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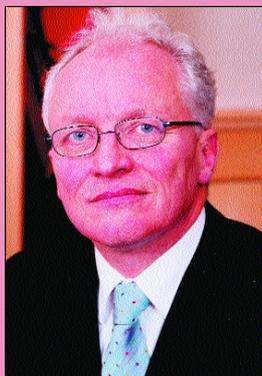
June 2003

irish national teachers organisation cumann múinteoirí éireann

Northern Conference Report....pages 5/8



Editorial



A big thank-you to all our members who throughout the year maintained our "Enough is Enough" industrial action campaign. The primary focus of the action was against the plan to introduce performance management linked to pay, the inspection regime and teacher workload

and bureaucracy. It was designed to spell out to the DE - and the employers - that teachers have had enough.

ENOUGH OF WHAT?

- Enough of Departmental Circulars on workload and bureaucracy that are not worth the paper they are written on;
- Enough of ill conceived strategies dumped peremptorily on the teaching profession with no regard for its welfare;
- Enough of the out-of-kilter policing inspector/teacher relationship;
- Enough of the indolence underlying the cosy "parity only" arrangements for teachers' salaries and conditions of service;
- Enough of the LMS school funding policies resulting in unnecessary school budget deficits and teacher redundancies.

Working together in solidarity, teachers have shown that we can overcome many of our problems. Devolution helped, as did a sensitive Education Minister. However, to date the DE and the employers have been slow in getting the message. In the coming year they have plans for teachers that would choke a donkey - Curriculum Review, new assessment arrangements, E-learning, new Inspection arrangements, new CPD arrangements, new fudges on Selection - the list just goes on.

In the INTO teachers know they will be protected. Young teachers need jobs and all teachers need to be treated with dignity and respect. Regardless of the industrial action, our "Enough is Enough" campaign continues until these objectives are achieved.

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TEACHER SUPPORT NETWORK



Paddy Hanna, Chief Executive
Teacher Support Network.

INTO welcomes the appointment of Paddy Hanna as Chief Executive of the Teacher Support Network in Northern Ireland - the UK Teachers' Charity. The only agenda of this charity is the improvement of the

health and well-being of teachers. Surely this proposed development is most timely and welcome.

Paddy at a recent symposium to introduce the new service said:

"Our main objective is to work in partnership with the key stakeholders within the education sector by developing practical support services which will enhance the health and well-being of teachers. The pressures faced by teachers are unique. We value teachers at all times and will promote a positive image of teachers."

Paddy has an excellent background in teacher welfare issues and is sure to continue making an outstanding contribution for the teaching profession.

CURRICULUM REVIEW

WORKLOAD CONCERNS GROW

Following the consultation on Phase 2 of the Curriculum and Assessment Review CCEA has presented recommendations to Jane Kennedy MP, Education Minister. There was general support for the proposals recommended by CCEA which are for implementation over an extended period of 7-10 years, no resources have yet been allocated nor has non-teaching time been guaranteed to ensure teachers can cope with these immense changes.

The proposals for KS3 strangely did not receive a positive response. The outcome of the consultation responses was such that CCEA has recommended to the Minister that new KS3 proposals be drafted and consulted on in the autumn term of 2003. Details on the proposals for implementation are awaited.

INTO will be responding to the implementation plans in the context of the Organisation's industrial action campaign on

workload. INTO is also demanding appropriate training, time and resources to ensure the debacle of the 1989 Curriculum implementation process is not repeated.

Nuala O'Donnell INTO welcomed the additional funding made available to provide for classroom assistants in all primary 2 classes which are involved in the Enriched Curriculum Pilot Project. This must be extended to include all classes in primary schools in Northern Ireland.

Teachers' Unions Excluded



The deliberate exclusion of the teachers' unions and parents' representatives from the Review Group to determine new arrangements for pupil transfer to post primary schools has been slammed by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation. Jane Kennedy MP, Education Minister (pictured above) has established a working group, comprising of so-called managers, and excluded representative teachers. For decades INTO has highlighted the harmful impact to generations of children arising from the antiquated selective transfer system. In spite of correspondence with the Education Minister about decision making on new transfer arrangements and the potential use of pupil profiles as a selective tool, the minister has established this working group of bureaucrats with watered down terms of reference designed to produce yet another fudge in addressing the eleven plus.

Frank Bunting, Northern Secretary said: "Now we know Jane Kennedy's meaning of "partnership". It is nothing short of exclusion. The terms of reference and the make-up of the working group have been drawn up in secrecy. There has been no consultation whatever with the teachers' unions. The teachers' unions have been deliberately excluded from one of the most important decisions concerning their role as professional teachers, their conditions of service and the quality of teaching and learning of

their pupils. In its breathtaking, contemptuous disregard for teachers, we have to go back to the worst years of Dr Brian Mawhinney's unaccountable Tory administration. It is too early to predict how INTO will respond to this disdainful action but it most certainly sours the atmosphere totally.

The exclusion of teachers' unions and parents' representatives by a Labour Direct Rule administration is unprecedented and INTO is bringing this outrage to the attention also of the Secretary of State Paul Murphy MP."

Jane Kennedy also said:

"There is also agreement (sic) that those most closely involved with managing the education system should be at the centre of developing future arrangements. I have decided, therefore, to bring together key education interests in a small Working Group and I am delighted that Steve Costello has agreed to act as Chair. The task of the Group will be to take account of the range of responses to the consultation, including the diversity of views on academic selection, and provide advice and recommendations on options for future arrangements for post-primary education. The Group will report to me, or to a devolved Minister for Education, by 31 October 2003. This is an important and complex education issue and I believe that those who have experience of managing and administering the system are best placed to build on the progress that has been made and develop future arrangements that will enable all children in Northern Ireland to achieve their full potential."

The Group comprises of the Chair, Mr Steve Costello and members drawn from the Education and Library Boards, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, Governing Bodies Association of Voluntary Grammar Schools, the Trustees of Catholic Voluntary schools, the Transferor Representative's Council (representing the 3 main Protestant churches), the integrated sector, Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment and the further education sector.

Ms Kennedy went on to say that following discussions between the Department of Education and the

Department for Employment and Learning, she had made £500,000 extra funding available so that some necessary groundwork could begin: "I have also decided to provide funding for the development of the Pupil Profile and the expansion of the range of vocational options by CCEA, to expand existing pilots of on-line learning and assessment opportunities and to explore alternative models of collaboration among schools and between schools and further education. This developmental package will help to prepare the ground for future arrangements."

The Minister also confirmed that pupils currently in P5 and P6 will sit the Transfer Tests: "We will want to consider the recommendations from the Working Group before making any longer-term decisions, but for children currently in P4, parents and teachers can be reassured that they will be advised in good time of the arrangements that will apply.

The Remit of the Working Group is:

"To take account of the responses to the consultation on the Burns Report, including the diversity of views on academic selection, and provide advice on options for future arrangements for post-primary education.

The advice should provide for:

- development of alternative transfer procedures with a view to the current Transfer Tests being withdrawn as soon as practicable;
- development of a Pupil Profile to inform parental and pupil choice;
- access for all young people to a broader curriculum providing greater choice;
- flexible arrangements that can meet the developing needs of young people;
- greater co-operation and collaboration among schools and with the further education sector;
- the development of local arrangements that meet local needs, wishes and circumstances.

The Working Group should also advise on:

- guiding principles and measurable outcomes for future post-primary arrangements;
- criteria for the development and assessment of proposals together with measures to encourage and support their development and implementation;
- outline arrangements for the planning and implementation of future post-primary arrangements.”

Steve Costello MBE is Chairman of the

Northern Ireland General Consumer Council and the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service. He is also a board member of the Northern Ireland Centre for Competitiveness. Mr Costello retired in 2001 as Head of Country for Marks and Spencer (Ireland) Limited.

Development Package

The Departments of Education, and Employment and Learning will make an additional £0.5m available in the current financial year to:

- Support the development by CCEA of a Pupil Profile that will provide a full and rounded picture of a child's

range of abilities;

- Expand the range of vocational options including vocational GCSEs;
- Expand existing pilots of on-line learning and assessment opportunities;
- Explore alternative models of collaboration among schools and between schools and further education colleges through the development of pilot schemes that facilitate sharing of expertise and enable schools to access the wide range of courses available in the FE sector.

Why Do We Subject Our Children To This Annual Humiliation?

A Parent's view

Saturday 8th February, the day the 11+ results came out, in long white envelopes, selecting a minority for a grammar school education and rejecting the majority. This is one family's experience of that day and while I realise that we are all unique individuals there are certain human experiences common to us all.

David, had his view of life changed by that white envelope, imagine for a moment you are looking out at the world through the eyes of this eleven year old boy. Life so far has been reasonably good, parents who love and care for you, friends who like being with you, teachers you like and schoolwork you can do. One day your teacher tells your mother that you are a bright boy and with a little coaching you could pass the 11+. So your parents, trying to do the best they can for you, get you a tutor. You are an optimistic child by nature and when the time comes for you to sit the exam you feel fairly confident that you have done well.

Until Saturday 8th David had little experience of failure or deep disappointment.

His mother knowing her son's nature got up early to open the envelope and prepare her child, if the result was not good. When she opened the white envelope and saw that what her son had received would not get him a grammar school place, she cried. Her tears were for the loss of her son's innocence, she felt that his childhood was effectively over. This was something she could not protect him from and she felt helpless.

She had told him the day before that no matter what the result she would take him shopping and buy him a toy for all his hard work. But he assured her in his usual optimistic way that he would probably pass and he didn't need any more toys.

Walking into his room that morning to tell him was one

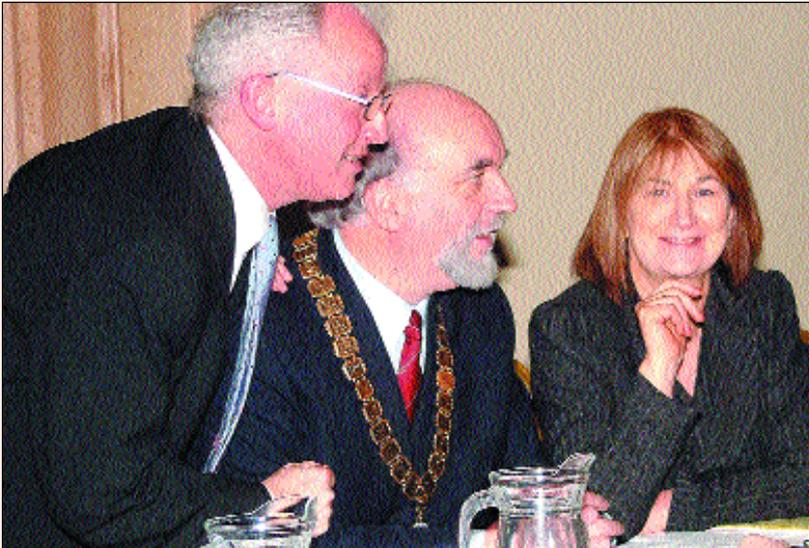
of the hardest things she has ever had to do, concerning her children. David is the eldest of her three boys and the thought that she might have to do this again, terrifies her because as long as the 11+ exists and as long as there are parents determined to "put their children in for it" others will feel that they are disadvantaging their children if they don't.

David appeared to take it very well, he didn't cry, at least not in front of his mother, he said that he didn't really care anyway but she knew that he was trying hard to "save face" and hide his disappointment from her. She left the room and later when he joined the rest of the family for breakfast his parents steered the conversation to other things. His mother knew that from that moment her son was viewing

the world through different eyes because some faceless bureaucrat had decided he was not fit for a grammar school education. He was not among the chosen few.

David's experience was repeated many times over in Northern Ireland on the morning of February 8th. How long are we going to stand-by and see children robbed of their childhood, forced to grow up and face the realities of this world before they are ready to? As adults we are supposed to protect them and shield them from hurt. We have to take the initiative and ensure that this annual culling of children's hopes, confidence and futures, stops now! A little boy like David can't make his voice heard but if we care, speak out together, our voices will be. Say NO to selection at 11!

Teacher Friendly Enquiry Outcome Sought



Frank Bunting, Northern Secretary, Gerry Malone, President, with Patricia O'Farrell, Northern Committee Chair.

In her outgoing address to Conference, Patricia O'Farrell capped a successful year by highlighting the key outcomes needed from the Independent Enquiry.

Patricia called for:

- A transparent and equitable salary structure for all teachers and principals;
- Incremental progress for all teachers on the Upper Pay Range from September 2002 and for principals and vice-principals;

- Staff Development and Performance Review which is light-touch on bureaucracy so that teachers can get on with teaching pupils;
- 20% reduction in teaching and non-teaching time to address the structural causes of teacher workload
- 1 year's guaranteed employment for all Newly Qualified Teachers from Northern Ireland HEIs;

All initiatives and strategies from the Department, CCEA and the employers



Gerry McGinn, Permanent Secretary Department of Education, Patricia O'Farrell, Chairperson Northern Committee and Mrs Anna Brolly, Mayor Armagh and District City Council.

must be workload proofed to ensure they are not bogging teachers down in unnecessary bureaucracy. Our well-funded employers must use some imagination and contextualize teachers' salaries and conditions of service. Too often they are to be found hanging onto failed English strategies like passing driftwood in a flooded river. The latest wheeze is the so-called national agreement.



Bishop John McAreevey, Chair of CCMS Council with General Secretary John Carr.

Selection and LMS must go. Teachers' unions must be involved in policy making. INTO has called for the establishment of a strategic partnership body that will enhance the teaching and learning experience in our schools.

Patricia called for a new beginning from the employers and the Department. Change cannot be top down. There must be partnership working. The time has never been more right.

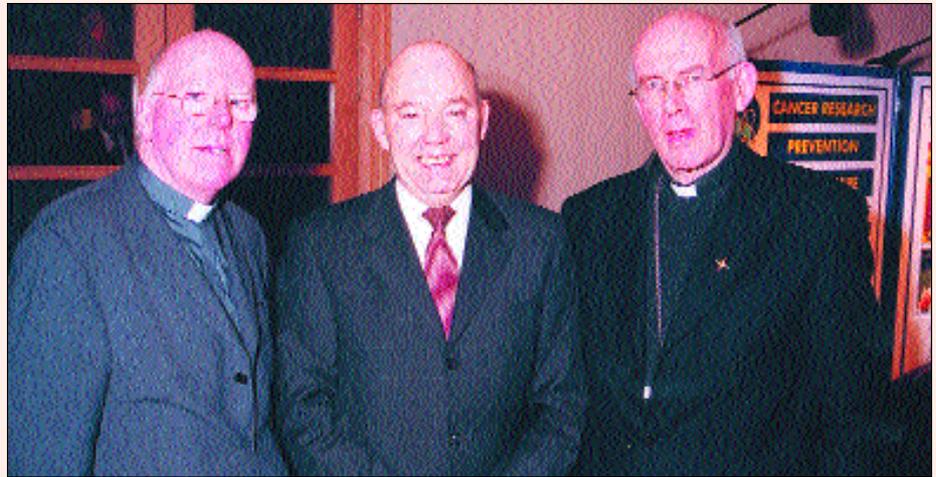
On relationships in schools, there is no place for un-recalcitrant bullies. Teachers as well as pupils need protection. Abusers of teachers must go or be sent on their way. The record of the employers to date is a sorry one.

Patricia concluded by calling for the maximum unity of all the teachers' unions to ensure the profession benefited from the outcome of the Independent Enquiry.

NORTHERN CONFERENCE 2003



Eddie Keenan, Northern Committee calls for all ability post-primary schools.



Conference guests, Bishop McAreevey, Chair CCMS, Barry Fawcett, Salaries' Negotiator NUT, His Grace, Archbishop Sean Brady.

SELECTION

The key conference resolution opposed selection at eleven and called for a post-primary education system:

- (i) within which parents select pupils to go to an all ability school of their choice;
- (ii) which is socially inclusive and provides a wide range of academic and vocational choices to suit the needs of all pupils;
- (iii) which will raise academic standards for all pupils.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR TEACHERS

Gerry Murphy warned of potential massive workload implications for teachers over the next 5 years arising from:

- (i) Skills orientated revised Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- (ii) Dramatic implications of the E-Learning Strategy;
- (iii) Development of pupil profiles and changes to post

- primary transfer;
- (iv) Workload implications of the Inspection Process;
- (v) Un-resourced implications of SEN inclusion in mainstream classes.

"Teachers need a proper work-life balance. To date the employers having nothing practical to offer. This must change."



Gerry Murphy, Northern Committee and Principal St. Mary's PS, Belfast.



Mary Hughes, Northern Committee, SELB.

CURRICULUM REVIEW

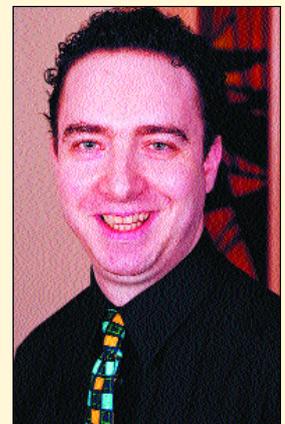
Mary Hughes raised concerns about teacher workload arising from the revised Northern Ireland curriculum proposals. She argued the proposed new curriculum must be:

- (i) fully funded;
- (ii) fully committed to a non-selective form of education;
- (iii) thoroughly monitored to ensure that serving teachers have a positive input into the new syllabi.

NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES

Barra O'Dochartaigh called for more provision to be made to facilitate the North South mobility of teachers. Essential to this was:

- (i) local courses for teachers to sit the "Scrudu Cailiochta na Gaeilge";
- (ii) recognition of teachers' superannuation on a North-South basis.



Barra O'Dochartaigh, Meanscoil School Representative.

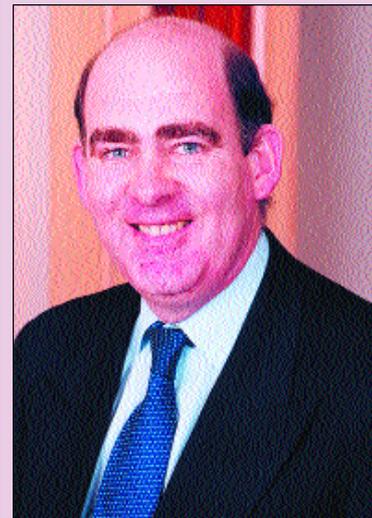


Nuala O'Donnell, Senior Official calls for meaningful consultation with teachers on E-Learning Strategy.

E-Learning

Nuala O'Donnell highlighted the importance of the E-Learning Strategy and called for:

- (i) all training for teachers in the area of E-Learning and E-Teaching take place during the school day at no expense to the teacher;
- (ii) members not to co-operate with the introduction of new ICT uses until they have been evaluated as to their impact on the already intolerable levels of teacher workload.



Gerry McGinn, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education.

DE Permanent Secretary

Gerry McGinn, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education addressed Northern Conference and was well received by delegates.

Gerry indicated the centrality and importance of the teacher and the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

The key issue for his Department is funding the negotiated outcome of the Independent Enquiry.

SEN

Anne Madden attacked the bureaucracy of the SEN Code of Practice, the lack of time for administration of SENCOs whose workload is intolerable. Anne called for:

- (i) legislation which recognises the needs and rights of the child with SEN as well as the wishes of the parents;
- (ii) appropriate training programmes to meet the demands that the new SENDO legislation will create for teachers in mainstream schools;
- (iii) funding is made available to upgrade facilities in mainstream schools in advance of moves to integrate children with SEN needs.



Anne Madden, Northern Committee representative to Standing Conference on Special Education.

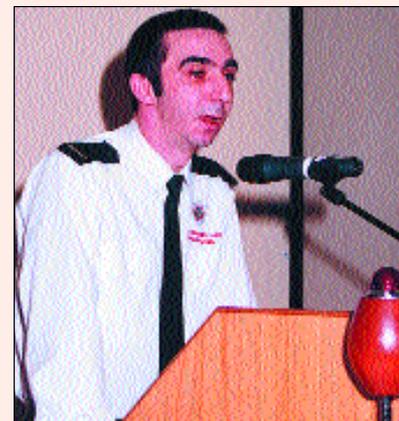
Salaries



Des McDonagh, Northern Committee Belfast Secondary Representative.

Des McDonagh conveyed the frustration and anger of teachers at the 2.9% Pay Review Body Award to English teachers. "Teachers are sustaining a pay cut. Take the National Insurance contribution increase of 1% from 1 April out of this and teachers' salaries are being cut. The strict "parity" argument of the NASUWT is threadbare. The Independent Enquiry must deliver on salaries and contextualisation".

FBU at Northern Conference



Jimmy Quinn, FBU addressed Northern Conference on the union's struggle for a fair wage and received a standing ovation from delegates.

BT CD ROM Coming Your Way



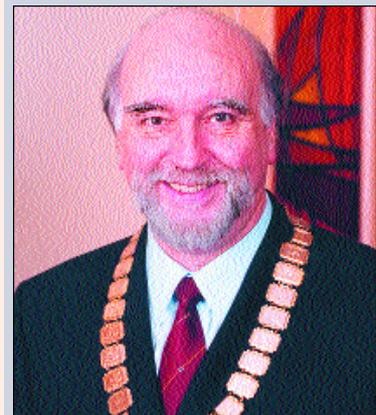
Sean Hanna BT, Rita Fox Chair Northern Committee and Tony Carlin INTO at the launch of the new members' CD Rom designed for teachers in Northern Ireland. The CD Rom contains a treasure trove of educational resources for teachers.

New INTO Leadership Elected 2003-2004



Rita Fox, Principal of Recarson PS, Omagh elected Chair of Northern Committee 2003-2004.

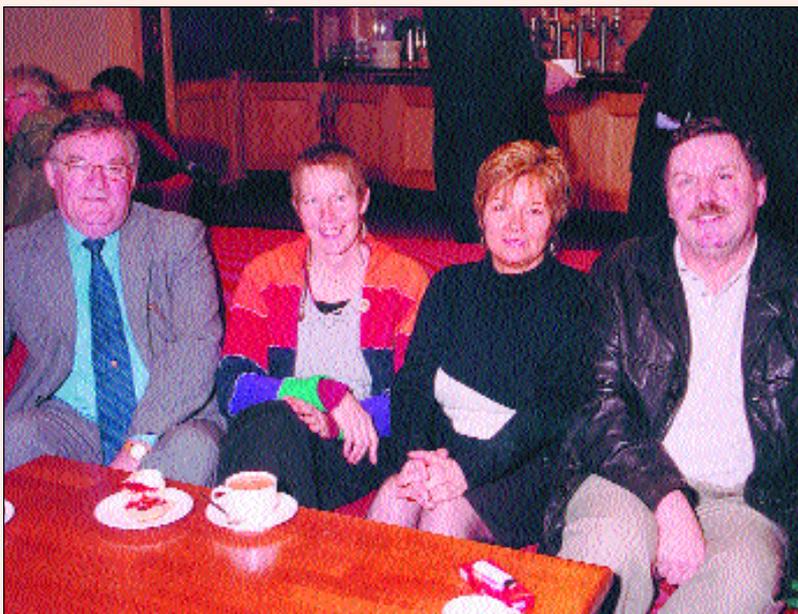
INTO President Gerry Malone



Gerry Malone, Past President INTO.

Gerry was enormously popular in Northern Ireland during his presidency. His serenity and wisdom guided Northern Committee in the campaign against Performance Management linked to pay.

Derry Branch Delegates



Malachy Doherty, Principal Model Primary School Derry, Daisy Mules, Anne Sands and Owen McColgan.

HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

Schools, like the rest of society are made up of individuals who hold a spectrum of values, beliefs and opinions. Some of these can be based on prejudice and opinion; other may be discriminatory. Homophobia is defined as "An irrational dislike, hatred or fear of individuals who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender".

Examples of homophobic behaviour include offensive jokes, language, innuendo and mockery, insulting or abusive behaviour and gestures; graffiti; damage and threat to property; refusal to cooperate with an individual because of their sexual orientation; exclusion from con-

versation and professional and social activity; HIV and AIDS related discrimination; physical threats and assaults. The consequences of homophobic bullying can range from damage to self-esteem to premature death.

A survey of lesbian, gay and bisexual people of 26 and under found that homophobic bullying does exist in schools. The findings included:

- The average ages at which young people develop their homosexual feelings are 13 for boys and 14_ for girls. Boys keep their homosexual feelings to themselves for an average of three years without telling anyone at all girls for only one year.
- The majority of boys had heard their fellow pupils' views on homosexuality and most of these views were derogatory to people who are gay. Nearly three-quarters of the boys who knew they were gay at school experienced homophobic bullying yet few of the lesbian and bisexual girls were bullied.
- Most LGB pupils feel their self-esteem was damaged by the attitudes of their fellow pupils.
- Very few pupils hear anything about homosexuality from their teachers and most of what they do hear is homophobic. Some boys experienced direct homophobic victimization from teachers.
- There are strong indications of the negative impact of homophobia in school, particularly on gay and bisexual boys. Attempted suicide, mental breakdown, depression, social isolation and academic underachievement are all reported by the sample of 31 boys.
- HIV/AIDS education in schools was in their view patchy.

INTO believes that homophobic abuse is as unacceptable in schools as disability, racist, sexist or sectarian abuse.

Parliament Debates Workplace Bullying

A House of Commons adjournment debate has considered the case for legislation on bullying at work. The debate, led by Bristol West MP Valerie Davey, heard MPs call for bullying at work to be outlawed. Davey told the Commons that at two recent meetings organised by Amicus-MSF "not a single person... thought that the situation would be changed without legislation." She added: "There is a whole culture and ethos that has to be changed... good companies and

workplaces operate dignity at work policies. Trade unions have produced such policies in detail, which are recognised by good companies as being important, but the individual has no clear remedy. In poor companies with no such policies, the need for a legal remedy is even stronger."

Department of Trade and Industry Minister Brian Wilson MP, replying for the government at the end of a debate, said it was not presently in favour of legislation but was willing to support measures short of legisla-

tion. Amicus-MSF's Chris Ball commented that "the government's! dislike of our proposals for a Dignity at Work Act is disappointing but it is good that the MPs are getting more interested." He added that: "the underlying need for legislation is likely to remain as long as there are employers who are unwilling to work seriously to eradicate bullying." The problem may be getting worse, as bullying goes hi-tech. A study this week found one in six workers in the UK has been bullied via email.

TEACHING IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Teachers trained in Northern Ireland and within Europe but outside of the Republic of Ireland are unfairly required to provide extensive and detailed paperwork to the Department of Education and Science (RoI) in order to qualify for recognition to teach in the Republic of Ireland. INTO has been working with the Teacher Training Institutions in Northern Ireland and the DES (RoI) to address this problem and to reduce the amount of documentation required. Significant bureaucracy busting progress has been made on this issue but INTO is of the view that further clarifications are required. Members will be kept informed of all developments in this area.

Health & Safety News

MORE PEOPLE "OPT OUT OF RAT RACE"

A growing number of people are leaving well-paid jobs and moving home to relieve stress, according to research published on Wednesday. Twelve million Europeans, mostly in well-paid, high-stress jobs and with young children, are downshifting - taking a cut in salary or working fewer hours. Another two million, mostly well-educated and in their thirties or forties, have given up the rat race completely.

And the rest, kept on the career ladder by necessity or fear, are looking to relieve stress by increasingly choosing products that are easy to use and to find, according to market analysts Datamonitor. Every day 1,600 advertisements bombard people in Britain, the study says.

"Too many demands on time, too

much information and even too many choices leave many feeling burned out at the end of a day" Datamonitor's Dominik Nosalik said.

This, combined with exposure to the internet, e-mails and mobile telephones and the "fragmentation" of the extended family, has pushed stress levels to breaking point. A greater awareness of the risk of terrorist attacks has made people focus on what really matters to them.

"Many people in full-time jobs are increasingly looking to simplify their lives as they suffer from the mounting number of things they have to deal with daily. This is leading some to reassess what really matters to them - is it to earn more and spend more or focus on family, relationships and other human and family values?"

Twelve million Europeans, mostly in well-paid, high-stress jobs and with young children, are downshifting

Teachers 'living in fear of violence'

Almost one in 10 secondary schools in Britain has caught children bringing guns to school, a survey suggests. Knives are even more commonplace, with more than 40 per cent of teachers saying pupils are carrying them. Other vio-

lent children adopted everyday objects as weapons, such as chairs, cigarette lighters and tables. Staff are becoming increasingly concerned over the prevalence of weapons in the classroom, with a majority of teachers saying they

are a problem. In addition teachers have continually raised the issue with INTO of being threatened with violence by parents or carers. A number of INTO members have also been physically attacked in the course of their teaching career.

COST OF WORKPLACE INJURIES AND ILLNESS

Workplace injury and illness costs the UK economy £18 billion a year but the average boss pays just £70 per employee in insurance to cover the annual cost of compensating staff hurt at work. The TUC is calling for employers to pay more of the costs of poor workplace health and safety in 'Radical solutions are all we can afford', its submission to the Government review of employer liability insurance.

At a recent meeting of MPs attended by CBI and the Association of British Insurers the TUC questioned employers' organisations' complaints that employer liability insurance premiums have risen too fast and too far. The TUC argued that:

- on average, employers are paying just £70 a year for each worker in employer liability insurance - less than a tenth of the average cost of insuring a car.
- employers pay less than a sixth of what their major competitors pay for the cost of injury compensation (0.25% of payroll compared with 1.5% to 2% in most developed countries).
- Most of the £18 billion cost of workplace injury and illness is paid for by the Government and the victims. The Health and Safety Executive estimates that employers, who cause the health and safety risks, pay between £3.3 billion and £6.5 billion.

Overall, the TUC believes that the current system of employer liability insurance fails to provide incentives for prevention, fails to provide injury victims with sufficient compensation, and fails to deliver rehabilitation to get victims back to work and back to health.

Equality of Opportunity



Charlie Glenn, Steelstown PS, Derry elected Vice Chair of Northern Committee 2003-2004.

At present a number of pieces of legislation are in force in Northern Ireland to prohibit discrimination and afford individuals the right to equality of opportunity in the fields of employment and the provision of goods and services.

Disability Discrimination

The Disability Discrimination Act (NI) 1998 (DDA) requires employers to ensure that an individual's disability is not a factor which impacts on their recruitment, employment, or retention. The DDA created a new definition of the term disabled. Disability is now defined as: "A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect upon the individual's ability to carry out normal day to day activities"

Physical and mental impairments include weakening of part of the body caused by illness, accident or congenitality or recognised mental illness and learning disabilities.

An employer can attempt to avoid a claim of discrimination by carrying out reasonable adjustments to the workplace. These include the purchase of special equipment, provision of assistance or support for some or all tasks,

or rescheduling an employee's work to enable medical assistance or rest.

It is important to recognise that the medical conditions of individuals who have a disability may improve, worsen or fluctuate depending on the nature of the illness. With an ageing population, the issue of disability, potential discrimination and the need for adjustments will increase.

Sex Discrimination

The Sex Discrimination Order (NI) 1976 prohibits discrimination in the provision of employment or training or the delivery of goods and services based on an individual's gender, marital status, pregnancy, or sexual orientation. In addition cases of sexual harassment can be taken under the Sex Discrimination Order as being less favourable treatment of an individual because of their gender.

Disability is now defined as: "A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect upon the individual's ability to carry out normal day to day activities"

Sex Discrimination is one of the major areas for complaints to an industrial tribunal. To prove discrimination based on this piece of legislation, an individual must demonstrate that they have been detrimentally treated because of their gender and that an individual or individuals of the opposite gender have been more favourably treated.

The legislation also permits employers to identify posts which can only be undertaken by individuals of a particular gender because of reasons of decency or physical requirements of the job, e.g. toilet attendant or male / female model. This is referred to as a Genuine Occupational Qualification (GOQ)

The legislation also permits employers

to undertake "positive action" to identify training or development needs of a particular group which may enhance their promotion prospects in respect of future appointments. Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination as the effect of the legislation is to create level playing fields for all applicants.

Race Discrimination

The Race Relations Order (NI) 1997 prohibits the discrimination on the basis of an individual's race, nationality or ethnic or national origin in the areas of employment and the delivery of goods and services. This therefore makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of an individual's race or colour of their skin or their perceived ethnic origin. The legislation also prohibits the use of derogatory terms that may relate to an individual's colour, race or ethnic origin.

The legislation as it applies in Northern Ireland affords the Irish Travelling Community special status within the legislation as a named group. The Irish Travelling Community is defined as "the community of people commonly so called who are identified (both by themselves and by others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland."

GENERAL ADVICE

INTO advises any member who feels that they may have suffered discrimination or require advice or information in respect of the above areas to contact their Northern Committee member or the Northern Office.