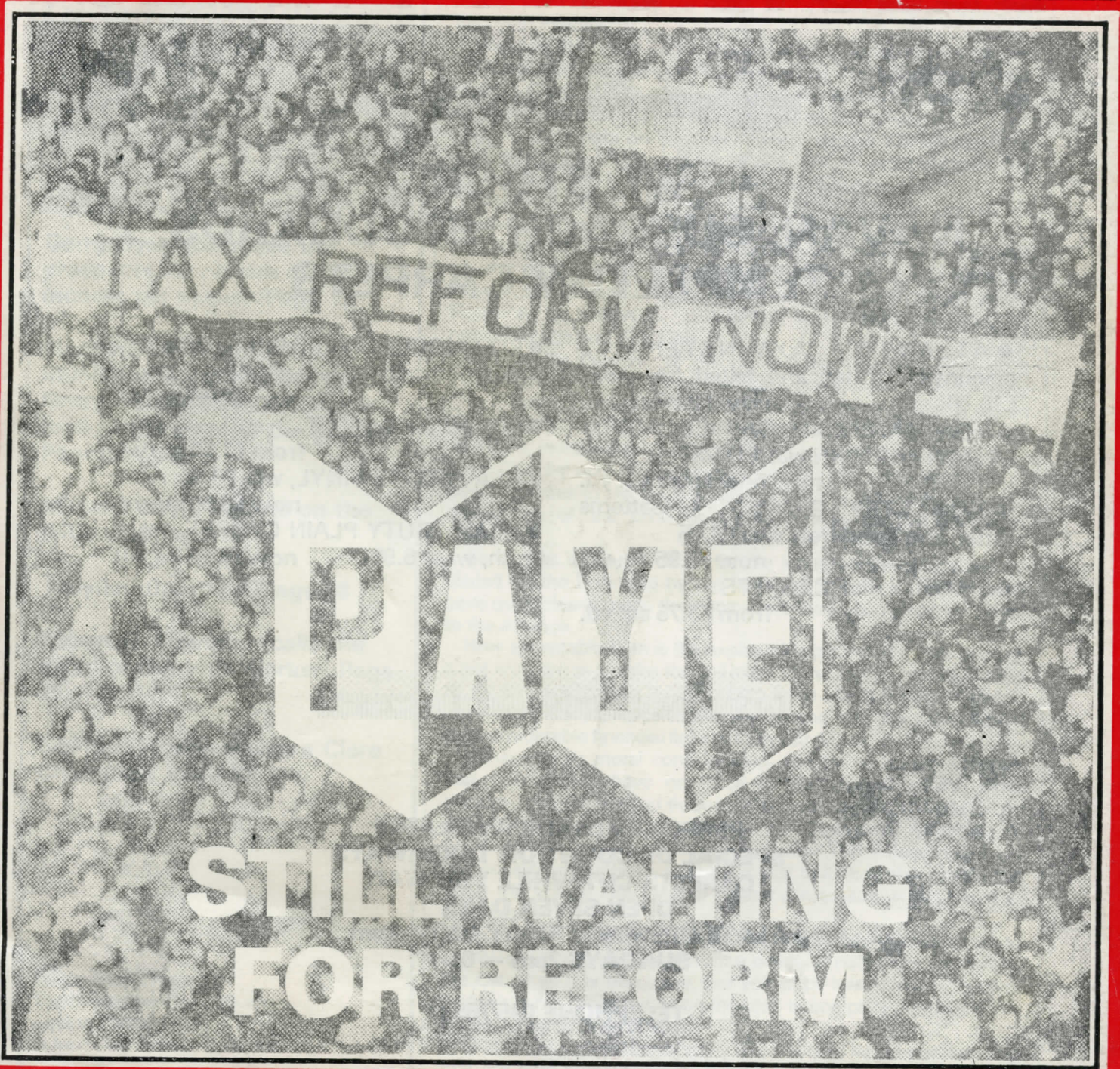


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WORKERS LIFE

Vol 2 No 1 May 1981



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Editor Des O'Hagan
Staff Reporter Gerry Flynn
Design Paddy Gillan
Advertising Adrian Gallagher

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CONSPIRACY theories of history have always, or at any rate in the long run, been laughed out of court. Generally speaking this is because closer and less fevered examination of a situation has demonstrated that rational explanations for events lay more readily to hand.

In international affairs one does not often have to look further than pragmatic interests to explain the behaviour of states.

That may read somewhat cynical; but one is more likely to arrive at the truth by establishing what benefits accrue to each party in an international agreement rather than look for the hidden hand of a secret service.

Equally it would seem that moral concepts have a low priority in deciding international behaviour whether the issue is one of El Salvador, Palestine or Namibia.

There was a time when Ireland was relatively insulated from such matters. We could afford from our sheltered position either to remain silent or express our horror at the scandalous behaviour of the Great Powers.

However the days when international questions were remote from the Irish people are long gone. The IRFU decision to tour racist South Africa and the subsequent justifiable anger of the free African States is adequate evidence on that point.

But the spotlight on our international decisions is even sharper now that Ireland is a member of the world's most authoritative committee — the United Nations Security Council.

Indeed during April, Mr Noel Dorr, Ireland's permanent representative at the UN was president of the Council.

Among the questions before the Security Council was the issue of what parties should be heard on the critical debate on Namibia. There was unanimous agreement that the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) were fully entitled to representation and a hearing.

But on the question of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, a puppet group of the South African government, the Security Council divided. Ireland voted with Britain, France, Spain, Japan and the USA in favour of admitting the DTA, the other nine members, including the Soviet Union voted against.

Mr Dorr by way of explanation said that Ireland's vote was to have "all sides to the issue heard" and that it did not constitute a recognition of the DTA as representatives of the people of Namibia.

Be that as it may. That is not the interpretation which will be placed on the Irish vote by the free African States. These states have quite clearly made their point that they will give no credence to the Alliance.

How acceptable then is the explanation proffered by Mr Dorr? It is not arrogant to dismiss the "all sides of the argument" statement as totally unrelated to the Namibian issue nor is it cynical to ask were there other pressures pushing Ireland into the camp which has considerable financial links with South Africa.

Leaving aside moral consideration, but by no means agreeing that they should have no force in international affairs, what benefits accrue to Ireland through adopting a position hostile to the free African States? Increased British, Japanese, American or South African investment in Irish industry? This indeed may have had considerable influence, but it is well to look further ahead and ask if this vote is indicative of Ireland's international alignment in the future.

On the surface it would seem that Ireland has moved closer to the Western bloc and away from a policy of non-alignment within the UN. If so it is necessary that voices be raised now to ensure that this is not the first step on the road to complete capitulation to Anglo-American interests.

That is not a moral cry of pain; it is a simple statement stressing that our best interests are to pursue a path which enables us to treat with all democratic nations on equal terms. We will not be able to do so if we are regarded with suspicion by those countries outside the Anglo-American sphere of influence.

FIANNA FÁIL's close connections with the liquidated Irish Tapestry Co. in Drogheda has not endeared 'the Party of Reality' to the workers of Louth and Meath. Twenty workers were made redundant when the craft company, which manufactured good quality bedspreads and woollen covers, went into liquidation last March.

The firm had received £122,000 from the state rescue agency, Foir Teo, and owed more money to the state owned Industrial Credit Company. Most of the workers feared that their outstanding holiday money and redundancy payments of £12,000 would not be paid and they staged a successful three day sit-in until a deal to sell the factory was agreed.

Managing Director of the woollen operation was Matt Doolan, a brother-in-law of Tánaiste and Energy Minister, George Colley. Other shareholders included Fianna Fáil's chief fund-raiser and Aran Energy boss, Des Hanifin, as well as Tom Roche, of Cement Roadstone and Bula mines, who supports Fianna Fáil and is seeking to build private toll bridges to boost his vast wealth.

A local consortium of managers and businessmen have agreed to purchase the plant from the receiver and the Industrial Credit Company has been co-operating with their efforts to keep the factory going. The new bosses include local solicitor and horse owner, Vincent Hoey who keeps a finger in most of Louth's business pies. He's been joined by Noel Ryan who owns the Drogheda and Dundalk Dairies. Only time will tell whether the tapestry workers are merely out of the Fianna Fáil frying pan and into the businessmen's fire.

MEMBERS of the Labour Party are being made pay the price of financial support from the social democratic 'Socialist International' which is dominated by the West German and Israeli labour parties.

The Labour Party's Ruairi Quinn T.D., has begun to back Israel's efforts to establish a base and embassy in Dublin. Already Ireland has non-residential diplomatic relations with Israel through the Ambassador in Athens, Sean Ronan, but the Israeli government are making repeated efforts to build their international network.

The Labour Party has been out-flanked by the Israelis who want to prevent any EEC recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation but

THAT'S LIFE

continue to spread extensive propaganda against the Irish troops of the U.N. force in South Lebanon. More embarrassing for the Labour Party have been the fears of soldiers' families that they support the Israeli army who provide the weapons and shells to South Lebanon's 'christian militia' to injure and kill Irish soldiers.

WE CAN ALL breathe a deep sigh of relief to learn that one of the world's most powerful and dangerous men is pleased with the reports he receives on Irish workers.

Former NATO Commander and now U.S. Secretary of State, General Alexander Haig — the man who excitedly shouted 'I am now in control' when President Reagan was shot — made a brief stop-over at Shannon airport last month. He told the gathered security men, political aides and Shannon workers that he was pleased with the reports he had received of Irish workers through some of the U.S. firms in Ireland. Haig was formerly President of the conglomerate which owns the Mostek micro-chip plant in Dublin.

As the 'Savage on El Salvador' General Haig has increased military aid to the brutal junta and terror gangs. He is now working hand in glove with the South African and Israeli regimes but before he presses the nuclear button it is reassuring to learn that he is pleased with Irish workers, at least for the moment.

THE FREE Legal Advice Centres in Dublin have recently expanded their work of pressurising the Minister for Justice, Gerry Collins, to provide a legal aid system based on equality before the law. FLAC has expanded into publishing its bi-monthly Flac File which is prepared by young people working in law, journalism and design.

Despite having provided voluntary assistance to 40,000

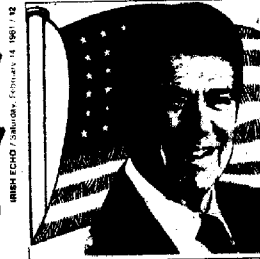
people over ten years, neither Paddy Cooney (Coalition) nor Gerry Collins (Fianna Fáil) paid much attention to FLAC's recommendations and submission titled 'It's Rough Justice with Legal Aid'. The understaffed government Law Centres provide a limited legal service based on a means test in seven major towns. Flac File, costing 20p, highlights these inadequacies as well as containing topical articles on fire laws, equal pay, prison reform, racism and the planned rugby tour of South Africa.

MANY of you will have wondered at the rapid recovery of President Reagan following

his recently inflicted gunshot wound. *Workers Life* can reveal exclusively that it had nothing to do with any acquired immunity following years of practised convalescence from the same ailment on the Big Screen; neither had it anything to do with the efficiency of a highly-paid, highly-trained and highly-motivated team of Presidential surgeons. It was, in fact, due to the well wishes of erstwhile Son of Erin Thomas W. Gleason.

Mr Gleason is the President of the International Longshoremen's Association (a reactionary US trade union representing about 100,000 dockers and allied workers) who, in an open letter to Reagan that was published in the US *Irish Echo*, declared that the initials of his union stood for 'I Love America'.

Mr Gleason's amorous tendencies might well be of interest to the Chief Executive but it was another part of the letter that had the remarkable effect on Reagan's health. Here, Gleason boasted of a three year agreement entered by the ILA with the employers which was completed 'without strife or disruption... to commerce... or port activity.' The ILA, he added, were always ready to back government policy.



IRISH ECHO (London) February 14, 1981/72

ILoveAmerica

Dear President Reagan:

On behalf of the more than 100,000 longshoremen and other waterfront workers represented by our union, I extend congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of your inauguration as President of the United States of America.

You have assumed the role as Chief Executive in a time of difficulty and peril. The problems we face as a nation and those you must deal with as President extend in many directions. Whether they involve the national economy and other domestic matters, or relations with allied governments and other foreign nations, the issues are complex and serious.

In those endeavors you deserve support by all citizens and groups in our country. Therefore, I can think of no better occasion than this to express publicly such support by our union, the International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO, and its membership of maritime workers. Indeed, ILA pledges all-out backing to your efforts to resolve these problems.

In this regard, it is relevant that ILA presently operates under a newly-negotiated three year labor contract with the Atlantic and Gulf Coast shipping industry that should prove beneficial to the national economy. The agreement was completed without strike or disruption to vital maritime commerce or port activity. Significantly, the contract also embodies conditions in labor-management relations that should enhance growth of maritime commerce through our ports in the years ahead.

Also, in action supportive of United States government policy, the ILA membership last year served notice on the Soviet Union that it could not conduct ocean trade as usual through ILA ports so long as its armed forces occupied the territory of neighboring Afghanistan. The resulting union-member boycott of Russian vessels and Russian cargoes remains in effect.

As citizens and workers in this greatest of all nations, the rank and file members of ILA are proud to proclaim love of country. Thus, the three letters of our abbreviated union title—ILA—have often been spelled out to read I LOVE AMERICA, and properly so.

We say so again at this time because we feel this is a sentiment in which you fully concur. Therefore, as you now take hold of the reins of government, we in ILA are proud to say that we love our country and will support, in full measure, our newly-installed President and Chief Executive as he leads the nation in these difficult times.

God Bless You Mr. President.

Respectfully,

Thomas W. Gleason

THOMAS W. GLEASON
President

International Longshoremen's Association AFL-CIO



It has been reliably reported that with their current industrial relations headaches, both Margaret Thatcher and Charles J. Haughey are investigating the possibility of being shot in that sacred Hollywood region of the fleshy upper shoulder, where pain and inconvenience are negligible, while sympathy, charity and, best of all, compliance are paramount.

In between loving America, being a war-monger's sycophant and betraying workers, Thomas W. Gleason also supports the Provisional IRA.

THE FIVER book token for this month's political graffiti goes to Sean MacCarthy of Cork who spotted the following in the Black Swan bar in the city: Once you've seen one nuclear war you've seen them all.

All the spelling is correct so Tipperaryman R.Reagan is discounted as the author.

Still a fiver for the best each issue, so keep your eyes open and your pencil handy.

'Death to all slimmers!'

Frank Hall's WORLD

LOSE WEIGHT OVERNIGHT

SUFFERERS of anorexia nervosa — the psychological ailment that encourages fanatical fasting — will hardly have been amused by the rather unfortunate juxtaposition of headlines (above) that appeared in the Sunday World, March 29. One was, of course, at the top of what was to be a humorous column while the other, obviously, headed an advert.

Such mishaps are a sub-editor's nightmare and we are quite sure that the staff of the Sunday World are not so ghoulish as actually to be campaigning for the deaths of voluntary dieters.

Curiosity

How did I do it? Don't ask me. Just believe that I can do more. After a while's domination of my stomach knows who's boss. After I used to bully me for 70s, 80s and 90s, I used to be a scrawny little fellow. Now it's delighted with a plate of cauliflower soup with butter and margarine and sprinkled with parmesan. And so am I. Though I occasionally indulge in a bit of a four-ounce piece of chicken, pepper and orange juice with a sliced banana and a small. Just to show there are no hard feelings. Was it really worth the trouble? When I look at the house of those first friends who formerly look so much trouble to tell me that I was putting on a lot of weight I can honestly reply, by Heaven YES.

It's more than a sense of achievement — it's a wonderful feeling of revenge. You'll never know what it's like to be found out for yourself.

Alan Byrne savours the flavour of the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis

AND STILL they gazed, still they clapped and still their wonder grew that one small man could carry all they knew.

The party faithful came from all over to cheer their way through last month's Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis. The Taoiseach, Charles Haughey, inflicted a two hours ten minutes address on the delegates. They didn't seem to mind — clapping, cheering and standing ovations were provided as required.

Mr. Haughey said everything he could during his marathon address, yet he said absolutely nothing. There were no new policies, no new ideas, not even a new point of emphasis. All that was new were the occasional rich and flowery metaphors. If Anthony Cronin had a hand in the speech then he has certainly earned his oats as a Government employee. The delegates loved it.

Mr. Haughey had arrived on to the platform at about 6.20 to rescue distressed Brian Lenihan. Lenihan's voice had, for once, deserted him. Intended to warm up the crowd before the

Taoiseach's address, he was merely able to utter a few high pitched croaks.

Maire Geoghegan Quinn explained that Brian had fallen victim "to that disease which affects us all from time to time". However, it was not ordinary laryngitis which had silenced the poor Minister. The story went that the previous night the Republic's very own Foreign Minister had been singing rebel songs to a very late hour in celebration of the election result from Fermanagh/South Tyrone earlier that day. Lenihan's voice, once abused, refused to operate with its usual guttural inflexions and roars.

For the first half an hour of Mr. Haughey's speech the delegates were full of enthusiasm. They clapped relentlessly. However, by 7.20 they were worn out and completely flat. Mr. Haughey was talking about fisheries — badly. With live TV coverage due to start at 7.30 something had to be done. Cue the North. The Northern Ireland problem had

been raised to a new level, said Mr. Haughey. Cue a standing ovation. When the red lights on the TV cameras lit up, the delegates clapped louder and with more zest than ever.

It had, mused Mr. Haughey, been suggested that our economic problems were being overshadowed and relegated to second place because of the priority he had given to the Northern problem. This was not true. He felt that tackling the Northern problem had made our economic situation an even more important issue. We all waited for an attempt to throw some light on the sorry state of the Irish economy. But not so. Instead? More rhetoric on Northern Ireland.

By the end of Mr. Haughey's lecture the delegates were ecstatic. They had been wound up nicely and obliged with a tremendous standing ovation. A large proportion of their enthusiasm was probably attributable to their relief that the proceedings were over and it was no longer necessary to suffer the agony of the hard wooden seats.

And so the Fianna Fáil faithful cheered, clapped and shouted. When Sile de Valera, heir presumptive to Grandad's party, ran towards the centre of the stage to give Charlie a big kiss they could take it no more. They screeched and roared with delight. What is life but the sight of Sile and Charlie together?

The IFA Family Committee, founded five years ago by Co-op boss and Euro MP, T.J. Maher, is now run by Mrs. Pearl Holt, married to a Kildare farmer. The original idea was to interest farmers' wives in agricultural issues (higher prices and no tax) but the emphasis was changed two years ago. A scheme was introduced to provide a week's holiday 'down on the farm' for city children. At first ten boys from Dublin were brought to live on country farms. Last summer the scheme was extended to sixty kids.

And what is the purpose of this sudden interest in attracting workers' children? According to the Family Committee the youngsters get a better appreciation of the farming way of life and, more importantly, they very staunchly defend the farmers who refuse to pay income tax.

There is little doubt that town and city dwellers are real innocents compared with organised farmers defending their privileges.

One man, sitting close behind me, went practically hysterical. Wearing a long green coat and a short grey cap, he was clearly "up for the day". "Good on ye Sile", he bellowed, "good girl yourself". Minutes later, I saw him scale the main stage, seize two potted plants, and shout down to his friend: "Mick, I got some. I got some of the flowers."

As the delegates moved towards the exits, the smooth yet grating tones of RTE's Pascal Mooney could be heard urging them to buy the party's election record "Charlie's Song". Apparently about two thousand people did and at £2 each that's a lot of 'blind faith'.

The central function of most party Ard Fheiseanna is a policy making one. Not so this Ard Fheis. No new policies were formulated. Any minor criticism of a Minister's performance was always prefaced by a hearty congratulations to the Minister. Each Minister walked on to receive a standing ovation. This seems to have been the main purpose of last month's gathering — a confidence boost before the impending battle.

The delegates returned to their local branches well primed and full of confidence. Whether this sense of euphoria and optimism was false and mis-placed has yet to be seen. Great efforts were made to plaster over the splits and divisions within the party. But will the plaster stick?

'The General Election will see a shift in balance on the Left as Sinn Féin The Workers' Party make their long-awaited breakthrough..'

DESPITE their Ard Fheis bravado the largest political parties fear an imminent election campaign. The traditional blind loyalty to party tags is breaking down as more voters are prepared to switch support. The accepted solution now is to set up an auction of wild promises with the winner usually pulling the most extravagant pledges out of the hat and the closer to the election the better.

As Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael have the support of so many auctioneers and farmers it is not surprising that they treat elections as grand-scale cattle marts with the fattest beast for the highest bidder. The last two election contests were based on appeals to petty greed with promises to reduce rates, then abolish them, scrap car road tax and provide reshuffled house grants totalling a marketable one thousand pounds. This year's bids have already started with car telephones (an obsession with private cars), four thousand pound grants and a thirty-two county state, for those that want it, within five years. Serious issues concerning housing shortages, land speculation, unplanned communications, unemployment and development of natural resources are swept aside.

The conservative parties fear that they may now reap the fruits of their cynical promises. The experience of a callous Coalition followed by a profiteers government, now wrapped in nationalist clothing, has opened thousands of workers' eyes. None more so than the 160,000 seeking jobs. The eventual polarisation between right and left is slowly taking place.

Labour confused

The counterbalance to conservatism has, for sixty years, centred on a dispirited Labour Party which is afraid to adopt the role of workers' representatives. Their confused policies and disastrous alliance with Fine Gael led to major disillusionment among supporters. More importantly the Labour Party is confused about its likely support. Their overtures to farmers' organisations have created fun and belly-laughs for the powerful farm leaders but will not result in support. The pleas to large companies and banks to underwrite their election campaign has not filled the party coffers.

All of these factors make the left side of the political equations more important. There are eighteen extra seats in the new constituencies with more voters who are young and increasingly urban workers. Despite these trends the Labour Party has been losing its urban support. In 1965 there were 22 Labour T.D.s but that has been whittled away to the present 17 seats; and many of them are from rural areas. Electorally the Labour Party is at its weakest for just twenty years. Part of that downward trend was the loss of three important Dublin constituencies in February 1973 and, four years later, their failure to win any seats in important working class areas like Artane, Finglas, Rathmines and Cabra in Dublin and industrial cities like Limerick, Galway and Waterford.

The standard bearer of the break-away Socialist Labour Party, the erratic Noel Browne, has tired of the role and the SLP which confidently anticipated a bright future for itself four years ago is now little more



Joe Sherlock to win seat in Cork East

than a social gathering of disillusioned Labour deserters. The other maverick labour candidates like Mick Lipper in Limerick have returned to the fold while John O'Connell has set his cap against party leader Frank Cluskey in Dublin South Central.

Workers' Breakthrough

The general election will see a shift in balance on the left as Sinn Féin The Workers' Party make their long awaited breakthrough in Dáil elections by contesting fourteen



Martyn Turner/The Irish Times

constituencies. Party Vice-President, Joe Sherlock, who polled exceptionally well in the Cork North East by-election at the end of 1979, is certain to be the first SFWP candidate to win a Dáil seat. He is likely to head the field of other SFWP front runners like Paddy Gallagher (Waterford), John McManus (Wicklow), Frank Ross (Dublin North West), Eric Byrne (Dublin South Central) and Tomas MacGiolla (Dublin West). Each of them contested the last general election and have built strong local support. Sinn Féin The Workers' Party's cautious electoral strategy over eight years has provided a spread of committed support in the main industrial and urban areas. That long-term preparation is expected to result in a significant increase in electoral support from workers and PAYE taxpayers who have been disillusioned with the Labour Party and conservatives.

Not surprisingly the right versus left candidates have adopted very different strategies. The Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael conservative parties are repeating their earlier policy of presenting politics as a leadership personality contest between a dark

green and true blue J.R. who will look after those who support and finance them. Their reliance on glossy advertisements and simple slogans like 'Fianna Fáil leading the nation through' (what?), 'with Garret the country wins' and 'Dr. Garret has the cure' (again for what?). Their discredited similarities were well illustrated by



Tomas MacGiolla

Fine Gael's refusal to publish an electoral programme — what used to be called manifesto promises — because Fianna Fáil might steal and adopt them.

The workers candidates are sometimes less entertaining as they highlight the unequal tax and education systems and propose extensive investment to create secure employment and provide decent housing and hospitals.

The 22nd Dáil will provide 18 additional secure, if not permanent, jobs but whether it results in reduced unemployment depends on the presence of a workers' voice. The Fianna Fáil promise of full employment within five years is understood for the opportunist gimmick it was. Equally dangerous is Fine Gael's proposal to licence recognised trade unions, impose fines on trade unionists and abolish the negotiated wage agreements of the National Understanding.

The memory of the National Coalition combined with the opinion poll's 57% who favour a change of government indicates that the sooner we have an election the better for all workers and their families.

APRIL 9, 1981 could well prove to be a turning point in the history of politics in Northern Ireland. Provisional hunger striker Bobby Sands defeated Harry West, former leader of the Official Unionist Party, in a straight fight in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone by-election.

Thousands of words have already been written about the significance of the vote. It has been claimed, not surprisingly, that Sands' victory constituted an endorsement by the Roman Catholic population of the Provisional terrorist campaign in Northern Ireland. More reasonably, but equally tragically, most observers saw the result as a simple statement of "us" telling "them" that the politics of the sectarian head count were alive and well in Co. Fermanagh.

Two key issues however need further examination: how did the situation arise in which there was a two-cornered fight and secondly in the weeks that followed the election, what was/is the implication of what appears to be an orchestrated campaign in the media to make the Sands' hungerstrike the major issue in politics both in Northern Ireland and the Republic.

The *Fermanagh Herald* March 28 reported that there would be two and possibly three Unionist candidates in the field. Nationalists were expected to have to have at least five under consideration ranging from the SDLP to Noel Maguire, brother of the deceased Frank Maguire. The Workers Party Republican Clubs were also reported to be "considering the situation". In fact the only significant Northern Ireland Party not mentioned was Alliance.

So with a plethora of candidates and possible candidates being discussed it looked as if there would be a feast of electioneering under the dreary steeples of Fermanagh.

However, by Monday March 30 the scene had altered drastically and West had emerged as the Unionist *unity* candidate; until minutes before closing it seemed as if there would be two Nationalists in the field, Maguire and Sands. Austin Currie had already expressed himself "unhappy" with the SDLP Executive's decision not to endorse him.

Then with only seconds to go Noel Maguire withdrew. The sectarian confrontation was then a reality.

It is possible only to guess at the pressures applied to achieve a Nationalist *unity* candidate. Rumours include the threat of

Fermanagh/ South Tyrone

Who is the real victor?

Des O'Hagan

dumping coffins at the homes of candidates who were prepared to "split" the Nationalist/Roman Catholic vote and it is also suggested that Dr Paisley deliberately allowed himself to be outmanoeuvred so as to harden his position come the Local Government elections on May 20. His reasoning here is not too hard to follow.

One time candidate and former Mid-Ulster MP Bernadette McAliskey set the tone of the Nationalist campaign. "We are not asking you in this election to support any particular organisation for any particular activity." Shades of the American Know-Nothings. (The Know-Nothings existed briefly in the USA in the mid-1850s. When questioned as to their programme members replied that "They knew nothing". Their one declared purpose was to elect "native" Americans.)

Full page advertisements in the *Ulster Herald* spelt out the reasons why voters should support Sands. The McAliskey theme was continued: "Bobby Sands' life is in your hands — Don't let him die."

The Fermanagh Herald carried an advertisement which certainly must have caused a few raised eyebrows round Enniskillen; it read "Father Joe McVeigh — As a Catholic priest, I appeal for your vote... A vote for Sands is a vote against violence." The notice also carried the simple message — Reject West.

Harry West also kept the politics simple and appealed for: Your Vote to Defeat Terrorism in the *Tyrone Constitution*. In

The Impartial Reporter and Farmers' Journal West expanded this theme by asking the voters to show "the world that this Constituency has no time for the men of violence and their supporters". This advertisement appeared on the morning of the poll and was clearly directed at the Nationalist voters.

Left with no choice voters flocked to the booths on April 9 and marked their papers along rigid sectarian lines.

Apart from the ultimate effects of the election, main losers would appear to be the Roman Catholic SDLP. As a party with an organisation in the area and already having run Austin Currie their collapse in face of the Provisional grouping will be interpreted as placing them absolutely and firmly in the camp of the sectarian Nationalists. As one leading commentator put it: "The SDLP allowed the Provisionals to dance on the grave of Mrs. Mathers". Mrs. Mathers was murdered in Derry when collecting census returns.

The by-election result was barely declared when an orchestrated campaign on the question of political status in Northern Ireland prisons was launched.

The intensity and stridency of the efforts to push the question of the hunger strike onto the front pages was matched only by the willingness of journalists in almost all dailies to accept that this was the major issue confronting the people of both Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Equally, radio and television

in the Republic was brought into service. A steady stream of bulletins, testifying to extensive "rioting", widespread fear and imminent street battles in Northern Ireland suggested that the North was in a state of collapse.

Mr Phil Flynn of the Local Government and Public Services Union was widely reported when he stated in Belfast on Easter Sunday that "the time was coming when the nationalist community, street by street, would have to organise itself into defence committees." (*News Letter* April 20).

Such malign comments designed to fuel hatred in Northern Ireland were not condemned by the Fianna Fáil Government. Instead, with the benediction of Haughey, Sile De Valera, Neil Blaney and Dr John O'Connell they hastened to Long Kesh to discuss the situation with Sands on Easter Monday.

Quite rightly the intervention of the Haughey-trio has been interpreted as the visual sign that the Fianna Fáil election strategy is to divert attention from the critical economic situation and turn "the war in the North" into a Haughey-unites-the-nation election jamboree.

The public tragedy, indeed scandal, is that the total irresponsibility of the Fianna Fáil Government was matched by elements in the media. A decade of violence and terrorism, murder and criminal injury was swept aside, not in the interests of peace and justice in Northern Ireland, but to create a nation in the interests of Fianna Fáil and the image of Charles Haughey.

'The prospects for significant change in the Northern Ireland local elections is remote'

Des O'Hagan

IF EVER there was an occasion when one would like to be a political scientist examining elections from the vantage point of fifty years hence, then surely the impending Northern Ireland Local Government elections (May 20) is that occasion. The reasons are obvious. Apart from the atmosphere in which the elections are being conducted, sectarianism, violence and the absence of a central democratic government, voters are confronted with a bewildering variety of parties, if not programmes, from which to pick.

The issues should be clear for the majority of voters. Rents have soared, electricity charges are astronomical, punishing both industry and the home, prices are out of control and the numbers of unemployed continue to rise. It shouldn't require pollsters and computers to predict a landslide victory for the parties whose programmes deal with these issues to the satisfaction of the voter.

But that is very unlikely to be the case, at least outside the urban areas.

In the main this is due to the manner in which Dr. Paisley, Democratic Unionist Party, and John Hume, Social Democratic and Labour Party, have attached themselves, albeit in opposing fashions, to the shadowy London-Dublin talks. Paisley saw his opportunity some months ago and with an eye on May 20 went roaring down the "Carson trail". Hume and the SDLP hoisted their flag more firmly to the Haughey Fianna Fáil mast and thus the constitutional question becomes a ridiculous part of the Local Government elections.

The traditional sectarian battle lines then remain dominant in the North. Paisley for example can expect to clean up in Fermanagh as a result both of the point already made here and the recent by-election. The other four Unionist parties while singing the Paisley tune in a lower key will find it impossible to compete with the strident



Seamus Lynch

tones of the DUP leader. No matter how pleasant Ann Dickson, Unionist Party of Northern Ireland, how conservative Jim Molyneux, Official Unionist Party, they are no match for Paisley at full steam. Jim Kilfedder, Popular Unionist Party, certainly has no love for the DUP but just simply has not the organisation to compete throughout the North.

Overall the forecast must be for Dr Paisley and the DUP to go further ahead. The only areas where any serious challenge will be mounted to his overall dominance is in the Protestant urban working class districts, particularly Belfast, where a small but interesting number of Independents are contesting. These include Shankill Road Councillors Hugh Smyth and Sammy Miller. Miller is recuperating from a sectarian murder attempt on his life, but is fully expected to be on the ballot paper.

In terms of Local Government politics this will be one of the most interesting aspects of the

entire election and ultimately if the Independents make the gains they expect it could significantly effect the shape of Belfast Corporation.

On the Roman Catholic-Nationalist side clearly the resignation of Cllrs Fitt, Devlin and Hunter from the SDLP in the Belfast area will reduce the party's representation on the Corporation. And while the SDLP would obviously feel confident of maintaining their support in the rural areas, the more overtly Provisional group, the Irish Independence Party, could make heavy inroads especially in Fermanagh and Tyrone.

The IIP led by Fergus McAtee can be expected to make the most of the events surrounding the Long Kesh hunger-strike. However this is an issue which will be latched onto by other minor groups such as the Peoples Democracy in Belfast and possibly a number of Nationalist independents. In any event the vote-catching power of Long Kesh may be considerably less than the various shades of Nationalists expect.

The SDLP's total profile also has been blurred by the nature of its leadership. John Hume MEP is obviously more at home in Strasbourg than in Derry. Other top figures, Mallon (Armagh), and Duffy (Mid-Ulster) are unrepentant right-wing nationalists, largely indifferent to the urban vote. All in all the prospect for the SDLP looks dismal, the party which once claimed to represent 40% of the Northern Ireland community.

Actively poised to collect the disaffected SDLP vote the Oliver Napier-John Cusnhahan led Alliance Party. Although claiming that they draw their support from all social classes, Alliance is in the main, largely backed by both the Protestant and Roman Catholic middle class. They can certainly expect to increase their share of seats not only from SDLP voters dismayed by the growing Provisional tone of the party but also from middle-class Unionists

neither prepared to join the "Carson trail" nor any of the other cul-de-sacs.

Alliance, fully aware of the shift in population in Northern Ireland towards the Antrim-Craigavon-Downpatrick triangle, will be hoping to make significant gains in Belfast and are already talking of becoming the largest party on the Corporation. While they will make advances on this occasion the future of the party will depend more on their position on the Left-Right political spectrum, and less on their "nice-guy" non-sectarian profile.

What then of the Left on May 20? Largest party, with six councillors at the moment, is The Workers Party Republican Clubs led by Alderman Seamus Lynch. Expected to have thirty candidates in the field they will be hoping for some gains, particularly in the urban areas. In fact excluding Derry City, Newry and the rural districts, the vast majority of their candidates are within the triangle mentioned above.

However they are certain to be viciously opposed by a number of right-wing and ultra-left candidates running on a mixture of nationalist programmes. They can increase their representation in Belfast, Craigavon and Downpatrick but may find it hard to progress elsewhere, outside Derry City.

Also on the Left are the Communist Party of Ireland, the United Labour Party, the Northern Ireland Labour Party, the Fermanagh Labour Party and the Lurgan based Socialist Alliance. Only the ULP and the NILP have more than one candidate in the field and again it is unlikely that any of the others will win a seat; the ULP and the NILP have had discussions over the past year with WPRC on economic and social issues, but no election pact has emerged.

The prospects then for significant change in the Local Government elections are remote. The traditional sectarian dimensions of Northern Ireland politics will remain largely unaltered in the rural areas, at least in the overall sense. That must be qualified by pointing to the manner in which some response to the material and social problems must be elicited from even the most dogmatic loyalist or nationalist candidate.

Politics continues to break through even in spite of the character of some parties.

It is in the urban districts that one would hope to have that aspiration proved most satisfactorily.

The Poet and The Prince

Paddy Gillan

"...I do certainly think that the National Question is the most important one facing us today. I think it will take imagination, finesse, sophistication and patience to solve it and I think these are the qualities the Taoiseach has got. So I think in the end he will."

The above thoughtful words — 'I think therefore I am' — are Anthony Cronin's. The object of his flattery is Charles J. Haughey, whose government last year gave Mr Cronin a job in the Government Information Service.

Prior to his present appointment, Mr Cronin was a poet by profession. For a living, he worked as a freelance journalist and broadcaster.

Through his *Irish Times* column, Mr Cronin made a bit of a name for himself as a 'lefty'. He enhanced this reputation by speaking at a centenary tribute to Trotsky and by writing a gushing profile of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, Michael O'Riordan, for *Magill*.

Before he went on to better things, Mr Cronin in *The Irish Times* frequently lamented the plight of the artist in Irish society. "I was," he now says, "an unremitting propagandist for the individual artist." Mr Cronin condemned the vulgarity and hypocrisy of the Irish middle-class for its neglect of art and artists. It now seems that the 'individual artist' whose neglect most outraged Mr Cronin was himself.

If Mr Cronin hadn't neglected his *art*, his *arguments* might have carried more weight. But he failed to translate his one true gift — the gift of the gab — into good prose. Reading his *Irish Times* column was like listening to a windbag deliver the five Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.

As he bade farewell to *The Irish Times*, Mr Cronin celebrated, not with *Benediction* but with *nunc dimittis*. *Nunc dimittis* is the prayer of Simon in the Gospel: 'now, O Lord, you may take your servant...'

A week later, Mr Haughey had gathered Mr Cronin unto his bosom. Just how well the bosom buddies work together was demonstrated in Mr Haughey's marathon address to the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis last month.

The Cronin style was perfectly suited to the occasion. In the wake of the Provisional IRA's electoral victory in Fermanagh/South Tyrone, verbosity and ambiguity were the order of the day.

Mr Haughey didn't deliver the words (15,000 in all) too well.



Charles Haughey

But he was brilliantly ambiguous. He did not concern himself with condemning terrorism; nor did he condone it. He had no need to. The kiss from Sile de Valera was a good enough signal to the grass-roots of Fianna Fáil. Without uttering a word either way, Mr Haughey showed that his heart is in the right place.

Mr Haughey's heart is with the 'The Nation' as defined by Thomas Davis almost a century and-a-half ago and as redefined for today by Anthony Cronin. As every yahoo in Fianna Fáil knows, Thomas Davis is the author of *A Nation Once Again* which is the anthem of the Provisional IRA. Mr Haughey is not a yahoo, but by invoking Davis's 'The Spirit of the Nation' he feeds the spirit of the yahoos, while salving Anthony Cronin's conscience.

Thomas Davis cannot be blamed for his popularity within the ranks of either the Provisional IRA or Fianna Fáil. He has no say in the matter; Mr Cronin has.

Davis was first enlisted in the Haughey camp in 1972 when Mr Haughey spoke at Harvard University in July of that year. The present Taoiseach was then, as Mr Cronin delicately puts it, "still very much in the wilderness". The Arms Crisis of 1970 was still fresh in the public mind and Mr Haughey was busy rehabilitating his public image.

Mr Haughey desperately needed to distance himself from the sword. At the same time, it was important that he didn't appear *too* distant. With the help of Mr Cronin, Mr Haughey discovered in Thomas Davis the answer to his problem.

Thomas Davis was a gentle —



Anthony Cronin

even genteel — revolutionary. His aim was a national rather than a social revolution. Among his close colleagues in the Young Irelanders were those who were as appalled by the French Revolution as Conor Cruise O'Brien is today. "You and I will meet on a Jacobin scaffold," Smith O'Brien warned Gavan Duffy in 1848, "ordered for execution as enemies of some new Marat or Robespierre, Mr James Lalor or Mr Somebody Else."

By 1848 Thomas Davis was dead. Following his death, he entered the popular consciousness through his poetry. "...it was after his death," Francis McManus wrote, "that Thomas Davis, a dead man, began to shape Ireland."

Dead men tell no tales and dead poets are in no position to protect their work from abuse or exploitation. Ghosts may haunt, but they can't complain.

Thus, those who roar out the chorus of *A Nation Once Again* either forget — or are, more likely, ignorant of — the following words of Thomas Davis: "The people of Munster are starving. Will murder feed them?"

Francis McManus was wrong. 'Thomas Davis, a dead man' was in no position to 'shape Ireland'. Living men used his name and his spirit to shape the Ireland they wanted.

Arthur Griffith drew on Davis to justify his insular nationalism. More recently, John Mulcahy saw *Hibernia* as successor to Davis's *The Nation*. Eventually, he got so carried away that he saw *himself* as Thomas Davis.

John Mulcahy has since been left standing by Charles Haughey. Under the artistic

direction of Anthony Cronin, Mr Haughey is no longer content to be a Thomas Davis. He is the nation that Davis wrote about: *Mise Eire, Mise Haughey*.

One visionary passage in his Ard Fheis address summed up Mr Haughey's vision of himself: "During the recent past, I have come to feel, more and more, that the reason we adhere to Fianna Fáil, the reason that time and time again the broad majority of the Irish people have given their endorsement to this party rather than to any other, turned to it in time of crisis, continued to give it their support in times of difficulty, is because it represents, not this pressure group or that sectional interest, this class or that creed, but because, in the broad sweep of its membership, and their faith and devotion to their own country, there resides what one can well call 'the spirit of the nation'."

No mention of corruption, greed or jobbery which, while they are not very spiritual things, are important factors in the success of Fianna Fáil. Mr Haughey, of course — unlike Oliver Cromwell — does not want the picture painted 'warts and all'.

The warts are, however, beginning to show. No amount of mystical blather can disguise the fact that the deepening economic crisis is a direct result of the lavish election promises made by Fianna Fáil in 1977. Young and old, employed and unemployed workers, housewives and working mothers, have learnt the hard way that the present Fianna Fáil government is a classic example of government for the rich, *by the rich*.

Almost fifty years ago, a real poet, Bertolt Brecht, penned the following response to the deadly spirit of another nation:

**And just because he's human,
A man would like a little bite to
eat,
He wants no bull and a lot of
talk,
That gives him no bread or meat.**

Anthony Cronin may yet wear Mr Haughey's Collar of Gold, but he'll never write lines like that. *He hasn't the spirit.*

LETTERS

Last month saw the first anniversary of the death of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador. He was murdered by Right Wing Militia while campaigning for human rights of the oppressed.

This tiny Central American Republic (about the size of Munster) has a population of almost five million, and besides being one of the most densely populated countries in the Western Hemisphere, is also one of the poorest. Extreme wealth of the few has meant appalling hardship for the masses. In the rural areas over fifty per cent are unemployed. Approximately thirty-seven per cent of the workers earn less than £14 per week, while ten per cent earn less than £5.

Housing is so bad that homes are constructed from cardboard, corrugated iron, salvaged scrap or anything that can be found. It is said that 'the poor build their houses from the cardboard containers in which the freezers of the rich have been delivered'.

For most of us living in Ireland, El Salvador was virtually unknown before Bishop Eamon Casey of Galway travelled there twelve months ago for Archbishop Romero's funeral. His analysis of the country's situation has provided us with tangible evidence of the Junta's atrocities perpetrated against the people. More recently Dr. Casey denounced the United States for their stance on El Salvador calling on the Irish Government to break off diplomatic relations with Washington until they cease all military involvement.

The U.S. are continually losing credibility regarding their rhetoric on human rights. Before leaving the White House, former President Carter resumed military aid to El Salvador after withdrawing it the previous week. Mr. Eagleburger, State Department Emissary, attempted — without much success — to cut off E.E.C. food aid to the starving Salvadoreans. A move no doubt which would have pleased Colonel Eugenio Vides Casanova, Commander of the El Salvador National Guard who stated publicly that in order to bring a FEW YEARS STABILITY it would be necessary to kill 150,000

people. Hence, would it follow that in order to bring approximately 60 years "stability" to El Salvador, the country's entire population would have to be wiped out?

Mr. Alexander Haig, Secretary of State, has condemned countries such as Cuba for "exporting Communism" to El Salvador. The U.S. Government should have learned from experience that social change cannot be exported or imposed from abroad. Neither can it be prevented when the people decide to obtain it. The very nature of successive violent oligarchies which have been supported by the U.S. in countries such as El Salvador have sown the seed of revolution long ago. Cuba's alleged arms supplies to the Salvadorean guerrillas are the result of the dastardly crimes and extreme poverty imposed on the people by the ruling Junta. For instance in the Sampul River massacre — and there is evidence of many such massacres — over 300 men, women and children were butchered in the most brutal fashion. The incident was investigated by London's *Sunday Times*, but largely ignored by the American media.

In fact the United States themselves have attempted to export their own system by sponsoring repressive regimes in countries like Haiti, Chile, Uruguay Paraguay and Brazil to mention a few. Tens of millions have died in these countries from malnutrition, curable diseases, poverty and torture. Little or no social progress has been made largely because of U.S. interference in Latin America.

In Guatemala twenty-seven years ago the U.S. Government intervened and the progressive government of Arbenz was overthrown, leaving over 700,000 peasants murdered or "disappearèd". On September 11th, 1973, the Chilean road to Socialism was brought to an

abrupt halt when the forces of reaction backed by the C.I.A. and multi-national corporations such as I.T.T. overthrew the democratically elected government of President Salvador Allende. Incidentally, Allende made the classic mistake of trusting his opponents and refusing appeals to arm his people.

When Cuba achieved its independence the U.S. not only committed an economic crime by imposing a twenty-year blockade, but conspiracies, acts of sabotage, and counter-revolution existed for years. Sinister plans for the physical elimination of some Cuban leaders were attempted. Invasion was planned and attempted with little success. Cuba could not even purchase a simple medicine or sell an ounce of sugar to its next door neighbour.

The U.S. Government must bear some of the responsibility along with the decaying satrapy in El Salvador for the subjugation of its people by slaughter. Bombs and bullets can eliminate people, but can they eliminate diseases, starvation and ignorance?

Did the United States not learn a lesson from Vietnam? Don't they know that ire and aggression cannot change the will of an oppressed people. The people of El Salvador will eventually choose any economic, political and social system they desire. When they achieve that independence, will the U.S. send doctors, teachers, technicians and any economic aid necessary to provide a decent living for every Salvadorean, or will they sink to the same level of decadence as they did with Guatemala, Cuba, Vietnam, Chile etc?

In the words of Archbishop Romero: "the voice of sin does not want to hear the voice of justice and stills it with blood, but this people (of El Salvador) shall be redeemed, because they have given so much blood and pain for their liberty'.

Romero's only "sin" was speaking out for the oppressed. For that he was murdered. And so were 30,000 others — so far.

**John Carlos,
"Cascia",
Rockbarton North,
Salthill, Galway.**

FOLLOWING two years of massive marches demanding tax reform and equal taxation, the government responded by establishing a Commission on Taxation. In effect the 700,000 PAYE protestors were asked to go home and place their trust in twelve people selected by the Minister for Finance. In the meantime farmers and business people have continued to pay little, and often no, income tax.

One year ago, in March 1980, the government appointed its Tax Commission "to enquire generally into the present system of taxation and to recommend such changes as appear desirable and practicable so as to achieve an equitable incidence of taxation".

The Commission is definitely not balanced in the PAYE worker's favour. Despite the repeated tax marches. There are only two trade union representatives, Donal Nevin and Dan Murphy, while the farmers lobby can rely on Donal Murphy, boss of the Milk Suppliers Association, Camilla Hannon, President of the Irish Country Women's Association, and Patrick O'Neill, an accountant and full-time farmer. The banks have two directors of the Bank of Ireland, Donal Carroll and Loudon Ryan, to fight their corner. Private business interests have every confidence in James Gallagher, a senior partner in the Arthur Anderson accountancy firm, Derek Chambers, a consultant to the I.D.A. and Raymond O'Neill a leading barrister.

Their review of the tax system is the first since the Commission on Income Tax was established in 1957 and completed its deliberations five years later. Since then the yield from taxes has increased from £160 million to nearly £3,000 million. This represents an increase from 22% to nearly 40% of the country's Gross National Product.

Since that review in the early sixties, the pay as you earn worker has had to shoulder most of the burden while private operators and self-employed farmers wriggled to evade and avoid as much tax as possible. Last year, more than one third of all tax collected by the government was paid by PAYE taxpayers. On top of this all workers and their families pay indirect taxes and VAT on the household goods they buy.

Farmers tax

While the income tax collected has risen dramatically since 1976, the amount collected in the resource tax and estate duties has remained the same and in real

PAYE workers still waiting for reform

Gerry Flynn



terms it means that landowners are paying much less tax today than they were in 1976. The abolition of rates for most farmers and the instruction to county councils not to push for back rates means that the farming class are now more advantaged than when the trade unions organised the original tax protests to 'tax the greedy and not the needy'.

These developments have confirmed to most trade unionists that the latest Commission on Taxation is a talking shop which will not bring an equitable reform to the unjust tax system. On the very day that the Commission was announced the Taoiseach, Charles Haughey, had discussions with the farming organisations and reassured them that the resource tax would only be a temporary measure. The Minister for Industry, Des O'Malley decided to reduce manufacturing tax to a mere 10% until the year 2000 and the present tax deductible allowances will remain on top of that.

The decisions to please private interests have provoked an angry response from organised labour groups. At a pre-budget meeting sponsored by Dublin Trades Council and attended by 5,000 people, Fergus Whelan, the Trades Council Vice President, stated that, "the workers of this country are prepared to look after the needs of the poor, the old, the young and the underprivileged but there's no way that we're going to continue to carry the rich on our backs as well". In their pre-budget letter to Finance Minister, Gene Fitzgerald, the Dublin Trades Council stated that "the tax returns for 1980 show that there is now less tax equality than when we launched our reform campaign in 1979. We will tolerate this situation no longer."

Last year PAYE taxpayers paid 88% of all income tax. This year a married industrial worker with two children, and his wife not working, on the average wage of £5,618 will see his tax deductions climb by 46.5% if he gets a 20% wage increase to

compensate for rising prices. Compared to this the country's 120,000 full-time farmers paid only an average of £208 tax last year while the PAYE worker paid an average of £1,345.

Tax Inspectors unions

While the Commission on Taxation considers the two hundred submissions it has so far received, tax evasion will continue though workers will have to make up most of the loss and schools and hospitals will suffer more cutbacks. The three unions representing tax inspectors and Revenue Commission employees have all called for major reforms and improved scrutiny of private companies and tax dodgers.

Ted Goodman of the 200 strong Inspectors of Taxes Association says that evasion and avoidance of taxes by the self-employed could be costing the country up to £80 million a year. The Irish Taxes Union submission to the Tax Commission seeks tougher measures to cover businesses and loopholes which they say are being exploited by the banks. To establish a fair system the Irish Taxes Union, catering for over 1,000 revenue staff, has sought new legislation to provide tax allowances only for house purchases but not for personal insurance policies, bank loans and property speculation.

The Association of Inspectors of Taxes, comprising over 500 tax inspectors, has proposed a system of "self-assessment" such as operates in other countries. Tax would be paid by the self-employed and accounts submitted within three months of falling due and between 5% and 10% would be selected for indepth examination.

According to the A.I.T. Secretary, Eoin de Buitlear, their proposals would free the Inspectors from much of the routine paper work and enable them to concentrate on

combating evasion. Speaking at a recent seminar on taxation he said that "more than 6,000 tax dodgers were unearthed by the Revenue Commissioners Special Enquiry Branch in 1979 and their comment at the time was that it was the tip of the iceberg".

Some confusion arose amid the tax reform campaign when two national teachers, Francis and Mary Murphy, won their High Court case declaring their compulsory joint tax assessments unconstitutional. A few weeks after the Tax Commission was formed the Supreme Court ruled that the Murphy couple were entitled to recover excess tax paid over two years but that "there is no general right to cover tax

illegally collected". While a victory for equality the joint assessment case has not widened the tax net.

Interim report

When the then Minister for Finance, Michael O'Kennedy, addressed the Tax Commission's first meeting he sought their "advice and recommendations as rapidly as possible". He stated that, "It would also be very helpful if from time to time you would consider the feasibility of submitting interim reports. I would like you to investigate as a matter of urgency and let me have an interim report on the contribution to taxation made by

the financial institutions."

'As rapidly as possible, and 'as a matter of urgency' can mean a very long time if the result might embarrass private interests. According to a spokesperson for the Tax Commission, the Minister's request for prompt action was considered but "it became apparent that general work had to be done before we could get into specific areas. Though technically feasible, an early report would be highly undesirable and superficial."

The trade union movement may have to re-activate the tax campaign over the coming months because the Tax Commission is expected to sit for

five to seven years before any final recommendations will be made. This will suit Fianna Fáil and the Coalition parties who were unwilling to support any tax reforms and which might be reflected in diminished political contributions.

While the twelve nominees meet every three weeks in the Commission on Taxation's Merrion Square offices, the tax dodgers and evaders continue to use every loophole at workers' and taxpayers' expense. Unless the Commission is seen to demand immediate reforms it is unlikely to retain the confidence of the 700,000 taxpayers who will not sit at home for ever.

PRICES BATTLE OF THE GIANTS

Michael Boyle

THE BATTLE for the minds and pockets of the public in the Republic by the large Supermarket Multiples and the so-called "independent" grocers has boiled to fever pitch in the last few months.

The "Price war" between the multiples, the propaganda war by the "independents" and the report of the Restrictive Practices Commission on below cost selling have brought into clear focus the main elements of the campaign to control the Irish grocery trade.

The Irish grocery market has a current annual turnover of £1,200 million. The so-called Big 5 control 45% of this. The Big 5 are: Dunne's Stores, Quinns, Superquin, H. Williams and Tesco and between them they employ 8,500 people.

The other 55% is, in the main, controlled by a federation of 6 wholesale groups, with 1,600 group shops under their wing and servicing the majority of the other 8,000 unaffiliated grocers. The wholesalers' federation is called the Irish Association of Distributive Trades (IADT). Under the leadership of its forceful General Secretary, Ray Burke, it has held the centre of the publicity stage for the last 2 years, effectively smashing the retailers organisation RGDATA in the process.

Among the major wholesaling groups in the IADT stable are household names like MACE, VG, MNC, PIGGYBANK, SPAR and MUSGRAVES. These companies are not by any means "small independents" — they are in fact large combines, (Musgraves had a turnover of £64 million in 1980 — higher than either Superquin or H. Williams) who are using the classic Irish gombeen tactic of demanding Government protection for their profits rather than face modern competition. The RPC in its Report last month on below cost selling claimed that the IADT members have "a collective negotiating strength comparable with that of the multiples".

The main arguments made against the multiples are that they don't cut prices — that "special offers" on a small number of items conceal higher prices on the majority of their goods; that pressure on manufacturers for lower prices and imports will in the long term create unemployment; that they are foreign controlled with no concern for the economy; and that when, eventually, they reach total monopoly, they will increase the price of food at will.

Unfortunately for the "independents" these arguments do not hold up. Prices in the multiple supermarkets have been

shown to be cheaper in surveys done by "Checkout" — the grocery trade journal and by the National Prices Commission.

Special studies by the Prices Commission in November 1979 and June 1980 showed that Newbridge in Co. Kildare which has three of the multiples (Tesco, Dunnes and Quinns) was 15% cheaper over a range of 115 items than similar sized towns who have no multiples. The Prices Commission study showed "that price levels for grocery goods relate quite closely to the existence of one or more branches of multiple grocers in any town", and they concluded: "that where a multiple branch is located in a particular centre, the shopping public in that town benefit from both the lower prices available and the resulting increased price competitiveness forced on other retail grocers".

The IADT choose to ignore this evidence and still insist that when the multiples cut the price on some items, they compensated by adding on to the price of others. There is little evidence to support this — in fact it has been contradicted by the Government's Restrictive Practices Commission in their recent report on Below Cost Selling where they found it "safe to assume that when a firm engages in undercost selling it is accepting a narrower overall

mark-up on its sales in return for an increase in volume and that the advantage to the customer is real".

It also noted that "since the items sold below cost are usually staple goods... reductions in their price should often particularly benefit poorer customers".

Below cost selling means selling below the net price stated on the suppliers' invoice. In other words, if sugar is sold at £100 per carton, net invoice price, by the Sugar Company to Tesco, Tesco may not sell it at a lower price for fear of having its supplies cut off.

But net invoice price is, within the trade, generally agreed to be only the starting point in negotiations between manufacturer and buyers. After this, there are special discounts for bulk purchases, one-drop deliveries, cash payments etc. that may cumulatively run up to 10% or 20%. Manufacturers are prepared to grant these discounts to benefit from the economies of large scale production, easy deliveries and ready cash. These discounts are available to everybody, multiples and wholesalers included. The problem arises because the multiples are prepared to pass on these discounts to attract more customers, while the wholesalers want to keep them in their own pockets.

What is being concealed in this propaganda war is that the real threat is to the middle man — the wholesaler, who is being eliminated by the multiples operations. The multiples don't use wholesalers; they deal directly with the manufacturers and have cut out the additional rake-off for the middle-man. Have no doubt but that the real war in the Irish grocery trade is between the multiple super-

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markets and the powerful wholesaler cartel. The small shopkeeper is a diversion.

A popular propaganda ploy with the IADT is to claim that thousands of jobs are threatened by the activities of the multiples. This concern for jobs is equally shared by employers organisations every time workers look for a pay rise and by farmers when they are pushing their own sectional interest. Fifteen thousand jobs is what the IADT claims are in danger in manufacturing industry but they don't say how or where, and those who carry all the handouts never press them. Although the IADT made submissions to the

Restrictive Practices Commission, the Commission, in its Report, observed that IADT had "produced no evidence of loss of employment or of serious damage to Irish goods manufacturers". Neither did the manufacturers. So it seems that this claim, like others, is nothing but a callous political gambit by the wholesalers front men.

Similar claims about the dangers of monopoly in the grocery trade are equally suspect. There is no evidence to suggest that concentration of shop numbers or their ownership will push up prices. Indeed by international standards, Ireland

has too many shops. For example, in the United States, for every 10,000 population there are 8 shops; in Britain the figure is 13. But in Ireland there are a staggering 26. It is interesting to note that while the IADT expresses concern that 45% of the grocery trade is in the hands of 5 supermarket chains, they see nothing wrong with 6 of their own wholesaler groups controlling the other 55% of the business.

The grocery war will continue. The IADT have mounted a substantial political lobby numbering T.J. Maher, Dan McCarthy Fine Gael, and Barry Desmond T.D. (Remember his

attacks on the PAYE marchers).

Fianna Fáil are ambivalent. On the one hand they fear the political muscle of the shopkeepers but on the other, they recognise that the supermarket price wars are keeping down the cost of living and with an election looming that's good news for them. The passage of the Restrictive Prices Bill in the Dáil will show how successful the wholesalers are likely to be.

They are unlikely to make progress immediately but in the long term Fianna Fáil will patch up some deal with them from which workers and their families can only lose.

MEAT is an important item of diet; we are often told about the diet problems that its absence from the table causes in the Third World. Why is there so little concern about its increasing absence from the table in our homes?

There is plenty of it but we cannot afford to buy it. Our meat industry is in as great a state of confusion as our building industry; the two most important industries are run in a very unplanned manner. Ordinary people literally pay a very high price for this.

CAP payments are boosting the price of meat on the home market. Article 39 of the Treaty of Rome states that it is necessary to give a good income to farmers; it also states that it is necessary to give food at a reasonable price to consumers. Consumers are, obviously, not yet a powerful lobby in the EEC.

EEC support payments are being used to run down the national cattle herd and to subsidise the export of cattle on the hoof to North Africa at the expense of our meat factories whether run and owned by farmers or not.

The four largest meat packing factories are jointly owned by 30,000 farmers.

The total value of exports of cattle, beef, sheep and lamb and their by-products in 1980 amounted to £815 million. This is an increase of 35% on the 1979 figures.

Beef exports — 354,000 tons were 32% higher than in 1979. Exports of cattle on the hoof — at 475,000 head — were 45% higher than in 1979.

Although the carcass lamb exports in 1980 were 9% up on 1979, live sheep exports were over twice the level of 1979.

Inefficient

The unplanned nature of the industry means that cattle can be

The high price of meat

Eamonn Smullen

sold when and where the farmers choose. Dublin Meat Packers, for example, advertise for supplies: "Unlimited quantities of steers, lambs and heifers required daily — top prices paid. We pay on the day of slaughter." The advertisement does not mean that they get the cattle they ask for.

In other areas food production from the land is just as inefficient. The fact that potatoes to the value of £8.9 million — processed and unprocessed — were imported in 1980 says clearly that land is not being used.

Beef is raised on grass and grass for beef means the use of nitrogenous fertiliser. The state company NET covers 90% of this market. Fertiliser from NET costs just over £100 a ton but £26.50 of this price is paid as a subsidy on the first tonne purchased.

Subsidies

The farmers are also seeking other aids to the cattle industry. The requests and demands take various forms — "that the government match an EEC grant of £13 a head under the suckler cow schemes; that a headage payment of £52.74 for the disadvantaged areas be paid".

Demands for cash are made by the farming industry and grants and subsidies of all sorts pour in. Much of these payments come from the PAYE taxpayer; in the final count, this is the source of the money. It is natural to spend money in this way to develop agriculture but all the money

spent should now be showing a return in the form of cheaper and plentiful supplies of home produced meat and vegetables on the home market. This has not yet happened and if it does not happen fairly soon "money for farmers" will cause understandable resentment in urban areas where high food bills are causing real hardship.

Mr Joe Rea is possibly more diplomatic than some who have held office in the IFA but he did not make many friends in urban areas when he said: "Farmers have a fundamental right to sell their products on the open market wherever it gets the best return. They have a right to do their business in their own way — there can be no deviation from that."

Speaking on the live cattle export trade the same gentleman said: "We will not allow it to be used as a political expedient by politicians or held hostage by trade unions."

Another farmers' representative, speaking about the trade unions and the live cattle export trade, said: "I put it to these people that they are not just flogging a dead horse, rather they are trying to kick a living horse to death."

Over one thousand workers in the meat processing industry are on the dole.

Processed products

The exports of processed meat products are down.

The reasons for this, according to the CBF review are as follows:

"Irish exporters of cooked meat products are becoming less competitive on export markets through their inability to supply products at the right prices." The reason given for the difficulty is: "Continued problems of raw material availability and price levels in Ireland." Cattle prices are too high in Ireland if we are to have a serious cooked meat export trade.

The problem of "raw material availability" is given in detail by the June 1980 enumeration of cattle which states: "Total cattle numbers have fallen by 243,000. The breeding herd has fallen by 73,000 from the levels of a year earlier. The breeding herd is now back to its 1972 level, whereas the beefcow component of the herd is back to its 1971 level."

This report means more unemployment in the meat industry.

In April 1981 the CBF reported a further big fall in the numbers of cattle killed for export. Slaughtering for the first three months of this year are down by 154,000 head, or 53%.

Total live exports have dropped by 10% but live shipments to the Third World (North Africa) are up by 43%. North African live exports are paid for by an EEC subsidy of about half the price paid for the beast in the field. Fortunes are being made in this trade which is entirely harmful to the Irish economy in the longer term.

In the meantime — according to the Agricultural Institute — our pastures could carry 50% more dairy cows and 100% more beef cows. Individual animal performance could be improved by 10% by a choice of breed.

Also, in the meantime, the consumer pays an exorbitant price for meat and meat factory workers are forced on to the dole.

LIFE PAST

May Day demonstrators throughout the world suffered injuries from both police and right-wing attacks. Disorder broke out as a large crowd assembled in London's Hyde Park. Two people were arrested for alleged infringement of the Park regulations and mounted police attacked the crowd.

In Johannesburg, South Africa, nearly 1,500 European and black May Day demonstrators protested outside the exclusive Carlton Hotel and Rand Club. Police from the Central Barracks were called and they broke up the crowd with considerable force.

Spain celebrated its first May Day under the new Republic with over 5,000 workers and trade unionists being welcomed by the Prime Minister in Madrid.

Severe riots took place in Berlin as Nazi gangs clashed with Social Democrats celebrating May Day. Later in the day there were extensive riots near the university after some young Communists hoisted the Soviet flag over the building.

1,440 people were detained by police in Paris for refusing to move during a May Day protest. Among those arrested for distributing pamphlets was one of the directors of the Communist paper, *Avant Garde*.

Many others were injured following attacks on May Day marches in Havana, Cuba, and Kybartov in Poland.

An allegation that Cork County Library was distributing books of an immoral tendency was rejected by the chief librarian, Mr Donal Cronin

At a meeting of the Cork County Council, Mr Maurice Murphy had criticised the type of books available and called for the appointment of a full-time censor. Mr Cronin stated that the committee which controlled the library's lending scheme was comprised of clergymen and Christian Brothers. Any books complained of were submitted to responsible people to give their opinion as to whether it was offensive.

As a further safeguard, Mr Cronin said, the County Library policy was to buy books included on the list issued by the Catholic Truth

50 YEARS AGO MAY 1931

Society. Combined with the official censorship set up by the Minister for Justice he felt that there were adequate systems of preventing spurious literature getting into Cork's homes without employing a whole-time library censor.

In preparation for summer and outdoor sports, Switzers store in Dublin was offering chrome plated gent's cycles for £4.9.6 (£4.48), golf bags with six clubs for 69/9 (£3.49) and tennis rackets for 29/6 (£1.48)

When negotiations over wage reductions between the Irish Railway Companies and the Irish Railway Trade Unions broke down the employers said that they would proceed with their proposed ten per cent all-round cuts.

The National Union of Railwaymen held a delegate conference which rejected any reduction in their members' wages.

"No one can be at the same time a good Catholic and a true Socialist" claimed the Pope in a new encyclical on social and economic problems. The new encyclical was a revision of the famous *Rerum Novarum* issued forty years earlier by Pope Leo XIII who liked to be known as the 'Workman's Pope'. Titled *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Pius XI's message proclaimed the Roman Catholic doctrine on the right to private property and

denounced individualism. Warning that Socialism was in general at variance with the gospels, Pope Pius XI appealed to 'his sons who had strayed into the ranks of Socialism to return to the Church without delay'.

A severe shortage of new films and a crisis in the cinema industry was predicted owing to the fact that the Irish Censorship Board was rejecting most of the films submitted. Within a few weeks four out of every five films, including eight British films were rejected on the grounds that 'they foment crime or deal with illicit sex relations'.

Because of the extensive censorship the country's three hundred cinemas and film halls, one hundred of which could show 'Talkies', had to rely on less than a six week supply of films.

Spanish villagers killed a right-wing Catholic priest near Valencia. The body of Father Sotero Francos, aged 72, was found in the village of Villa la Fuente having lost his life for his Royalist opinions favouring the deposed king.

He was in the habit of conducting political arguments with the villagers and a group of them, armed with scythes, attacked him and cut off his head before hiding his body.

A prospector in Kilgoorlie, Australia, discovered an extremely rich reef of gold. In one Sunday morning he collected 300 ounces of gold and within a few days deposited 600 ounces in the local bank.

While a gangster, Jack Diamond, recovered in a New York hospital after being shot in an attempt on his life, police gathered evidence and details of his racketeering activities.

Detectives seized Diamond's safe deposit box in the Cairo National Bank and found cancelled cheques indicating his involvement in many illegal operations.

State troops were sent to guard Jack Diamond in hospital and the authorities claimed to have enough evidence to jail him for life.

May Day, says Dominic Behan, is not what it used to be

WELL, would yeh not have a pain in the megalithics listening to the bright scholars telling us all about May Day and it's origins? One fella from Trinity saying that it was a pagan celebration in honour of the bould Bela, our one and only Sun God apart from his brothers in Totley Barton, Llandudno, Brittany and Inverness. In Paddy's Place, they called it Bealtaine and gave us the month and ordered us to drive our cattle between two fires if we would wish them to procreate, or, if you've ever tried cleaning out a cattle stall the word should be procrastinate. Over in our English brother-Celts' country the young girls swing out of Maypoles, the Welsh battalions sing through slits, Jack Kerouac's forebears make love in barrels, and the MacDonald clan jump over chamber pots and all in the interest of fertility. If that be the case, then I think they were a dirty low lot, and it's just as well that some better-minded people came to dedicate the day to the Virgin Madonna.

Another crowd would have you believe that May Day was for supporting those who believed that the working class should have the one day of the year to call their own. So Robert Owen got out and decreed that all the men and women of labour should desist from their manual exertions on that day and the bosses said 'Fair enough you can have every May Day off that happens to fall on the Sabbath'. But Larkin stubbornly refused to accept such dictation from the employers and pressed on with a workers' holiday for every twelfth of May to commemorate the murder of James Connolly. And that's the Irish worker's holiday so long as it falls on a

Sunday. Only in the Soviet Union and some other places do the workers rally on the first of May. They do have a holiday in Canada and America, but because those folk couldn't tell the difference between a calendar and a clock they got the date wrong and now celebrate the first of May on the first Monday in September.

I remember well what May Day was when I was a chissler — white starched shirts, new trousers, and shoes that had never seen the top of a pawn-office counter. Mainly it was a day for the girls much to our male chauvinist annoyance. There they'd be stepping along the North Circular like so much butter never melting in a metropolitan mouth. They had white shoes and socks, knickers with the elastic of endurance, immaculately white dresses, and veils of snowey gossamer, 'God, couldn't yeh eat the little angels,' cried the owl wans. And God forgive me, but God would have to have had a strong stomach to eat some of the snotty-nosed ruffians who were at school with me.

And that of course was what May Day was all about. To be seen by as many of the neighbours as possible in our sartorial elegance, for sart in the tenements didn't last long. Tomorrow our collective mother will wrap our finery in a brown paper parcel for the attention of Uncle Tom, Dick or Harry, which relatives we all had scattered throughout the four corners of Dublin. And worse than all the trek to school to the jibes of the ones ever poorer than us who were without benefit of such collateral. 'Brass Balls', they called after you and swore that the pawnbroker had three of them to prove two-to-one May Day is only a figment of some crazy, twisted, archaeological imagination.

MAYDAY 1981

**MAY DAY GREETINGS
FROM
THE NICLAS SOCIETY**

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**MAY DAY GREETINGS
TO ALL TRADE UNIONISTS**



**IRISH NATIONAL PAINTERS and
DECORATORS' TRADE UNION**

John Mulhall, General Secretary

**THE AMALGATED
TRANSPORT AND GENERAL
WORKERS UNION**

*SENDS FRATERNAL GREETINGS TO THE
IRISH WORKING CLASS*

MAYDAY 1981

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struggling for peace and socialism*

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Questions of a Studious Working Man

Who built Thebes of the seven gates?
In the books you find the names of kings.
Was it the kings who hauled chunks of rock to the place?
And Babylon, many times demolished,
Who raised it up again so many times? In what houses
Of gold-glittering Lima did the builders live?
Where, the evening that the Great Wall of China was
finished,
Did the masons go? Great Rome
Is full of triumphal arches. Over whom
Did the Ceasars triumph? Had Byzantium, much praised
in song,
Only palaces for its inhabitants? Even in fabulous Atlantis,
The very night the ocean engulfed it,
The drowning still roared for their slaves.
Young Alexander conquered India.
Was it he alone?
Caesar defeated the Gauls.
Did he not have a cook at least in his service?
Philip of Spain wept when his armada
Had sunk. Was he the only one to weep?
Frederick the Second won the Seven Years War. Who
Else won that war?

Every page a victory.
Who cooked the feast for the victors?
Every ten years a great man.
Who paid the bill?

So many accounts
So many questions.

Bertolt Brecht

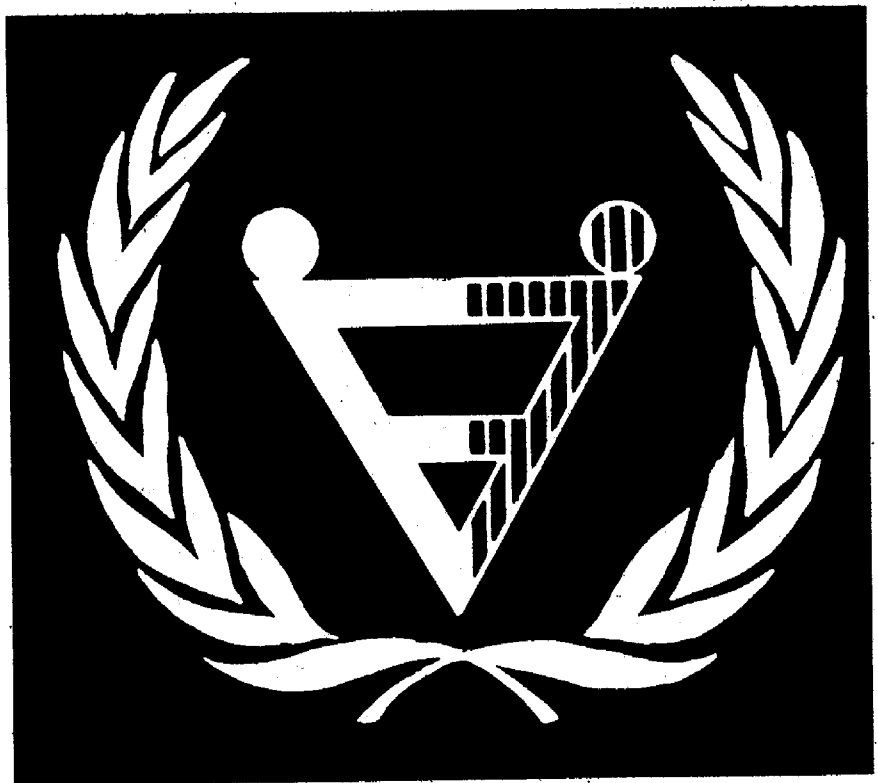
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE DISABLED

FULL PARTICIPATION AND EQUALITY

THE UNITED NATIONS has designated 1981 "International Year of Disabled Persons". To mark the year, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is undertaking a major programme on the Rights of Disabled Persons.

The Executive Council of Congress considers that there is an urgent need for a fundamental change in the economic and social conditions of the disabled and the elimination of all discrimination against them. A National Action Programme for Disabled Persons should be formulated, incorporating policies on education, vocational training and rehabilitation, employment, housing, accessibility and services generally for the handicapped. To assist in the formulation of a national action programme, the Congress representatives on the National Economic and Social Council proposed the commissioning of the recently published report, "Major Issues in Planning Services for Mentally and Physically Handicapped Persons" (No. 50).

It is recognised by the Executive Council of Congress that legislation must be introduced to protect the rights of the disabled person, and to make the provision of certain services and facilities mandatory. Congress, therefore, pursued the demand for a Green Paper on Services for the Handicapped, and this was agreed to by the Government in the Second National Understanding for Economic and Social Development. Congress representatives have met officials of the Department of Health to discuss



the scope and content of the Green Paper and it is anticipated that it will be published in the near future.

The goals of a National Action Programme for Disabled Persons should be: (a) the full integration of the handicapped person into the community, (b) the active promotion of the rights of the handicapped person. Planning for these long-term goals should be initiated now and the forthcoming Green Paper should be seen as the beginning of this planning process. In this context, the Executive Council of Congress is making a number of key demands of

Government:

★ The Government should appoint a Minister of State with particular responsibility for the development of services for the handicapped population. The NESC Report (No. 50) highlighted the need for a greater commitment, at Governmental level, to reduce the inequalities and social deprivations experienced by many of the handicapped population in Ireland.

★ A nationwide survey of the

nature and extent of handicap in our community should be undertaken. If we are to introduce positive planning for the disabled, then we need more information. There is, at present, an appalling lack of any worthwhile statistical data relating to the number of handicapped or the nature of their handicap.

★ The Government should accept the principle of integrated education for physically handicapped and mildly handicapped children. A Working Party, with representatives from ICTU, the Teachers' Unions, the Department of Education and appropriate voluntary organisations should be established to devise methods for such integration.

★ The 3% Quota Scheme for employment of handicapped people in the public sector should be accelerated, so as to ensure that the Government meets its own commitment to fully implement this scheme by 1982. Also Congress is calling on the FUE and other employer organisations to support a joint approach to the Labour Court, requesting the Court to make Fair Employment Rules relating to disabled persons. These rules would make it an unfair practice to discriminate in employment against otherwise qualified disabled persons on the grounds solely of their disability.

★ In accordance with the commitment given in the Second National Understanding, the Government should ensure that all new public buildings are accessible to the disabled. Also in granting planning permission for developments by the private sector where the public are to be admitted, local authorities should have regard to Part S of the proposed National Building Regulations. Part S of these Regulations covers building standards to cater for the special needs of the disabled.

★ All new public transport facilities should be suitably designed to meet the needs of

DISABLED PERSONS' CHARTER OF RIGHTS

All people should enjoy certain rights. Because people with disabilities have consistently been denied the right to fully participate in society as free and equal members, it is important to state and affirm these rights. All people should be able to enjoy these rights — regardless of race, creed, colour, sex, religion or disability.

The right to live independent, active and full lives.

The right to the equipment, assistance and support services necessary for full productivity, provided in a way that promotes dignity and independence.

The right to an adequate income or wage, substantial enough to provide food, clothing, shelter and other necessities.

The right to accessible, integrated, convenient and affordable housing.

The right to quality physical and mental health care.

The right to training and employment, without prejudice or stereotype.

The right to accessible transportation and freedom of movement.

The right to bear or adopt and raise children and have a family.

The right to a free and appropriate public education.

The right to participate in and benefit from entertainment and recreation.

The right of equal access to and use of all businesses, facilities and activities in the community.

The right to communicate freely with all fellow citizens and those who provide services.

The right to a barrier-free environment.

The right to legal representation and to full protection of all legal rights.

The right to determine one's own future and make one's own life choices.

The right of full access to all voting processes.

handicapped people. Accessibility features should be incorporated into the new bus fleet being constructed for CIE. Also accessibility should be a feature of all new rolling stock for the railway. A study group should be established to examine and recommend on specialised demand-responsive transportation for those too disabled to use fully-accessible public transport.

Congress is also organising a programme of education to inform trade unionists of the problems of disability, and of the needs of disabled persons. The Executive Council of Congress has published a leaflet outlining the Congress

demands for the International Year of Disabled Persons, and a Disabled Persons' Charter. Also Congress has published a Seminar Report on Education, Training and Employment for Disabled Persons.

On 9th and 10th May, 1981, Congress is holding a major seminar on the "Rights of Disabled Persons — The Need for Legislation". This important seminar will be addressed by eminent speakers from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland.

Finally, Congress is calling on its affiliated trade unions to do everything possible in 1981, to make their premises accessible to disabled persons.

WORKERS' WORLD

WITH summer holidays just around the corner there is some special magic about France; the language, the wine, the restaurants etc. All part of a slightly unreal image of one of Western Europe's largest states. But if we know little of the reality of France, then we know even less of the reality of its *political* life. During the Presidential election campaign there has been little serious comment on the *political* issues facing French workers in the *media*.

They are, of course, the obvious ones, namely unemployment. Giscard, in a burst of unusual self-criticism, considers youth unemployment the failure of his Presidency! But, this represents not so much concern for those walking the streets of France as concern for his own re-election. Having beaten Socialist party leader Francois Mitterand by only 1% last time around he has reason to be worried. However, will Mitterand make it? More importantly does it really matter if he doesn't?

Central to the question is the attitude of the French Communist Party. With around 20% of electoral support its impact on economic and industrial life is profound. It publishes a daily and Sunday paper (*L'Humanité*) and controls the large trade union confederation CGT. To see the Party and its leader relegated to the role of Cinderella, or support-act for Mitterand must outrage its members and supporters.

No bad example of this is a recent article in the *Irish Times* by Anne Sington. In a smart-alec article on the candidates she could describe the Social Democrat Mitterand as the "white hope of the left" and PCF leader George Marchais as the "bad man" of French politics. Underlying this general hostility to the PCF are two things. One is the predictable hostility to a serious party of the left. Secondly, however is resentment at the fact that Marchais does not see the main function of his party as getting Mitterand elected. It is obviously not a view that the PCF takes.

In Ireland where party principle in the three main parties is impossible to identify, and where the only criterion for coalition is maximising cabinet jobs, the position of the PCF may be hard for

George Marchais, depicted as villain by the media

Dermot Mahon comments on politics in France

'Underlying the general hostility to the PCF is the predictable hostility to a serious party of the left'

some to understand. Mitterand has said he will not have communists in the cabinet. He is right, of course, from his viewpoint. He has considerably more to fear from them than Garret FitzGerald has to fear from the leaders of the Labour party. If anything contrasts the difference between coalition as a means and coalition as an end, this certainly does.

So, far from committing an act of treachery and disloyalty, the PCF is putting its commitment to its class, its line and itself first. To the prissy commentators of the liberal press, that a left party should consider its own party organisation is seen as indifference to the "national" interest. Fortunately, there are other interests than those laid down as priorities by columnists in the *Irish* or the *Sunday Times*.

It would be an act of folly for the PCF to enter into short term electoral arrangements that would lead to its eventual emasculation and eclipse by the Social Democrat Mitterand. Mitterand wants and needs PCF votes in the election, but no PCF in his government.

So, there are serious problems for the French Communist Party. They are not the problems of the liberal or right wing parties whose policies are tapered to suit the press conference of the day. While Mitterand changes his tailor and has his teeth capped, George Marchais is outlining his party's strategy for

creating 1.5 million jobs. (That has a familiar ring!)

On the other hand, what if PCF voters desert to Mitterand as they might well. The Socialist Party has been making steady progress over 10 years and is now the largest in France. The Soviet Union (which has bigger fish to fry) has said it favours Giscard. The Euro-communist flirtation has been a failure and internally a great many problems are still unresolved.

There is no joy for readers of this magazine, or for members of supporters of a Workers' Party, in seeing this great working class party in difficulty. However, as we know both the importance of elections and the dangers of obsession with them as the *only* strategy consideration, so surely does the PCF. Marchais will never be President of the French Republic; if he is not then the ultimate difference between nice man Mitterand and nice man Giscard is somewhat academic.

Still if there is a singular lesson of politics it is that eaten bread is soon forgotten. The PCF has stood between the French people and its worst horrors. But, in Western "democracy" it is the five-o'clock shadows and the capped-teeth, and who owns the TV stations which are more likely to determine the outcome than the record and principle of the PCF.

Tomorrow is another day...

Why Marchais bites the legs of his French socialist rival



SPAIN:

'We need more democracy not less'

Manu Escudero, representative of the Basque Communist Party at the SFWP Ard Fheis, tells PADDY WOODWORTH how he views the tense situation which has followed the attempted Coup in Spain:

"THE COUP was not a soap opera but an expression of the beliefs of a very important sector in the army that the Spanish military should hold direct political authority, both as of right and to fill the so-called 'vacuum of Power' which the indecision of the present Government has indeed created. But Spain's complex problems could not be resolved by a return

to authoritarianism. We need more democracy, not less."

He is convinced that last month's coup will prove the rehearsal for a successful and tragic performance unless a broad-based coalition government is formed. Including the Communists? "No, we would support a Socialist and Christian Democratic coalition

for the sake of consolidating democracy." The coalition would have to carry through an emergency programme "implementing the points already agreed in our Spanish Constitution."

These points must include the application of the full rigor of the law to all army officers guilty of conspiracy, and to right-wing terrorists and those police officers who appear to have tortured suspects with impunity. Terrorism from ETA, he feels, can only be isolated and defeated by an autonomous Basque police force, since the ordinary citizens of the Basque Country however hostile they may be to terrorism, simply will not cooperate with the traditional police. A pact should be established between the central and autonomous governments, whereby autonomy will be accelerated but the fundamental unity of the Spanish State accepted. The grave crisis of unemployment would also have to be tackled immediately, through increased public spending.

He was critical of the French Communists and Gaullists for their obstruction of Spanish entry into the EEC, which he saw as vital to ensure the

"irreversibility of our transition to democracy".

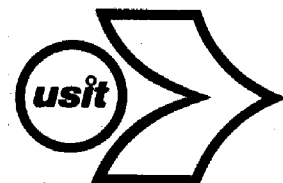
He rejected the argument that Basque terrorism was a cause of the Coup: "It was simply a convenient excuse". But he had hard words for Basque Nationalists in general: "Terrorism is only the most extreme manifestation of nationalism. Even under democratic conditions, nationalism in power doesn't necessarily mean an increase in the welfare or happiness of the whole Basque population. It could mean the political domination by the nationalist community over the numerous citizens who do not share its aspirations and symbols. But to go back to military rule would obviously subject the entire population to indiscriminate oppression. It would also postpone the reconciliation of the deeply divided Basque people, both between themselves and with the other peoples of Spain.

"I would emphasise that such a reconciliation can only come through a long and painful democratic process." Whether the Generals have either the patience to endure either the length or the pain remains to be seen.

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GROWING MILITANCY AMONG TEACHERS

Gerry Flynn

A DEDICATED and increasingly female group of organised and educated workers who have been walked on for years. Such is the broad picture of Ireland's 37,000 teachers emerging from their different trade union conferences last month. As victims of government cutbacks, bad working conditions and sectarian discrimination, the teachers' unions have become more militant in recent years.

With the backdrop of sectarian conflict the exclusive religious control of many schools, both North and South, continues to promote division and narrow views. The teachers' unions have tried to negotiate with the clerical managers but without much progress. The Roman Catholic bishops have indicated time and again that they view control of education as their most prized and valuable means of propagating their religion. Sometimes it seems that their schools are more precious than their churches to them.

While the endearing sight of eight year old children repeatedly reciting long prayers may be acceptable, the reality of clerical control is not. Its local harsh face is of school managers insisting that young teachers must teach religion whatever their beliefs, and their continued control of teacher education colleges. Last year's proposal to streamline and amalgamate Belfast's Colleges of Education brought forth a concerted sectarian protest from the Northern Catholic hierarchy.

Over a year ago the battle lines on religious domination were drawn by the Auxiliary Catholic Bishop of Dublin, Dr. Brendan Comisky, when he spoke to the Association of Primary Teaching Sisters. He told the nuns that he saw "religious in management as being able to ensure the Catholic ethos in the particular school"

and that some of those opposed to religious control of education were anti-religious. Monsignor John McCarthy of the Catholic Primary School Managers Association fought against the changing tide when he asked the national school teachers to remember their forefathers who had struggled to keep their faith and allow continued control of primary schools by local priests. The Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) delegates rejected his demands and reasserted their policy for equal representation of teachers, parents and church authorities on school management boards.

Clerical principals

It is the secondary school teachers who have to endure the most indefensible aspect of sectarian structures with reserved places for the school principal in "religious owned" schools despite an average of four-fifths of the school's staff being lay teachers. The top jobs and the top wages are reserved for less than twenty per cent of the staff — the unmarried clerical teachers — because the school was originally established, often over one hundred years ago, by a religious order. In the meantime both parents and taxpayers have funded the school and paid the clerical staff's wages.

In his address to last month's

conference, the out-going President of the Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI), David Barry, spoke of the need for new teacher contracts to provide a clear career structure and equal promotional opportunities.

The Teachers Union of Ireland, with 5,700 members teaching in local authority Vocational Schools, is the only teachers' union not directly effected by religious control. The Vocational Education Committees, originally formed fifty years ago, consisted of elected representatives but their weakness for making blatant political appointments soon became legendary. The T.U.I. is seeking more representation for teachers on the vocational education committees.

The shortage of teachers, overcrowded classes and poorly maintained schools have been the recent issues for the largest teachers' union, the INTO with 21,250 members working in primary schools. The three main teachers' unions united to win some basic reforms of education. Just before Easter two schools in Ballyfermot, Dublin, were threatened with closure and were so close to insolvency that a special grant of £10,000 saved the day in a marginal constituency.

Sub-standard schools

Some of the reforms have been vaguely incorporated in the current National Understanding. The government promised, as far as practicable, to provide additional real resources for education. Another promise was that "the programme for the renovation of sub-standard school buildings will be completed in the shortest possible time". The dilapidated state of many small schools has infuriated teachers and causes concern to parents of school children. The INTO has continued to highlight the sub-standard conditions as little progress has been made with school managers.

The antiquated process of crowding over forty school pupils into a single class-room to keep numbers up and reduce the number of teachers has not been eradicated as promised by the Fianna Fáil Minister for Education, Mr. John Wilson.

The substantial wage improvements granted to teachers last Autumn by the salary review body have been used to cloud the longstanding problems of promotion and school facilities. Experience has shown that most teachers take a dedicated interest in their pupils' education but that commitment has been used as an excuse to under-invest in education and to retain exclusive religious domination.

Unless the festering problems of authority, representation, promotion and facilities are resolved the country's 37,000 teachers are likely to unite in a major effort to force a reluctant government to reform education instead of patching up an antiquated system and placating the conservative religious elements.

'The dilapidated state of many small schools has infuriated teachers and causes concern to parents'

WORK & CULTURE

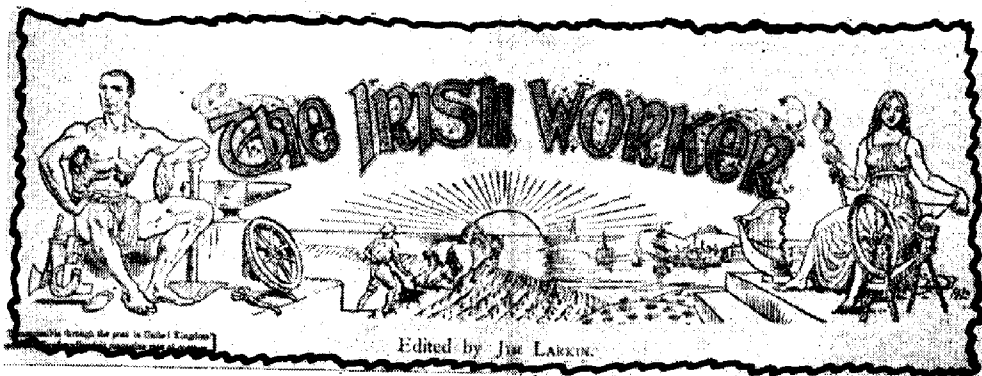
Robert G. Lowery recalls the years of 'The Irish Worker'

FROM May 27, 1911 to December 5, 1914, 189 issues of the weekly *Irish Worker* were published in Dublin. There were four "Stop Press" numbers, and, despite attempts to enlarge it, it never surpassed four pages, except for a special Christmas number in 1912. James Larkin edited every issue, with the exceptions of the last seven numbers in 1914 and a few issues in 1913 when he was either in jail or on lecture tours in England and Scotland. During these weeks, James Connolly was the acting editor.

It was an extraordinary newspaper, a milestone in the history of working class journalism, and it is unlikely that Dublin or Ireland will see its like again. Larkin's flamboyant personality set the tone for the articles, songs, poetry and even the odd play which found its way into the *Worker's* pages. Nearly every issue contained something bordering on libel, and, indeed, Larkin found himself in court seven times on libel charges in the first year of publishing. He never lost a case though. Surely a symbolic point.

The philosophy of the *Worker* can be found in one of the last issues of the *Harp*, a monthly forerunner founded by Connolly and which Larkin briefly sub-edited in Dublin in early 1910 before it founded. In February, Larkin wrote:

This paper does not pretend to be a literary magazine. We desire to articulate working class opinion. What is wanted in Ireland, we are of the opinion, is an honest



expression of dissatisfaction with the want of a system in society — a statement of our principles, our ultimate aim.

In the first issue of the *Worker*, Larkin continued:

By freedom we mean that we, Irishmen in Ireland, shall be free to govern this land called Ireland by Irish people in the interest of the Irish people. That no people or peoples, no matter what they call themselves, or from whence they come, now or in the future, have any claims to interfere with the common right of this land of Ireland, to work out their own destiny! We owe no allegiance to any other nations, nor the king, governors, or representatives of any other nation. That all such persons are interlopers and trespassers on this land, and that we are determined to accomplish not only National Freedom, but a greater thing — Individual Freedom — freedom from military and

political slavery, such as we suffer under at present, but also a more degraded slavery, economic or wage slavery.

There was, then, a call for dual freedom: freedom from political oppression and freedom from industrial oppression; freedom from British as well as Irish capitalism; from foreign as well as native exploitation. To Larkin the means of gaining these freedoms were twofold: first, the formation of a political party, an Irish labour party, which would represent the workers on all public boards, and, second, the establishment of an Irish-based trade union, separate and independent from the British-based and affiliated unions to which the majority of Irish trade unionists belonged.

Larkin's call for an end to British domination placed the *Irish Worker* in the best tradition of radical newspapers and journals of the past. He drew inspiration from Wolfe Tone and the organ of the United Irishmen, *The Northern Star*,

and from the writings of Thomas Davis and Fintan Lalor in the Young Irelander's newspaper, *The Nation*. Yet the *Worker* also signalled a departure from the past. Larkin's concern was for the working class, the men and women of no property, and he had no space in his paper for the phony nationalists who prated about the rights of Irish men but who cared little for the rights of Irish women, or for those who wrote of the spiritual needs of the nation but who denied the material needs of the nation's people.

Although the guiding spirit of the *Worker* was Larkin, he was not the whole paper. There were many who contributed to its columns on a regular basis, and this regularity moderated the instability which is found in any radical paper which challenges the status quo. Among Larkin's chief supporters was William Patrick Partridge, a Labour councillor for Kilmainham and vice-chairman of the Irish Citizens Army. In 1911, Partridge had been employed by

WORK AND CULTURE

the Great Southern and Western Railway for eleven years as a journeyman fitter. In November he wrote an article, "Why I Sympathise with Larkin", and a short time later he was sacked. Undeterred he remained one of Larkin's ablest volunteers. He wrote nearly 200 articles for the *Worker* including weekly features such as "Cork Hill Notes" (23 weeks) and "Inchicore Notes" (52 weeks). In addition, he wrote a series of exposes, "G.S. & W. Railway, Inchicore from Within", which detailed the sectarian hiring practices of the railway.

Like Partridge, Sean O'Casey was employed by a railway for almost the same number of years and he too lost his job for supporting Larkin and the Union. He went on to contribute 62 articles to the *Worker* including poems, songs and pieces often signed *Craobh na nDealg*; three translations from the Irish of Rev. P. Dinneen; press releases for the St. Laurence O'Toole Pipers' Club, the Wolfe Tone Memorial Committee, and, with Patrick Lennon, the Women and Children Relief Fund. As secretary of the Citizen Army, he contributed a series of "Citizen Army Notes" (also entitled "By the Camp Fire"), and always had something to say about the controversies raging around him. There is little evidence in his articles of the style which was to be found in his plays, but there is a wealth of material which point to the origins of his socialist convictions.

Connolly contributed 72 articles, including several under the pseudonym of "Seamus". Based primarily though not exclusively in Belfast, Connolly was the most brilliant of all the *Worker* contributors, and his articles have, arguably, the most substance. The complete text of his *Labour and the Re-Conquest of Ireland* was featured in the



W.P. Partridge



'As an editor, Larkin must be judged a success... his organising abilities overcame obstacles which would have deterred others'

May-June 1912 issues, and his songs, poems and notes from Belfast and Wexford frequently appeared. Connolly was a former editor of several newspapers, and he was the logical choice to succeed Larkin in 1914.

Delia Larkin, Jim's sister, came to Dublin in the summer of 1911, and she immediately began to organise the Irish Women Workers' Union. She contributed over 150 articles, mostly in her weekly "Women Workers' Column" which appeared without fail for over a year. There can be little doubt that she helped educate her brother as well as the *Worker's* readers on feminist issues, although she was more of a good trade unionist than what the 1980s would define as a feminist. Week after week she lashed out at employers who ran sweatshops or mistreated women labourers. Though not a particularly good writer she was forceful and was rarely misunderstood. Her bio-

graphy cries out to be written.

Larkin himself authored over 400 articles over a forty-one month period. Every week he wrote one or more editorials which were fresh and lively and, as often as not, explosive. Readers could always count on something which would move them one way or another. One week it might be a stirring tribute to Robert Emmet, Wolfe Tone or St. Patrick. The next week might feature a blistering attack on a sweatshop employer or a scathing denunciation of a local politician who had been caught padding his payroll with relatives. The number of articles written by Larkin is staggering when it is remembered that he was president of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and the Irish Women Workers' Union, a frequent candidate for political office, and often the main speaker at worker rallies in all parts of Ireland.

As an editor Larkin must be judged a success. Despite the

Worker's problems, his organising abilities overcame obstacles which would have deterred others. He was able to recruit correspondents from key areas in Ireland such as Wexford, Waterford, Sligo, Limerick, Belfast, Cork and Dundalk. These correspondents served as Larkin's eyes and ears. Rumbblings about a threatened lockout or anti-union employers reached him early enough for a planned campaign and in time not to be taken by surprise. Often, the correspondents served as the ITGWU organisers, so both the *Worker* and the Union were served.

When the first issue of the *Irish Worker* appeared on Dublin newstands eighty years ago, the world was a different place. There were only two independent countries in Africa and the Asian continent was suffering under the yoke of British, French, Belgian and Dutch colonialism. In London, Lenin was agitating for the establishment of the first socialist state and against the combined world capitalist powers. In Salt Lake City, Joe Hill was setting the lyrics to songs that would be sung "as long as working men unite", and in Dublin, as O'Casey put it, "in a room of a tenement in Townsend Street, with a candle in a bottle for a torch and a billycan of tea, with a few buns for a banquet, the Church militant here on earth of the Irish workers, called the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, was founded, a tiny speck of flame now, but soon to be a pillar of fire".

SPECKS of flame sparked around the world until they became pillars of fire in the U.S.S.R., China, Cuba, Chile, Vietnam and a dozen African countries. What Larkin and the Irish working class established in the *Worker* in 1911 was part of a world-wide revolt against hunger amidst plenty and poverty amidst riches. In every country, the working class had their Larkin and their *Irish Worker*, drawing inspiration from the success of one and learning the lessons from the failure of another. Today, we know that the bold dreams which Larkin and the working class articulated in the *Worker* remain unfulfilled. But we also know that the dreams are present in a newer and revitalized form. We know that their sons and daughters are the inheritors of that dream, that they are the visionaries of the struggle, and that they will shape their exalted destiny to eradicate the evils that confront them.

More Mannheim than Marx

IRISH NATIONALISM: A HISTORY OF ITS ROOTS AND IDEOLOGY by Sean Cronin; Academy Press; IR£13.

THIS IS an attempt to give both a history of the ideology of Irish nationalism and an analysis of its relation to the economic reality of its time. That there is a need for socialists in Ireland to have a serious analysis of the nature and political significance of nationalism and its effects on the working class was recognised first, and still most seriously, in Connolly's *Labour in Irish History*. A development, updating and in some areas a revision, of Connolly's work has long been needed. Some of the components of this work have begun to be produced. Unfortunately Sean Cronin's book cannot be classed among them.

There is much in it of interest. There is an attempt made to relate the writings of nationalist ideologists to new historical evidence. However there are major gaps. Recent important work on the economic and social structure of Ulster in the period of the United Irishmen is not used and important analyses of the relationship between land and the national question in the post-Famine period are ignored. Even more importantly for contemporary political purposes, the history of "constitutional" republicanism-Fianna Fáil, is dealt with summarily and superficially. In explaining the political success of Fianna Fáil up to 1948, Cronin writes, "...de Valera's personal leadership must get the credit for it, not republicanism. There was nothing radical about his leadership, but the Irish electorate was conservative by and large..."

This explanation in terms of a "charismatic" personality ignores the degree to which Fianna Fáil was able to link its variety of republicanism to the partial satisfaction of real social and economic demands, for an end to unemployment and emigration, and in this way to reinvigorate its republicanism by associating it with a form of limited development of the productive forces. That de Valera's successor was to change the path of economic development in ways the "Chief" had never contemplated

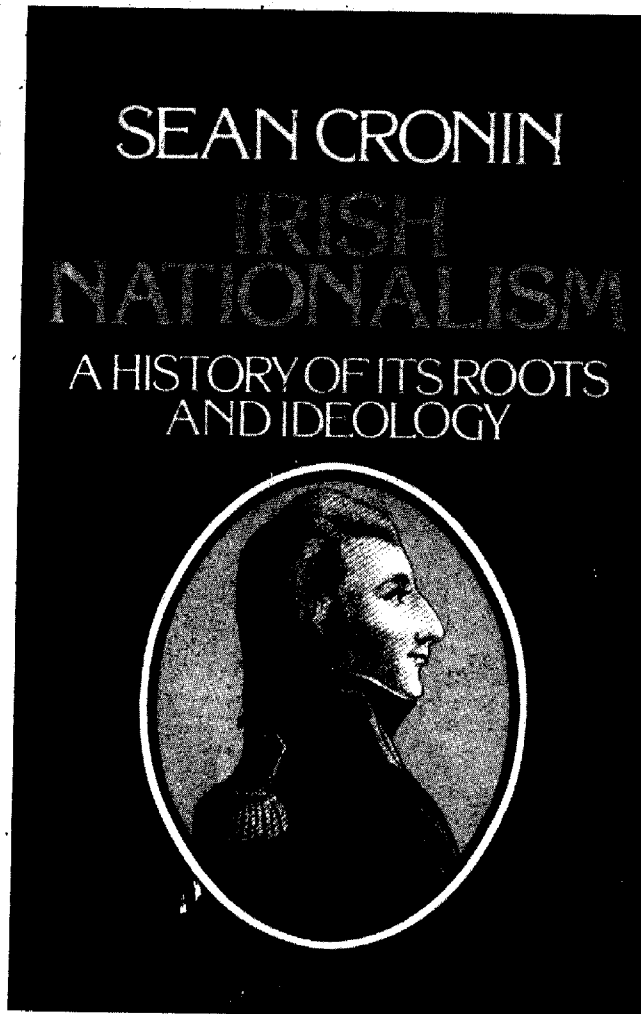
and could still claim to be a republican, demonstrates the impossibility of adequately discussing any form of nationalist ideology without relating it to the nature of the class struggle and political power.

There is of course an existing body of work, of differing quality and positions, which attempts this — Marxist writings on the national question. But although he makes various references to Marx, Cronin's theoretical position is acknowledged to be based on that of the sociologist, Karl Mannheim. Although he claims that Mannheim's positions are the same as Marx's, this is really not the case. For when Mannheim stressed the social

determination of ideology, he was referring to individuals and groups, not social classes. The class struggle which was the core of Marx's analysis is absent.

It is this which perhaps explains the strange ambivalence in the book when it deals with the central political questions in Ireland today. At times there is a clear and realistic recognition of the limits of Irish nationalism, "it must be concluded that Irish nationalism is usually socially conservative and Catholic, even the physical force strand". Also on the Ulster Unionist resistance to Home Rule: "Nationalist Ireland never fully understood this deep-seated prejudice against its economic backwardness, peasant character, customs, way of life, religion." Such

BOOKS



'From setting out to analyse Irish nationalist ideology, Cronin has become its prisoner'

attitudes were blamed on ignorance and on British efforts to keep the people divided."

However these relatively accurate comments are soon clouded over in a fog of nationalist mythology. After recognising the conservative and sectarian nature of much of Irish nationalism, and the real economic and social divergences between north and south, he relapses into the traditional treatment of Unionism as simple religious bigotry and even as a form of white-settler colonialism. An incredible analogy is made between Northern Ireland and South Africa, "the gulf between Protestants and Catholics would be as wide as that separating Boers and Zulus". There is a simple distortion: "Among Protestant workers the Orange Order is a more influential institution than the trade union". He concludes, "The ideology of Irish nationalism will continue to ripple the political waters until its conception of nationhood is achieved". From setting out to analyse Irish nationalist ideology Cronin has become its prisoner. This comes out most closely in the uncritical and sympathetic treatment he gives to the claims of the "leftists" in the leadership of the Provisionals.

How can this deterioration be explained? Theoretically it has its roots in the attempt to define an essence of nationalism. Cronin relies on Morgenthau, an American theorist of international relations for his definition — the nation is a "spiritual force". As such it is above the determination of history and class, both must adjust to its demands. The great advantage of the Marxist position on the national question, particularly that of Lenin's, is its refusal to treat nations as other than historically created material realities, with not one element of "spirit" in their composition. The Leninist position was that there was no national spirit or essence just specific nationalist ideologies and demands which had to be concretely evaluated, not in their own terms, but solely in relation to wider political questions, the key ones being democracy and socialism. In Ireland socialists should measure the claims of Irish "nationhood" against those of democracy and socialism.

Those who insist on putting the claims of the "Nation" first are, whatever their intentions, writing not about Nationalism, but for it.

Henry Patterson

WORK AND CULTURE

Traitor to his class

ASSASSINATION ON EMBASSY ROW by John Dinges and Saul Landau, Writers and Readers Co-Op; 411pp; £6.95 (in UK).

Assassination on Embassy Row is really four books in one. It is, in the first place, a meticulous account of the events surrounding the assassination in Washington on 21 September 1976 of Orlando Letelier, the Chilean Socialist Party leader, and of Ronni Moffitt, his co-worker in the Institute for Policy Studies. The book traces the preparation of the killing in Chile and in the shadows of the Cuban demi-monde in the USA, and follows the investigation through its many meanderings up to the conviction of some of those involved in February 1979. But through the twists of this story three other major topics emerge, each with dimensions sufficient to fill a whole book.

One is the story of Orlando Letelier himself, the middle-class radical who opted for socialism and, after serving the Popular Unity government of Salvador

Allende, became such a prominent exile leader that General Pinochet had him killed. Another is that of Chile in the 1970s, both before and after the September 1973 coup, together with a fascinating and novel portrait of the workings of the Chilean state after 1973. Landau and Dinges chart the functioning of the military and security apparatuses, and the contradictions between the narrowly military elements and the civilian financial and industrial class who backed the junta. Finally, it is a book about the US state. It describes the rifts and conflicts within the Washington bureaucracy that both enabled the assassination to occur and then enabled the FBI agents investigating the killings to trace those responsible. At the same time, it gives a fascinating insight into the relations between the US government and one of its junior allies, into how far the US state, as a whole, can influence Third World states and into how those trying to press for a confrontation with Pinochet were blocked, in the final analysis, by US officials in Washington. If simplistic notions of 'imperialism' as a monolith are dispelled by this story, so too are those

interpretations of the US state as merely the site of competing pressures — a free for all in which the relations between the US and its Third World allies, work themselves out haphazardly. What we get is a picture of diverse and at times unpredictable state which is, in the last resort, run by people who can and do protect themselves.

The hero of the story is Orlando Letelier himself. Born in 1932 into a provincial middle-class family, Letelier made the unusual choice of joining the military academy in Santiago, the Chilean capital, in order, as he told his father, 'to gain discipline with which to face the world'. He was a convinced socialist from his teens, and after studying at university, he entered the Department of Copper, out of a belief that this was a place where an informed and professional militancy could advance Chile's interests. But after campaigning for the Socialist Party candidate Salvador Allende in the 1958 elections, he was sacked from the Department. A high official told him: 'Your punishment is an example, for betraying your class.'

In the 1960s Letelier worked in Washington for the Inter-

American Development Bank, and when Allende was finally elected President in 1970 he appointed Letelier, who had by now great experience of the workings of Washington, Ambassador to the USA. Letelier stayed there until 1973, when he was recalled to Chile to serve first as Foreign Minister and then as Minister of Interior. On the fateful day the commander of the generals who, rising in revolt, arrested him at his ministry and later imprisoned him for a year on a remote island.

After his release in 1974, Letelier went into exile in the USA and from there worked tirelessly for the cause of a free Chile. Although not one of the most prominent of the original Popular Unity officials, and from a strongly bourgeois background, he used his skill and determination, and that discipline he had learned in the military academy, to become one of the most active of the exile leaders. It was his success in disrupting international banking support for Chile and his apparent ability to keep the factions of the opposition together that led Pinochet to have him slain.

Orlando Letelier was, by any

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The mass emigration of Irish people to the United States brought a new element to Irish culture: an American context which spawned such great works of literature and drama as *Mourning Becomes Electra*, *Studs Lonigan*, and, currently, *The Year of the French*. AIS-EIRI, the only magazine of Irish-America, reflects the best of that culture.

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standards, an exceptional man, propelled to prominence both by his own abilities and courage and by the events that so contorted his country in the 1970s. He had certain qualities, as all of us who worked with him in the Transnational Institute and IPS can testify, that were especially striking, being those that in the grimness of struggle are all too often forgotten. One was an immense enjoyment of life, a sense of energy and warmth that touched all who had the pleasure of meeting him. Another was a powerful ability to combine high-level and long-term political vision with an attention to the smallest detail of everyday administration. Where too many on the left are afflicted by pessimism or carelessness of the requirements of everyday management, Letelier, who had as much excuse as anyone for neglecting cheerfulness and meticulousness, represented them in the most contagious manner. A third quality was his patriotism: a cosmopolitan in culture, an internationalist in politics, and someone who knew how to work in the realms of international finance and diplomacy, he remained quintessentially Chilean in his personal expression and enjoyment and in his devotion to the cause of the Chilean people. The man who had betrayed his class, and who paid for this betrayal with his life, refused to accept the military regime's decree, announced a few days before his death, that stripped him of his citizenship. He was born a Chilean and would die one, he announced; the generals were born traitors and would die as such.

The story of the investigation into the assassination is one that Letelier himself would have appreciated, since it illustrates the ways in which a sustained political project can make an impression upon the US and Chilean states. Against the pessimistic view of those who argued that there was no point in collaborating with the FBI and the US Justice Department, Saul Landau and his associates tried to push the issue into the open and won the co-operation of the investigating agents of the US state. Just as sections of the US state were reaching out into civil society to recruit support for a cover-up, with the CIA feeding misleading stories to *Newsweek* and the *Washington Post*, so the IPS-TNI team reached into the state to find allies in the FBI, and later in the State Department. In the end, it was this alliance which prevailed, pinning the blame for the deaths of Letelier and



Orlando Letelier

Moffitt on the Chilean secret police DINA and bringing some of the conspirators to trial.

The parallel to the divisions within the US state is the shifting pattern of alliances inside Chile itself. Landau and Dinges give a unique insight into the relative independence from the rest of the Chilean state enjoyed by Pinochet, enabling him to use a hardline killer like Contreras to run DINA and then, later, once DINA had served its function, to dismiss Contreras and rely more upon the bankers and industrialists. The latter supported the regime and rejected the Christian Democrats, but were more attuned to the pressures coming from Washington.

The relations between Chile and the USA are one of the most engrossing themes of the book and demonstrate the limits of how far the US state would go. Although some of the conspirators were expelled from Chile to face trial in the US, the main DINA officials involved were not, and the US government refused to pursue the case further, even suppressing documents that would have shown how far DINA and the CIA collaborated. In a terse epilogue, the two authors also examine how far the US government had foreknowledge that the DINA was planning some operation in the US in September 1976; they prove how this information was put on one side and kept secret for the first months of the investigation. A substantial crisis in US-Chilean relations did take place, but both the CIA and Pinochet were able to prevent the scandal from going too far.

The book is generous and understanding about some of the other personalities in the story: not only FBI agent Cornick, who doggedly pursued the killers despite his anti-communist prejudices, and US Ambassador to Chile Landau, an aristocratic Austrian-born diplomat who hammered at the Chileans, but also Ines Callejas de Townley, the wife of the chief murderer, Michael Townley, whose right-

wing idealism and hatred of anti-semitism made her so uneasy in the criminal Cuban milieu in which her husband moved. One aspect of the story is, however, still not painted satisfactorily, namely the real role of the US in the Popular Unity period. For, despite all the revelations about the CIA and ITT, and the obvious convergence of Chilean military and US interests, it is still not clear how much the CIA concretely contributed to destabilising Chile and to the coup of September 1973. Given the demobilising weight that conspiracy theories about the CIA can have, in Chile and Iran, as in Greece, and Brazil, the authors' rather too easy account of the US role in the Chilean counter-revolution is a disappointment. We know what the CIA, Nixon and ITT set out to do, and we know that the Popular Unity government was destabilised and ultimately overthrown. What is much less clear, however, is how far those intentions in Washington were what actually led to the course of events in Chile. Yet such a precise and realistic appraisal would be most helpful in avoiding both a facile under-estimation of the CIA's role, and an exaggerated demonic portrayal of its abilities.

The assassination of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt has had a political significance far beyond the tragedy of their deaths and the revulsion which this provoked. As with the murder of the Moroccan trade unionist and Tricontinental organiser Mehdi Ben Barka in Paris in 1965 (by Moroccan agents in league with the French intelligence service SDECE) it served to highlight the complicity between the secret services of a metropolitan state and the dictatorships at home against which the victims were struggling. Both Ben Barka and Letelier were too dynamic, too intelligent and too successful in their work to be allowed to live. In Letelier's case, his death also gave an indication of the dormant rightist trends within the US state which have now come so much to the fore and which have sought to calumnify him as a foreign agent. Whereas documents in his briefcase showed how the exile network of the Chilean Socialist Party was sending him funds via their bank account in Havana, the US right-wing media have tried to whitewash Pinochet and the CIA by making out that Letelier was some kind of Cuban 'agent'. Their reaction to *Assassination on Embassy Row* has been a frenzied attempt to discredit the

Chilean left and the Institute for which Letelier worked, indicating that the issues raised by Landau and Dinges' investigation continue to hurt.

Fred Halliday

This review was first published in Race & Class, Winter 1981.

The fruits of labour

GROWING TOMATOES by Clay Jones; Penguin Books; 116pp £1.50 (in UK).

THAT there are many and varied ways of relaxing, brightening-up your home, and reaping the fruits of your labour is indisputable. But, to combine all three into one, all you need do is purchase Clay Jones' *Growing Tomatoes*, and plant yourself some tomato plants.

We are daily surrounded by the visual evidence of a growing appreciation of potted plants and flowers; this development is further illustrated by the mushrooming of garden centres. Modern technology, ably assisted by one of our most successful state companies, Bord na Mona, means that those of us even without a garden can now brighten-up our flats, backyards or balconies by using Bord na Mona "Sure Grow" bags.

The most interesting plants to grow must surely be those that give us some return, and tomato plants, above all, are the most rewarding of these. The variety of plants available — there are thirty types of seeds available from Mackeys of Mary Street, Dublin — means that you can grow anything from the huge "Big Boy" to the tiny "Tiny Tim". And if you don't mind the colour of your tomato, then you could try the yellow or golden varieties, or even the ornamental one. You should have no trouble getting at least 10 lbs. of fruit from each plant and if you feel too sick from eating them raw, you could make up some chutney, the recipes for which are also available in the book.

Clay Jones' book is to be recommended for its clear and uncomplicated approach to growing tomatoes. As an added bonus, details for growing cucumbers, peppers and aubergines are provided. These are also to be recommended, and will give as much reward and fruits as tomatoes.

Eric Byrne

THE TITLE of Robert Redford's directorial debut, "Ordinary People" (Adelphi and Green cinemas, Dublin) is, to say the least, misleading; ordinary people don't live in huge mansions on acres of land; ordinary people don't own yachts; ordinary people don't eat with heavy silver-ware at mahogany tables; ordinary people don't take three or four holidays abroad during the year; ordinary people don't spend \$100 a week on psychiatrists; ordinary people don't have so many clothes that you never see them wear the same garment twice; ordinary people don't automatically assume that their son "will go to Harvard or Michigan University" or indeed any centre of third level education. Even by American standards the subjects of this movie are very well-off.

It's ironic to think that if a similar movie came out of the USSR, bearing this title, how loudly all those pampered Russian dissidents-in-exile would shout "propagandist distortion". Inadvertently this "jarring title" draws attention to a more fundamental matter of concern in American cinema. Namely, that so few films are made which *do* deal with ordinary people. Hollywood constantly re-packages the "American Dream" in ever brighter colours to blind the public to the cracks in the wrapping. Threats never come from *within* the American system, but from *outside* forces — sheiks, aliens, zombies, even nature got blamed with the series of "Disaster Movies". Hollywood movies, while trying to divert, paradoxically confirm the paranoia preying on the American psyche. Ordinary people make bad subjects because they suffer from unemployment, inadequate medical welfare, inflation etc., all the problems of "creaking capitalism". They demonstrate that the threat is not *against* the system but that the threat to "ordinary people" *is* the system.

Redford would have been better off calling his movie "Affluent People". But of course he was restricted in this as the movie is an adaptation of Judith Guest's novel of the same name and as "movies of novels" go, it is quite a successful work, if you get over the feeling of smugness that surrounds the film. The plot revolves around an Illinois family whose eldest son has been drowned in a yachting accident and whose second son, Conrad, who was also on the yacht but survived,

FILMS

Bill Nolan encounters some Extra-Ordinary People



Mary Tyler Moore and Donald Sutherland

has just returned from hospital after an attempted suicide. The trio of familial relationships is sharply drawn and the movie's pace is just right to allow the viewer to digest all the complexities of emotion without dragging.

The mother is played, in a rare appearance away from "the box", by Mary Tyler Moore. She is a woman of meticulous neatness, both towards her home and her dress. In many ways this preoccupation with order reflects her tragic flaw — her inability to accept that events can take a course other than that which suits her sense of perfection. We sense from the beginning of the movie that her endless small talk, tight lips and hollow laughter has a neurotic edginess. As the movie unfolds we discover that she was not always like this and that the

turning point in her life was the death of her first son, Buck, whom she loved dearly and with whom she enjoyed a "perfect" relationship. It is a mark of Mary Tyler Moore's performance that we can, simultaneously, sympathise with her great loss and despise her selfish attitude towards Conrad. One exchange perfectly captures this ambiguity when Conrad says, "You never once came to see me in the hospital... if it had been Buck you would have come" and she replies icily "If it had been Buck... he would never have been *in* the hospital."

This terse, intelligent dialogue comes from the pen of Alvin Sargent who wrote the screenplay. Sargent won an Oscar for this work under the awkwardly titled category "Best Screenplay based on material from another medium". The

film garnered three other Oscar awards under the headings "Best Picture", "Best Direction" (both of which should certainly have gone to "Raging Bull") and "Best Supporting Actor". About the latter award I have no quibble whatsoever. Timothy Hutton as Conrad is totally convincing. He runs the gamut of emotions from the brink of a total breakdown to adolescent shyness — "Why is it always difficult to talk on the first date?". But why the tag "supporting" when in fact the character is the main protagonist in the movie, is in more scenes, and has more dialogue than Mary Tyler Moore and father Donald Sutherland, put together? Redford must be commended for his direction of Hutton, particularly in the scenes with his psychiatrist, Judd Hirsch (another TV actor), getting a deserved break from the series "Taxi".

It is at this point that the smugness I spoke of earlier creeps into the movie. Psychiatry is certainly at an advanced stage of development as a science but to suggest as the film does, indirectly, that it is a panacea for all ills is as misleading as the film's title. The psychiatrist is placed directly in contrast with Conrad's mother. Where she is obsessively tidy, he is casually messy, where she is always on vacation and playing golf, he is always ready to listen, available even in the middle of the night (ever try getting a doctor on a Sunday?), where she freaks at the sound of bad language, he is part of his 'street' vocabulary, where she is placid emotionally, he is 'healthily' aggressive, where she bottles things up, he lets it all out, where she is silent he talks. Using the psychiatrist in this way is an artificial and diverting device that goes completely over the top when Conrad falls tearfully into his arms and they pledge eternal friendship. Enough to make any self-respecting psychiatrist fall off his couch! Eventually the psychiatrist develops almost magical qualities when Conrad's father visits his office, lit in a strange golden light. There follows a five minute session, in which Sutherland acts like a child at his first confession, that ends with his realising that after over twenty years of marriage, Mary Tyler Moore has changed utterly and he leaves her. So the psychiatrist has not only cured the patient but also his father and he would have cured his mother if she only had agreed to those family sessions he recommended. Oh well... two out of three ain't bad!

FOLK LIFE

Brendan Phelan meets a Clare Champion

IN LAST month's article I mentioned that I suffered with psoriasis and often ventured to the Burren in Co. Clare to seek relief. This revelation has since evoked considerable interest which is evident from the numerous letters I've received seeking more information.

While psoriasis is not considered a serious disease, being neither contagious nor infectious, it is, nevertheless, visually unpleasant and in extreme cases can be very distressing for the afflicted.

On more than one occasion yours truly has watched helplessly as a potential conquest beat a hasty retreat from the scratcher (if you'll excuse the pun) at the sight of my bespeckled torso. When females are seen to run screaming from your bedsitter night after night the neighbours begin to worry and resort not only to locking up their daughters but to locking up their sons as well.

Rather than take up too much space in this column setting out my findings I promise to answer, in due course, all queries by letter. In the meantime, it might be of some considerable consolation to learn that extensive studies and surveys in the U.S.A. show that psoriasis sufferers appear to be almost immune to cancer except in very rare cases.

My latest sojourn in Clare occurred around St. Patrick's Day and proved very relaxing with one or two surprises, the most notable concerning the legendary Micho Russell of Doolin.

I was driving towards Lios Dúin Bhearna on my way to a remote spot on the coast called Leach na Naomh (a favourite basking area for mermaids) when I noticed this tall gangling figure hitching a lift on the road. I decided to stop, partly because it was raining and I am, after all, a socialist, but mainly because it was standing in the middle of the road, leaving me little choice unless I ran over him. It was of course the bould Micho Russell and the hours we spent together proved most pleasant.

Micho was no sooner seated in the *gluaisteán* when out of the pocket came the tin whistle from which emerged the sweet mellow strains of *Anachuan*, followed in succession by *Song of the White Strand*, *The Sleepy Glens of Gweedore*, *Madra Rua* and many, many more.

I dropped Micho off near a school in Kilshanny where he teaches the tin whistle to the local children, but not before I gleaned many heart-warming and humorous stories and

anecdotes from him. Many of the tales he related to me are not for publication and a few, I suspect, were told tongue-in-cheek, a habit Micho and others evolved through years of enduring *yankeens* or *wankeens* as they are called down there.

A concert tour of Germany has been lined up for Micho and friends beginning on Mayday and will spread over about eight days, taking in Hamburg, Berlin and Essen among other places.

The friends include De Dannann, Jimmy Crowley, Dolores Keane and Padraig O'Connor amongst others.

On the day I met Micho he had just returned from a weeklong stint teaching music to students at the Clifden Comprehensive. "The place was full of nuns. You couldn't get near the women at all."

It was fortunate for me that I did meet Micho Russell as it served to erase some guilt

feelings I've nurtured for the past year. The occasion follows: At the Goilin Singers Club in Teach Thomais (Thomas Street, Dublin) I often sing a song called *The Men Whom God Gave Balls* which is a humorous ditty in praise of certain people I have admired including, Brendan Behan, St. Breadan and Micho Russell among others. Arkle too is numbered as an honorary member in the Order, even though he was a gelding.

In the song I mention meeting Micho Russell in Clare one day, but until recently this was not completely true. This has now been rectified!

Before any member of the Tralee Women's Protection Society rushes for their pen with which to slate me, let me hastily explain that we in the Folk world use the word *balls* not in any vulgar or derisive context but rather in praise of someone we consider to have quality and essence. This applies to many singers and musicians, both male and female.

Whilst speaking about Clare, I would like to mention a fine session in Lisdoonvarna on St. Pat's night provided by Míccalín Conlon and Eoghan Collins. The latter can sometimes be heard playing the concertina in O'Connell's of Richmond Street, Portobello, on Monday nights and a great session is had by all. So if you like good music and suffer with psoriasis why not take your dust mites for a walk next Monday.

Fogra: Will the head who stole away my girlfriend in Slattery's pub last week please return her as soon as possible, or at least direct her to return my tape of Andy Irvine's *Rainy Sundays*, *Windy Dreams* L.P. The latter is sorely missed.

Slán.



THE BADMINTON Union of Ireland is an organisation affiliated to the International Badminton Federation and is responsible for the control, promotion, organisation and conduct of the game throughout the thirty-two counties.

The game is named after "Badminton", the country estate of the English Duke of Beaufort in Gloucestershire where it supposedly originated about 1873. With such upper-class origins, Badminton naturally became the game for Ladies and Gentlemen and was soon played in the church halls throughout Ireland. But today nearly 80 years after the first Irish Championship, Badminton has become the largest racquet sport in this country. There are approximately 30,000 players affiliated to the B.U.I. and in the Dublin area alone there are 5,000 players and over 275 clubs in the whole of the Leinster Branch.

Ireland's recent victory in the Helevatta Cup and their promotion to Division 2 in the European Championship is

Liam Cassidy looks at two fast-growing indoor sports

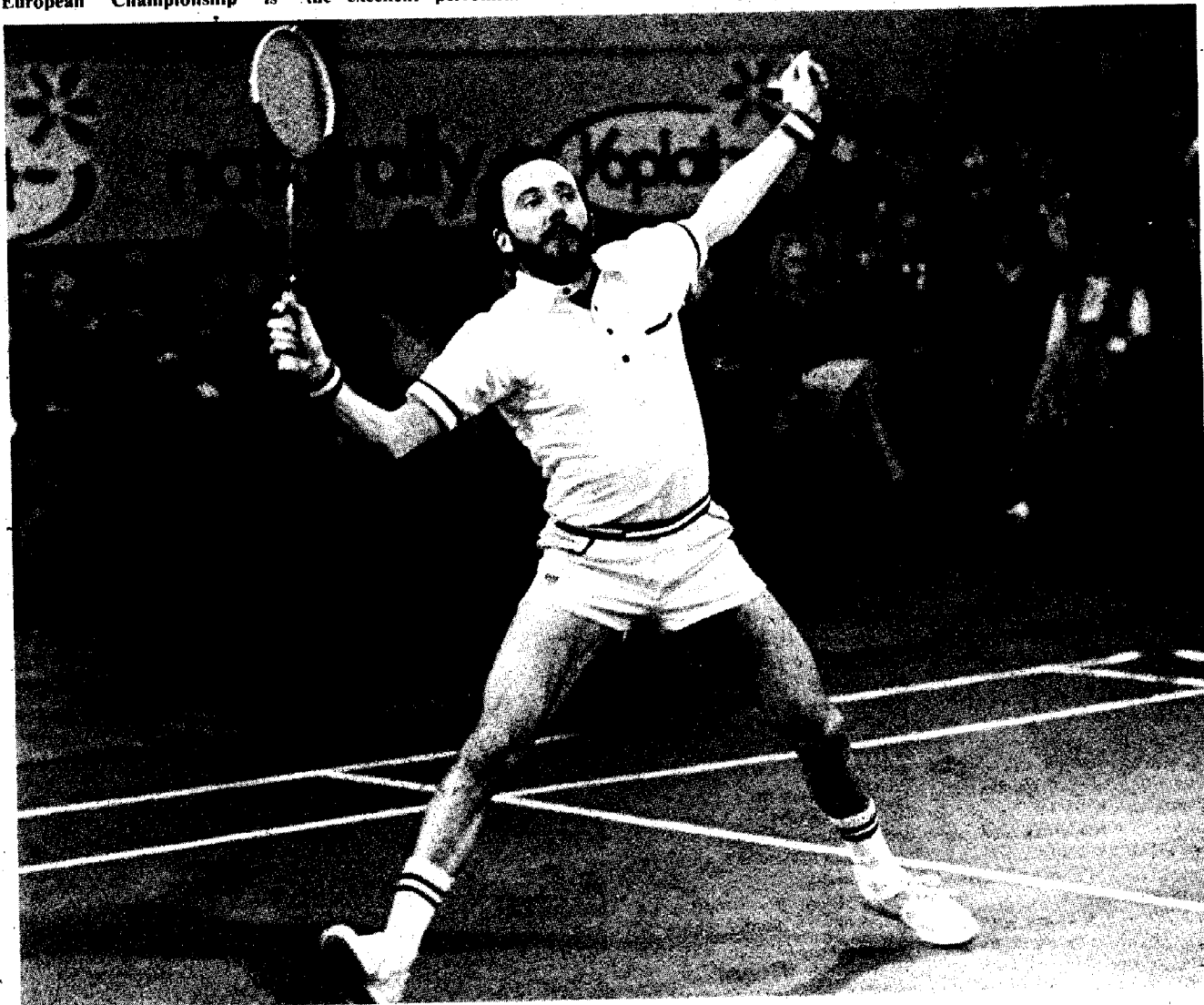
indicative of the improvement in standards in the last five years.

While Irish teams in the past have almost entirely been made up of players from Northern Ireland, there are signs that Leinster at least is narrowing the gap, particularly with the return of John Taylor from Canada and the excellent performances of

Mary Dinan and Wendy Orr both at home and abroad.

Improvement in Leinster can be related directly to the intensive coaching scheme brought about by the introduction of Government grants and the inclusion of Badminton on the Department of Education Sports Curriculum.

Ulster players had the benefit of the more enlightened British Government's approach to sports development for a longer time and because of this players like Colin and Adrian Bell, Bill Thompson, Clifford McIlwaine, Brian McKee and Diane Underwood have become the top players in Ireland.



Clifford McIlwaine in action

Photo: Sportsfile

THE PAST few months have seen a growing number of Irish teams and individuals competing at many levels both at home and abroad. Some performed very well others not so well.

At the beginning of April, Ireland's amateur boxers enjoyed one of their greatest nights when they defeated the USA by 6 bouts to 5. This is all the more remarkable when one considers that the USA have one of the strongest boxing teams in the world. On the professional scene, Enniskillen boxer Gordon Ferris won the British heavy-weight title.

Another Enniskillen man, Declan Burns, put up a very good performance when coming second in the World Superstars competition. This was by far the best performance put up by any Irish competitor in this event so far.

In cycling the Irish team did poorly in the recent Sealink International but this was offset by the brilliant start Stephen Roche made to his professional career. Riding in the highly competitive professional circuit on the Continent he won the three-day Tour of Corsica and the seven-day Paris to Nice classic, along with being highly placed in other races. In the first of his wins the opposition included the great Frenchman Bernard Hinault who has twice won the Tour de France and is the reigning world champion. Another Irish cyclist, Sean Kelly, is already competing very successfully on the Continent where he won five stages on the Tour of Spain and two stages of the Tour de France last year.

In men's hockey the Irish team did very well to finish in fourth place in the Inter-Continental Cup hockey tournament in Kuala Lumpur.

Among the disappointing performances by Irish competitors recently was the first round defeat of Alex Higgins in the World Professional Snooker Championships and the very poor display by the four Irish athletic teams (representing North and South) in the recent World Cross-Country Championships in Spain.

If you consider motor racing a sport then the performances of Derek Daly and John Watson in this year's Grand Prix races has been a disappointment.

Finally, the recent games involving the Republic and Northern soccer teams were not very encouraging and would seem to signal the end of any prospects of either team making it to Spain for the World Cup finals.

AFTER WATCHING two weeks of snooker on television, one of the things that struck me was the fact that most of the time commentators left it up to the viewer to decide whether the shot was a good one or not. This reminded me of a story I read recently about an experiment carried out by the National Broadcasting Company in the USA. The NBC decided to transmit two hours of American football without a single word of commentary. Instead of the usual three commentators telling viewers what was happening, why it was happening and why it shouldn't have happened, the only sounds were those of the crowd and the voice of the stadium announcer.

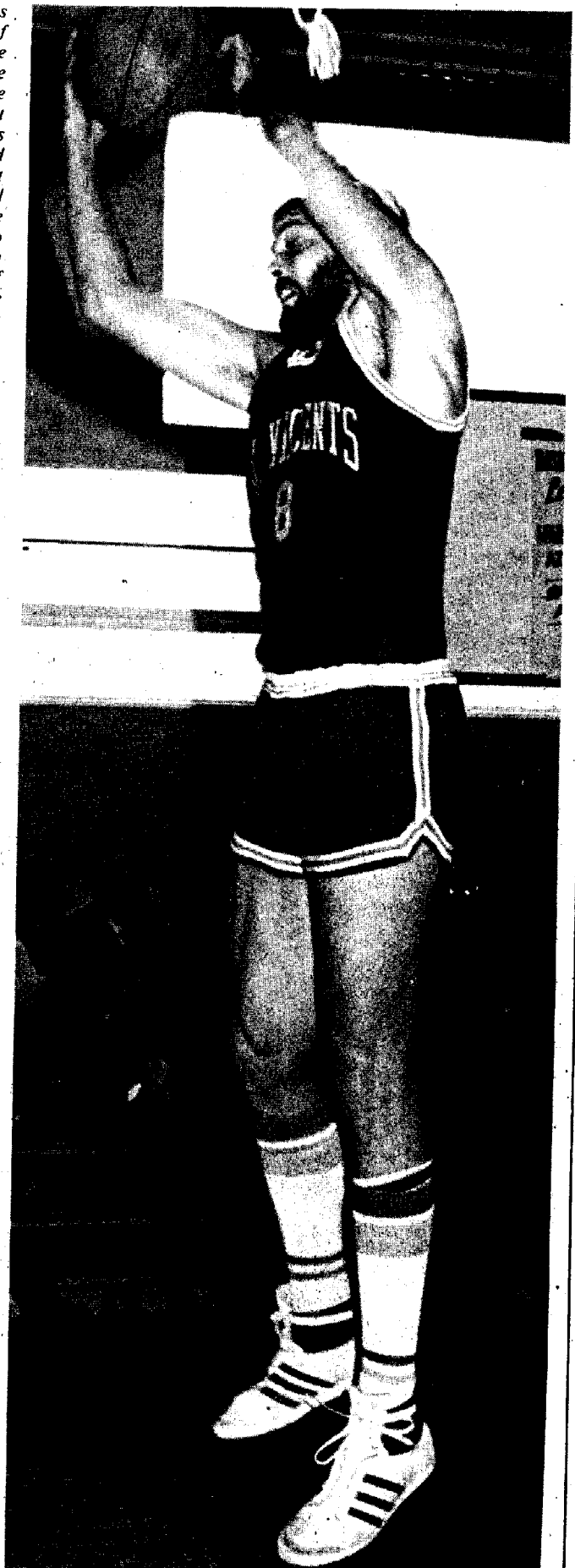
At the end of the experiment more than 1,000 viewers telephoned the Company and, surely to no one's surprise, over 60% of these were in favour of the idea.

THE STANDARD of basketball in Ireland has improved enormously over the past few years. At present we are in a situation where the top Irish clubs are a match for the top British and Continental sides. Part of the reason for this improvement has been the introduction of outside players into Ireland by the clubs and the increased amount of first class competition our teams get from playing in International events.

Last year's league and cup holders, St. Vincents of Killarney, who defeated Boroughmuir from Scotland in the Federation Cup earlier this year, have American star Brian Ulmer and Sami Murduglu from Turkey playing for them. This year's league winners, Blue Demons from Cork, have two Americans David Bekon and Wayne Williams, in the side. Dublin's Marian Club have yet another American player Tom Hinga, on their panel.

Basketball players and administrators in Ireland are to be congratulated on having such a progressive outlook towards their sport and they have set their sights higher than being just the best in Ireland. Unfortunately their efforts are not helped by the severe shortage of facilities for playing basketball in Ireland and the even greater shortage of basketball halls which cater for spectators.

The recent government grant of £7,500 is hardly going to rectify this situation. The only answer to the question of facilities is for the government to build proper sports centres catering for all sports.



Brian Ulmer, St Vincents (Killarney)

Photo: Sportsfile

INNISHVICKILLANE. EASTER SATURDAY

What a week-end!

Easily the best Easter for our family since April 1916.

My Bonnie had invited a very select party to spend the week-end in his island bunker celebrating our election victory in Fermanagh/South Tyrone. And I was to be the hostess!

As we stood on the topmost rock watching the first of the guests arriving by helicopter My Bonnie remarked that those arriving had the same patriotism and importance as the little group who assembled at Boland's Mills so many moons ago — Flor Crowley, Brian Lenihan, Maire Geoghegan Quinn, Charlie McCreevy — all supported by our gallant allies in Europe. Michael O'Kennedy and his household. Such terrible beauties were borne — down to the island!

First off we had a tour around the island in a Naomhóg skippered by Tommy Fad Fada who is affectionately known as Fiche Bliain Ag Fás and has retained all the old Irish sea-going skills such as starting the outboard motor when it's a bit damp by cursing at it in English. We had a great bit of gas when Maire Geoghegan Quinn fell into the sea, and Albert and Gene were too tiddly to throw the lifebelt in the right direction. Luckily My Bonnie got a rope around her neck and Tommy Fad Fada towed her ashore and helped her to dry out in a cave.

By then it was nearly time for dinner and we dropped down by express lift to the bowels of the island to the great Cement Roadstone Room. What an atmosphere! The great panelled walls of carved Kilcash Oak, the long dining table made from compressed and polished Wood Quay viking fragments. And the Derry Na Flan silverware permanently loaned by the National Museum — all glittering in the reflection of the roaring fire fuelled by Tommy Fada dumping a hundredweight of Census forms in every few minutes.

EASTER SUNDAY

Up bright and early and Mass in the NATO Chapel half a mile deep in the rock. The celebrant was one of the sound Dungannon Order people. I think his name was Pearse O'Dull but they all sound the same to me.



Sile's Diary

Then great excitement. Tommy Fad Fada reported that Vincent Browne had been seen outside Kugers. My Bonnie immediately called together the local vigilante group composed of contractors and foremen who had built the island bunker and the hunt was on. Such gas! We were up in the helicopter sweeping the countryside when Browne broke cover, and tore across the countryside. Around by Sleah Head he ran squealing that he was on My Bonnie's side all along and we only lost him when he took refuge among a pack of killer dogs beneath Mount Brandon, whereupon My Bonnie lost interest and ordered the helicopter home.

After a light lunch of Vichysoisse, coquilles St Jack, prawn cocktails, suckling pig, Dunquin saddle of lamb and fried Dolphin steaks, all finished off with Bewley's Mary cakes drenched in brandy, My Bonnie took me down to the Romper Room. There, surrounded by twenty feet of concrete and steel, he showed me the Doomsday table with its sinister red telephone occupying pride of place.

"Any time that phone rings," My Bonnie told me solemnly, "it means that Owen Carron is on the line." Then we had a good giggle over recent stirring events. He told me that he thought I was marvellous to pretend that my Strasbourg speech was off the top of my head. I told him that he was even better the way he pretended to be taken unawares by my Ard Fheis Kiss. Then we went over the outline plan for the visit to Long Kesh.

My Bonnie said that it gave him great comfort to think that in a Doomsday situation to the Romper Room would preserve our twin dynasties, even if the people of Ireland, always unreliable, should perish.

"What a team we would make" I told him, "if we weren't already playing together."

That night, after dinner, Tommy Fad Fada sang me a song he had specially composed in my honour, called "Droimeann Donn Dilis". It was all about a cow who was Ireland and it had two lovely last lines.

"Is d'fhag si siud mise
Ag Sile na ndeor."

EASTER MONDAY

Back from Long Kesh, just in time for an "Ulster Fry" and many new bright faces gathered round in the Cement Roadstone Room.

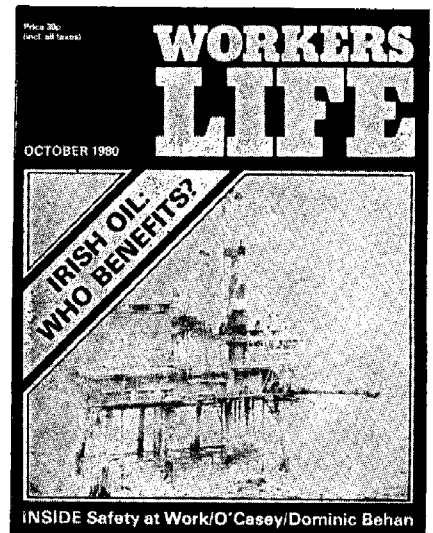
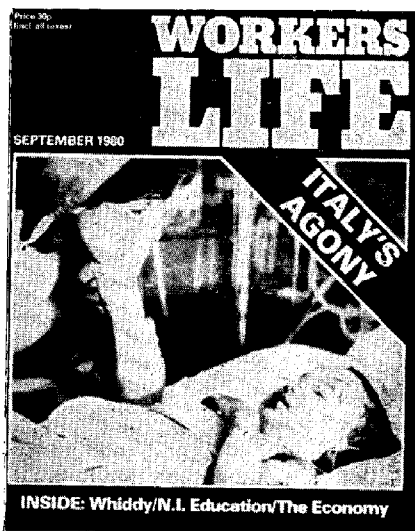
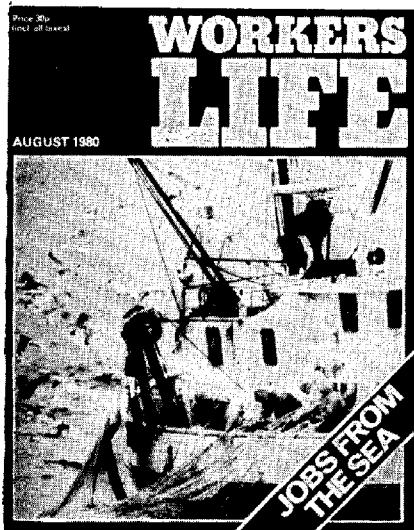
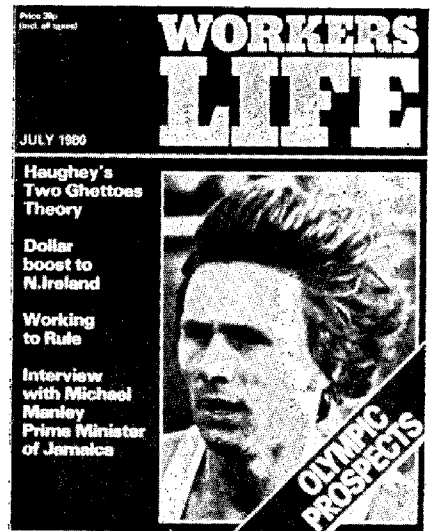
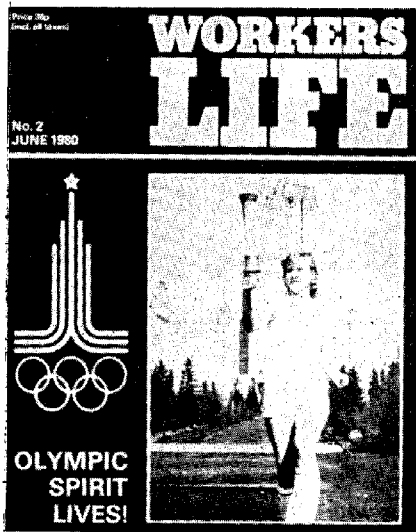
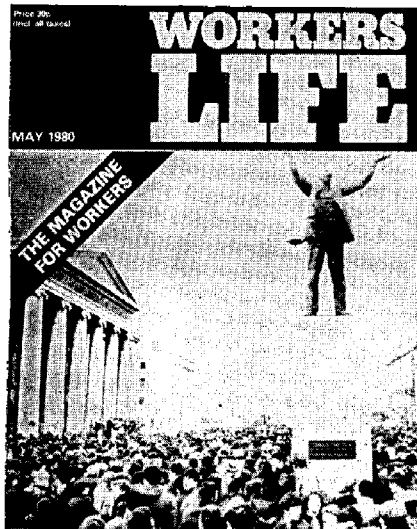
Over in the corner, Tony Cronin was gathered with some of his Aosdánai, teasing them for the money he had given them because he had a bad day at Fairyhouse (where incidentally most of the Irish people went yet again on this memorable Easter). Then there was a flurry at the door as Frank Gulliver, Mary Holland, John Mulcahy and Eamon McCann arrived. Eamon McCann was blustering loudly that he wasn't a prominent Republican, holding up a copy of the *Sunday World* to prove as much.

"That's no problem," Brian Lenihan shouted. "Nobody else here is a Republican either." But in deference to McCann's principles he was allowed to eat at Tony Cronin's side-table, where they spent the evening showing each other pictures from which Trotsky had been removed by Stalin.

Talking about my visit to Long Kesh, one of the maids got hysterical, crying about some poor woman or other who got shot on the Census, but Tommy Fad Fada said to take no notice of her, that she was from Dingle. Over in the corner John Mulcahy lost £230,000 to Donncah O'Dulaing at pitch and toss and Tommy Fad Fada, looking over the wrecked room said "Ni bheidh a leitheid ann aríst".

"Yerra, that's enough of that Gaelic blather," said Flor Crowley, "Let's have a good Irish song." With that, we arose and followed Charlie.

SIX OF THE BEST!



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