



Autumn 2009

Rights News



LOVE ACTION.

EQUALITY FOR SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS, DIVERSE FAMILIES
AND YOUNG GAY PEOPLE. **CHANGE THE LAW.**

GON



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Irish Council for
Civil Liberties



The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) is Ireland's leading independent human rights watchdog, which monitors, educates and campaigns in order to secure full enjoyment of human rights for everyone. Founded in 1976 by Mary Robinson and others, the ICCL has played a leading role in some of the most successful human rights campaigns in Ireland. These have included establishing an independent Garda Ombudsman Commission, legalising the right to divorce, securing more effective protection of children's rights, decriminalising homosexuality and the introduction of enhanced equality legislation. We believe in a society which protects and promotes human rights, justice and equality.

What we do

- We advocate for positive changes in the area of human rights.
- We monitor government policy and legislation to make sure that it complies with international standards.
- We conduct original research and publish reports on issues as diverse as equal rights for all families, the right to privacy, policy reform and judicial accountability.
- We run campaigns to raise public and political awareness of human rights, justice and equality issues.
- We work closely with other key stakeholders in the human rights, justice and equality sectors.

How you can help

You can help us to continue our work to monitor, train, conduct research, campaign and lobby for changes in legislation to ensure our rights are protected and promoted.

Please visit our website: www.iccl.ie or phone us on 01 799 4504 to make a donation.

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Once again, the closing days of the Dáil's Summer session saw a Minister for Justice press the case for urgent new legislation to tackle "gangland" crime, without producing a shred of evidence that his proposals would improve life for victims of crime. Speaking during the debate on the second stage of the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill 2009, on 3 July 2009, Dermot Ahern TD told the Dáil that he believed that "the country cannot wait three months" for legislation to introduce secret detention hearings and expand the use of the Special Criminal Court. Three months later, not a single prosecution has been brought under his Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act, nor has a single "gangland" trial been held in the Special Criminal Court.

Once again, as had been the case in 2007 when the Minister's predecessor Michael McDowell rushed so-called "anti-gangland" legislation through the Dáil, the families of victims of crime have been misled by a senior politician into believing that there is a straightforward legislative solution to problems that continue to blight their lives.

Writing in this edition of Rights News, our guest essayist A.C. Grayling (see opposite) emphasises that the provisions in this new Act "are serious assaults on civil liberties and the due process of law, and are not acceptable in an advanced democracy". The ICCL agrees and will continue to press for the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act 2009 to be repealed, in partnership with a broad coalition of like-minded legal practitioners, academics and others established during our recent campaign to highlight the shortcomings of this deeply-flawed legislation.

On a more positive note, the ICCL is delighted that the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency has chosen to appoint the organisation as its new "National Focal Point" on Racism in Ireland. This work was previously carried out by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), which was closed when the Government withdrew its funding in December 2008.



The ICCL will be carrying out this function in partnership with the UCD School of Social Justice and the Immigrant Council of Ireland. Racism is a mutating virus which, if unmonitored, can easily breed and spread. Keeping the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency closely informed about developments in Ireland will maintain an international spotlight on emerging forms of intolerance which might otherwise prosper unchecked.

Other work highlighted in this issue includes the "LOVEACTION" campaign at the 2009 Electric Picnic music festival in Stradbally. The ICCL teamed up with BeLonG To, Gay Community News, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN), MarriagEquality, the National Gay and Lesbian Federation (NLGF) and LGBT Noise to campaign for a change in the law to deliver full equality to same sex couples and other loving families. Over four thousand festival-goers signed the LOVEACTION manifesto and, as you will see from the photographs of the marquee, a serious message was presented in a fun way.

Finally, I'm delighted that the ICCL's newest online privacy publication "Think Before You Click" (see back page) is ready to be dispatched to every secondary school in the country, and that our 2010 Human Rights Film Awards will be launched at the Corona Cork Film Festival in November 2009.

We will continue to seek out innovative ways to press home the message that human rights matter, and your ideas and comments on our work are always welcome.

Mark Kelly
 Director



To Give up Human Rights is Criminal

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR A.C. GRAYLING, PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AT BIRKBECK COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, DISCUSSES THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009, AND ARGUES THAT HISTORICALLY HARD-WON LIBERTIES MUST NOT BE SURRENDERED LIGHTLY.

There is a very good reason why lawyers are concerned at the Government's Criminal Justice Bill, which includes abolishing some trials by jury, allowing Gardaí to give opinion evidence and holding detention hearings in secret without accused persons or their lawyers present. The reason is that such provisions are serious assaults on civil liberty and the due process of law, and are not acceptable in an advanced democracy.

Civil liberties exist to protect individuals against the arbitrary use of state power. They include rights to individual freedom, privacy, the secure possession of private property, the expression of opinion without prior restraint, the holding and exercise of personal beliefs, and more.

Authorities in all countries and at all times, even in Western democracies, find themselves inconvenienced by civil liberties, which make the job of policing society more difficult.

Central to civil liberties is the idea of a due process of law, a set of procedural formalities and restraints which protect the innocent, assure equal treatment and require the authorities to show good cause why they exert state power over citizens, not least the powers of arrest and detention. Tyranny exists wherever civil liberties do not. Think of a typical police state such as Soviet Russia in the period of its worst excesses, where men knocked on doors in the night and took people away to torture and imprison without trial because there was no regime of civil liberties, no institutionalised protection for human rights, to stop them.

The modern democracies of Western Europe are, of course, a long way from being tyrannies, but from Germany to Ireland too many of them

are going down the alarming road of compromising civil liberties in the supposed interests of fighting terrorism and crime. Authorities in all countries and at all times, even in Western democracies, find themselves inconvenienced by civil liberties, which make the job of policing society more difficult.

But there is a good reason why civil liberties make the work of the authorities more difficult: to protect the great majority of people who are not bad. The inconvenience of the authorities is the freedom of the people, and it is a price worth paying.

In particular, and to the great irritation of governments everywhere, civil liberties interfere with authorities' ability to detect, arrest, prosecute and convict bad people. But there is a good reason why civil liberties make the work of the authorities more difficult: to protect the great majority of people who are not bad. The inconvenience of the authorities is the freedom of the people, and it is a price worth paying.

The civil liberties which until now have served to define the open democracies of the Western world are taken for granted until something like the Criminal Justice Bill comes along to call them into question.

People forget how hard it was to achieve these civil liberties in the first place. It took centuries of struggle. Think of what had to happen in order for the ordinary 21st century Western citizen to attain the position of a free citizen whose rights are protected by law.

The process began in the 16th century Reformation. First, the hegemony of a single church over the minds and lives of individuals had to be broken. Then absolute monarchy had to be challenged and replaced by more representative systems of government. Both processes were sometimes revolutionary but mostly evolutionary.

Any society which goes into reverse because it is facing hard times betrays the long history of struggle. The test of a society's strength and maturity is whether it can stick to its principles in the face of difficult challenges.

They were painfully slow and difficult because of the reluctance of those in power, both ecclesiastical and temporal, to give anything away. Many died in furthering the cause of liberty — at the church's stake, in chains in royal dungeons, on the battlefield.

It is astonishing to think that the ordinary citizen of a democracy today enjoys rights, freedoms and possibilities that a few hundred years ago were only available to very few: to aristocrats and senior churchmen. We are all aristocrats now in the degree of our liberties and opportunities, because we have replaced the rule of might with the rule of law.

No arbitrary ruler can throw a citizen into prison at whim; institutions and practices buttress the individual's liberties. Among them is trial by jury, the need for proof to be brought before a court where it can be tested properly, and a presumption of innocence for anyone accused of committing crimes. Any society which goes into reverse because it is facing hard times betrays the long history of struggle. The test of a society's strength and maturity is whether it can stick to its principles in the face of difficult challenges.

The question Ireland faces in the battle over Dermot Ahern's bill is whether it will betray its principles or show strength and maturity by defending them.

This article was first published in the Irish edition of the Sunday Times on 12 July 2009 and appears here with the kind permission of Professor Grayling.



THE COUNCIL OF STATE MEET AT ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN TO DISCUSS THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009, 22 JULY 2009

Flawed Law and False Promises

In late June 2009, during the final Dáil sitting days before the Summer recess, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Dermot Ahern TD, introduced the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill 2009.

The Bill, which the Minister claimed was a response to the “gangland” killing of Limerick man Roy Collins, allows for secret detention hearings, detention on the word of a single low-ranking Garda, and the expanded use of the non-jury Special Criminal Court.

These measures undermine long-established procedural safeguards, and do nothing to tackle the genuine and legitimate concerns of the victims of organised crime.

On 3 July 2009, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties and the Irish Criminal Bar Association hosted a press conference to voice their strong opposition to the Bill. The ICCL also presented a constructive alternative in its paper, *Combating Organised Crime and Respecting the Rule of Law: Human Rights-Based Alternatives to the Criminal*

Justice (Amendment) Bill (available to download from www.iccl.ie).

The ICCL was at the forefront of criticism of the Bill’s hasty passage through the Houses of the Oireachtas, which our Director branded “an abuse of the Dáil, apparently designed to deny parliamentarians the opportunity to properly consider the implications of this so-called Anti-Gangland law.”

Other notable critics of the Bill included the Irish Human Rights Commission, the Law Society, opposition politicians, distinguished commentators (including Professor A.C. Grayling – see page 3 of this edition of *Rights News*) and over a hundred practicing lawyers, including numerous prosecutors, who signed an open letter to the *Irish Times*. The Garda Representative Association also criticised it as a “knee jerk” bill which failed to mask the “failure to provide frontline resources both in Garda numbers and financial support for increased operations”.

Nonetheless, at the Minister’s behest, the Bill was rushed through all its stages in both houses of the Oireachtas in a matter of days. On 3 July 2009, the Minister claimed that “the country cannot wait three months” (i.e. until politicians had returned from their extended Summer break) to enact this law.

Given that certain provisions of the Bill (for example, secret detention hearings) are almost certainly unconstitutional, it came as no surprise that the President decided to convene a meeting of the Council of State before finally signing it into law on 23 July 2009.

The ICCL has respectfully noted that the President has chosen not to refer this legislation to the Supreme Court; however, it is clear that the Act remains riddled with legal pitfalls, and that it will do nothing to improve life for the victims of gangland crime.

Indeed, any attempt to invoke some of its more contentious provisions, such as secret detention hearings, or the use of uncorroborated Garda evidence to establish facts central to a prosecution, is bound to provoke further legal challenges to its constitutionality.

Three months later, not a single prosecution has been brought under the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act 2009, nor has a single “gangland” trial been held in the Special Criminal Court. Once again, the families of victims of crime have been misled by a senior politician into believing that there is a straightforward legislative solution to problems that continue to blight their lives.

What’s wrong with the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act 2009?

- The proposed expansion of the role of the non-jury Special Criminal Court comes despite a decade of calls by UN Human Rights Committee for Ireland to put an end to the jurisdiction of this emergency court, the most recent during Ireland’s examination under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in Summer 2008. The Act asserts that the conventional courts are inadequate to deal with the problem of organised crime, although no evidence has been produced to back up this claim. The expansion of the Special Criminal Court flies in the face of international standards for the administration of justice.
- Provisions for secret detention hearings and detention on the word of a single low-ranking Garda have no place in a mature democracy.
- The Act fails to address the problem of witness intimidation – witnesses are required in the non-jury Special Criminal Court just as in the conventional courts.
- The Act ignores internationally-recognised strategies for combating organised crime while respecting human rights. These include the resourcing of effective intelligence-based policing, and community-based policing.



ICCL DIRECTOR MARK KELLY AND SÉAN GILLANE BL, CHAIR OF THE IRISH CRIMINAL BAR ASSOCIATION, SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009 AT BUSWELL’S HOTEL, DUBLIN, 3 JULY 2009

Criminal Justice (Surveillance) Bill Enacted

The Criminal Justice (Surveillance) Bill 2009 was enacted on 12 July 2009 at last placing Garda surveillance on a lawful basis that broadly conforms to Article 8 (right to privacy) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Published by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform on 17 April 2009, the ICCL gave the Bill a cautious welcome, stressing that intelligence-led policing, and not the restriction of fair trial rights, is the most effective way to tackle organised crime.

Though the Act is largely positive, requiring judicial authorisation of most forms of surveillance, it nonetheless allows tracking devices to be placed on people’s vehicles solely on the authority of a senior member of the Garda Síochána, Defence Forces or an officer of the Revenue Commissioners.

In the interests of the protection of privacy, the ICCL urged the Minister to publicly disclose, before the Bill became law, the proposed content of the regulations foreseen in section 8(11), in order to ensure that there will be a human rights-complaint framework for the use of tracking devices by Gardaí and other authorized state agents. To date the proposed content of these regulations has yet to be made available. The ICCL will be closely watching developments as the application of this Act commences, to ensure it remains human-rights compliant.

Communications (Retention of Data) Bill Published

On 9 July the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform published the Communications (Retention of Data) Bill.

The Bill provides for the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publicly available electronic communications services, such as mobile phones and computers, and for access to certain data for the purposes of the prevention of serious offences. It will compel internet service providers to retain data on internet usage, and will provide for the retention of telephone records for use by the Gardaí and the Defence Forces in their investigations.

The Bill raises several serious concerns regarding the right to privacy, and leaves unanswered important questions around the secure storage of retained data. The ICCL is carefully studying the Bill in order to establish whether it is human rights-compliant.

Strict Liability - ICCL Expertise helps Shape Joint Committee’s position on Constitutional Amendment



On 6 May 2009, the Joint Committee on the Constitutional Amendment on Children released its Second Report, in which it reached the conclusion that a referendum on strict and absolute liability in cases of offences committed against children less than 18 years of age was not necessary, and that legislative measures were more appropriate.

The ICCL welcomed this acknowledgement that it is possible to protect children from exploitation in a more robust manner than under the current law, without trampling upon fundamental principles of justice and fairness. Crucially, the report cites the ICCL’s submission of January 2008 on the subject, which highlighted the view that the imposition of absolute or strict liability would be capable of causing injustice through “criminalising and jailing the morally innocent”.

To coincide with the release of the Committee’s Interim Report, on 7 May 2009 the ICCL published a follow-up paper by Roisín Webb BL entitled *Protecting Children, Respecting the Rule of Law*. This “options paper” aims to assist members of the Oireachtas with the delicate task of drawing up the necessary amending legislation, outlining five ways in which pressing child protection concerns can be addressed without undermining the constitutional rights of persons accused of crimes.

On 16 June 2009, Roisín Webb presented the paper on behalf of the ICCL at a high-level Oireachtas briefing introduced by Mary O’Rourke TD, Chair of the Joint Committee on the Constitutional Amendment on Children.

Organised by the ICCL in association with the Irish Criminal Bar Association, the briefing also featured contributions from Patrick Gageby, SC, one of Ireland’s leading criminal justice practitioners, and Tom O’Malley, BL, Senior Lecturer at the National University of Ireland, generating extensive media comment in the days that followed.

The next phase of the Joint Committee’s work will tackle the subject of an amendment to enshrine express rights for children in the Constitution. The ICCL trusts that the Committee will produce a robust agenda for change in this area, so that Ireland can finally meet its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



LOVEACTION

LOVEACTION at Electric Picnic 2009

From 4-6 September 2009 the ICCL teamed up with BeLonG To, Gay Community News, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN), MarriagEquality, the National Lesbian and Gay Federation (NLGF), and LGBT Noise to take part in the LOVEACTION campaign collective at the Electric Picnic music festival in Stradbally, Co Laois.

LOVEACTION called on picnic-goers to voice their support for equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people, relationships and families through signing the LOVEACTION manifesto.

The LOVEACTION marquee was a hive of activity, attracting crowds throughout a wet and windy festival weekend. Artist Will St Ledger prepared a giant canvas and hundreds of bottles of spray paint for picnickers to create a collective LOVEACTION artwork. Meanwhile in the marquee, body painters emblazoned festival-goers with the LOVEACTION logo while cool sounds from our resident DJs refreshed the soul.

LOVEACTION got its message out loud and clear to picnickers, with well over 4000 – almost twenty per cent of the festival attendance – signing up in support of the LOVEACTION manifesto.

LOVEACTION plans to follow up this success in the coming weeks with the unveiling of Will St Leger's collective LOVEACTION canvas – the work of 4000 supporters of equality and recognition of all loving relationships in Ireland, gay or straight.



THE LOVEACTION MANIFESTO:

Today in Ireland:

- Same sex couples are not treated or valued equally under Irish law, and continue to be denied access to civil marriage.
- Lesbian and gay couples are bringing up families in Ireland today, but these families go unrecognised in Irish law and their children are less protected.
- Young LGBT people have their relationships broken up and disrupted by parents and teachers due to a false belief that they should not declare their sexuality until they are 18.

LOVEACTION CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE THE LAW:

- Deliver equality to same-sex couples by opening up civil marriage.
- Hold a referendum to change the Constitution's restrictive definition of a family so all loving families are recognised and protected in law.
- Recognise the right of LGBT young people to form and develop healthy and happy relationships in their teenage years on the same basis as their straight counterparts.





ACCESS TO EQUALITY: A TRAINING COURSE ON THE EQUAL STATUS ACTS

Anti-discrimination law in Ireland is an essential instrument for tackling inequalities faced by members of marginalised groups. The Equal Status Acts 2000-2008 are especially important because these laws prohibit discrimination in relation to goods, services and education on nine grounds: age, disability, family status, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religious belief and membership of the Traveller community.

Together with the Equality Studies Centre of UCD School of Social Justice the ICCL has devised an educational programme for advice-givers, community and non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives who work in the area of human rights and social justice. This programme will be delivered over four days in October and November/December 2009 to eighteen participants.

Civil Partnership Bill Published

In June 2009 saw the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform finally publish the long-awaited Civil Partnership Bill.

The ICCL acknowledged that the Minister for Justice has published what is a broadly progressive bill, offering a new legal structure and solid foundation for the recognition and protection of loving same sex relationships.

However, the Civil Partnership Bill is no more than a halfway house on the road to full equality for same-sex couples, which can only be achieved through equal access to civil marriage.

Make the Gift of a Lifetime

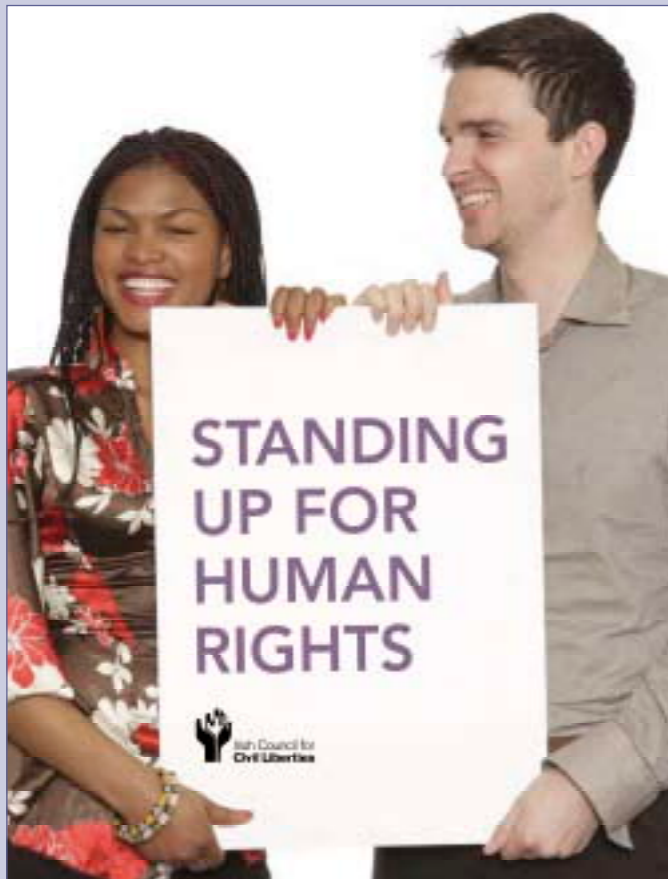
We don't know what the future holds in terms of threats to our rights, but we do know that we need to be there in order to protect and promote the rights of everyone living in Ireland. You can help continue this proud tradition of work by remembering us in your Will.

After your family and loved ones, please consider making this deeply meaningful gift to the Irish Civil Liberties Trust* and ensuring that a legacy of equality, justice and human rights exists in Ireland for generations to come.

For further information, please contact the office on 01 799 4504 or email info@iccl.ie. To those of you who have already expressed your wishes to remember us in your Will, we would like to take this opportunity to extend our most sincere thanks to you. Your support is invaluable.

Irish Civil Liberties Trust Registered Charity Number 11460

*The ICLT is an independent charitable trust, with the key objective of the advancement of education in the areas of civil liberties, human rights and fundamental freedoms. It collects and distributes funds which can be used to support the work of the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL).



European Expert Echoes ICCL's call for a Better Deal for Crime Victims

On 28 May 2009, the ICCL welcomed Mr Peter Csonka, Head of the Criminal Justice Unit in the European Commission's Justice Directorate (DG JLS), to Dublin for a high-level meeting on victims of crime.

Speaking at an event organised by the ICCL at the European Parliament Office in Dublin, Peter argued that European standards, particularly the European Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings, provide a solid framework to achieve a better deal for victims of crime in Ireland.

The Framework Decision highlights the need to adequately protect victims' rights to protection, to privacy and to information; rights that the ICCL has also highlighted as key to victim welfare in its June 2008 Charter of Rights for Crime Victims.

The ICCL has continued throughout 2009 to highlight the need for a constructive approach to protecting the rights of victims in line with international best practice, offering meaningful alternatives to the retrograde steps taken in the recent Criminal Procedure and Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bills.



MR PETER CSONKA, HEAD OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE UNIT IN THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION JUSTICE DIRECTORATE

EU Appoints ICCL and UCD School of Social Justice to Monitor Racism in Ireland



The ICCL is pleased to announce that the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) has appointed the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) and University College Dublin (UCD) School of Social Justice as the FRA's new 'RAXEN National Focal Point' on racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism in Ireland.

The ICCL/UCD consortium will be assisted by a panel of the country's top academic experts, as well as by the Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI), which has been

subcontracted to develop the communications work of the RAXEN National Focal Point.

RAXEN National Focal Points are the FRA's recognised national coordinators, contracted to manage an information network including government departments, research bodies, statutory human rights and equality bodies, NGOs and social partners. Based on information gathered through this network, the ICCL / UCD consortium will provide regular reports to the FRA on racism and related forms of intolerance in Ireland.

The decision to jointly appoint the ICCL and UCD as the new RAXEN National Focal Point will ensure that this critical monitoring function will be placed in independent hands. The ICCL is looking forward to working with our colleagues in UCD to produce quality independent research on racism in Ireland.

The ICCL has recruited Karla Charles as the newest member of its research and policy team, with responsibility for the RAXEN work on behalf of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. Karla studied at Trinity College and the Honourable Society of King's Inns, and holds a Masters in Human Rights Law (LL.M., London). She previously worked with the Refugee Council (London), the Prisoner's Race Discrimination Unit (London), a Racial Equality Council (London), and was Senior Policy Development



KARLA CHARLES, THE ICCL'S NEW RESEARCHER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR RAXEN WORK ON BEHALF OF THE EU FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AGENCY

Officer with the Children's Commissioner for England (11 Million). Karla has carried out consultancy work for the Ombudsman for Children on Separated Children Seeking Asylum, and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.



THE ICCL'S WALTER JAYAWARDENE WITH STUDENT GARDA KAROLINE CARTY

ICCL attends Garda Diversity Community Fair 2009

On 21 April 2009 ICCL Campaigns and Communications Officer Walter Jayawardene and ICCL Information Officer Lorraine Curran travelled to Templemore to attend the Garda Diversity Community Fair.

The ICCL was one of 26 organisations who travelled to Templemore for the day, where they had the opportunity to speak to approximately 750 members of An Garda Síochána, including students at the Garda College, senior Gardaí, rank and file Gardaí and Garda lecturers. Walter and Lorraine answered questions about the ICCL and its work, and provided informational materials to Student Gardaí.

The Fair was an excellent opportunity to engage directly with members of An Garda Síochána, who were eager to learn more about human rights and policing in general and the work of the ICCL in particular.

ICCL Governance



- The ICCL Executive, Staff and Membership bade farewell to **Michael Finucane**, who has stepped down from the Board after twelve years of service. The ICCL would like to extend its sincere gratitude to Michael for the expertise he has brought to the organisation during his time on the Board, and looks forward to working with him on future projects.



- Executive Member **Natalie McDonnell** has been elected Co-Chair (Policy) of the Executive.



The State of Things to Come: ICCL welcomes Statewatch Director to its 2009 AGM

The ICCL welcomed the Director of Statewatch, Tony Bunyan, as its keynote speaker at the ICCL Association AGM on Saturday 20 June 2009 in the Law Society.

An investigative journalist and writer specialising in justice and home affairs, civil liberties and freedom of information in the EU, Tony Bunyan has been Director of Statewatch since 1990. In 2001 and in 2004 the European Voice newspaper selected him as one of the "EV50" - one of the fifty most influential people in the European Union.

Tony's talk, "Is a Surveillance Society the Shape of Things to Come?", looked at the work of the EU Future Group report, *Freedom, Security and Privacy - the area of European Home Affairs*. His analysis suggests that European governments and EU policy-makers are pursuing virtually unfettered powers to access and gather personal data.

"The Council of the European Union, the European Commission, national governments, the law enforcement agencies and the multinationals believe that technology, not values and morality, should drive change. They believe they have balanced freedom and security when all with eyes and ears to see and hear know that liberties and freedoms have been made subservient to the demands of security. But how are we to be safe from the state itself, from its uses and abuses of the data they hold on us? If we do not have an open and meaningful debate now we never will, because by then it will be too late"



ICCL Human Rights Film Awards 2010 to open at Cork Film Festival

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) is delighted to announce the launch of its second annual Human Rights Film Awards with a special screening at the Corona Cork Film Festival in November 2009.



ICCL Human Rights Film Awards

Following on from a very successful inaugural year, the 2010 ICCL Human Rights Film Awards will once again call on the best of Irish filmmakers, directors, producers, scriptwriters (amateur and professional) to turn their hands to a making a short film on a human rights issue. The aim of the Awards will be to provide film students, filmmakers and those working in human rights with an opportunity to use the medium of film to raise public awareness about human rights in the Irish context.

Following on from a very successful inaugural year, the 2010 ICCL Human Rights Film Awards will once again call on the best of Irish filmmakers,



The special screening, which will take place at 1pm on 7 November 2009 at the Gate Multiplex, North Main Street, Cork, will showcase the six finalist short films from the ICCL's hugely successful inaugural 2009 competition. Covering a range of topics and genres, the shortlist represents the cream of entries to this inaugural ICCL competition, and sets a high standard for entries in 2010.

Details of the launch event, and how to enter the 2010 competition, will soon be made available on the updated competition website:

www.humanrightsfilmawards.org



Think Before You Click

The ICCL has teamed up with by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) and the Citizenship Education Support Team of the Second Level Support Service (SLSS) to develop a new teaching resource for the Junior Certificate Civic, Social and Political Education curriculum.

'Think Before You Click' has been specifically designed for teachers who wish to explore the issue of online privacy in the context of online rights and responsibilities. The ultimate aim of this resource is to empower children and young people to be safer, more effective and responsible internet users.

The publication will be rolled out to all secondary schools in the country in late October 2009.

Think Before You Click can be downloaded at the dedicated website www.thinkb4uclick.ie