

The Irish People

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IRISH PEOPLE NOW 2p.

How to beat the planning laws

IN THREE

EASY

STAGES



● Before alterations.

How to beat the planning laws in three easy stages:
Shown here is a house, 74 Ranelagh, Dublin, on three separate occasions during 1975. Far left, taken 29th June; centre, taken 4th August, and extreme right, taken on 7th July.
What's so unusual about this? Nothing much, except that the alterations shown in the picture were made without planning permission. In fact on 5th June application P 2040, Reference No. 75/23, to retain addition, to carry out reconstruction and alterations to provide six flats and two bedsitters, was turned down by Dublin Corporation's planning department.
No problem. Mr. James Flynn, applicant, appealed to the Minister for Local Government who is now reviewing the case. It is, of course, a relatively minor form of development but nevertheless is indicative of the attitude of many property owners to the planning laws—build first and answer questions after.



● Illegal alterations in progress.



● Finished and ready for letting.

C.I.E. JOBS CHOPPED

Beeching-style closures in CIE will start to affect transport jobs in several different parts of the country shortly. Several rural stations are to be closed or downgraded and a number of rail freight centres will be axed and their services relocated in larger centres. CIE Rail Plan 80, under which the cut-back in jobs is proposed, is to be implemented by early November and by that time many transport jobs will have disappeared.

The cut-backs are an at-

tempt to make CIE more competitive in the face of stiff rivalry from private freight hauliers whose businesses have benefited from liberalised regulations under 1971 transport legislation and new EEC rules.

In Leitrim, for example, an estimated 13 employees, working at Carrick-on-Shannon and Dromad stations alone, over 80 per cent of the workforce will lose their jobs. Only passenger services will be maintained and wagonload and livestock transport services will be withdrawn.

Where road haulage replaces former rail freight services CIE are likely to be squeezed out faster by private competitors.

The pattern of redundancies in Leitrim will be repeated in many other stations up and down the country but the withdrawal of services from counties like Leitrim, which are chronically underdeveloped, will also make the task of attracting new industry much more difficult.

In all about 400 jobs will be lost through cut-backs in the railhead section.

MORE

DEMOS

THREAT

FROM

A.S.T.M.S.

More public demonstrations of the 2,500 strong march-type which took place in Dublin last week are planned by the Association of Scientific Technical and Managerial Staff if there is no settlement in the National Mutual Life Association of Australasia strike. Insurance inspectors there were sacked following their initial refusal to mark detailed time sheets for the company. Although the refusal was subsequently withdrawn the NMLAA went ahead and maintained notices of dismissal which expired on 31 July. "A totally uncivilised way to behave" was the comment of an ASTMS spokesman.

The use of public demonstrations is to bring to public attention the fact that the strike is not simply over a trade dispute but because workers were dismissed even though they had acquiesced in the company's demands. The only concession from the NMLAA has been to advise their employees to re-apply on a 6 months probation basis, even for employees who have been there for several

years.

In addition to public marches the ASTMS has also put a black on insurance business handled by its members in other firms for the NLMAA but this tactic is less effective than it might normally be because NLMAA tends to sell policies direct and have less dealings with brokers.

The Federated Union of Employers is being held responsible for seeing that its members, in this case the NLMAA, act in what an ASTMS official described as a "civilised industrial manner" and for this reason were made the object of the first union-led march in Dublin last week.

The ASTMS has approximately 400-500 members in Cork and several hundred more in Limerick to call on and the decision to escalate the public demonstrations has already been accepted in principle by the union's decision makers.

The exact time and place remains to be settled.

The Irish People

MURDER

Hopefully the invitation of the IRA to all Northern paramilitary groups to sit down and discuss some way out of the civil war situation that seems to be coming to a head, after having been forewarned for years, will bear fruit. It is better to light a candle than to sit cursing the darkness and anyone who fears the outcome of a full scale civil war must take a stand now or accept the consequences. The situation has deteriorated to a frightening level in the past week. People now feel that they are living in a doomsday situation and that the slightest wrong move could push the entire North over the brink.

The reaction of the UDA to the proposals is discouraging on the surface but a door-to-door survey in Loyalist areas, if it is carried out as promised, might show that there is a strong desire at street level for an end to the carnage. Whatever attempts are made to abate sectarianism have not been helped by the terrible killing of a young Protestant man, Samuel Llewellyn, while on an errand of mercy, in the Falls area last week. Without a doubt, if a door-to-door survey were taken up in that area, there are very few who would be found who would condone the killing.

The utter waste and futility of these sort of killings must be plain to all but the maddest adherents of these organisations. Where it is not, the paramilitary groups should be capable of controlling the activities of their members, since the deeds are carried out in their name. If positive steps are not taken now to halt their activities the madmen from either side will succeed in pushing the North into a situation where even last week's horrific death will seem trivial.

GRANTS

We are living in stringen times. Money is scarce for even the most worthy projects. Naturally, any unnecessary waste should be eliminated. However, one can only regard the decision to cut back grants paid to postgraduate and research students as the falsest of false economy. If as much thought had been given to the long-term results of this move, as was given to the timing of its announcement, designed to ensure the minimum outcry, then the decision might never have been made.

The relatively slight amount of money saved is hardly worth the loss of trained students, many of whom have been left high and dry in the middle of their studies and who may have to leave the country. A lot of money was spent on educating them to this level. It is all wasted in the name of economy when they are prevented from completing their studies.

Without research and innovation many fields of industry, science and agriculture will stagnate or fall behind our competitors. Many of the new developments in these fields are the results of research undertaken by postgraduate students.

Fire threat at office site

There have been further sinister developments in the saga of the Gallagher Group's attempts to 'restore' Harcourt Terrace, in Dublin. It was the stated intention of Gallaghers, according to a planning submission made by well-known architect, Desmond Fitzgerald, to "encourage the restoration of the rest of the terrace by expending money on the "restoration of the buildings at the corner of Harcourt Terrace", that is, Nos. 10 and 11. Events in the Terrace since then seemed designed to 'restore' the two houses to the state of nature rather than any pristine Regency condition.

The latest discovery by members of the Harcourt Terrace Residents Association was of a full 45 gallon container of diesel oil, marked Irish Shell and B.P., situated in the back garden of No. 11, which is one of the buildings which Gallaghers wish to restore/develop. On the morning of 28 July a group of Gallagher workmen started a large bonfire in the back garden of No. 11 and refused to stop the fire saying that they were working under orders. The blaze finally had to be extinguished by the fire brigade. The oil drum was placed on a rise between the fire and the house and, as noted by one of the firemen, if punctured the oil would have flowed in the direction of the blaze on one side and towards the house on another. Coincidence?

It is, of course, possible that the full drum of diesel oil was placed there by strangers since the two houses have been left open to wind, weather and the passing world since



Desmond Fitzgerald: Gallagher's architect.

The owners, Merchant Banking, controlled by Gallaghers, were ordered by Corporation officials to close up the building following complaints from residents of Harcourt Terrace and on 16 July were found to have complied with that. However, on 25 July, after workmen who had been cutting down trees in the gardens of No. 10 and 11 for about ten days had left, the side door of No. 11 was found to be wide open. The next day the front door was also found open and later No. 10 was discovered to be in a similar state. Gardai, when appealed to by residents, could only state that if the owners wished to leave their doors open all night they had a perfect right to do so.

It is not the first time that Merchant Banking / Gallagher's have adopted an unorthodox approach to the 'restoration' of their property. After the houses, Nos. 10 and 11, were bought in 1973 the slates went missing from the roof of No. 10 while windows in No. 11 were left permanently open. This, coupled with pleas of intended restoration, goaded the residents of the Terrace into commenting "the only reason there is a whole and sound roof on No. 10 Harcourt Terrace is as a result of the vigilance of concerned residents, the Dublin Civic Group and the good offices of Dublin Corporation who forced them into restoration of the roof to prevent major deterioration of this preserved building".

Having stated its intention to restore the two houses Gallaghers / Merchant Banking also stated, through the statutory newspaper advertisement, their wish to build an office block at the rear of Nos. 10 and 11. However, on one of their site plans, the proposed block was shown actually protruding into much of the garden of No. 9 Harcourt Terrace,

not owned by them, and closely adjoining the rear walls of No. 8. There was no mention of the rear of No. 9 in the advertised planning application.

Whether intended to deceive or not there is no doubt that plans submitted for the block did not give a full picture of the proposed development in relation to either siting or final appearance. There was a discrepancy between two sets of drawings one of which showed the final height of the building to be 60 feet and the other 72 feet at its highest point. Not only was the final height unclear; one of the plans failed to show clearly that four storeys of offices were to be built over a space which in the plan was shown, by dotted lines, to be reserved for parking space.

Suffering, as Gallaghers seem to do, from an inability to express their planning intentions clearly it is no wonder that Harcourt Terrace residents find their concept of 'restoration' hard to understand.

A.I.B. helps ground rent landlord

We see that Portland Estates (Limerick) Ltd. have recently acquired a mortgage debenture from Allied Irish Banks Ltd. The amount of the debenture is not specified but amounts to all sums which are due by the company to the bank. The debenture, registered on 4 July, was created on 20 June last.

Portland Estates are the ground landlords for Ballinacurra Gardens, Limerick, where 270 householders are paying about £25 per year in ground rent. Recently, forty of them were summoned for non-payment and appeared in Court in June but their cases had to be remanded because of the difficulty experienced in getting legal advice. A number of solicitors refused to represent them when they found that their offence was refusal to pay ground rent.

Perhaps the ground rent market is not proving very lucrative in Limerick these days for Portland Estates — hence the AIB debenture?

North report slates B.A.

The Greater London Association of Trades Councils is the representative in Greater London of the Trades Union Council. It represents 40 Trades Councils. In January of this year, the GLATC decided to send a delegation to Northern Ireland to meet with representatives of the Trade Union Movement in Northern Ireland and to report back what they think that the trade union movement in London should be doing in their support. The delegation, comprising 14 representatives of 8 different trades councils, was in Belfast from the 3rd to the 6th July. While in Belfast they also met representatives of the Tenants and Community Groups, and the Civil Rights movement. Their report, which was endorsed by

the Executive of the GLATC was released last week.

The recommendations in the report fall under three headings, Civil Rights, Employment and Housing. The trade unionists said that they placed civil rights first because "we believe that the most urgent need in Northern Ireland is to reduce tension through the promotion of democratic and civil rights. The other two sets of recommendations refer to what must be done in Northern Ireland to attack unemployment and bad housing the twin evils which fuel the sectarian fire in Northern Ireland".

The delegation made 3 main recommendations on the civil rights front.

Firstly the delegation recommend that Westminster should enact a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. The delegation said that they endorsed the Bill of Rights produced by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. Although the delegation had met with representatives of the Ulster Citizens Civil Liberties Advice Centre and welcomed their proposed Bill of Rights as a "serious and constructive initiative" they disagreed with the UCCLAC that the campaign for a Bill of Rights should be a United Kingdom one. The report says "we are not satisfied that there is the same argument in Great Britain for a Bill of Rights as there is in Northern Ireland and we think that a broader campaign would detract from the pressure for the immediate passage of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland."

The GLATC report recommends the immediate end of internment without trial and an immediate return to jury trial in Northern Ireland.

Thirdly the report recommends that army harassment particularly of Republican areas should stop and that troops should be withdrawn to barracks with a view to their phased withdrawal from Northern Ireland. After their visit the London Trade Unionists were in no doubt about the British Army's 'peace keeping' capacity. "We wish to make it clear that we do not regard the troops as a proper peace keeping force and we believe that they should be withdrawn from Northern Ireland as quickly as possible. However we would stress our support for the views of the representatives of the trade union movement with whom we met that the 'troops out now' demand only has the effect of obscuring other important civil rights, economic and social demands as well as dividing the trade union movement in Northern Ireland".

On the unemployment question the delegation said that pay restraint will be all the more keenly felt in Northern Ireland, where the wage levels are significantly below those in the rest of the United Kingdom. The report remarks that Northern Ireland trade unionists have additional arguments against a Westminster policy of pay restraint.

To tackle the unemployment question the report recommends that an effective Development Corporation should be established, with powers similar to those of the proposed National Enterprise Board in Britain. The report also recommends the expansion of the public sector and of public sector control in Northern Ireland to stabilise the employment situation and to create more employment in the short and long terms. In addition they recommend that the Fair Employment Bill (Northern Ireland) should be enacted as quickly as possible. The report also recommends an expansion of training school facilities to produce the skilled labour required for an expansion of industry in Northern Ireland.

On the Housing question the report recommends an expansion of the Direct Works Building Department in Belfast under the Housing



British Army are not peace-keepers, British trade unionists found.

Executive. The Department should be capable of carrying out capital works and should be fully unionised. All contracting out to firms employing lump labour should cease.

Secondly the Government should loan at a nominal interest rate all the funds necessary for housing and other socially desirable development, through the Public Works Loan Board, to the Housing Executive.

Thirdly the report recommends that the Housing Executive should seek to double its present inadequate house building rate and that the Community and Tenants Associations should be given more representation and control in all those Committees dealing with housing and social services in and outside of Belfast.

Finally the London Trade Unionists recommend that the Government should re-establish an independent Community Relations Commission whose function it would be to fund community initiatives and projects.

The GLATC has promised that the report will receive the widest possible coverage and distribution within the trade union movement in London. There is to be a regional report-back conference on 6th September, local report-back conferences will be held in different parts of London in September and October and it is hoped that, by November, the delegates will have reported back to well over 100 trade union bodies in London. In addition the delegates will be seeking meetings with the TUC and the Northern Ireland Office and the GLATC will be organising a mass lobby of Parliament by London trade unionists in October.

Limerick politician pays no stamps

Noel O'Sullivan, of St. Senan's St., St. Mary's Park, Limerick, is out of work but cannot draw the dole even though he has paid Social Welfare contributions for the past seven years.

He discovered this after he had been sacked from a fish store owned by Mr. Clem Casey, a Flanna Fail City Councillor and that party's recent nominee for the Mayorship of Limerick.

Advised that he was eligible for redundancy payments but needed stamps to get it, he found that his card had only 26 stamps on it. He said that his ex-employers had told him that that was all that he would need. Having informed the Department of Labour that he had been paying contributions since the age of 16, they checked and told him that, No, they had no record of cards in his name.

So Noel O'Sullivan will get no payment while the Department is checking up with Clem Casey and company.

He was told that he was being sacked because there was no work for him but he believes that the real reason was because he announced his intention to get married and that Caseys feared he would ask for a rise on his £26 wages. Since being laid off, his work has been done by a member of the Casey family.

He had already been refused a week's holiday, starting last Saturday, in order to get married. This was because he had been sick for a few weeks some months previously.

Mr. O'Sullivan had worked in the Casey company since the age of 12.

Read

The United Irishman

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— the voice of Irish Republican Socialism

I.R.A. urge talks to end murders

"We are determined to do all in our power to end this horror and the coolness with which the paramilitary organisations have responded to our peace initiatives does not weaken our resolve", a spokesman for the IRA told an Irish People reporter in Belfast this week. "We had hoped that the paramilitary organisations from both the Protestant and Catholic communities would accept our offer to make our services available to organise talks among them but have not given up hope that the ordinary people whom these organisations claim to represent will pressurise them into seeing reason and force them to end the carnage", he added.

The IRA offer to help to set up talks between the various paramilitary organisations came in a statement issued last Friday afternoon two hours before the Loyalist car-bomb went off in the Lower Falls, five hours before members of the Provisionals murdered a Protestant Corporation workman who had volunteered to come into the Lower Falls area to repair homes damaged by the Loyalist blast, and seven hours before a blast, believed to be the work of a PLA/IRSP element, ripped through the Travellers Rest at Derriagh, causing one death and numerous injuries.

"The pattern whereby a paramilitary group from one section of the community murdered innocents of another religion today in retaliation for the atrocity of another sectarian paramilitary group yesterday must be halted", said the IRA statement of Friday afternoon. The events of Friday evening diverted attention from the plea but gave savage emphasis to its urgency.

"Paramilitary organisations are the source of the perpetrators of the sectarian violence. Some had claimed responsibility for some of the outrages (e.g., the Miami Showband killings); all had denied responsibility for others (e.g., the Bayardo Bar killings)", the IRA statement asserted. It went on: "What all paramilitary organisations must realise is the futility of such outrages."

As we go to press it appears that no direct response has come from any of the paramilitary organisations. But realisation by the communities from which the paramilitaries spring that killing innocent Protestants does not serve the cause of a United Ireland any more than killing innocent Catholics maintains the North's Constitutional position might bring the pressure to force the madmen back from the brink.

Wanted-one scapegoat for recession

The world is at war — a war of propaganda. What is at issue is the blame for the widespread economic crisis and recession in almost every country of the free enterprise world.

What is at stake is the future credibility of their governments who are, in the main, helpless in the face of spiralling unemployment, inflation, cut-backs in investment and trade union pressure to maintain the living standards of their members.

What is needed is a scapegoat to explain how, for instance, employment is dropping and the purchasing power of wages cut while, at the same time, the major industrial and financial companies are continuing to make record profits. In America the giant motor corporations, Ford and General Motors, claimed the recession as the reason for laying off over 100,000 workers and still turned in 1.3 BILLION dollars profit in the same year. Exxon, the oil giant, blamed the 'crisis'



● Ford's view of world oil diplomacy (Kissinger behind).

when it laid off over 4,000 workers but managed nevertheless to beat world profit records when it made 42 billion dollars last year.

Or to come closer to home, how did the various banking groups manage to make profits ranging from £16m to £18m when, at the same time, the 'crisis' forced them to cut their intake of school leavers? So desperate are young people leaving school for a job that one bank was swamped in a flood of 5,000 applications for just 100 jobs last week.

So we have a war of words. President Ford of America threatens to invade the Arab oil-producing countries if they don't accept a 'reasonable' price for their oil and as everyone knows the rise in the price of oil is to blame for the mess that the world finds itself in. So you put the Arabs in their place, reduce the price of oil and everything will be alright. Right?

A bitter campaign of vilification, blackmail and intimidation is under way against the oil-exporting countries. US imperialism, in the shape of the US-controlled oil multinationals, is the prime mover behind this campaign. The oil-producing countries are accused of being the chief cause of inflation and have been even threatened with armed intervention.

But what President Ford, or anybody else for that matter, cannot explain is, if oil prices are to blame for the rocketing inflation, how come we were plagued by inflation long before the oil-producing countries insisted on a better price for their product? And how come the major part of the oil price increases went into padding the profits of the major Western oil companies and not to the Arabs who were held to blame for the rises and for the artificially induced shortages which were used to deceive the consumer into believing that a crisis situation actually existed? Well, if the Arabs cannot be held to account for the world inflation, the reasoning goes, it must be the workers who are making exorbitant wage demands and are not prepared to work to earn them. Right?

Hence we have the Taoiseach (salary £14,000 per annum) telling us that as a nation we are paying ourselves too much; Richie Ryan dons the doctor's coat to tell us to take our medicine for our own good and, when that proves ineffective, threatening to withdraw all sorts of budget goodies like food subsidies. And, of course, there is the occasional oddball who feels that a touch of unemployment/hunger/fascism or the return of the death penalty will solve everything.

But, in fact, the worker throughout the world is the one most hit by inflation, whose purchasing power has been most reduced and whose immediate concern is to barely maintain living standards. And, as in the case of the oil producers, the wage earner is the object of a large scale propaganda campaign telling him that it is his fault that the world is in the mess it is and that he better do something about it quick — like take a wage cut — or else.

Wages are not the cause of our crisis; no more than is the increase in the prices of raw materials. Inflation has been on the rampage since about 1968, long before the producer countries of the world claimed more advantageous terms for their goods. Another convenient explanation which is trotted out along with the redundancy figures is "The World Economic Crisis". Crisis — what crisis? A major part of the world can say with some truth. The 'world' crisis is, in fact, only confined to that part of the world under the free enterprise system,

the developed industrialised countries and those Third World countries which depend on supplying the industrialised countries with raw materials often at ridiculously low prices! The socialist countries are islands of economic stability in a sea of economic chaos.

So why is it that a very large section of the globe, those operating under a planned economy, can escape the general 'world crisis'? Or to turn the question around, why is it only the free enterprise countries which are in an economic mess?

Here is the truth behind the propaganda war. It is neither Arab oil producers, extortionate workers nor some economic 'Act-of-God' which is responsible for the current malaise. The real villains are, in the main, the multinational companies and banking corporations, mostly US-controlled, whose capital accumulation is geared totally towards short-term profitability and the making of more profit through monetary speculation. The spread of inflation can be largely traced to their activities; indeed, inflation comes as a boon to these economic giants because the higher the inflation the higher the profits in the short term. They exploit their workers more, hold down wages and employment, attack trade union rights, cause firms to close down and drive non-monopolist competitors to ruin. On a world scale they interfere with government policy, increase the imbalance in development throughout the world, alter the structure of production, threaten the sectors of the economy which are the basis of national independence, attack the sovereignty of the developing countries, encourage reactionary forces and interfere with the right of peoples to make what use they wish of their natural resources.

For years they paid low prices for oil and other raw materials from the underdeveloped countries, accumulating fabulous profits on the way, while the prices of their industrial goods imported by those countries went up relentlessly and the terms of exchange became ever more scandalous on account of inflation. One of the most notable facets of the present crisis is the growing determination of the primary producer countries to demand a greater degree of control over their economic development and a better price from the multinationals on the world market. The oil-producing countries are attempting to fix the price of oil to the rate of world inflation and to nationalise, where still privately owned, the oil companies. Other raw material-producing countries are taking the same steps, hence the world-wide publicity campaign to persuade people that it is these countries which are behind the massive growth in unemployment and inflation. There are indeed radical changes taking place in the trading relations of the underdeveloped and developed worlds but the crisis in the 'free world' doesn't come from any threatening 'Third World' but from within itself, from the policies of its governments and the uncontrolled profiteering and speculation carried on by its major monopolies.

THE IRISH SOCIALIST

On sale every month

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Parliament St., Dublin 1.

Well, are ye going? ... To Rome, of course. Did you hear about the big crowd that is going to see the honours being done by Ollie Plunket? Well, there is our own Taoiseach (that's Mr. Cosgrave, by the way), most of the Hierarchy (naturally), a few Ministers (the Government kind) and, of course, Mark Clinton. From what I'm hearing in farming circles, he's going to pray for a miracle or two for Irish farming. Surely it is about time that Irish farmers told him that it is not miracles but a thought out policy that's needed here.

...

Well, after writing about their staffing problems last week I am happy to report that the F.B.D. Insurance Company, or the farmers insurance company as they like to style themselves, have resolved their differences with their staff in an amicable manner. If you recall I reported, exclusively, last week that certain prominent I.F.A. people were insistent that the staff who had dared to ask for more be sacked for their impertinence. Their jobs were advertised as vacant in the Sunday papers but the response was slow. Eventually they were reinstated and as a nice touch I hear that the firm agreed that in future they

will advise new staff of "the advantages of joining a union". Now, I wonder what those advantages would be? Something like getting your own job back when you are unfairly sacked?

Well, there are some directors of the company that won't be pleased by that. Like who? Well, like T. J. Maher (President I.F.A.), Sean Healy (Secretary General I.F.A.), Paddy O'Keeffe (Editor Farmers' Journal) ... need I continue?

Paddy, by the way, was in the unique position of being offered an advertisement for the Farmers' Journal, by the union involved in the trade dispute, advising people not to take up the supposedly vacant positions. Well, to his credit he did print the ad. but only after it was changed a little.

Now you may well think, in your ignorance, that if these directors didn't like the terms of the agreement they could veto it but there is an interesting international flavour to the F.B.D. insurance company. It centres around a Belgian insurance company 'N.V. Assurantie Van De Belgische Boerenbond' who won a tidy figure of 70,000 shares in the F.B.D.

The most interesting point is that no other shareholder has more than 1,600 shares and

indeed all but one have less than 1,000 shares each. So you can see who lays down the law in F.B.D. Perhaps this is the reason for the change of heart by the management in this dispute. They may be more progressive in industrial relations in Belgium ... or possibly it was just the fact that no other insurance company in Dublin was prepared to do business with them.

And, by the way, what about all the fuss over keeping capital in the country? Surely the I.F.A. are not a party to the draining of capital out of this country into another??? Is it any wonder that they (the I.F.A.) are this week advertising for an economist?

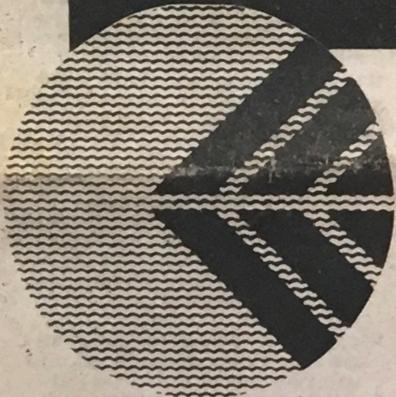
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Finally this week I report on a court case where the Land Commission sought an injunction against the Westmeath Land League. In court the counsel for the Land Commission described the Westmeath-based organisation as "a bunch of Portuguese Communist guerrillas". Now Dan McCarthy should refute that in a hurry. After all, who ever heard of a Portuguese Communist guerrilla winning a Dail seat, especially in the Longford-Westmeath area?

FARMING PEOPLE

CLINTON FOR CANONISATION!

THE OIL REFINERY ROW



This is the last in our series of articles on the development of Dublin Port and the role of the proposed oil refinery in this.

First: a lazy man's guide to oil refining.

An oil refinery is a plant through which crude oil is refined into the numerous different oil products which we use every day. There are many different types of oil refinery, some of which, particularly the older models, do give rise to pollution. The type proposed for Dublin is a modern distillation-type complex and, according to those in favour of the refinery idea, will actually reduce the level of pollution in Dublin by about two per cent by producing an oil with a lower sulphur content.

Most of the oil which we use at present is heavy residual oil, the oil

which is left when the other products of the petroleum have been extracted. At present these by-products are extracted and processed abroad and we import both the residue, to burn as fuel, and the other products, which we use in industry.

What are these oil products?

Naptha: used in the production of household gas. Liquid Petroleum Gas: used for cylinder gas, for use in industries, such as glass production, which require high level heating processes and also for cigarette lighter fuel. Petrol and Diesel: used in all mechanical transport. Light Oil: used in domestic and light industrial heating and lighting. Heavy Residual Oil: imported at present and used to produce electricity in oil fired generating stations.

Those in favour of siting the refinery in Dublin point to these different oil products which the refinery could supply and which could be processed in Ireland for domestic use and for export.

Other arguments put forward in favour of the home refining of oil are the immediate effects on our balance of payments. At present we spend £250m per year in importing oil. In the future we could increase export earnings by selling refined oil and processed by-products abroad.

In addition there is the fact that sooner or later we will be bringing our own oil ashore; if refined in Ireland its final value will be increased several times beyond what can be got from simply exporting it.

Against these advantages the main arguments are environmental ones and that is the platform on which opponents of the refinery, notably Sean D. Loftus, are campaigning.

However, in a report made in 1973 for Dublin Corporation the IIRS said of the refinery: "... the measures proposed by the Applicants in regard to air and water pollution control represent the very best practice at this time. Present pollution levels are not expected to show noticeable increase due to the proposed refinery. Indeed SO2 levels in the city may fall."

In 1966 the then Minister for Local Government instructed Local Authorities to draw up a sales scheme for tenants of Corporation and Council housing. In the Housing Act of 1966, Section 90, an attempt was made to place controls on the resale of such houses to prevent people who resold Council housing going back on to the housing list and the houses becoming the subject of speculation.

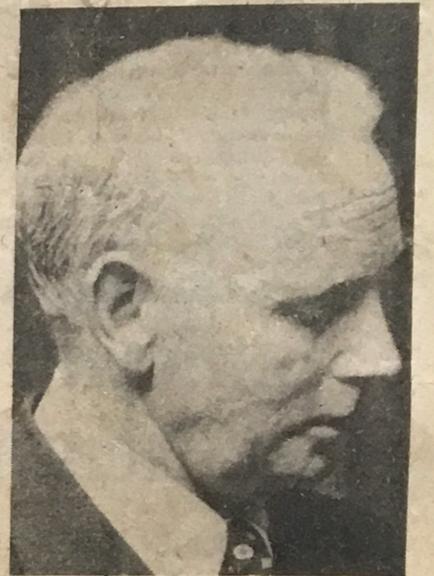
Sub-section (a) of Section 90 gave the Minister power to claim what is now referred to as a 'clawback', in other words, a percentage of the profits of such resale. This does not operate unless the resale is within 5 years of the original purchase.

Sub-section (b) stipulated that the intended purchaser should be a person in need of housing and that the intended sale would not leave the vendor or his dependants without adequate housing.

It is doubtful if sub-section (a) would survive a challenge under the Constitution which guarantees the right of citizens to own private property subject to the common good. The Minister could, to be sure, claim that it would be contrary to the common good that Local Authority housing should be sold on the open market but it is difficult to see members of the Irish judiciary upholding that principle. Apart from that, the proviso that consent to resale could be withheld if the intended purchaser is not a person in need of housing, could not prevent the house ending up as the subject of property speculation.

There are no guidelines in the section as to what constitutes a "need of housing" and it could indicate merely that the intended purchaser did not already own a house. Would the Minister or Local Authority, in examining a prospective purchaser, be empowered to examine his financial affairs, investigate bank accounts etc.? There is nothing in the 1966 Housing Act which could prevent a house, built with public funds for the specific purpose of housing working class families, being turned into two flats and rented to desperate young couples at £10 a week. Once the house is actually resold the Local Authority loses all control over what happens to it and this is even if its original control can be upheld.

It is difficult to understand what induced the Department of Local Government to introduce a scheme for selling local authority housing. Ostensibly the reason was to reduce the Corporation maintenance bill and to give



Mark Clinton: praying for a miracle.

TO CLAW OR NOT TO CLAW (BACK)

people a pride in their dwelling place which, it was argued, they wouldn't have unless they owned it. These are specious arguments but even if they were valid they would be outweighed by the social undesirability of valuable property passing out of public control.

Local Authority tenants have full security of tenure, subject to very reasonable provisos. They further have the right to hand down tenancies to selected next of kin, again subject to specific conditions. While there are areas for improvement, local authority tenants have little to complain about compared with those at the mercy of private enterprise. There is no doubt that decent and adequate shelter is a human right. There is no human right, contrary to what housing speculators would want people to believe to the ownership of such shelter.

Whether or not the Minister has the right to insist on a clawback from the resale of local authority housing is not the main problem. The real question is whether or not the Minister has the right to authorise the initial sale of public property which will, in the long run, create more hardship to families in the lower income group.

THE PRO'S

Director of Economic Affairs in Sinn Fein, which has come out strongly in favour of the refinery plans. Long-time Republican.



E. Smullen

Active in British trade union movement before returning to Ireland.

Author and playwright. Favours the refinery, he says, because it will free the country from the control of oil multinationals and will give rise to many industries to process the by-products.

and...

THE CONS

Born 1927: Barrister and Lecturer in Law: Dublin City Councillor.



S. Loftus

Founded Christian Democrat Party whose title he added to his own name by deed poll.

Political career based on preservation of Dublin Bay and opposition to oil refinery. Has not specified his policy on the general industrial development of the port area. Says refinery will cause pollution and damage environment.

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