman Godman MP (Vice-Chairman), Mr Dennis Canavan MP, Mr Michael Mates MP, ...no record of Irish Members - check with Stephen/John Roycroft

Committee B
European and International Affairs

- 1 During 1999 the Committee held seven meetings (three in Ireland, three in Britain and one in Brussels), and agreed one report.
2. The Committee's principal inquiry was into the proposals for reform of the Common Agricultural Policy known as "Agenda 2000" and their likely impact on Ireland and Britain.
3. In connection with this inquiry the Committee took evidence at Westminster on 5 March from agricultural economists at the Northern Ireland Office. On 29 March the Committee met during the Plenary at Dromoland Castle in Co. Clare and agreed a programme for the remainder of the inquiry. On 21 May it held meetings at Stormont with the Northern Ireland Agriculture Minister, Lord Dubs, and his officials, and with representatives of the Ulster Farmers' Union and the General Consumer Council of Northern Ireland. On 18 June the Committee visited the European Commission in Brussels and held discussions on CAP reform, rural development and the structural funds. On 28 June the Committee met at Leinster House and took evidence from representatives of the Irish Farmers' Association, the Irish Creamery Milk Supplies Association, Teagasc (Ireland's national Agriculture and Food Development Authority) and the Irish Department of Agriculture.
4. Finally, on 19 July, the Committee met at the House of Commons and agreed its report. This was debated and approved at the Plenary of the Body held in Cambridge in September.
5. During the Plenary the Committee met and discussed its future programme. It was agreed to conduct an inquiry into transport to and from the island of Ireland, looking in particular at the prospects for increased co-operation in international transport policy. A programme of evidence sessions on this topic is being arranged for the early months of 2000.

Attendance at meetings of Committee B in 1999

Friday 5 March 1999, House of Commons, London

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Ms Mary Coughlan TD; Senator Paschal Mooney.

Monday 29 March 1999, Castle Dromoland, Co. Clare

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Ms Mary Coughlan TD; Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr John Ellis TD; Senator Paschal Mooney; Senator Shane Ross (*substitute*); Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP; Mr Robert Walter MP (*substitute*).

Friday 21 May 1999, Dundonald House, Stormont, Northern Ireland

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr John Ellis TD. [*NB: This meeting was inquorate on the British side.*]

Friday 18 June 1999, European Commission, 45 avenue d'Auderghem, Brussels

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr John Ellis TD; Senator Paschal Mooney.

Monday 28 June 1999, Leinster House, Dublin

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr Robert Jackson MP; Senator Paschal Mooney; Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP.

Monday 19 July 1999, House of Commons, London

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr John Ellis TD; Mr Robert Jackson MP; Senator Paschal Mooney

Tuesday 14 September 1999, Garden House Hotel, Cambridge

Mr Michael Colvin MP (in the Chair); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Mr Gerry Bermingham MP; Ms Mary Coughlan TD; Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr John Ellis TD; Miss Geraldine Smith MP; Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP.

Committee C

Economic and Social Affairs

1. In 1999 the Committee met on five occasions and made three visits to Ireland, North and South.
2. The Committee began its inquiry on the Future of Small Farms in the Rural Economy with a series of meetings in Dublin on 11 February 1999. The Committee held discussions with the Chairman of the Cavan/Monaghan LEADER Group, The Irish Farmers' Association, the ICMSA, Teagasc and the Department of Agriculture, as well as with Dr Jim Phelan of University College Dublin.

3. The Committee met on 29 March at the Plenary Session in Drumoland Castle, Co. Clare to review progress on the inquiry. At that meeting the Committee resolved to hold evidence sessions in Londonderry and visit farms in Northern Ireland and Co. Donegal in June. Unfortunately, the Committee was unable to conduct its programme of farm visits in June due to pressure of parliamentary business. The visits were therefore rescheduled for October.

4. On 20 and 21 October, the Committee visited farms near Garvagh and Eglinton in Co. Londonderry and at Malin Head and Muff in Co. Donegal. The Committee was accompanied on these visits by agricultural advisors from the Department of Agriculture Northern Ireland. The farm visits were preceded by discussions in Londonderry on the LEADER programme with the Head of the Rural Development Division, DANI and the Manager of a local LEADER group. Discussions were also held with representatives of the Ulster Farmers' Union and the Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers' Association.

5. On 13 December 1999, the Committee completed its evidence taking on the inquiry with discussions in Belfast with officials from the Department of Agriculture Northern Ireland.

6. It is hoped to present a report on The Future of Small Farms in the Rural Economy at the forthcoming London Plenary (February 2000)

Attendance at meetings of Committee C in 1999

Meeting in Dublin 11 February 1999:

Mr Séamus Kirk TD (Chairman), Mr Kevin McNamara MP (Vice-Chairman), Lord Blease, Mr Andrew Boylan TD, Ms Maria Fyfe MP, Mr Brian O'Shea TD, Mr Brendan Smith TD.

Meeting in Drumoland Castle, Co. Clare 29 March 1999:

Mr Séamus Kirk TD (Chairman), Mr Kevin McNamara MP (Vice-Chairman), Lord Blease, Mr Andrew Boylan TD, Mr John Browne TD, Mr Jeff Ennis MP, Ms Maria Fyfe MP, Mr Brian O'Shea TD, Baroness O'Cathain, Mr Brendan Smith TD.

Meeting in Cambridge 14 September 1999:

Mr Kevin McNamara MP (Vice-Chairman), Mr Andrew Boylan TD, Ms Maria Fyfe MP, Mr William O'Brien MP, Lord Rathcavan, Mr Michael Ring TD, Mr Brendan Smith TD.

Meeting in Londonderry 20 October 1999:

Mr William O'Brien (Vice-Chairman), Mr Andrew Boylan TD, Mr Johnny Brady TD, Mr Kevin McNamara MP, Senator Francis O'Brien, Mr Brendan Smith TD.

Meeting in Belfast 13 December 1999:

Mr Séamus Kirk TD (Chairman), Mr William O'Brien MP (Vice-Chairman), Lord Blease, Mr Kevin McNamara MP, Mr Brian O'Shea TD, Senator Francis O'Brien, Mr John Perry TD, Mr Brendan Smith TD.

Committee D
Culture, Education and the Environment

1. In March 1999, Committee D completed an inquiry into Education and Inter-Community relations. This inquiry followed the Committee's 1995 Report on the same subject and investigated the development of integrated education, education for mutual understanding (EMU) and the development of teaching in the medium of Irish. It was presented to the Plenary session on 29-30 March 1999. At that meeting, the Committee agreed to look further at two projects which had not been adequately considered in the Report because of time restraints. These visits formed the work of Committee D for the remainder of 1999.

2. In July the Committee went to Skye to visit the Columba Initiative and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is a Gaelic language college which promotes the Gaelic language and culture through summer courses and an expanding degree programme linked to the University of the Highlands and Islands. The Columba Initiative has its base at the College and was founded in 1997 to foster closer cultural and linguistic ties between the Gaelic speakers of Scotland and the island of Ireland. During the visit the Committee toured the campus and met with staff of the college and the project. Sadly, this visit was to be the last which the Committee would make under the Chairmanship of Roger Stott MP, who died in August. Committee members paid tribute to his tireless work as Chairman at their meeting at the September Plenary in Cambridge.

3. In November the Committee went to Warrington to see the work of the Warrington Project. This was the first visit on which the new Chairman, Kevin McNamara MP, accompanied the Committee. The Warrington Project began as an attempt by the people of Warrington to respond constructively to the IRA bombing of their town in 1993. Through the "Ireland in Schools" project it introduces themes of Irish culture and history into the National Curriculum and thus aims to promote mutual understanding amongst young people on both islands. During the visit, the Committee met with officers of the project and teachers and went to primary and secondary schools which were using study units devised by the Project.

Attendance at meetings of Committee D in 1999

Meeting in London, 1 March 1999:

Mr Roger Stott CBE MP (Chairman), Ms Marian McGennis TD (Vice-Chairman), Mr Jimmy Deenihan TD, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Mr William O'Brien MP

Meeting in Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, 29 March 1999:

Mr Roger Stott CBE MP (Chairman), Ms Marian McGennis TD (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Jean Corston MP, Mr Jimmy Deenihan TD, Senator Edward Haughey, Mr Lembit Opik MP, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Mr Brendan McGahon TD, Lord Merlyn Rees, Mr William O'Brien MP, Mr Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD

Meeting in Skye, 6-7 July 1999:

Mr Roger Stott CBE MP (Chairman), Ms Marian McGennis TD (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Jean Corston MP, Mr Brendan McGahon TD

Meeting in Cambridge, 13-14 September 1999:

Ms Marian McGennis TD (Vice-Chairman), Mr Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD, Mr Jimmy Deenihan TD, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Mr Andrew MacKinlay MP (*substitute*), Mr Kevin McNamara MP, Lord Merlyn-Rees, Mr William O'Brien MP, Mr Lembit Opik MP

Meeting in Warrington, 24-25 November 1999:

Mr Kevin McNamara MP (Chairman), Ms Marian McGennis TD (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Jean Corston MP, Mr Brendan McGahon TD

APPENDIX 4 Staff of the Body in 1999

<i>Ireland:</i>	<i>United Kingdom:</i>
<i>Clerk: Mr John Roycroft</i>	<i>Clerk: Mr Frank Cranmer</i>
<i>Counsellor/Adviser: Mr Stephen Dawson</i>	<i>Consultant: Brigadier John Osborne</i>
<i>Clerk, Committee A: Mr Stephen Dawson</i>	<i>Shadow Clerk, Committee A: Mr Crispin Poyser / Mr Huw Yardley</i>
<i>Shadow Clerk, Committee B: Mr George Hegarty / Mr Conor Long</i>	<i>Clerk, Committee B: Dr Robin James</i>
<i>Clerk, Committee C: Mr Stephen Dawson</i>	<i>Shadow Clerk, Committee C: Mr Alistair Doherty / Mr Frank Cranmer</i>
<i>Shadow Clerk, Committee D: Mr George Hegarty / Mr Conor Long</i>	<i>Clerk, Committee D: Dr Lucy Moulard</i>
<i>Administrators: Mrs Veronica Carr and Ms Rosanna Losty</i>	<i>Administrator: Miss Amanda Hay</i>
	<i>Secretaries: Mrs Barbara Hunter / Miss Jo Crowder / Mrs Ann Williams</i>

Media Consultant: Mr Mike Burns