



**BRITISH-IRISH
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY**

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

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

No. 83 — March 2002

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH-IRISH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY

Introduction

1. This is the sixth 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 2001.

Political developments

2. From a Westminster perspective, the most important event was the United Kingdom general election in June. Not only did several long-standing Members of the Body retire from the House of Commons, but the political balance of Northern Ireland representation changed: Sinn Féin increased its representation in the House of Commons to four seats and the Democratic Unionist Party to five, while the Ulster Unionist Party found its representation reduced to six.

3. From the UK general election onwards, the political situation in Northern Ireland moved with almost bewildering speed.

4. On 1 July, the First Minister, Mr David Trimble, resigned his post in protest at what he regarded as the slow progress of decommissioning of illegally-held weapons under the Belfast Agreement. He was succeeded as Acting First Minister by Sir Reg Empey. Mr Trimble's resignation was followed by an intensive round of inter-party talks led by the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach.

5. On Saturday 14 July the two Governments issued a statement in which they reemphasised that, while the outstanding issues of policing, the stability of the institutions, security normalisation and decommissioning were best addressed in their own terms rather than being seen as a precondition for progress on any other issue, the Agreement could only succeed if all parts of it were implemented together. The statement concluded:

We do not believe now that further negotiation is necessary. It is now for us, on the basis of our discussions, to draw together a final package. In the meantime, we ask all involved to reflect very carefully. We remain convinced that the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement is the wish of the great majority of the people. They want and deserve to enjoy the full benefits of the Agreement for which they voted.

6. On 1 August the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Dr John Reid, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Cowen, put forward a series of proposals covering policing, decommissioning, normalisation, and the stability of the institutions, with an invitation to the Northern Ireland party leaders to respond by 6 August. The responses revealed continuing disagreement between the Northern Ireland political parties. In order to provide further time for negotiation, the Executive and Assembly were suspended for one day, from midnight on 10-11 August to midnight on 11-12 August, thereby restarting the six-week period under the Northern Ireland Act 1998

during which either fresh elections had to be held or a new Executive formed. The institutions were further suspended from midnight on 21-22 September to midnight on 22-23 September.

7. On 18 August the Government published a revised plan for reforming the police in Northern Ireland in accordance with the proposals of the Patten Commission. The Secretary of State set a deadline of Tuesday 21 August for the four main parties to consider the plan and indicate their willingness or otherwise to nominate members to the Policing Board for the proposed Police Service of Northern Ireland. The immediate response of Sinn Féin was that the proposals were unacceptable; however, by 21 September the UUP, DUP and SDLP had nominated members to the Board. The change of name from "Royal Ulster Constabulary" subsequently came into effect on 4 November.

8. At the beginning of the new school term in September, inter-community tensions were heightened by Loyalist protests in the Aboyne district of North Belfast against the route chosen by Roman Catholic parents taking their children to Holy Cross Primary School. The matter was debated in the Northern Ireland Assembly on 10 September. More generally, there were serious outbreaks of inter-community violence in North Belfast during the latter part of the month, including an attack on a school bus taking children to Hazelwood Integrated College.

9. On 28 September, the Secretary of State was about to sign an Order specifying the Ulster Defence Association as having broken its cease-fire, but refrained from doing so on assurances that the violence would be brought to an end. He concluded, however, that the level of violence continued to be unacceptable; and on 12 October he specified the UDA (whose political wing, the Ulster Democratic Party, disbanded six weeks later), the Loyalist Volunteer Force and the Ulster Freedom Fighters. In a speech to the Labour Party Conference on 2 October he also announced that he proposed to bring in legislation to strengthen the law against incitement to sectarian or racial hatred.

10. On 23 October the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning reported to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform that they had

witnessed an event-which we regard as significant-in which the IRA has put a quantity of arms completely beyond use. The materiel in question includes arms, ammunition and explosives. We are satisfied that the arms in question have been dealt with in accordance with the scheme and regulations. We are also satisfied that it would not further the process of putting all arms beyond use were we to provide further details of this event.

In addition, the United Kingdom Government began dismantling some of the watchtowers in South Armagh and, in a statement on 23 October, reiterated the commitment of both Governments to the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

11. In response, Mr Trimble concluded that it would be appropriate for the UUP to resume full participation in the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly and the DUP Ministers resumed their portfolios. However, on 2 November Mr Trimble failed to secure a unionist majority in the Assembly for re-election as First Minister. Protracted negotiations followed, during which some of the Alliance MLAs agreed to register as unionists for the purposes of Assembly votes and the Democratic Unionist Party brought an unsuccessful action in the High Court for judicial review of the actions of the Assembly and the Secretary of State. On 6 November, Mr Trimble was elected First Minister and Mr Mark Durkan Deputy First Minister, following which the Secretary of State confirmed that there would be a review of the workings of Strand One of the Good Friday Agreement.

The work of the Body

12. In accordance with the Rules of the Body, two Plenary Sessions were held in 2000: from 26 to 27 February in Killarney and from 3 to 4 December in Bournemouth.

13. Much the most important development in the work of the Body itself was its enlargement to incorporate representatives from the new devolved parliamentary institutions and the islands. The debate on how this should be achieved had occupied the Body for some considerable time, and at the Twenty-first Plenary in Galway, the Body had agreed to a temporary change in the Rules to permit the Steering Committee to make transitional provision for the accession of the devolved institutions and islands. After considerable thought and some degree of negotiation, the Steering Committee brought forward proposals to the Twenty-second Plenary for changes to the Rules which would provide for representation from the devolved institutions and the Crown Dependencies. The proposals were agreed with only very slight amendment, and the Observers from the candidate institutions became Full Members - a development which was welcomed by the Taoiseach in a speech to the Scottish Parliament on 20 June.

14. Under the new arrangements:

- the National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament are each entitled to nominate five Members and four Associate Members to the Body;
- the States of Guernsey, the States of Jersey and Tynwald may each nominate one Member and one Associate;
- the Steering Committee has been expanded from six to nine, in order to provide three seats for the new member institutions to be chosen from among themselves collectively; and
- the former Political Committee has been redesignated "the Committee on Sovereign Matters" and will remain solely the preserve of Members from Westminster and the *Oireachtas*, while the other three Committees are being expanded to include representatives from the new member institutions.

Twenty-second Plenary

15. The Twenty-second Plenary was held at Killarney from 26-27 February, shortly after the first case of foot-and-mouth disease had been confirmed in the United Kingdom since 1967. In view of the seriousness of the situation both for Great Britain and the island of Ireland, the Steering Committee proposed an emergency debate on the situation. After a full and rather sombre discussion, the Body agreed the following Resolution:

That the Body notes the outbreak of foot and mouth disease and the immediate actions being taken to contain the spread of the disease.

16. During the afternoon sitting, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr John O'Donoghue TD, made a statement to the Body and answered Oral Questions. For the first time, Members from the newly-admitted institutions were able to ask questions, and both Ms Patricia MSP and Ms Cathie Craigie MSP asked about the newly-established Irish drug courts and the possibility of Scotland (where a similar proposal was under consideration) benefiting from Irish experience in this area.

17. The Body then debated a report from Committee D on the cultural significance of parades. The Committee had had the opportunity to take evidence from the Parades Commission, from the Apprentice Boys and the Ancient Order of Hibernians and, in Scotland, from the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Orange Order. It had not proved possible, however, to arrange a meeting with the Orange Order in Ireland, and this was noted with general regret. The report was agreed to without dissent.

18. The following day began with business reports from the Committees, and an oral Report on the activities of Committee A by the Vice-Chairman, Dr Norman Godman.

19. The Body then turned to a debate on recent political developments. It was noted that since the last meeting in Galway Dr John Reid had replaced Mr Peter Mandelson as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and that the North-South Ministerial Council had started work. There had also been formal contacts between Committees of Dáil Éireann and the Northern Ireland Assembly. However, the political situation continued to be threatened by sporadic violence in the form of pipe-bomb attacks - particularly against the minority community - and so-called punishment beatings. As on previous occasions, much of the debate centered on weapons decommissioning, demilitarization and policing. The text of the Body's Resolution is as follows:

That the Body takes note of recent political developments in Northern Ireland; calls on all of the pro-Agreement political parties to redouble their efforts towards the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement; and continues to support the Irish and British Governments in their efforts to achieve this goal.

20. The Body took note of the Fifth Annual Report [Doc.79]. It further noted that it was likely that this would be the last Plenary before the impending general election in the United Kingdom, and noted the impending retirement from the House of Commons of the Rt. hon. Peter Brooke CH MP, Mrs Maria Fyfe MP, Dr Norman A Godman MP and Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP, all of whom had been long-standing Members of the Body. Subsequently, Mr Gerry Bermingham MP also announced that he would not be standing at the forthcoming election. Subsequently, Mr Brooke and Mr Temple-Morris were created life peers in the Resignation Honours List, and the Body had the pleasure of welcoming them back at the Twenty-third Plenary.

Twenty-third Plenary

21. The Twenty-third Plenary took place in Bournemouth from 3-4 December. As in 2000, the Body was sent a message of support by the Prime Minister.

22. The Plenary began with the customary debate on recent political developments, which took place in the context of the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Executive after a period of some uncertainty. Members welcomed the fact that the institutions established under the Belfast Agreement were once more in full operation but expressed concern at continuing low-level violence, particularly in areas such as North Belfast. Concern was also expressed about the apparent disconnection between the leaders of the peace process and those local communities that did not feel that they were benefiting from it. There was a general welcome for the act of decommissioning by the IRA; but the consensus was that this was only the first step, however important, on a long road. There was a large (though not unanimous) measure of over the new policing arrangements. Members also noted with approval the decision of the Gaelic Athletic Association to remove its ban on members of the security forces playing Gaelic games, in the hope that this would encourage recruitment from the Nationalist community to the new Police Service for Northern Ireland.

23. The text of the Body's Resolution is as follows:

That the Body reaffirms its support for the Good Friday Agreement and the conclusions of the Weston Park consultation; endorses the views of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the outstanding issues relate to policing, the stability of the institutions, security normalisation and decommissioning and that while each of these issues is best addressed in its own terms, rather than being seen as a precondition for progress on any other, the Agreement can only succeed if all parts of it are implemented together; notes the recent political developments in Northern Ireland; expresses the hope that the election of the Rt hon David Trimble as First Minister and of Mr Mark Durkan as Deputy First Minister marks the beginning of a new era of stability in the political institutions of Northern Ireland; and calls on all political representatives to respect the wishes of the people in the referenda to implement the Agreement in full.

23. The Body then debated the responses of the two Governments to Committee D's Report on the Cultural Significance of Parades. The text of the resulting Resolution can be found in Appendix 2.

24. As a result of an unexpected hiatus in the programme, Mr Quentin Davies MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, was invited by the Steering Committee to address the Body. Mr Davies, who was warmly received by the Body, gave a short presentation on the Opposition's policies in relation to Northern Ireland, and answered questions. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt hon Dr John Reid PC MP, then addressed the Plenary, focussing on the importance of the Good Friday Agreement as a vehicle for realising the aspirations of the different communities throughout the British Isles, and answered oral questions.

25. On Tuesday 5 December, after brief business reports from Committee Chairmen, the Body turned its attention to a debate on Sellafield, on a substantive motion for the adjournment. In a frank debate, concerns were expressed by Members from several jurisdictions about the safety and economic viability of the mixed oxide fuel plant at Sellafield; others, however, took the view that fears about safety were rather exaggerated and that reprocessing was still a necessary part of the nuclear fuel cycle. It was agreed that a transcript of the debate should be circulated to member governments within the British-Irish Council

Steering Committee

26. The Members of the Steering Committee during the year were Mr Michael O'Kennedy SC TD and Mr David Winnick MP, Co-Chairmen, and Mr Jimmy Deenihan TD, Mr Brian Hayes TD, Mr Michael Mates MP, Mr Kevin McNamara MP, and Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD, Vice-Chairmen. Ms Patricia Ferguson MSP, Mr Séan Neeson MLA and Mr Barry McElduff MLA represented the devolved institutions once they had become full members of the Body. The Crown Dependencies, however, decided to rotate their representation; and meetings were attended on their behalf by Mr Edgar Quine MHK, Senator Pierre Horsfall and Deputy Roger C Berry. The Committee met on five occasions. Mr Deenihan replaced Mr Hayes as a Vice-Chairman during the course of the year.

Committees

27. The work of the Committees during the year is outlined in Appendix 3. Overall, the UK general election caused an inevitable break in their work-programmes.

Prospects for 2002

28. The work of the Body during 2002 is likely to be disrupted to some extent by the forthcoming general election in Ireland, and this is likely to impact most of all on the work of Committees. 2002 will be the first full year of the expanded Body, and perhaps the first task is fully to integrate the new Members into the Body's activities.

More generally, however, much depends on the continuing stability of the institutions established under the Good Friday Agreement.

APPENDIX 1

Members of the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body

The Oireachtas

Members of the Body - January 2001

FULL MEMBERS

Mr Michael O'Kennedy TD (*Co-Chairman*)
Mr Brian Hayes TD (*Vice-Chairman*)
Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD (*Vice-Chairman*)
Mr Andrew Boylan TD
Senator Joe Costello
Ms Mary Coughlan TD
Mr Seymour Crawford TD
Mr Austin Currie TD
Mr Jimmy Deenihan TD
Mr John Ellis TD
Senator Edward Haughey
Senator Mary Henry
Ms Cecilia Keaveney TD
Senator Helen Keogh
Mr Tony Killeen TD
Mr Séamus Kirk TD
Mr Conor Lenihan TD
Mr Brendan McGahon TD
Ms Marian McGennis TD
Mr Dinny McGinley TD
Senator Paschal Mooney
Caoimhghín O Caoláin TD
Mr Brian O'Shea TD
Mr Michael Ring TD
Mr Brendan Smith TD

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr Bernard Allen TD
Mr Liam Aylward TD
Senator Enda Bonner
Mr Paul Bradford TD
Mr John Brady TD
Mr Matt Brennan TD
Mr John Browne TD (Carlow-Kilkenny)
Senator Frank Chambers
Mr Proinsias de Rossa TD
Mr Seán Doherty TD
Senator Pat Gallagher
Senator Tony Kett
Senator Ann Leonard
Senator Maurice Manning
Mr Michael Moynihan TD
Ms Breeda Moynihan-Cronin TD
Senator Francis O'Brien
Mr John Perry TD
Mr Gerry Reynolds TD
Senator Shane Ross

Members of the Body - December 2001

FULL MEMBERS

Mr Michael O'Kennedy TD (*Co-Chairman*)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr Bernard Allen TD

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Mr Jimmy Deenihan 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 (Carlow-Kilkenny) |
| Mr Austin Currie TD | Senator Frank Chambers |
| Mr John Ellis TD | Mr Proinsias de Rossa TD |
| Senator Edward Haughey | Mr Seán Doherty TD |
| Mr Brian Hayes TD | Senator Pat Gallagher |
| Ms Cecilia Keaveney TD | Senator Mary Henry |
| Senator Helen Keogh | Senator Tony Kett |
| Mr Tony Killeen TD | Senator Ann Leonard |
| Mr Séamus Kirk TD | Senator Maurice Manning |
| Mr Conor Lenihan TD | Mr Michael Moynihan TD |
| Mr Brendan McGahon TD | Ms Breeda Moynihan-Cronin TD |
| Ms Marian McGennis TD | Senator Francis O'Brien |
| Mr Dinny McGinley TD | Mr John Perry TD |
| Senator Paschal Mooney | Mr Gerry Reynolds TD |
| Caoimhghín O Caoláin TD | |
| Mr Brian O'Shea TD | |
| Mr Michael Ring TD | |
| Senator Shane Ross | |
| Mr Brendan Smith TD | |

***Parliament of the United Kingdom
Members of the Body - January 2001***

FULL MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Mr David Winnick MP (<i>Co-Chairman</i>) | Mr Nick Ainger MP |
| Mr Michael Mates MP (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>) | Lord Alderdice MLA |
| 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 | Mr John Grogan MP |
| Rt hon Peter Brooke PC CH MP | Mr Nick Hawkins MP |
| Lord Dubs | Ms Helen Jackson MP |
| Mrs Maria Fyfe MP | Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC |
| Lord Glentoran CBE | Lord Lyell |

Dr Norman Godman MP
Mr Dominic Grieve MP
Mr Robert Jackson MP
Mr John McFall MP
Mr Seamus Mallon MP MLA
Rt hon Sir Brian Mawhinney PC MP
Rt hon Lord Merlyn-Rees PC
Mr William O'Brien MP
Mr Lembit Öpik MP
Lord Smith of Clifton
Ms Geraldine Smith MP
Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP
Mr David Wilshire MP

Mr Eddie McGrady MP
Mr Andrew Mackinlay MP
Mr John McWilliam MP
Ms Margaret Moran MP
Mr Stephen O'Brien MP
Baroness O'Cathain OBE
Mr David Tredinnick MP
Mr Robert Walter MP

***UK Members of the Body - December 2001
(delegation appointed September-December 2001)***

FULL MEMBERS

Mr David Winnick MP (*Co-Chairman*)
Mr Michael Mates MP (*Vice-Chairman*)
Mr Kevin McNamara MP (*Vice-Chairman*)
Mr Harry Barnes MP
Mr John Battle MP
Mr Joe Benton MP
Rt hon Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville PC CH
Ms Jean Corston MP
Lord Dubs
Lord Glentoran CBE DL
Mr John Hume MP MLA
Ms Helen Jackson MP
Mr Elfyn Llwyd MP
Mr John McFall MP
Rt hon Andrew Mackay PC MP
Ms Rosemary McKenna CBE MP
Mr Andrew Mackinlay MP
Rt hon Sir Brian Mawhinney PC MP
Mr William O'Brien MP
Mr Lembit Öpik MP

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Lord Alderdice MLA
Mr Henry Bellingham MP
Mr Kevin Brennan MP
Mr Tony Colman MP
Mr Jeff Ennis MP
Mr Paul Flynn MP
Mr Dominic Grieve MP
Mr John Grogan MP
Mr Steve McCabe MP
Mr John McWilliam MP
Ms Gillian Merron MP
Mr Stephen O'Brien MP
Mr John Robertson MP
Mr Chris Ruane MP
Mr David Ruffley MP
Mr Alex Salmond MP
(vacancy)
(vacancy)
(vacancy)
(vacancy)

Lord Smith of Clifton
Lord Temple-Morris
Mr Robert Walter MP
(vacancy)
(vacancy)

National Assembly for Wales

***Members of the Body - December 2001
(delegation appointed April 2001)***

FULL MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr William Graham AM
Mr John Griffiths AM
Dr Dai Lloyd AM
The Presiding Officer or his representative
(vacancy)

Mr Michael German AM
Mr Brian Gibbons AM
(vacancy)
(vacancy)

Northern Ireland Assembly

***Members of the Body - December 2001
(delegation appointed April 2001)***

FULL MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Ms Carmel Hanna MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Séan Neeson MLA
(vacancy)
(vacancy)

Mr David Ervine MLA
Mr Francie Molloy MLA
Mr Danny O'Connor MLA
(vacancy)

States of Guernsey

***Members of the Body - December 2001
(delegation appointed November 2001)***

FULL MEMBER

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Deputy Roger C Berry

Deputy Mike Torode

States of Jersey

***Members of the Body - December 2001
(delegation appointed April 2001)***

FULL MEMBER

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Senator Pierre Horsfall OBE

Senator Terence Le Sueur

The Scottish Parliament

***Members of the Body - December 2001
(delegation appointed April 2001)***

FULL MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Ms Cathie Craigie MSP

Ms Annabel Goldie MSP

Mrs Margaret Ewing MSP

Mr Michael McMahon MSP

Ms Patricia Ferguson MSP

Ms Shona Robison MSP

Mr David McLetchie MSP

Mr Jamie Stone MSP

Mr Iain Smith MSP

Tynwald

Members of the Body - July 2001

FULL MEMBER

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Mr Edgar Quine OBE QPM MHK

Sir Miles Walker CBE MHK

***The House of Keys was dissolved in October 2001 and first met after the general election
on 27 November: at the end of 2001 the Manx seats on the Body were vacant.***

APPENDIX 2

**Reports and other documents approved by the Body
Twenty-second Plenary, Killarney, 26-27 February 2001**

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

That the Body takes note of the Fourth Annual Report of the Body [Doc. No. 79].

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO RULES AND REFORM OF THE BODY

That the Amendments to Rules [Doc. No. 80] be made with immediate effect.

THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PARADES

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

That the Body takes note of the Report of the Environmental and Social Committee [Doc. No. 81] on the Cultural Significance of Parades and the conclusions and recommendations of the Report, which should be forwarded to both Governments for their observations.

Twenty-second Plenary, Bournemouth, 3-4 December 2001

THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PARADES

The Body agreed to the following Resolution:

That the Body takes note of the responses of the British and Irish Governments to the Report of Environmental and Social Committee [Doc. No. 82] on the Cultural Significance of Parades and the conclusions and recommendations of the Report.

APPENDIX 3

Work of Committees Committee A Committee on Sovereign Matters.

1. In common with other Committees, Committee A found its work necessarily disrupted by the UK general election in June, and the consequent need to reestablish the Committee in the second part of the year. Nevertheless it met formally on three occasions during the year, twice during plenary sessions and once on a working visit.
2. In February, the Committee undertook a visit to Larne and Belfast to inquire into the rise in sectarian harassment and attacks. The committee met the Chief Constable of the RUC, Sir Ronnie Flanagan, and representatives of Unionist parties, the SDLP and Sinn Féin. During the course of the latter meetings the Committee had the opportunity to meet and talk to victims of the attacks themselves. The Committee also took the opportunity to meet officials from the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat.
3. The Committee met at the Killarney Plenary later in February, and the Shadow Chairman reported orally to the Plenary on the Committee's work. No further meetings were possible until the Bournemouth Plenary in November, at which the Committee decided to examine the possibility of a visit to Belfast early in 2002 to examine progress in the establishment of the new Northern Ireland Police Service.

Attendance at Meetings of Committee A in 2001

Thursday 15th and Friday 16th February 2001, Belfast and Larne: Mr Brian Hayes TD (Chairman), Dr Norman Godman MP (Shadow Chairman), Senator Helen Keogh, Mr Sean Doherty TD (for Mr. Tony Killeen TD), Dr Rory O'Hanlon TD, Mr John McWilliam MP (for Mr Dennis Canavan).

Tuesday 27th February 2001, Killarney: Dr Norman Godman MP (Acting Chairman), Rt Hon Peter Brooke MP, Senator Helen Keogh, Mr Tony Killeen TD, Mr Dinny McGinley TD, Mr Michael Mates MP, Lord Smith of Clifton.

Tuesday 4th December 2001, Bournemouth: Michael Mates MP (Acting Chairman), Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville, John Browne TD (for Mr. Dinny McGinley TD), Lord Dubs, Senator Helen Keogh, Andrew Mackinlay MP.

Committee B
European Affairs Committee

1. The Committee continued its inquiry into transport links between Ireland and Great Britain. This has been a broad-ranging look at links between the two islands by air and sea as well as road and rail links to ports and airports. Issues examined have included the impact of differential fuel duties, north and south of the Irish Border; the prospects for the expansion of air traffic; the need for further investment in road and rail links and the possibility of opening up new routes for Irish freight across Britain and on to continental Europe.
2. The inquiry has also provided an opportunity to study how the new devolved arrangements within the UK are working in practice, the extent of liaison between devolved, national and European levels on transport matters, and input from the Republic at each of these levels.
3. In November 2000 the Committee had explored these issues in a visit to Edinburgh at which it met Sarah Boyack MSP, Minister of Transport in the Scottish Executive, and the Transport and Environment Committee of the Scottish Parliament. In February 2001 the Committee made a similar visit to Cardiff at which it met Ms Sue Essex AM, Minister of Transport in the National Assembly for Wales, and Assembly officials.
4. The Committee hoped to visit Northern Ireland, to meet the Regional Development Minister (responsible for transport), Mr Gregory Campbell MLA, and the Regional Development Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Despite repeated approaches, however, this visit could not be arranged, largely because of political problems. Mr Campbell let it be known that, in accord with the policy of his party, the DUP, he was unwilling to meet with a committee of the Body. Likewise, the Ulster Unionist Party members of the Regional Development Committee were reluctant to meet with Committee B given the party's policy of non-participation in the Body. The SDLP chair of the committee, Mr Alban McGuinness MLA, indicated that, while he personally supported a meeting, he wished to proceed only on the basis of consensus within his committee.

5. Committee B next met during the Plenary in Killarney in March 2000. At this meeting it was decided that the Committee would not meet again until after the UK general election, which was thought to be imminent.

6. In the event the election was not held till June, and the British side of the Committee was not renominated till November. The next meeting of the Committee was therefore held at the Bournemouth Plenary in December. At this meeting Sir Brian Mawhinney MP took the Chair for the first time, in succession to Mr Robert Jackson MP (who had ceased to be a member of the Body).

7. During the period in which Committee activities were in abeyance, further written evidence relating to transport links was gathered by the Committee secretariat. At the December meeting the Committee decided to resume the transport inquiry, with a view to presenting a report to the Dublin Plenary in Spring 2002. The Committee also reaffirmed its wish to meet the Regional Development Committee, either in Belfast or in a 'neutral venue' elsewhere.

Attendance at Meetings of Committee B in 2001

Monday 12 February 2001, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff: Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr John Ellis TD; Mr Dominic Grieve MP; Senator Mary Henry; Senator Paschal Mooney; Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP.

Tuesday 27 February 2001, Killarney: Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr Harry Barnes MP; Mr Seymour Crawford TD; Mr John Ellis TD; Mr Dominic Grieve MP; Senator Paschal Mooney; Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP.

Tuesday 4 December 2001, Bournemouth: Sir Brian Mawhinney MP (Chairman); Mr Austin Currie TD (Vice-Chairman); Mr John Ellis TD; Margaret Ewing MSP; Senator Mary Henry; Mr Elfyn Llwyd MP; Senator Paschal Mooney; Lord Temple-Morris.

Committee C Economic Committee

1. In 2001 the Committee met on three occasions, one of which involved a visit to Northern Ireland. It was unable to complete its inquiry on Tourism before the Dissolution of the House of Commons in May.

2. The Committee visited Northern Ireland on 17-18 January. Discussions were held in Belfast with officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. The Committee gathered a great deal of useful information on the importance of tourism to the economy of Northern Ireland. Issues discussed included the provision of support from the EU; grants for hotel construction and the impact of the different VAT rates north and south of the border. The role of the new publicly-owned company Tourism Ireland Ltd. was also raised. After a meeting with the International Fund for Ireland, the committee visited

a number of tourism projects in Belfast. Dame Mary Peters, Deputy Chairman of the NITB, hosted a dinner for the committee at which representatives from Tourism Ireland Ltd, the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation and the National Trust were present. On Thursday, 18 January, the Committee looked at examples of tourism infrastructure along the Antrim coast.

3. At the meeting at the Killarney Plenary on 27th February, the Committee reviewed progress on the tourism inquiry. A decision was taken to maintain the restricted scope of the inquiry; it would focus on North-South issues. The Committee had intended to meet again in Dublin with officials from the Department of Tourism and Sport, academics working on tourism and representatives of the regional tourist bodies, but before it could do so the United Kingdom general election intervened.

4. The first meeting of the Committee after the general election took place during the Plenary Session in Bournemouth. On 4th December, the Committee decided to complete its inquiry into tourism. It was agreed:

- to arrange a meeting with Bord Fáilte;
- to seek further submissions from the NI Tourist Board, regional tourism agencies, with particular focus on cross-border aspects; and
- to seek submissions from relevant transport operators.

It was envisaged the Committee would meet in Dublin before the end of January, and the Clerks were asked to circulate copies of the previous Reports on Tourism and on Road and Rail Links in the Island of Ireland.

5. At that meeting Mr Bellingham raised the possibility of an inquiry into the impact of economic distortions on cross-Border trade. It was agreed that the matter would be put on the agenda when the Committee was reconstituted after the forthcoming Irish general election.

Attendance at meetings of Committee C in 2001

Meeting in Belfast, 17/18th January 2001: Mr Séamus Kirk TD (Chairman), Mr William O'Brien MP (Vice-Chairman), Mr Andrew Boylan TD, Mr Jeff Ennis MP, Ms Cecilia Keaveney TD, Mr Brian O'Shea TD, Mr Brendan Smith TD.

Meeting in Killarney, 27th February 2001: Mr Séamus Kirk TD (Chairman), Lord Dubs, Mr Jeff Ennis MP, Mr Brian O'Shea TD.

Meeting in Bournemouth, 4th December 2001: Mr Séamus Kirk (Chair), Mr Bill O'Brien (Shadow Chair), Mr Harry Barnes MP, Mr Henry Bellingham MP, Mr Andrew Boylan TD, Mr Tony Coleman MP (Associate), Ms Cecilia Keaveney TD, Mr David McLetchie MSP and Mr Brian O'Shea TD.

Committee D Environmental and Social Committee

1. The beginning of 2001 saw Committee D continuing its enquiry into "The cultural significance of parades". At the October 2000 Plenary in Galway the Committee had agreed to visit Killeel and Donegal to meet with representatives of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Orange Order, and also to make a further visit to examine the cultural significance of parades in Great Britain. In the event the Orange Order in Donegal refused to meet the Committee, so on 17 January the Committee visited Newry to meet representatives of the AOH Board of Erin, including the National President, Brother Gene Lambe. The frank discussion that followed covered both general issues to do with parading culture, and also the specific problems associated with the AOH parade in nearby Killeel.
2. The Committee followed this up with a visit on 29 January to Glasgow, where it proved possible to meet representatives of the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland, led by the Grand Master, Ian Wilson. The Committee also met the AOH Provincial Board of Scotland, led by its President, Gerry O'Connor. Both meetings cast valuable light on the social pressures affecting the parading orders in Scotland, and on the very different parading culture that prevails there.
3. The Committee agreed its Report in London on 12 February, and presented the Report to the February 2001 Plenary in Killarney, where it was debated. Responses were subsequently received from both Governments, which were in turn debated at the December 2001 Plenary in Bournemouth.
4. The work of the Committee after the February Plenary was impeded first by the foot-and-mouth crisis, and then by the British general election. However, the Committee was able to respond to an approach from Professor Neil Collins, Director of the Graduate School in Business and Government at University College Cork, concerning the links in higher education across the islands. The Chairman wrote to education ministers in each of the jurisdictions, asking them about their policies on encouraging such links, and on the participation of civil servants in courses designed to promote understanding of inter-governmental issues and regional development. Answers have been received from all the jurisdictions, and will be brought together in a short report.
5. The Committee met with a new membership at the December Plenary in Bournemouth, and agreed that its next enquiry should focus on the Sellafield nuclear power station. The Committee is particularly concerned at the security implications of the terrorist outrages of 11 September, and hopes to find reassurance that appropriate responses have been made. A visit to the site is proposed for the end of January 2002.

Attendance at meetings of Committee D in 2001

Visit to Newry, 17 January 2001: Ms Jean Corston MP, Senator Edward Haughey, Mr Brendan McGahon TD, Ms Marian McGennis TD, Mr Kevin McNamara MP

Visit to Glasgow, 29 January 2001: Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Mr John McFall MP, Mr Brendan McGahon TD, Ms Marian McGennis TD, Mr Kevin McNamara MP

London, Portcullis House, 12 February 2001: Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Ms Marian McGennis TD, Mr Kevin McNamara MP, Mr Lembit Öpik MP

Killarney Park Hotel, 27 February 2001: Ms Jean Corston MP, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Mr Brendan McGahon TD, Mr Kevin McNamara MP

Marriott Highcliff Hotel, Bournemouth, 4 December 2001: Mr John Battle MP, Mr Geoff Ennis MP, The Lord Glentoran, Ms Carmel Hanna MLA, Mr Brian Hayes TD, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, Dr Dai Lloyd AM, Mr Brendan McGahon TD, Ms Marian McGennis TD, Mr Iain Smith MSP.

APPENDIX 4

Staff of the Body in 2001

Ireland:

United Kingdom:

Clerks: Mr Jim Mulkerrins

Clerk: Mr Frank Cranmer

Counsellors/Advisers: Mr Conor Long & Mr Colm McGrady

Consultant: Brigadier John Osborne

Clerks, Committee A: Mr Conor Long & Mr Colm McGrady

Shadow Clerk, Committee A: Mr Huw Yardley

Shadow Clerks, Committee B: Mr Patrick Duffy & Ms Marianne Bolger

Clerk, Committee B: Dr Robin James

Clerks, Committee C: Mr Conor Long & Mr Colm McGrady

Shadow Clerks, Committee C: Mr Alistair Doherty, Mr John Whatley & Mr Frank Cranmer

Shadow Clerks, Committee D: Mr Patrick Duffy & Ms Marianne Bolger

Clerk, Committee D: Dr Christopher Johnson

Administrators: Mrs Veronica Carr & Ms Rosanna Losty

Administrator: Miss Amanda Hay

Media Consultant: Mr Mike Burns