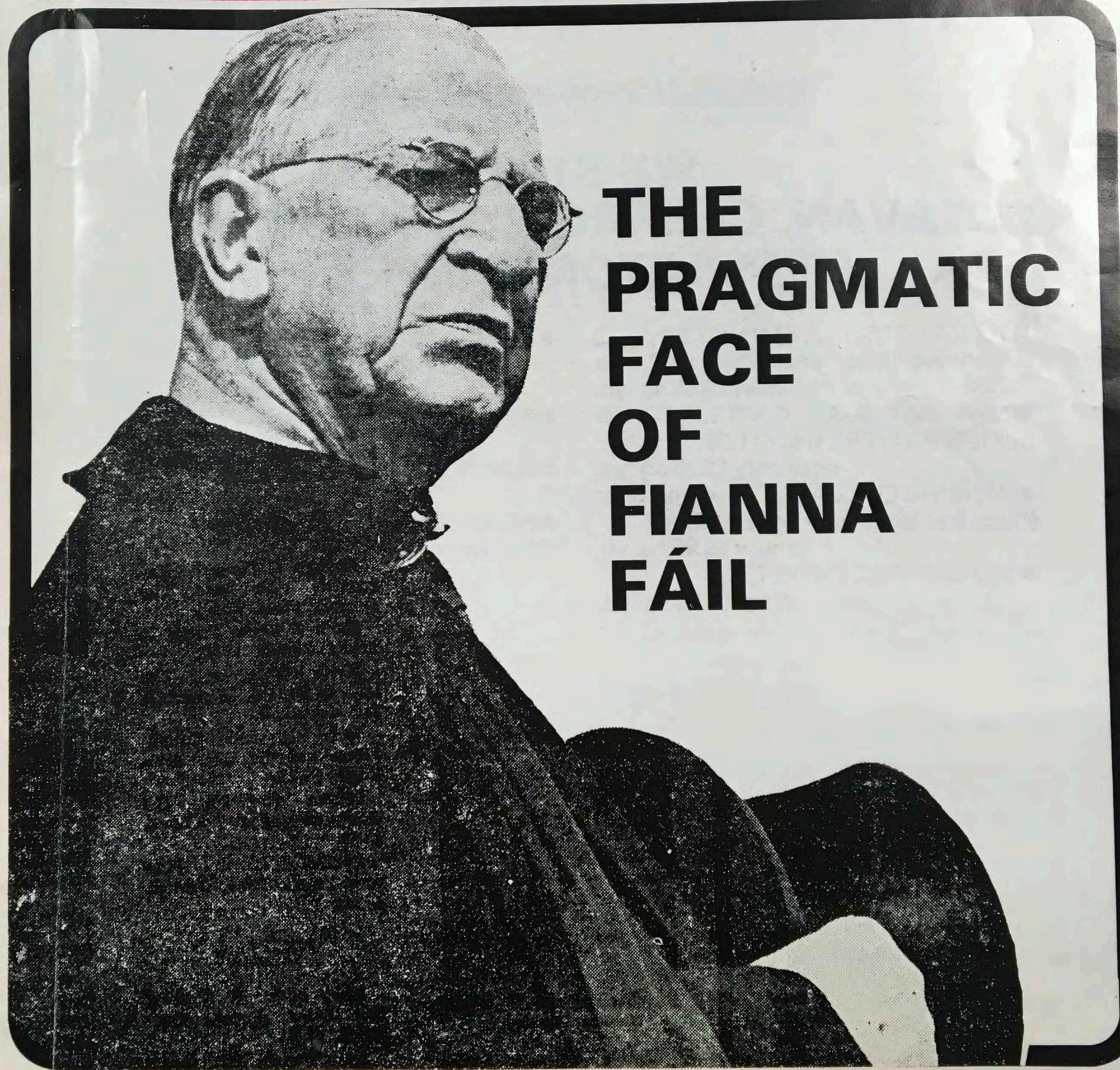


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# WORKERS LIFE



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OF  
FIANNA  
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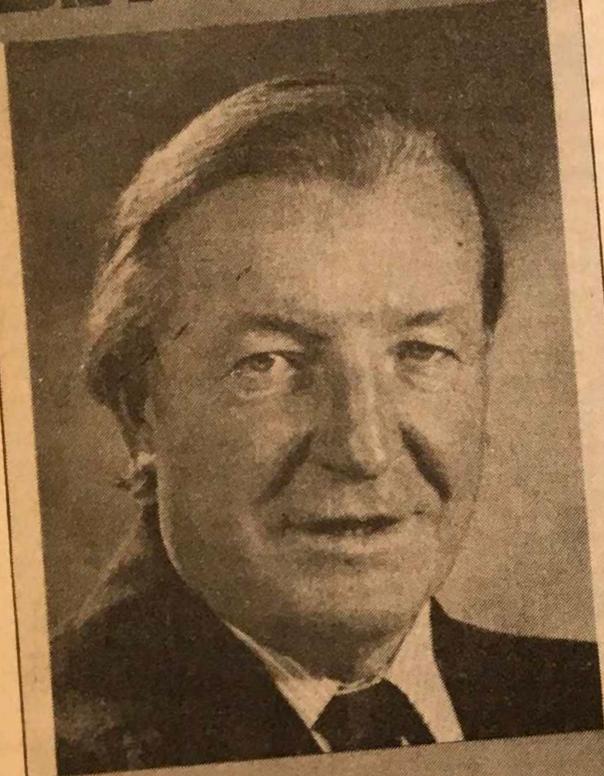
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# WORKERS LIFE

Vol. 2 No. 12 April 1982

**WE DO A  
BETTER JOB**



**Fianna  
Fáil** THE  
REPUBLICAN  
PARTY

*Paul Bew and Henry Patterson look  
at the pragmatic face of Fianna Fáil/  
Page 8.*

*Fianna Fáil and borrowing/ Page 14.*

*Paul Sweeney asks: Is private  
enterprise a myth?/ Page 12.*

*Gerry Flynn details the hazards of  
lead in petrol/ Page 18*

**Editor:** Des O'Hagan

**Staff:** Gerry Flynn, Adrian Gallagher,  
Paddy Gillan

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CONSIDERABLE surprise has been expressed in many quarters at the decision by Sinn Féin The Workers' Party to support Mr Haughey for Taoiseach in the 23rd Dáil. On that account it is worth quoting in full the statement released by the Party on the day the new Dáil assembled.

"The decision by Sinn Féin The Workers' Party on whom to support for Taoiseach has been taken after prolonged study not only of the harsh immediate economic, social and political circumstances which face the Irish working class but also with regard to securing a government which will have the opportunity and time to tackle these issues.

"But we state categorically that these issues — unemployment, unfair taxation, gross social deprivation, inequalities in the legal system and the continued denial of fundamental human rights within the family must not only be tackled but determined efforts made at their solution.

"We also wish to make it absolutely clear, so that there is no doubt about it whatsoever, that Sinn Féin The Workers' Party has done no deals, made no bargains nor are we giving our unreserved support to the incoming Taoiseach and Government.

"On the contrary we will vote on every issue as it affects the interest of the Irish working class. For we are conscious of the role the working class has chosen for Sinn Féin The Workers' Party at this point in time. And we will not betray that trust.

"Therefore there will be one consideration and one consideration only guiding our judgement in opposition — the interests of the working class of this entire island. Every action, every word, every deed, every piece of legislation coming from the government will be judged in that light. And we will vote accordingly.

"Sinn Féin The Workers' Party has as its goal the establishment of a democratic, secular, socialist unitary state. We have declared our total opposition to terrorism and violence in Northern Ireland and we say today to the people of Northern Ireland that we will resist any attempt in word or deed by this government to coerce or to assist in the coercion of the people of the North.

"Finally, we express our resolution to oppose any decision to end Ireland's neutrality or to link the country in any way with an international war machine."

SFWP must be understood therefore to have adopted in the main a strong opposition position to a number of the key planks in the Fianna Fáil general programme. Northern Ireland in particular stands out. Indeed the Party's stated view from recent Ard Fheiseanna is at complete variance with that of Fianna Fáil on this issue.

SFWP accepts that there can be no change in the status of Northern Ireland except by the democratic decision of the people there. Fianna Fáil see London and Dublin as the centres of decision making, effectively giving the people of Northern Ireland no say as to their future.

A recipe, in fact, for ongoing violence and terrorism on even a wider scale.

Mr Haughey's quick dash to Washington to confer with President Reagan would also seem to suggest that on many aspects of foreign policy the three SFWP Deputies will find themselves consistently in opposition.

On the home front it is slightly easier to understand the support for Haughey. Once having brought down the Coalition on its Budget proposals it was unlikely that SFWP could reverse that decision, particularly as all reports suggest that there was not only confusion in the Coalition ranks but also what inside observers described as "seemingly little desire to stay in power".

Be that as it may, Fianna Fáil are now in power. They are the largest party and have the clear support of two independents. The country expects them to tackle all our problems including those listed by SFWP. The extent of Fianna Fáil's reign will depend to some extent on its success in those fields. Equally SFWP will be judged on the quality of its opposition.

## McCarthyism

"THE FUE can relax now that little has changed at Liberty Hall" was how *Business and Finance* summed up Mr Christy Kirwan's election as Vice-President of the ITGWU. It was a typically condescending summation but one not likely to surprise union members as much as the announcement by union President Mr John Carroll, after the votes were cast, that he was "prepared to work with whoever is elected in a campaign that has been a clean and democratic one".

Whatever else the campaign was, clean it was not — and John Carroll had been plied liberally with the evidence from unsigned sources. The *Irish Press* described the smear tactics, (again after the election) used against one of the candidates, the runner-up Mr Des Geraghty, as "redolent of McCarthyism at its worst". The *Irish Press* should know, since its siblings from the same stable betrayed indecent haste in their rush to publish the scurrilous opinions of anonymous authors.

Indeed, this intrusion by a section of the press into the internal affairs of the trade union movement, and the overt attempt to influence the result of an important election is particularly to be regretted. By comparison, the internal caucus meetings and regimentation, the hawking of maps around the country showing the locations of the sinister SFWP

# THAT'S LIFE

influence, and the whisper campaign by even the 'Gentlemen' candidates about REDS under the BED are almost legitimate tactics with which any candidate of progressive non-conformist politics must cope.

In a statement to delegates, Des Geraghty said that he had never made any secret of his membership of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party. "As a socialist," he said, "I believe in the need for greater participation and democracy in the trade union movement and take great exception to any suggestion to the contrary. I recognise that the strength of trade unions stems from the essential unity of purpose which can be shared by all their members, irrespective of their political loyalties. I would not support anyone who attempted to undermine that essential unity or who would engage in elitist 'take-over' bids in any trade union."

The new Vice-President, Mr Kirwan is almost 30 years a trade union official and lectures extensively on industrial relations. As a National Group Secretary since 1964 he was a colourful but non-controversial figure. He did, however, find himself embroiled in the controversial petrol tankers' dispute of a couple of years ago. Mr Kirwan will no doubt term it poetic justice that as Vice-President he will now be able to publish the findings of the Special Committee, established to investigate and report on the causes of that dispute as it affects the public interest.

## Democracy

DES GERAGHTY's statement on what democracy in the trade union movement should mean for a socialist was certainly not taken to heart by one little Dublin Branch Secretary. Not satisfied with having secured the nomination of his branch for the candidate of his choice — he had been to school with the brother of the candidate — he worried that something might go wrong on the day. (None of his delegates had been to school with either the candidate or his brother and otherwise had no knowledge of, or contact with, the candidate.)

Fearful that any of his delegates might accidentally give a stray preference to the cloven-hoofed Geraghty he issued each delegate with voting instructions from 1 to 5 and omitted Geraghty's name altogether! Now that's democracy.

Even the story can be surpassed in terms of sheer melodrama by the two God-fearing delegates positioned inside the door of Liberty Hall whispering to anyone who would listen "Save our Union. Save our Union." According to *Business and Finance* their prayer was answered!!

## Wish

'WATCHING the social workers

and polytechnic lecturers march through Camden the other day, calling for troops out of Ulster and an end to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, at least one Southern Irish observer could only echo the Catholic mother's reaction to Vatican edicts on birth control: "I wish to God I knew as little about it as they do."

(Roy Foster, *London Review of Books*)

## Ha'penny place

CLASS POLITICS may be new to Ireland, but class distinction is as old as the hills. An article in *Aisling*, the magazine of the Dublin Literacy Scheme, reminds us of the social apartheid which has not completely vanished from Irish life: 'There are still reminders in churches today where ropes were used for enclosing part of the church to separate the poor from the gentry. To go up the middle to the front of the church you had to pay sixpence. The poor had to go to the side of the church and for that privilege they paid half-a-penny. My mother remembers a woman and her daughter who came to live on their road. They were from the country and did not know the custom concerning the church, so on Sunday the daughter went off to Mass. When she got into the church she went straight up to the front. The stewards stopped her, and told her she could not go down the front of the church without paying her sixpence, and started to direct her to the side. She was prompt in telling them that she was coming to the house of the Lord, and not the pictures, and would not pay an entrance fee and boldly walked up the front of the church to the amazement of the congregation. What a pity the half-penny people did not get up and follow her.'

## Tribute

A FITTING and lasting tribute is to be paid to the late Joe Atkinson (Doherty). Friends of Joe in Wales are organising a Joe Atkinson Memorial Fund to be formally launched at the second Bangor May Day Rally, a festival which Joe was largely instrumental in organising.

*Workers Life* editor Des O'Hagan has been invited to act as one of the trustees administering the fund, which will present an annual prize to the person judged to have done the most for socialism and/or peace in the previous year.

All subscriptions should be sent to Manny Cohen, c/o 2



'Maggie Conlon's Corner Shop, Verner Street' — one of the illustrations by Joe O'Kane featured in 'The Old Markets Calendar'. Copies are available at £1.50 from the Lagan Social and Recreation Club, Friendly Street, The Markets, Belfast 7.

# THE AIRPORT AT KNOCK

This sad little story may cause you some shock. It concerns the case of the airport at Knock.

Shannon's the finest airport in the land  
With runways where even the Concorde can land.  
"An airport in Knock?" The common man smiles;  
"Sure from Shannon to Knock, 'tis not eighty miles."

Well you've heard of the old political game;  
I won't tell it here, the story's the same.  
(Of the well-suited morons who sit in the Dáil,  
Some Fine Gael, and some Fianna Fáil;  
Ready to wallow about in the sewers —  
The display window promises of political whores.)

The weak and the sick and the homeless and old  
Helpless, look on, while their birthright is sold.  
Widows and orphans and unmarried mothers  
All can do nothing, though it gives them the shudders.  
The unemployed, poor, the deprived and destitute  
Are powerless to stop the Dáil Eireann prostitute  
Throwing away millions on a barren Knock field  
To reap the mean harvest in political yield.

Mr American Tourist and your half-senile wife  
We're so glad you've come over to see Irish life.  
We have four hundred seats all waiting for you  
And you won't have to queue up to go to the loo.  
All aboard now and please fasten your belts;  
You're in the Saint Patrick, the pride of the Celts.  
"The jumbo" they call a plane of this sort;  
It will fly you right now to White Elephant Airport.  
It's two o'clock sharp and we're up and away —  
Quick! Look to your left; that's Galway Bay.

"Lough Corrib?" No sir, I must take you to task;  
We're already flying over the shores of Lough Mask.  
We're so glad your wife is impressed by the dresses  
And attractive appearance of our dozen hostesses.  
And when she gets back she can tell Uncle Horace  
That she had a quick look at the streets of Claremorris.  
It's two thirteen now and we're just setting down  
Our magnificent aircraft at the edge of Knock town.

Well might you ask, sir, why visitors few  
Have come here to look at this desolate view.  
As you can see, sir, the weather is wet.  
It's only July; few tourists as yet.  
And the post-papal pilgrims have dwindled away.  
We haven't had any since the middle of May.

Step right this way for your duty-free whiskey  
And go back to Boston feeling Irish and frisky.  
Your mock-Irish wife can buy duty-free beads  
And use them back home to pray for our needs.

Yeah. Who the hell cares if our country's in hock.  
They're going to build us an airport at Knock.

*Kieran Furey*



Berwyn Crescent, Kinmel Bay, Rhyl, Clwyd, Wales. Cheques should be marked payable to the Joe Atkinson Memorial Fund.

## Political terms

MANY PEOPLE who are confused about the use of political terms may find the following useful:

Recently, there has been much discussion about the "Left" in the Labour Party and many observers wonder what exactly this means. Well, it is comprised of two elements.

Firstly, there are those people who "left" one, two and in some cases, three parties to eventually find a resting place in Labour. Secondly, there are those others who have always been in the Labour Party who wish they had "left" ages ago. This is the Labour left, or what's left of Labour.

Thus when Michael D. Higgins talks about a "new departure" in the Party, he is not so much talking about policy but engaging in wishful thinking about ...well, no names, — all those who should simply depart — or maybe it's himself.

Then take John Wilson and Paddy O'Toole describing both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael as "left of centre" on a recent TV programme. We can reveal that they are actually talking about a psychiatric *centre* (whose location we may not reveal) who *left* FF and FG out of their definitions of serious clinical self-delusion. Everyone knows that the *Tribes of Ireland* and the *Soldiers of Destiny* are forms of political schizophrenia to which Irish voters succumbed in the past in a more or less regular pattern — but from which imminent recovery is now predicted.

Alternatively, the centre they refer to is, like the centre of

Ireland, a soft and sinking bog from which they derive their political inspiration. They are not so much left of it, as left *in* it. And quite *rightly*!

## Cuba

A TRADE UNION tour to Cuba will take place in October 1982.

This tour, the first of its kind, will provide a unique opportunity for over one hundred Irish trade unionists to meet and exchange views with Cuban trade unionists, officials and shop stewards. The main highlight of the tour will of course be a meeting which will be organised with Fidel Castro. Other important features will be a visit to a cigar factory and a visit to the most modern sugar factory in the world.

The tour, which is for 17 days, departs from Dublin for Havana on 16th October 1982. The tour remains in Havana for three days during which time there will be a city tour of Havana, a visit to the Museum of the Revolution and an opportunity to explore the other artistic and historic aspects of Havana. The tour continues to Cienfuegos (1 night), Trinidad (3 nights), Varadero (3 nights), back to Havana (4 nights) and returns to Dublin on 1st November 1982. The tour will also be accompanied by its own interpreters.

The main purpose of the tour is to meet Cuban trade unionists and learn about Cuba from them. However, the tour also aims to ensure that the participants will have the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful Caribbean climate of Cuba. Therefore, the stay in Varadero which is described as a paradise of sun, sand and blue sea, will provide an opportunity to do that.

All booking enquiries to Shamrock Travel Limited, 32 Eden Quay, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1. (Tel: 748559).

# THE PRAGMATIC FACE OF FIANNA FáIL

*Paul Bew and Henry Patterson*

RECENT EVIDENCE of the divisions within Fianna Fáil attracted enormous public comment. Yet while there is no doubt that Haughey's exotic personality has given recent events a particular edge, the characteristic of the post-war (as opposed to pre-war) Fianna Fáil party is a degree of serious division over policy questions. Indeed, most of Haughey's problems have their roots, not in his personal qualities, but in this earlier period. Haughey has inherited an extremely ambiguous political legacy from his father-in-law and predecessor as leader, Sean Lemass.

In retrospect, the years of the 'Emergency' seem like golden years for Fianna Fáil. The inevitable isolation of Ireland imposed by war time neutrality suited de Valera well. He ruled supreme as the philosopher king of Irish pastoralism and frugal comfort. Lemass meanwhile performed efficiently enough the task of supplying the country with necessities. The economic strategy of self-sufficiency — which had come under increasing strain in the late thirties — now seemed to be fully vindicated. The whole range of Fianna Fáil slogans from protection to increased tillage seemed to be justified. By the general election of 1944, it was clear that the party had an unrivalled dominance in Irish politics.

But beneath the surface, serious divisions about policy within the party leadership were beginning to appear for the first time. Sean Lemass and Sean Moylan began to argue for radical changes in agricultural policy. Lemass complained

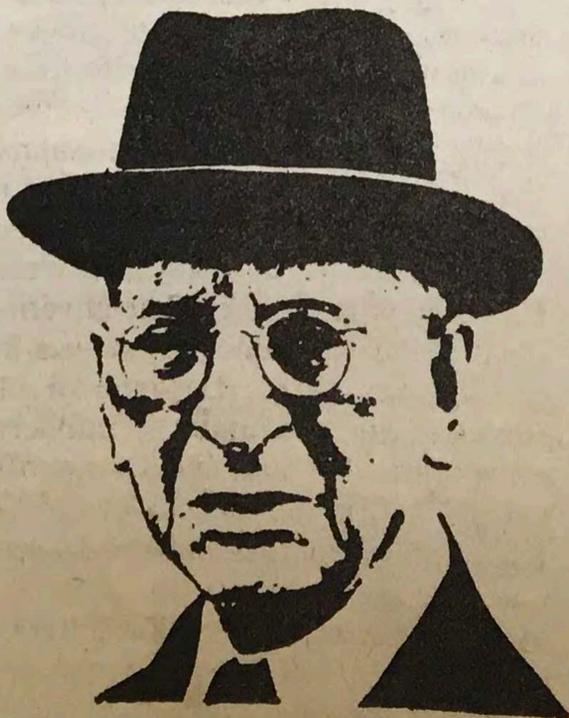
in increasingly bitter tones of the privileges and inefficiency of Irish farmers, and talked of state intervention to 'displace' the less productive. Moylan began to pour scorn on the results of much of the work of land re-distribution. He was to proclaim openly in the Dáil in 1946 that there were too many people on the land. Other more traditional elements in Fianna Fáil, led by de Valera, resisted these arguments in favour of a rather romantic view of the joys of life on an Irish small farm. While the more radical ideas of the reformers — for example, 'displacement' — were regarded as far too politically dangerous to apply, there is no doubt that this period saw the demise of that distinctive, though always ambiguous, appeal to agrarian radicalism (embracing even the land hunger of landless men)

which had so marked Fianna Fáil in the thirties.

## Working class support

The implication of such a development was that the party's continued image as 'progressive' would depend largely on the relationship it worked out with the urban working class. The party's electoral problems in the early fifties were largely due to the fact that only Sean Lemass within the leadership really grasped this fact. This realisation is apparent in his abortive industrial efficiency legislation of 1947 — which would have given the trade unions a much greater role. It is apparent in his speculations on the 1951 General Election, when he alone interpreted Fianna Fáil's narrow victory as primarily the result of an increase in support from the working class looking for economic expansion. MacEntee's massively deflationary budget of 1952 exploded such hopes. In the 1954 general election, Fianna Fáil's strategy was based on the assumption that the party's rural vote could be boosted enough to give it victory. When this assumption was proved wrong, de Valera seems to have gained a new realisation of the importance of winning more urban working class support. Lemass was allowed his head rather more.

Lemass began the business of elaborating a new progressive programme. In the 1930s Lemass had regarded the penetration of foreign capital (especially British) as posing grave threats to national independence. By 1945 his views had altered somewhat. He now saw foreign



*Eamon de Valera: philosopher king of Irish pastoralism.*



Sean Lemass championed foreign investment.

capital and technique as essential to Ireland's continued industrialisation. In 1953 on an American trip, Lemass specifically called for foreign capital, commending Ireland's political stability to potential investors.

It is not clear how this idea was received within Fianna Fáil. Certainly as late as the summer of 1956, de Valera and the *Sunday Press* were still prating on about the old 'Sinn Féin ideal of Irish ownership of Irish resources' and pouring cold water on the Coalition's rather nervous efforts to attract foreign capital. Lemass's pronouncements on the subject became rather cryptic. Nevertheless, it was clear to any moderately careful observer that he retained a pro-foreign capital position. Anyway, the soaring emigration and economic crisis of the mid fifties was to make major change in economic policy almost inevitable.

By summer 1957 even the *Sunday Press* article and letter pages carried items in favour of foreign capital. Lemass also came out more and more strongly for an expansion of state expenditure — even in areas

which were not, in the narrow technical sense, productive. In the general election of 1957, Fianna Fáil armed with a modernising programme based on vulgar Keynesianism, capitalised on disenchantment with the Coalition's economic performance. It was perhaps Fianna Fáil's last chance; but it was a chance they took.

#### Reaction

The return to power in 1957 quickly demonstrated the strength of reaction in the party's leadership. For despite the rhetoric of Lemass during the election, and the claims that Fianna Fáil would "put our men and machines back to work", the economic policies adopted were far from expansionary. The government's chief economic adviser was T K Whitaker of the Department of Finance. He had made it publicly known that he had little time for Lemass's "simple Keynesianism". His famous report *Economic Development* presented to the government at the end of 1958 explicitly stated that it was "quite unreal to approach the question of development from the aspect of employ-

ment".

Like Garret FitzGerald, then the *Irish Times* economics correspondent "Analyst", Whitaker wanted the "modernisation" of Irish agriculture and industry to be based on the uncontrolled logic of capitalist market forces. This meant not only an end to protectionism, and an opening up of the economy to foreign capital, but also an end to what were regarded as high levels of "unproductive" government expenditure.

Both viewed Irish economic problems from the narrow point of view of the economic specialist and technocrat. Their analysis of the inefficient and uncompetitive nature of the Irish industry built up in the protectionist period was undoubtedly correct. It was also the case that from the point of view of the needs of capital it was "unproductive" to invest money in housing, schools and hospitals. One of Lemass's colleagues, Erskine Childers, referred to the 1948-51 Coalition's expenditures in these areas as "slush".

However, as Donal Nevin of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions pointed out at the time, the hard-

## POLITICAL LIFE

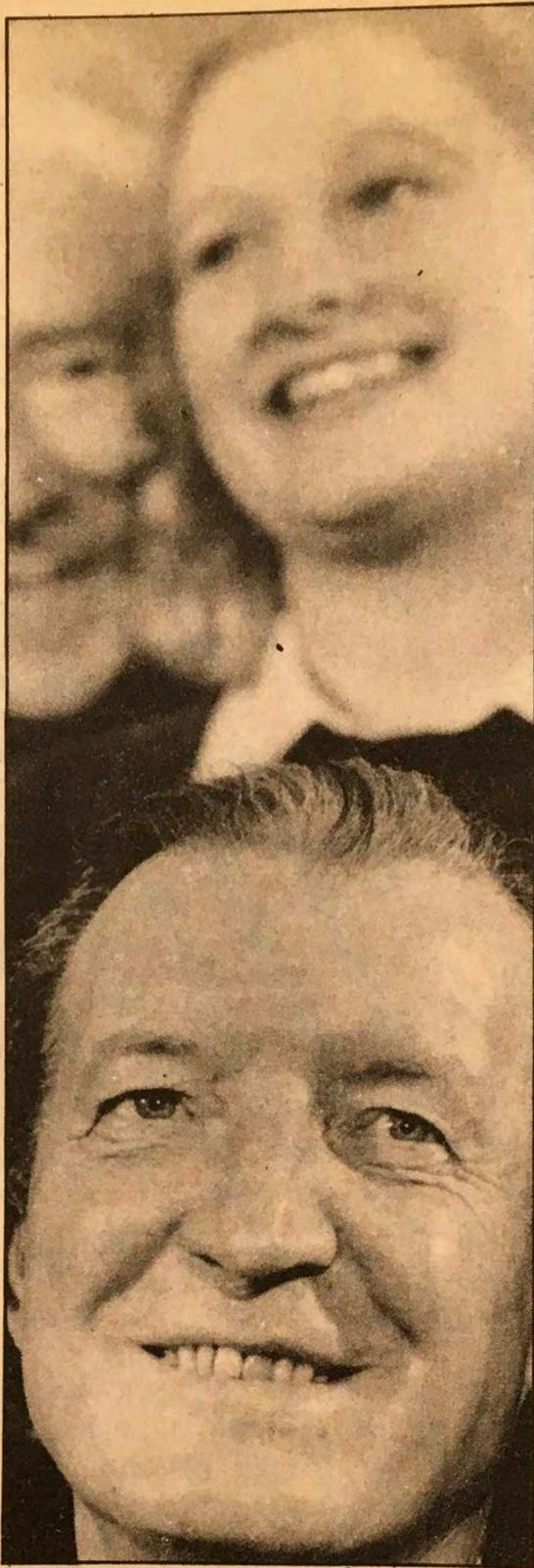
nosed free market approach of *Economic Development* would have little appeal to the urban and rural workers. It would arouse little enthusiasm to be told that if the proposals were implemented, real national income would be doubled in 35 years, especially as in the immediate future the proposals meant deflation.

But it was the conservatives in Fianna Fáil who ruled the roost, at least until de Valera retired. Thus the First Programme for Economic Expansion (1959-64) provided for little increase in the state's programmes of capital expenditure and for real cuts in some areas. The starkest example was in housing where *Economic Development* claimed that needs were well satisfied. The government cut expenditure, and as a result, presided over a serious housing crisis which erupted in 1963 with the collapse of a number of Dublin tenements and the deaths of four people.

### Progressive image

Lemass realised the deadly implications of these policies for Fianna Fáil's support base amongst the working class. With the reunification of the trade union movement in 1959 after decades of internal division, he feared that if the reactionary approach of people like Childers and Sean MacEntee dominated Fianna Fáil it would create the basis for the emergence of a social-democratic alternative. The image of Fianna Fáil as a "National Movement" of a progressive sort had to be preserved at all costs. From his accession to Taoiseach in 1959 Lemass set out to achieve this.

He approached his task with considerable skill. He realised that there was little sympathy amongst workers for the inefficient and often complacent bourgeoisie who had grown up during the protectional phase. Employment and an end to emigration were the crucial needs as defined by the unions and so Lemass went all out to convince them that Fianna Fáil had serious plans for action. He initiated a gradual process of tariff reduction together with government-financed schemes for the modernisation and nationalisation of Irish industry. He was careful to try and integrate union representatives into the various national and industrial



Charles Haughey — republican monetarist.

committees set up to oversee this process.

At the same time he saw to it that government capital expenditures began to substantially exceed the Whitaker projections. This incurred the anger of important sections of the bourgeoisie, particularly the banks, and was criticised by many of the government's economic advisers. However, it served to cement a good relationship with the leadership of most of the important unions and to reinvigorate Fianna Fáil's claim to be "Ireland's Labour Party".

His task was made easier by the weak and largely-rural based nature of the Irish Labour Party. In 1960 its new leader, Brendan Corish, had defined its programme as "a form

of Christian socialism. It is a policy that provides for all classes..." Its lack of a coherent class perspective meant that the Labour Party was often forced into a position of merely reacting to Lemass's initiatives. Thus it ended up by pathetically attacking Lemass for moving towards the EEC. In the words of James Tully, "...it was quite obvious that if we entered the EEC we must drop our Nationalism". In a situation where the main opposition from the left was one of a negative and nationalistic sort, Lemass had little to fear.

### Monetarism

But if Lemass's *political* success in reconstructing Fianna Fáil dominance over the working class made it easier for him to deal with the economic conservatives in the leadership, it did not eliminate the basis for their criticisms. For from a capitalist perspective his legacy was clearly one of budget deficits and increasing government indebtedness. By the late 1970s both had reached crisis proportions and the Lynch/O'Donoghue axis was increasingly under pressure from the "monetarists" led at this time by C.J. Haughey.

For a while Haughey tried to replace Lemass-type policies by a mixture of monetarism and republicanism. But when he discovered that the "national question" could not be used to divert the working class from the defence of their interests, he returned to the attempt to portray Fianna Fáil as the "progressive party". But the conditions for such policies no longer exist. The crisis of the public finances is too deep to allow this and will ensure that even if Haughey was replaced to-morrow, Fianna Fáil would continue to be a divided party.

These divisions reflect the impossibility of implementing Lemass-type policies in the present era. As a result, despite his re-election as Taoiseach, Haughey will find it extremely difficult to provide the stable and progressive government he promises.

Paul Bew and Henry Patterson are the authors of *Sean Lemass and the Making of Modern Ireland* which will be published later this year by Gill and Macmillan.

# Gregorian cant and class politics

Paddy Gillan

TONY Gregory's deal with Charles Haughey has put Monsignor Horan of Knock in the ha'penny place. Equally, it has given a new lease of life to parish pump politics.

Mr Gregory claims to be a socialist. But by opting for the traditional pragmatic, ideologically agnostic and opportunistic style of Irish politics, he has turned his back on true socialism.

The inner city, according to Mr Gregory, has done well from his election to the 23rd Dáil. That remains to be seen. Mr Gregory's one concrete achievement as of this moment is to have reproduced — on a lavish scale — parish pump politics in an urban setting.

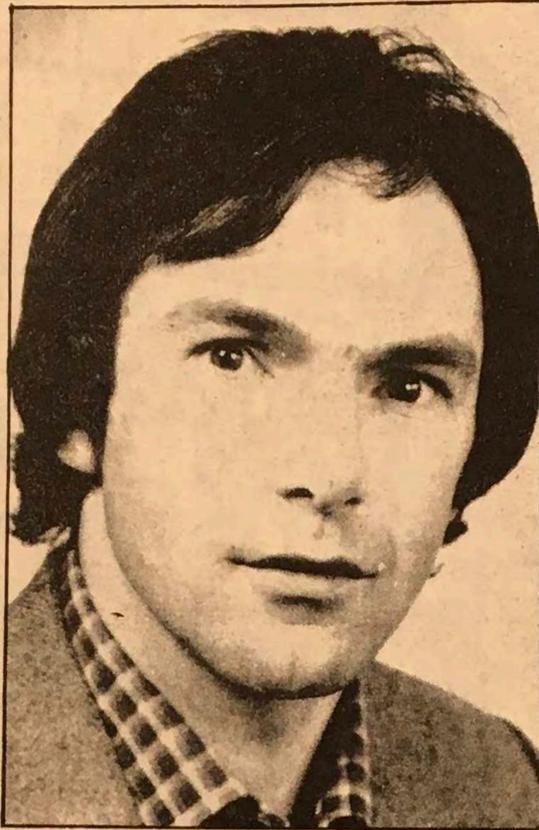
## 'Scratch my back...'

The likes of the 'Maggot' Durkan in their heyday would never have dared contemplate such a 'scratch'. Yet the Gregory/Haughey pact is true to the old maxim: 'You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.'

Thus, it represents no great step forward for democracy. Rather, it reinforces the idea of the public representative as an intermediary between people and government. And it suggests that politics should be organised on a community — rather than a class — basis.

Mr Gregory has already suggested that deprived areas should elect independent 'community' representatives like himself. He forgets the dismal failure of the group of 'community' councillors on Dublin City Council. This is not surprising as he has, since 1979, been a member of that particular group.

The community councillors promised great things having won a total of seven seats in the 1974 local elections. But they lacked cohesion, commitment, and — above all — policies. True to their conservative instincts, they *reacted* rather than initiated, and never exercised more than a marginal influence on city government. Since his election to



Tony Gregory: from the inner city to the parish pump.

the City Council, Mr Gregory has adopted a more 'radical' approach, but to no greater effect.

## Marginal effect

This would appear to have changed in the wake of his pact with Mr Haughey. Yet even if the Gregory proposals are implemented to the letter, the effect on urban deprivation in Dublin will be marginal. The bulk of the proposals relate to the *north* inner city only, while the problems associated with urban deprivation extend far beyond the city boundaries.

The scale of the problem was identified in last year's report by the National Economic and Social Council, *Urbanisation: Problems of Growth and Decay in Dublin*. This report found that almost *one-third* of the city's population was deprived in three important respects. Firstly, housing in the inner city and in some suburban local authority estates was inadequate and in a poor environment; secondly, on the economic level, unemployment and

low incomes put areas at a disadvantage; thirdly, the report found a lack of social amenities and an absence of community development.

These and other attendant problems add up to one simple fact: *Dublin is a city in crisis*. And while it may be reflected most dramatically in the inner city, the crisis is by no means limited to one area.

## Comprehensive plan

Dr Michael Bannon, consultant to the NESC report, has stressed the need for 'a comprehensive plan with a long-term economic and social strategy'. Mr Gregory, on the other hand, proposes a piecemeal approach confined to one area. Mr Haughey is willing to accommodate Mr Gregory — for the time being at any rate. Come the day that Mr Haughey is no longer dependent on Mr Gregory's vote, the Taoiseach could very well lose interest in revitalising the inner city.

Certainly, the bulk of the Fianna Fáil party would shed no tears if their leader reneged on his pact with Mr Gregory. In government, Fianna Fáil has been consistent in positively discriminating against Dublin. Coalition governments have done likewise. The true meaning of 'putting the country first' lies in the fact that the major parties share a conservative rural ideology which views urban Ireland with suspicion and hostility.

## Urban renewal

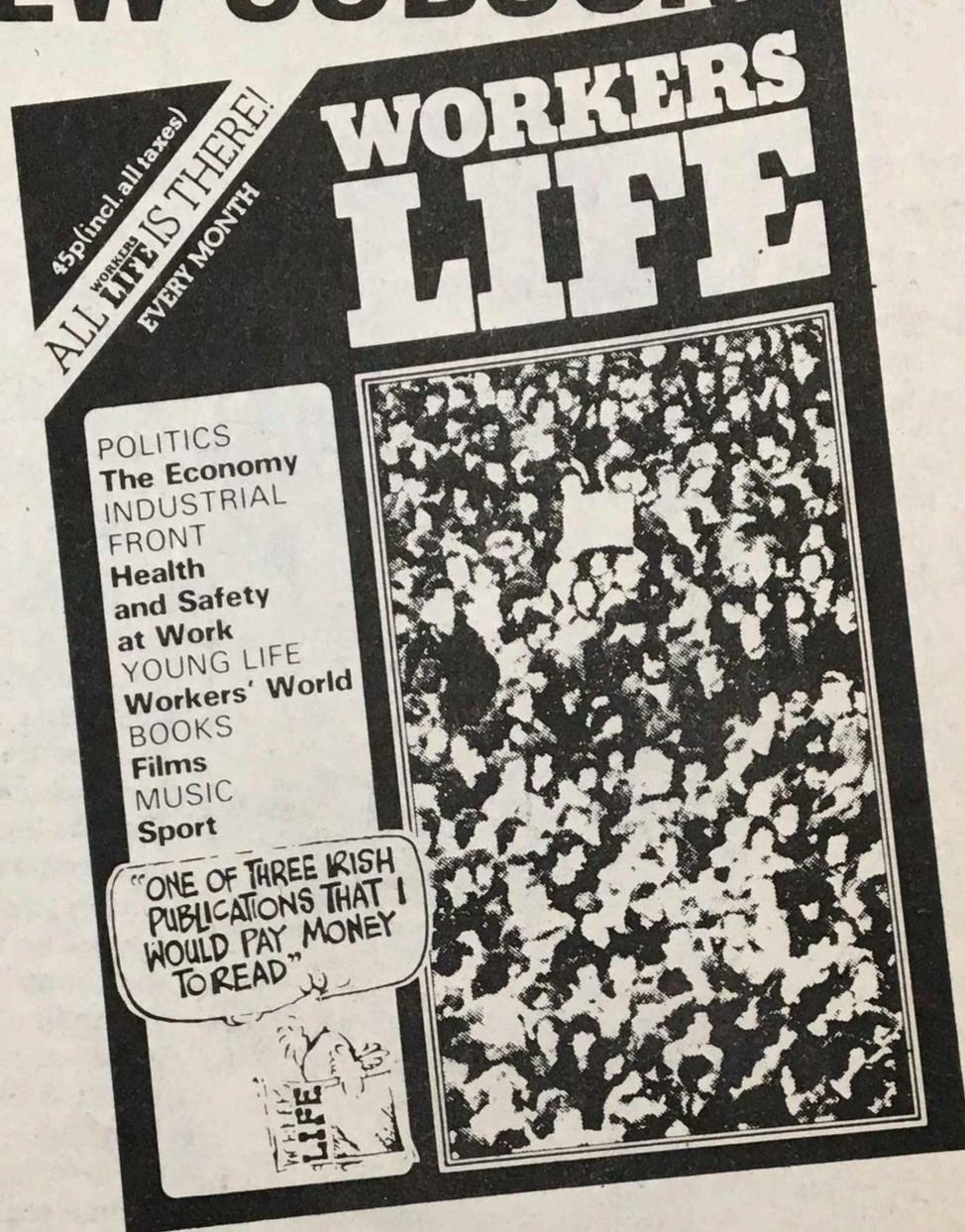
Positive political action on behalf of urban Ireland and its mainly working class population is urgently needed. Urban deprivation affects Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford and our major towns as much as it affects Dublin.

Any long-term solution will require the formulation and promotion of a policy of urban renewal at local government, central government, and EEC levels.

Thus, the problem cannot be effectively tackled by local mavericks — nor indeed by a coalition of such mavericks — operating on the basis of parish pump politics.

Class politics is the only realistic basis for urban renewal. And class politics — if it is to be meaningful — must be organised on a *party*, rather than an individual basis.

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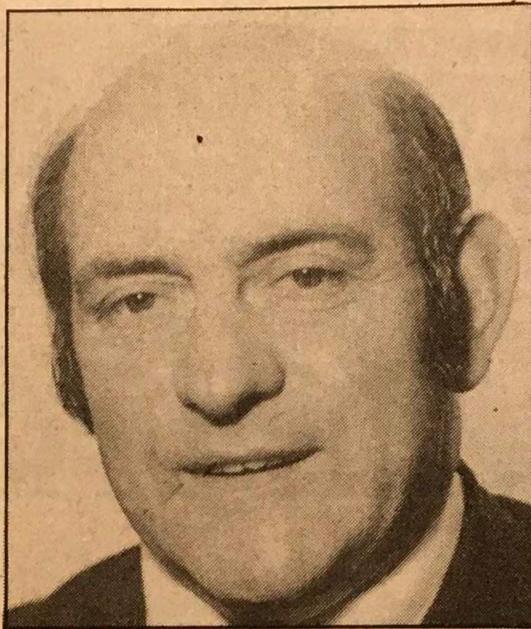
# SFWP CONCERN AT HAUGHEY'S NORTHERN POLICY

The following statement was made in Dáil Eireann by Joe Sherlock T.D., on 25th March during the debate on Mr Haughey's visit to the United States:

On behalf of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party I wish to say that we are considerably perturbed by the tone of the various statements on Northern Ireland by An Taoiseach since his election.

His most recent statement in Washington on St. Patrick's Day has heightened our fears. There was no indication that he recognised the great difficulties entailed in the current attempts to start a new political initiative in the North to end Direct Rule.

We understood from our discussions with Mr Haughey some weeks ago that he would "welcome and encourage" any attempts to get agreement on a form of Devolved government. If this were so we would expect him to show some sensitivity to the wide gulf between the aspirations of the two communities there. It is definitely not helpful at this stage to exclude the 1½ million people of Northern Ireland from any say in their future by stating that the solution is a matter for the London and Dublin governments. To try to enlist the support of Washington to force a solution is particularly dangerous not only for the people of the North, but for the people here in the South as well. America would only be too glad to get involved in working out a solution which would be to her own advantage. Such a solution would entail bartering our neutrality which would not be acceptable to the majority of Irish people.



Joe Sherlock, T.D.

I would urge Mr Haughey to be more temperate and restrained in his statements on Northern Ireland and to state publicly now what he stated to us privately, that he would welcome and encourage new political initiatives leading to Devolved Government.

MY PARTY welcomes Mr Haughey's efforts to encourage American investment in industry to create new jobs but would suggest that the recent closures of some of the brightest stars of the IDA assisted industries gives little hope of much success in that area. Our industrial and job creation programme must now be based on our own natural resources — processing our meat, fish and other foods; using our now mature forests for creation of thousands of jobs in all forms of timber processing; using our lead, zinc and other metals for

industrial production by establishing a smelter plant. While doing that we should continue to encourage other foreign industries here but they should be peripheral to our industrial economy, not dominating it as at present.

WE WOULD hope that Mr Haughey also took the opportunity while in Washington to clarify for Mr Reagan what our foreign policy is. Again from our discussions with Mr Haughey and five members of his front bench, it was made clear that Fianna Fáil in government would pursue a policy of "positive neutrality". Mr Haughey confirmed this further by saying he would pursue the policy initiated by Frank Aiden in the fifties. We reminded him that this entailed political initiatives on disarmament and on the spread of nuclear weapons and he agreed that this was what he had in mind. This is precisely the type of neutrality and non-aligned policy which the Irish people would like to see our government pursue at this time. I hope therefore that Mr Haughey, at his briefing session with our U.N. staff, spelled this out quite clearly.

One final matter which I must mention is the question of El Salvador. Irish people are very concerned at the numerous well documented reports of mass murder and torture by the Duarte government on the people of El Salvador. They are horrified that an American President should be aiding and abetting this murder and torture. I hope that this feeling was conveyed to President Reagan, or if St. Patrick's Day was not the appropriate time to do so, that the first available opportunity be taken to let him know where we stand on this most important issue.

# IS PRIVATE ENTERPRISE A MYTH?

*Paul Sweeney*

"IRELAND TODAY — Where Private Enterprise is Public Policy" boasts the I.D.A. in glossy business magazines all over the world. In spite of the fact that one in four workers in Ireland is employed by the state, private enterprise is still very much dominant. In fact, many public servants are employed in levying money from workers and transferring it to private capitalists. An enormous proportion of state expenditure goes into the pockets of capitalists. Much of the foreign borrowing has been used in transfers to private firms and businesses.

Capitalism is two centuries old and for 150 years it thrived. While creating great misery for millions, it boosted output and productivity to enormous levels, laying the foundations of our society and increasing the standard of living for all, though for some more than others. However, the nature of capitalism has changed radically in the last fifty years. In the 1930s it looked as if capitalism was about to collapse, but along came an economist called Keynes. He urged that the state should intervene in the market economy (to the horror of many), by running budget deficits to boost output and so create jobs. Capitalism was saved and since the Second World War, state intervention has become an integral and increasing part of western economies.

The Irish state spends more than half of all money spent in the economy today and has done so for several years. The IDA advertisement is almost an understatement, because it does not express the lengths to which Irish Governments go to aid private enterprise. The accompanying table is a selection of the main aids, grants and subsidies to industry and agriculture. It is



Where  
Private Enterprise  
is Public Policy

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mainly capital items, though it can be argued that all current costs of providing aid should be included. It is not a complete list. It is notable that approximately 22 state companies are promotional, that is, they are devoted to promoting private enterprise. The aids listed come to more than three-quarters of a billion pounds in one year. The leaked *Telesis Report* on industrial policy estimated that aid to manufacturing industry alone came to £2,800 million in the past ten years, without including the current costs of supplying the

aid, such as civil servants' pay. In the past ten years, one billion pounds has been disbursed by just three agencies, IDA, Udaras and SFADCo, in direct grants to mainly the private sector. Yet the number of jobs in manufacturing has barely increased in the decade.

**COSTS OF INDUSTRY**  
Industry has been restructured, but at what cost to the taxpayer? Did we get value for money? What proportion of it is now owned and controlled by the State which put up so much of

the capital? Has there been increased disclosure of financial information to workers? Do they even warn workers before closure, never mind give them a small voice in decisions? Has worker participation been even attempted in the private sector?

A recent example of what is euphemistically called private enterprise is the closure of Galway Textile Printers. The IDA put in £1.8m, Foir Teo, the state rescue body gave £1m, AnCo the state training agency, put up some more and the owners only put up £0.7m in shareholders capital and another £1m in borrowed capital. CIE and ESB are the main creditors. Another example is Clondalkin Paper Mills which received state funding without any ties, duties or obligations. These closures are examples of private "enterprise" funded to a large degree by the state. So the state builds the factories, trains the workers and management, pays for the machines, researches the products and export markets, gives cheap loans and numerous tax allowances and exemptions, huge hidden subsidies through tax-avoidance lending, rescues companies in trouble, and gives large state contracts for the products. In short, the state does everything, except take control and the profit, though it does pick up the loss. So it is the state which is the entrepreneur, the risk-taker, and private interests which take the profit.

**FARM SUBSIDIES**  
Industrial capital is not the only beneficiary of state funding. Thousands of millions have been poured into agriculture, where output has hardly increased, where the farmers have not alone refused to pay any tax at all, but demand and get the PAYE taxpayer to pay part of the interest

on capital borrowed to buy more land, and to pay their capital tax, i.e. rates. In 1981 alone, a total of £478m was spent by the state and EEC in direct and indirect aid to farmers. This is equivalent to 44 pence in every £1 of income tax paid by the PAYE sector. And yet food prices rise daily. Ironically, the most vocal group calling for public sector cuts are the farmers. Yet the fastest growing area of public sector spending is aid, both direct and indirect, to the private sector, including the farmers. Do they not realise that they are calling for a true private enterprise agricultural sector, where the market would prevail and every farmer would have to stand on his own two feet, and not be propped up by tax from the working class? Of course they do not really want this massive public spending on farming to be cut back. They are merely expressing their venomous hatred of the public sector worker, as is done weekly in the *Farmers Journal*.

One area which might be profitably cut back is the TB Eradication schemes which have been a total waste of £100m of taxpayers' money. In spite of the rapid decline of agricultural employment (it has halved since the late 50s), of the decline of agricultural exports as a proportion of total exports, of the sector's low output, money is being poured into it, in crazy and illogical ways. For example, nearly £100m will be paid by the ordinary taxpayer to offset rates, a tax on capital. If one accepts that the state should continue to aid agriculture, then the aid must be linked to increased output, rationalisation and be tied to a comprehensive plan.

**PRIVATE BUILDERS**

But it is not just industry and farmers which benefit from

**STATE FUNDING OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE**

INDUSTRY	£449.1m
AGRICULTURE	£309.1m
OTHER	£31.4m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£789.6m</b>

massive state spending. In 1981, 62 pence in every £1 spent on building was spent by the state, though virtually all the work was done by private contractors.

In spite of the size of the state's economic influence in the building industry, the building worker is the most abused, exploited, physically hard-worked, insecure worker in the industry with the lowest safety standards. Why does the state not tie every contract with minimum standards so that the anarchy can be eradicated, or better still, set up a state construction company? Because it is a capitalist state.

There are many other subsidies to the private sector which go unnoticed. There are many factories which depend on government contracts for their survival. The state could purchase on the

market for a lot less. Another example of state aid to private interests is through tax-avoidance lending. This cost the state £55m in 1981, and possibly £80m in 1982 in tax foregone from the banks, whose profits will be around £200m. It is interesting to note that companies will only pay £160m in tax in 1982. Compare this to aid to industry, or even just the £215m in IDA handouts in 1981. Another aid, to private hauliers, is the £40m spent by the Department of the Environment in 1981 on road repairs estimated to have been caused solely by damage by heavy goods vehicles. Tax paid by truck owners comes nowhere near this subsidy, which is equal to the subsidy paid to the railways in 1980. Then there are the cheap loans to industry, grants to hotels etc. as in the table.

**INVESTMENT IN JOBS**

There has been a rise in public sector contribution to investment in the last ten years, but it is not creating as many jobs in the public sector as it is creating in the private sector. So jobs which the private sector appear to be creating are actually being paid for by the public sector. This is an extremely important point and the opposite viewpoint is so often put that it is now believed by some workers.

Modern capitalism is highly dependant on massive state intervention, not just to boost economic activity, but in even entering the tabernacle of capitalism, providing risk capital for the "capitalists". Even the great and powerful multinationals will not set up in Ireland unless they get every type of aid. We have the undignified spectacle of so-called sovereign states competing to see which can grovel in the most prostrating pose at the feet of multinationals, who know no national borders, but who use national rivalry to add to their already overflowing coffers.

Private enterprise is like a junkie — totally dependant on massive doses of state capital for its survival. Private enterprise is a gross misnomer. Few companies, farmers or other so-called "entrepreneurs" do not get state money in one form or another. On top of all this aid, the state has the costs of supervising the chaos of the remnants of the market. In spite of the decaying and degenerate nature of modern capitalism, the essence is still the same as it was in its heyday — private ownership and private profit. However, today more than ever before, the seeds of its own destruction are growing within it. Next month the seeds of its replacement will be examined in a critical manner.

**'Jobs which the private sector appears to be creating are paid for by the public sector'**



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# TWO APPROACHES TO BORROWING

*Eamonn Smullen*

THE ISSUE of borrowing and the crippling debt now burdening the working class was a central topic on which the general election was fought. SFWP set out its position on this question as long ago as 1977 in the *Irish Industrial Revolution* in which a strategy of obtaining full employment by 1986 was outlined. The essence of that policy was central planning, in which input and employment targets would be set in the various productive branches of the economy, such as forestry, the food industry, turf, and engineering.

SFWP adopted as its policy a declaration that the existing state enterprises — Bord na Mona, the ESB, CIE, the Sugar Company and others — were to be the engine of growth of the economic and industrial revolution that was needed to obtain full employment and a rapid increase in the living standards of the working class people. The party resisted the pressures to adopt an ultra-leftist view of arguing that the private sector would have no role in such a plan — i.e. that it should be abolished overnight, or that foreign companies wishing to set up export-based manufacturing projects should be turned away.

What the party *did* say was that the private sector should be governed by the requirements of the national plan — run and organised in the interests of the working class. This line was reiterated in SFWP's 1982 election manifesto in which it was stated that the workers would have to be guaranteed the rewards to be reaped from any belt-tightening policies.

In calling for an expansion of the state sector SFWP urged practical measures for the expansion of state companies. In the case of the ESB, party members campaigned for an

expansion into the electrical contracting field — an area which has been designated by the ruling masters of the ESB as the preserve of native Irish entrepreneurs. In the case of CIE the party called for an expansion into the lucrative freight haulage business — another area set out by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael as a preserve for their business supporters.

The Sugar company was to expand into the highly profitable food processing sector — an area which is being strangled by the pro-capitalist policies of the two conservative parties. Bord na Mona was to retain the cutaway bogs and be allowed transform itself into a state agricultural body supplying the market with (cheaper) commodities such as beef, dairy products and vegetables. In all of these areas it has become more and more evident that only large scale production competing on a mass scale with multinational competitors could succeed — and only the state companies were geared to meet such a challenge.

## Departure

The plan for full employment set out by SFWP in 1977 was a departure for any political party in Ireland. No other party had presented a plan even remotely approaching that of SFWP in practical detail — detail that showed for the first time that full employment was indeed realisable in Ireland, and which showed that the only hope for better living conditions was the socialist road.

But in establishing a plan for large scale production, in which our state companies would be geared to produce on a par with multinational competition, it was always clear that substantial investment would have to be committed by the state. That

question was considered fully in the *Irish Industrial Revolution* also. The party said that the money required could be found by the taxation of the wealthy, the self employed tax evaders, the banks, the farmers and by cutting out wasteful expenditures in the economy. The party also saw a role for borrowing — but it was made clear that such borrowing could only be entered into to lay down productive investments that would provide the profits to pay back the interest on those loans.

At about the same time Fianna Fáil published its "economic plan", which was finally incorporated into the opportunistic 1977 election manifesto. Although both policies were superficially similar in that they laid emphasis on job creation, and indeed "planning", they were fundamentally incompatible in their essence. The fundamental contradiction had its roots in class politics — in that Fianna Fáil represented the class interest of a thrusting and established petty bourgeoisie and employer class, while SFWP stood for the workers' interest. The contradiction was embodied in the fact that Fianna Fáil saw the private sector as (to use Martin O'Donoghue's words) "the engine of growth in the economy". For SFWP the engine of growth was the socialised state sector. The two parties fundamentally differed in another respect — in their approach to borrowing.

## Massive borrowing

The Fianna Fáil "plan" came to fruition following that party's accession to power in 1977. Fianna Fáil had the good fortune of coming to power at a time when the kitty was full, when there was ample scope for borrowing massively in



Jack Lynch: hiked up foreign debt.

foreign markets to pay for whatever expenditures the new Government desired. Fianna Fáil thus, at the time, were able to simultaneously put into action its plan to enrich its private sector business supporters while appeasing the working class opposition by introducing a series of "soft" budgets.

There followed a disgraceful period of squandermania in which Fianna Fáil business supporters were paid back with large dollops of interest for their backing. The activities of Udaras na Gaeltachta, which have consistently been highlighted in the *Irish People*, reached a peak under this period of Fianna Fáil rule. New millions were made from land rezonings around the city. Capital taxation was virtually abolished during this period. The working class, while they did not suffer vicious cutbacks in living standards to pay for the Fianna Fáil gravy train, at least saw their earnings remain static. The class contradiction of Fianna Fáil's "plan" was postponed to a later date, thanks to unprecedented levels of foreign borrowing entered into during the period. During this whole period the rundown of the state sector continued, and no effort whatsoever was made to really raise

the level of economic development in the country.

Inevitably, as there were no new additions to productive state capacity, and as the private sector failed dismally as an engine of growth, the kitty was finally emptied.

**Paying the bills**

The foreign debt reached such a level that overseas interest payments were eating up 30 pence in every pound collected in income tax. Further foreign borrowing, to pay for Fianna Fáil handouts to its class backers, in the end threatened to eat up larger and larger chunks of taxation revenue. By the time Charles Haughey called the 1981 general election, the borrowing option — the lubricator of class conflict in Irish society — had disappeared.

The Fine Gael accountants moved in following the 1981 election to clean up the mess and pay the bills that Fianna Féil had run up. Inevitably, as they had the same class instincts as Fianna Fáil, it was the working class that they turned to to shoulder the burden. Calls by Joe Sherlock TD to make the bourgeoisie pay through capital taxation went unheeded in the July and January budgets, with the result that the

budget fell.

Now Haughey and Fianna Fáil are back in power — but unfortunately for them they are now in the position of having to face up to the task of finding the money to pay for the bills their supporters have run up. The borrowing option is no longer available to them as it was in 1977, and unless they change their fundamental class allegiances it is inevitable they too will turn to the working class people of this country to pay the bill for their 1977-81 splurge.

Already Haughey and Fianna Fáil are making it clear that they have no intention of changing their class allegiances. As if history were repeating itself, the new Minister for Industry, Albert Reynolds, has already declared that "small industries" must be made the basis for job creation — a direct echo of O'Donoghue's sentiments four years ago.

Haughey, in America for the St Patrick's Day circus, issued a direct invitation to US monopoly capitalist companies to move into this country to exploit Ireland's maritime resources.

Worst of all, Haughey within an hour of receiving his seal of office from the President, went back to the Dáil to put on record his belief that the most important question facing the Irish people was "Northern Ireland". This sinister development was in blatant contrast to his repeatedly professed declaration during the general election campaign that unemployment was by far the most important question facing the Irish people.

Even within the first two weeks of their administration the Fianna Fáil Government are not even attempting to maintain their populist pre-election facade. There are signs that as economic and political events close in on Mr Haughey that he will, in the time honoured tradition of politicians in trouble, attempt to divert attention to external and peripheral issues. His beating of the green tom-tom within hours of returning to office underscores this possibility.

In such circumstances, the need for clear and vigorous representation in Dáil Eireann for the working class of this country will be more needed than ever. In the 22nd Dáil that representation was provided through the impeccable record of Joe Sherlock TD. With the two new TDs now joining him, Paddy Gallagher and Proinsias de Rossa, it is assured that the workers' voice will be heard even louder in the 23rd Dáil.

# John de Courcy Ireland welcomes the National Board for Science and Technology's report on aquaculture

THIS IS the most important socio-economic document to come out so far in Ireland in the Eighties. It is more important than the Dublin Inner City document agreed by the honourable men.

It is so because if it is followed up, the vision that it opens will do more for Ireland, if translated into practice, than the renovation of an area of the capital rendered moribund by the gallop after private enrichment, (an activity deemed honourable, incidentally, in the society we live in and by its social and political upholders).

Intelligent, coordinated and determined pursuit of the suggestions enunciated in this thoroughly researched and closely argued volume would vanish for ever the fear of moribundity that has overshadowed huge stretches of the Irish coast since the 1830s, and never more than since we have had a government of our own in Dublin. Furthermore, it would be a boom to Dublin and other cities as well, for reversal of the decay of coastal areas by the promotion of fish-farming on a big scale would help to halt the steady immigration into our cities which is causing such an alarming and unhealthy population imbalance in this state.

The problem is that the number of votes obtainable by implementing a programme for developing fish-farming is small, and it is notorious that politicians in parties pledged to the maintenance of the social status quo are by definition uninterested in plans for the long term social and economical transformation of their

country. Such plans produce neither immediate super-profits nor votes at the next election.

Therefore it is all the more important that Irish socialists should not only carefully study the proposals in the document under review, but fight consistently for their implementation. It is doubtful if anybody else, except a few hundred dedicated experts, will fight, unless socialists can excite in the general public the vision of Ireland as a leading fish-farming area, with ever-expanding exports and job opportunities, which this document demonstrates to be an eminently practical possibility, provided the proper steps are taken in the near future.

It was in the substantial memorandum which it prepared in 1948 for presentation as evidence in 1949 before the government Commission on Population and Emigration that the Maritime Institute of Ireland raised, tentatively enough, for the first time in Ireland the possibility of fish-farming as an important new development to help revive our then ailing and puny fishing industry. This was done as the result of information received by the Institute from Norwegian sources. A leading official of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, as it then was, dismissed the idea as ludicrously utopian.

In 1979 in Norway — where, let it be remembered, the labour movement is powerful and has frequently controlled the government — there were 644 fish farms with a further 700 applications waiting to be

processed. In 1979 3,000 tonnes of rainbow trout were produced in Norwegian fish farms, 50% more than in the year before, and a steady increase in production has been maintained since. Two thousand tonnes of salmon were produced in Norwegian fish farms in 1976. This year's production is expected to top 8,000. Moreover, careful legislation has, the Norwegians believe, "ensured an optimum balance between marine aquaculture and coastal fishing and agriculture". By the middle of this decade, Norway confidently expects to be putting 20,000 tonnes of farm-bred salmon and trout annually on the market.

This is essentially the result of far-sighted state support for research and training and practical encouragement for the creation of large numbers of co-operative and family fish farms. Norway, of course, has much the same population as we do, and natural conditions there are in many aspects less favourable than ours.

It was a long time before anybody in the classical get-rich-quick capitalist climate of Ireland took up the idea put forward in 1948 by the Maritime Institute with its knowledge of coming developments in labour-controlled Norway. If Norway was producing over 2,000 tonnes of farmed salmon in 1977, we produced 10. However, this went up to 66 tonnes in 1981 and by 1983 we expect to raise the figure to 330, valued at over £1.2 million. In 1980 we produced 368 tonnes of freshwater farmed rainbow trout, 100 of this for export, showing a steady



*Fish catches by traditional methods are approaching maximum sustainable yield.*

annual increase from 85 tonnes in all in 1968, while sea-farmed rainbow trout rose from 7 tonnes in 1977 to 250 last year, which is expected to be doubled by 1983.

By the year 2000, the document under review shows, we should be producing between salmon, trout, oysters, mussels and other species 46,000 tonnes of fish, worth over £68 million by present day prices, in Irish fish farms. And, as the document emphasizes, fish catches by traditional methods are "rapidly approaching the maximum sustainable yield", while "the factors influencing demand, particularly population and income, are expected to continue to grow".

What does this mean? It means that there is an unlimited future for fish-farming in Ireland provided that research and training are stepped up and capital made available.

There are snags, but this excellent document shows that it is now clear-

ly realized what many of them are. And there are possibilities so far not taken up, of which one of the most exciting is the recent assessment that Irish conditions appear particularly favourable for farming sturgeon, demand for which does not cease to soar.

In fact, a sustained, planned effort could ensure that the present estimate of size and value of Irish farmed fish production for the year 2000 could quite considerably exceed the 46,000 tonnes and £68.05 million here projected, to say nothing of the projected figure of 3,000 then in employment (only 139 full-time now).

But to achieve all this, get equipment and have vessels built, research (which the last government was at one time rumoured to be going to axe) intensified, personnel recruited and capital diverted from dubious and frivolous targets to this hugely productive one, socialists

will have to campaign, and draw the coastal population of the areas suitable for fish-farming (indicated in some of this volume's splendid diagrams) into the campaign, preferably with a single centralized control instead of the multiplicity of separate agencies at present involved in the promotion of Irish fish-farming. What an opportunity, too, for constructive cooperation with fish-farming experts in Northern Ireland, and indeed elsewhere in the EEC.

In conclusion, to demonstrate what practical hopes and ambitions a society fuelled by socialist ideas and cooperative enterprise can legitimately aspire to, it is worth mentioning that socialist Yugoslavia, where fish-farming is now being taken intensely seriously, proposes to increase its production of fish annually in its present five year economic plan from 35,000 tonnes to 300,000 tonnes.

## ENVIRONMENT

UNTIL recently lead poisoning was considered the most common cause of cowboys ending up on 'Boot Hill'. Little did western fans realise that they were more likely to suffer from lead poisoning on their own street, than was the Lone Ranger in the Wild, but pollution-free, West.

All that has now changed during the last year thanks to the lead-free campaign mounted by political and environmental groups. The growing awareness of the dangers of high lead levels in cities, especially to young children, has forced changes in the lead content of petrol. Last year's move by the Minister for the Environment, Ray Burke, to exclude Ireland from the new EEC safety limits has angered a great many people.

The issue of lead pollution and especially the lead content of petrol has been a major issue in developed and industrial countries for over twenty years. Most of the petrol sold in the USA is now free of lead since 1974 and cheaper than the high octane grades. The authorities in the Soviet Union banned leaded petrol in its cities in 1959 while Japan had lead-free petrol within three years of deciding that lead was a health hazard to the community.

The EEC countries have been the slowest to reduce the permitted lead content in petrol which is measured in grammes of lead per litre of petrol (g/l). In May 1978, the EEC ministers adopted a directive to reduce the level of lead in petrol from 0.40g/l to 0.15g/l.

Following a secret report, leaked two months ago, by the British government's chief health adviser, Sir Henry Yellowless, expressing concern at the effects of lead on children's I.Q. the government announced that it would meet the lower EEC limit of 0.15g/l "not later than 1985".

### Special exemption

At the same time the Irish government sought, and received, a special exemption until 1986 to maintain the very high level of 0.64g/l, with the possible option of extending the derogation until 1991 — over thirty years after the Soviet Union banned leaded petrol in its cities.

Ireland is in a special position as its only refinery, at Whitegate near Cork city, is obsolete and only capable at present of producing heavily leaded petrol. The Whitegate refinery has been closed since June 1981 and all petrol at present imported from Britain has a lead content of less than 0.40g/l, the EEC maximum level. Whatever Whitegate's future, all parties are

# Lead in petrol puts children at risk

Gerry Flynn



Campaign symbol of HELP

agreed that it must refine petrol with a significantly reduced lead content.

Lead is added to petrol as an inexpensive way of raising its octane level. Those who argue against lead-free petrol claim that with less lead more crude oil is needed in the refining process to produce the same octane ratings. The high octane four star petrol is used by high compression engines which are more efficient in burning fuel. The lead acts as an anti-knocking agent or lubricant, but it is not used in diesel engines, so heavy trucks and buses cannot be held responsible for the lead pollution.

Lead is added to petrol to increase the efficiency and performance of engines, but in Britain it results in about 10,000 tonnes being emitted into the air from car exhausts every year — 1,000 tonnes of it falling on the Greater London area alone. The tetra-ethyl lead (TEL) was first developed by the Ethyl Corporation in America where 130 poisoned scientists either died, became seriously ill or went insane before the plant was closed for a year to introduce safety measures.

### Combined ownership

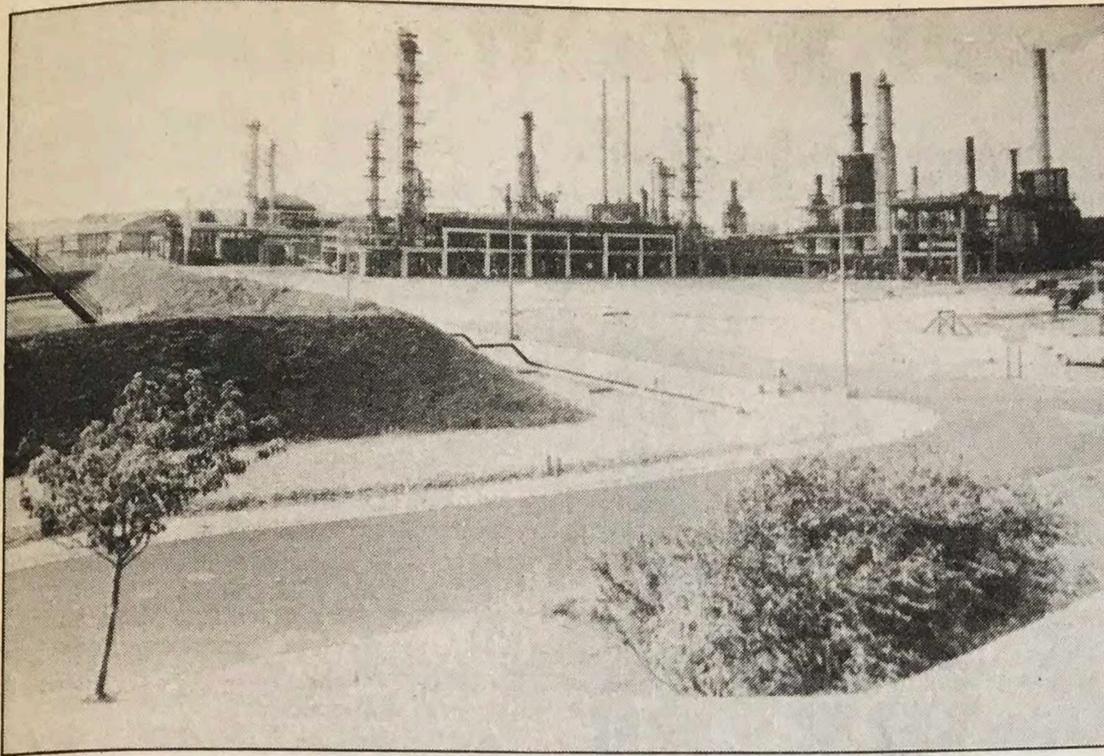
The lead additives sold in Ireland are produced by Associated Octel at Ellesmere Port. Just like Whitegate refinery was owned by the oil giants, Associated Octel is jointly owned by B.P., Chevron, Mobil, Shell and Texaco. When the chairman of the Campaign for Lead-Free Air (Clear) in Britain, Des Wilson, wrote to ten oil companies requesting details of their attitude to lead, each sent identical replies referring him to the UK Petroleum Industry Association.

The Petroleum Industry Association says that it will be unable to produce lead-free petrol because the cost would be prohibitive, and the best alternatives like methyl tertiary butyl are not widely available. Noel Tierney of Irish Shell says that the oil companies have a strong interest in reducing lead in petrol but that "lead-free petrol could write-off 96 per cent of cars on Irish roads".

He states that drivers already have the choice of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) or diesel engines if they want to avoid using leaded petrol. "The oil companies want to stay in business and are responsive to any lobby but there is a cost in using additional refining stages as well as economic questions of increased oil imports."

"Those who talk of 'transfer pricing' by oil companies to boost profits are talking through their hats," says Noel Tierney. "OPEC control the price, the Arab states own the top refineries, and the National Prices Commission controls our margins."

To the surprise of the major oil companies, Amoco broke the united opposition to lead-free petrol in Britain by declaring last month that it could have supplied safe petrol ten years ago if government regulations demanded it. The oil giant flatly



*Whitegate needs updating to refine lead-free petrol.*

contradicted the assertions of the Petroleum Industry Association.

### Whitegate

Producing lead-free petrol in Ireland is a different matter because of the out-dated equipment at Whitegate refinery. At maximum production Whitegate can refine almost half of the country's oil

needs. The owners of Whitegate Refining Company, Esso, Shell, Texaco and B.P. want to move all oil refining to Britain and claim that it would cost £200 million to re-equip the Cork plant. Other estimates state that it could be upgraded for about one tenth that figure at £20 million. The government has bought the shut-down re-

finery for £6 million and saved 150 jobs, but it is unclear whether Whitegate will ever produce petrol within EEC safety limits for lead additives unless it is updated. The government wants the oil companies to buy 35% of their requirements from Whitegate. One less than satisfactory interim solution could involve the distribution of this petrol to less densely populated areas until the lead content is reduced.

The Chairman of Dublin's South-Central Lead-Free Petrol Campaign, Eric Byrne, has called for new legislation making it illegal to sell petrol above the EEC limit and for a government plan to phase-in lead-free petrol over a two year period. The campaign has demanded that the oil multinational firms pay for the phased introduction from their "vast profits". Also the city environmental group has been seeking grants to replace dangerous lead water piping in older houses.

Petrol on sale at Irish pumps contains more than four times the EEC recommended lead concentration of 0.15g/l; the surprising aspect is that there are no government plans to reduce this well documented health hazard in our towns and cities.

## Research reveals dangers

IT IS widely agreed that lead serves no useful purpose in the body. In fact absorption of lead into the body by any means is generally accepted to be dangerous to the human central nervous system, and particularly so for babies and small children, in whom it is suspected of causing brain damage and retardation.

Petrol is not the only source of lead poisoning. Lead is found in paint, water, food and in the air from industrial fumes. The dangers associated with lead are mainly urban, and often confined to older city centre areas. In older parts of Dublin, Cork and Belfast, water pipes made of lead are still in use. Certain parts of Dublin, Glasgow and London have been shown to have unacceptably high levels of lead pollution in the air for which petrol exhaust fumes are a principle cause.

There are different views as to whether inhaled lead from the air or ingested from food or water is the more dangerous but most researchers agree that lead is harmful. Some say that 90 per cent of the lead emitted into the air is from petrol burning cars.

One of the most detailed studies of the effects of lead on children has been carried out by Professor Herbert Needleman of the Children's Hospital in Pittsburg who examined the lead concentrations in over 2,000 schoolchildren.

### CHILDREN'S CONCENTRATION

His study in 1978 indicated that there is a direct relationship between the level of

lead in the body and a child's intelligence and performance in school. His research involved teachers grading the children's concentration levels, distractiveness, hyperactivity and general behaviour. He compared the assessment reports with the chemical levels of lead in each child and found a high correlation.

In a follow-up study last year Professor Needleman found that his earlier results were borne out in the classrooms and that the inability to pay attention persisted over the three year period.

According to Dr John Keaveney of the Department of Social Medicine at Trinity College, children absorb five times as much lead as adults because their tissues are more porous. They also have a higher food intake relative to body size and are more exposed to lead dust in playgrounds.

Lead is a neurotoxin which damages the central nervous system, causes weakness of the muscle nerves, general lassitude, aching of the joints and nerve palsy. Another effect of lead in the body is that it attaches to the haemoglobin in the blood and reduces the life-span of the red blood cells. Severe lead poisoning produces convulsions, brain damage and death.

### BABIES AT RISK

According to the Irish pressure group H.E.L.P. — Help Eliminate Lead in Petrol — low level lead exposure affects the male reproductive system. Women are more

sensitive to lead because of extra fatty tissue while children and unborn babies are most at risk as their brains and nervous systems are only developing.

Dublin Corporation's Atmospheric Pollution Unit has monitored lead levels in the city since 1975. No EEC standards exist for maximum lead levels in the atmosphere but a draft directive proposes a maximum of two microgrammes per cubic metre ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ).

According to Dublin Corporation the average mean concentration of lead in O'Connell Street has decreased from  $2.77\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 1975 to  $1.48\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  last year. The encouraging trend is doubted by some experts who have pointed out that the method of sampling changed and the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards has carried out spot checks which showed higher concentrations in the air. The Dublin Medical Officer, Professor Brendan O'Donnell considers that concentrations below 1,000 parts per million (p.p.m.) as reasonably safe. The H.E.L.P. surveys have discovered levels as high as 30,880 p.p.m. in Fleet Street and 15,588 p.p.m. in Cork Street.

One of the few medical people to defend lead additives in petrol is Dr P.S. Barry who often presents his view in the British media. Few people are aware that Dr Barry is the chief medical adviser of Associated Octel who produce the lead additives and that he has worked for the company for thirty years.

# COMMON GROUND

THE FIRST Workers Life Forum to discuss Northern Ireland was held last month in Liberty Hall. A well attended morning session heard four northern politicians discuss 'Northern Ireland — Civil War or Democracy?'

The main speakers were John Carson of the Official Unionist Party fresh from his party's electoral victory in the South Belfast by-election. He was joined by John Cushnahan, General Secretary of the Alliance Party, Sean Farren, Chairman of the Social Democratic and Labour Party and Seamus Lynch of the Workers Party Republican Clubs. Generally the Dublin audience was surprised by the degree of unity and common purpose between some of the speakers.

John Cushnahan saw the way forward through linking three basic elements covering the economy, security and a political solution. The Alliance Party is opposed to the campaign of terror and violence and supports the police as being impartial and policing with integrity. The question of extradition is an important one which has an important psychological effect in demonstrating a will in the Republic to aid Northern Irish people against violence and it would reinforce the co-operation on the ground between the RUC and the Gardai.

The Alliance Party sees the doubling of unemployment and the rampant urban poverty as providing the fodder for the paramilitaries. The failure to establish political stability partly arises from the refusal to recognise the rights of Protestants and Catholics. Protestants fear coercion into a united Ireland while Catholics have suffered from the emphasis on the meaning of consent, and the rights of all citizens were divided into first and second class. It is not surprising that many Catholics fear or distrust the

## WORKERS LIFE FORUM

practice of majority rule because of past experience. The Secretary of State's major task is to steer both Protestants and Catholics away from their distrust and towards an assembly elected by proportional representation which will help heal the divisions.

Devolution is the solution to sectarian problems but the lessons of Sunningdale, the Council of Ireland must be learned. The Alliance Party supports comprehensive legislation governing a Bill of Rights and it is being considered by the Secretary of State, Mr Jim Prior. The road to peace and permanent stability lies through an agreed system of government supported by both sections, John Cushnahan stated.

### Consent

The former Lord Mayor of Belfast and Westminster MP, John Carson, said that each of the four platform speakers meet quite often and in fact three of them travelled to Dublin together. Nevertheless, the contrast of democracy or civil war makes one shiver. 'I do not think there will be a civil war because of the widespread opposition to violence and the number of people who are sick, sore, and tired of it.'

The only way to build friendship among the community is by remov-

ing fear and consent is the key to any political solution. An imposed solution cannot succeed. Direct Rule is a tragedy and in many ways it is responsible for much of the violence. One way forward is for Northern Ireland to be master of its own house, capable of tackling the issues of housing and unemployment which will soon reach 25 per cent throughout the province. Financial aid or even an integrated plan for Belfast will not solve the problems without a political solution.

Northern Ireland and the South are and can be good neighbours. The South is well used to changing governments, especially in the past few years, and is capable of adapting to such changes. It has been clear that the line of friendship between South and Northern Ireland has been built by Dr. FitzGerald.

People in Northern Ireland need some initiative but it must come from within the population itself. When the assembly was created too much was pushed on the people against their will and the Council of Ireland helped bring its downfall through those who are afraid of the South.

While we condemn the violence, we must also deal with it and unless we take the right steps for a devolved government we will continue to give an opening to the men of violence. Violence has left a terrible legacy, especially for young people, and we need a devolved government very soon to allow people express their feelings and hopes for the future.

### Problems

The SDLP Chairman, Sean Farren, told the forum that despite the trappings Northern Ireland does not work as a democratic state and that it presents socialists with some

problems. The rise and fall of several political parties and politicians bearing socialist labels over sixty years is testimony to the sometimes crushing dilemmas presented by Northern Ireland.

'A comprehensive democratic socialist platform on Northern Ireland can only be based on a clear understanding of the cultural, civil and human rights which must be respected there, as indeed they must in any truly democratic society.

'The totally one-sided nature of the 1920 Ireland Act as applied in Northern Ireland can clearly be seen to have laid the basis for the violation of the cultural rights of those who espoused the cause of a united Ireland, especially as far as their political rights were concerned.

'In purely political terms, the effect has been a state inherently unstable and in continual need of repressive measures to defend itself. In broader terms the effect has been to diminish both traditions in a manner which must cause grave concern to socialists who value the positive contributions which different cultural traditions can offer a political community.

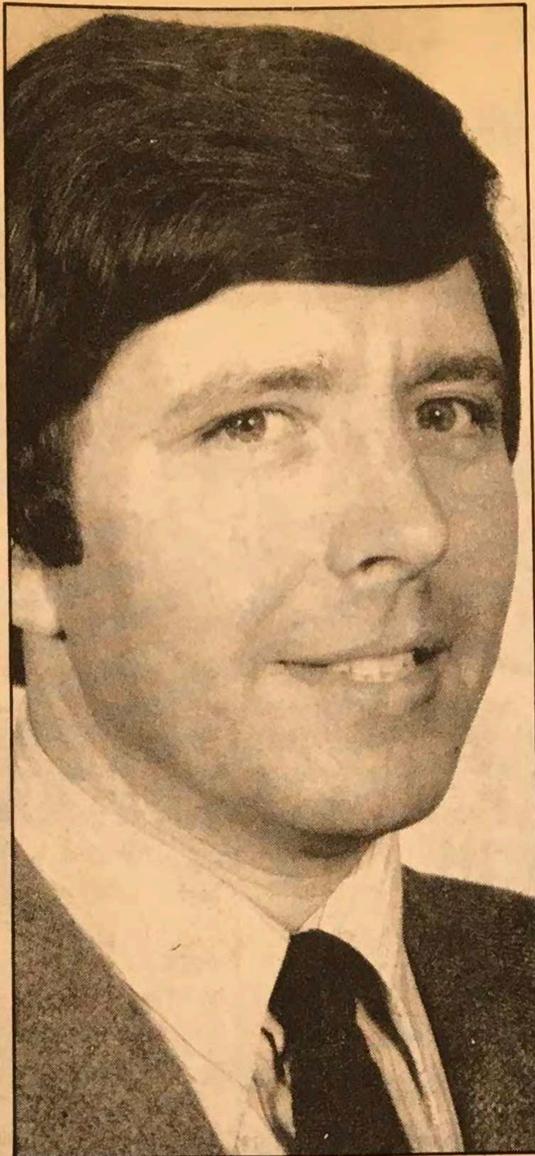
The only framework within the SDLP believes progress can be made is one which allows both traditions to be accepted for what they are and not for what each might like the other to be. The first tentative steps towards establishing the necessary political framework to realise this goal has been taken through what is now termed the Anglo-Irish dialogue between the sovereign governments in London and Dublin.'

'As I am addressing a Southern audience,' Sean Farren concluded, 'the search for a solution demands a willingness to promote those changes in the South which will support change in the North. In this there is a clear challenge to the left to become fully involved in this necessary process.'

Seamus Lynch of the Workers Party Republican Clubs told the Forum that the problems in the North have not been tackled for many years. The WPRC are opposed to violence and favour a democratic devolved assembly. Their demands and strategy are for peace, work and democracy.

'In Northern Ireland we are aware of many people who call for peace and then go home. To the farmer on the border it means that he can work his land in peace and without fear while in Belfast it means a job, a decent house and not having British soldiers on the doorstep. In order to achieve peace it must be worked for.

'All are agreed that unemploy-



Seamus Lynch

ment is at a high level and with 20 per cent out of work there are families where the father, grandfather and grandson have never had a job. The lack of political stability is partly to blame and the onus is on the politicians to become involved in promoting peace.'

He said that the Tory government recognises no religious boundaries and their policies have resulted in places like Antrim suffering record unemployment. It is one issue which will surely bring the working class together. We want to build on the common foundations which bring politicians together.

The Workers Party believes that some political parties have been selective in their condemnations of terrorism and have had differing approaches when it was 'one of their own'. 'We are in no doubt that elements are intent on creating civil war and that both the Provos and Paisley live off each other and divide workers in Northern Ireland.'

'It is clear that the working people in the North rejected civil war and that the people in the South have rejected the Provos. While we can differ with other political parties we all agree on our commitment to the democratic process,' said Seamus

Lynch.

### 'Rubbish'

In the afternoon session each speaker answered or commented on questions from the attendance. The earliest discussion covered the issue of segregated education and the Chilver Report recommendations. Sean Farren said that the freedom to hold and propagate one's beliefs is the right of all and the SDLP supports voluntary involvement in education. The Alliance Party favoured integrated education while the Workers Party view segregated education as an aspect of the ghettoed lifestyle where there is no social mix between Catholic and Protestant children from five to fifteen years old.

A speaker from the Militant Tendency said that all he had heard was a "load of rubbish" because the unionist parties whipped up sectarianism and the SDLP which is a "catholic party" benefited from the poverty. He felt that the failure of the civil rights movement was that "they wanted to share poverty".

Another speaker asked the panel whether they would agree that "it is the responsibility of the democratic parties to give the necessary leadership in: one, isolating terrorism and, second, in creating the conditions for long-term peace and democracy."

John Cushnahan said that the RUC had a new integrity and professionalism and that 90 per cent have been recruited since the early 'troubles'. The question of Castle-reagh centre was no longer an issue as the Chief Constable had stopped it and it was not even mentioned during the hunger strike campaign.

Seamus Lynch said that northern politicians do shirk responsibility and it is essential that politicians provide leadership in the fight for democratic process and the isolation of terrorism. While the political parties have failed to provide that leadership the ordinary people have been the losers.

Everyone must join in isolating terror and support the security forces John Carson stated. Any police force can only be good if it has the full support of the people.

Des O'Hagan closed the discussion and thanked the invited speakers and contributors. He stated that socialists in the South must retain their resolve to promote peace and democracy while respecting that Northern workers and their families were the best and final judges of the political and economic structures best suited to their needs of employment and security.

## WORKING TO RULE

THE European Trade Union Confederation, and its 40 million members, including the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, are advocating action aimed at improving workers' rights in multinational undertakings. The ETUC welcomes recent moves in this direction within the EEC.

The Commission of the European Communities has adopted a Proposal aimed at giving the employees of multinational undertakings more rights to information and consultation.

This decision was taken against very strong opposition from the European employers' organisation and other representatives of capital, and can be regarded politically as the successful outcome of the trade unions' effort to defend the interests of persons employed in large groups of companies.

The Proposal has not yet become law. It is to be debated by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee in the next few months, after which the Council of Ministers will take the final decision.

### BINDING LAW

The EEC is as yet the only region in the world which has the power of transnational legislation. The EC Commission has given the Proposal for procedures for informing and consulting the employees of multinational undertakings the form of a binding legal act, a "Directive". This means that the Member States of the EC must adapt their national legislation to the content of the EC Directive within a given term, thus making the Directive binding law.

The EC is thus making a contribution in the field of the steadily growing problem of multinational business activities which is in accordance with its legal structure and is needed to complement the non-binding codes of conduct which have been adopted in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the new rules which are under preparation in the United Nations Organisation. Legal language is rather special language, and the EC is no exception. The Directive proposed by the EC Commission is entitled "Directive on procedures for informing and consulting the employees of undertakings with complex structures, particularly transnational firms".

This may sound complicated, but the substance of the Directive deals with straightforward basic workforce rights in plants and undertakings which are part of a

# The right to information and consultation



group.

There are three crucial points in the Directive: information and consultation of employees and the representation of workforce interests.

### INFORMATION

The management of a dominant, and particularly of a multinational, undertaking is required to forward relevant information at least every six months to the management of its subsidiaries in the Community giving a clear picture of the activities of the dominant undertaking and its subsidiaries taken as a whole. This information must relate in particular to:

- structure and manning,
- the economic and financial situation,
- the situation and probable development of the business and of production and sales,
- the employment situation and probable trends,
- production and investment programmes,
- rationalisation plans,
- manufacturing and working methods, in particular the introduction of new working methods,

— all procedures and plans likely to have a substantial effect on the employees' interests.

The management of each subsidiary employing at least 100 persons is required to forward this information without delay to the workforce representatives in that undertaking. Where the management of a subsidiary is unable to provide its workforce representatives with this information, those representatives can apply to the management of the dominant undertaking.

### CONSULTATION

Consultation relates to decisions which are planned concerning the whole or a major part of the dominant undertaking or of one of its subsidiaries and which are liable to have a substantial effect on the interests of its workers.

These decisions relate to the following areas in particular:

- the closure or transfer of an establishment or major part thereof,
- substantial restrictions, extensions or modifications of the activities of the undertaking,
- major modifications with regard to the organisation of work,

— the introduction of long-term cooperation with other undertakings or the termination of such cooperation.

Where in the opinion of the workforce representatives the proposed decision is likely to have a direct effect on the employees' terms of employment or working conditions, the management of the subsidiary is required to hold consultations with them with a view to reaching agreement on the measures planned in respect of the workforce.

Where the management of a subsidiary does not proceed to arrange consultations, the workforce representatives concerned are authorised to open consultations through mandated delegates with the management of the dominant undertaking.

### WORKFORCE INTERESTS

It is left to the Member States to determine the procedures for appointing the workforce representatives, and the determination of the type of representation body to be involved (overall or group works council, shop stewards committee, etc.) is also left to their discretion.

The Member States can also approve the creation of a body representing all the employees of the parent company and its subsidiaries in the Community by means of collective agreements. It will thus be up to the trade unions to define the details of the bodies representing the workers according to the specific circumstances in their particular countries.

Where the decision-making centre of a transnational undertaking is located outside the Community, the subsidiary with the largest workforce in the Community is responsible for the observance of the obligations laid down in the Directive.

The Member States must provide for "appropriate" penalties for failure to comply with the prescribed information and consultation obligations. In particular, these penalty provisions must give the representatives of the employees affected by the decision the right to go to court or to apply to the other authorities with the appropriate powers in order to protect their interests.

# Master McGrath

*Dominic Behan*

FEW anniversaries in Ireland are celebrated in a spirit of universal acclaim. Apart from Christmas and Good Friday, I can't think of many. There are certain events I would like to see celebrated; like the time the chap was done because the sheet was made of Belfast linen; and, in Kildare, Katie Barry became famous for beating the monkey on the Naas road. All in all, I wouldn't mind a few festivals of remembrance in which the feet played less a part than the head, and with that in mind I have decided to compile a list.

My first date would be May the First (neolithic) when Mr. Finn Macool of Rathcool was responsible for creating the Giant's Causeway by angrily crushing mountains into rocks so as to fling them at the terrors of Scotland. Or indeed how Scotland came into being because Diarmid and Grainne fell out over her cooking and her tears turned to stone to make the Hebrides and all within.

I would like a day on which to celebrate the honest grocer or the happy farmer. I would gladly march for the day of the truthful politician and the poor landlord and you couldn't keep me away from the Feast of the Understanding Bank Manager. That is why most of my dates must be as fantastic as the story of the man who was fed up doing nothing so he jumped into his Rolls and went painting hall doors. Or the poor people who were told that the only chance of a job was to save up enough money to buy employment at a sale of work.

Maybe fantasy is just what is needed, because the people of Ireland have been getting a helluva raw deal from reality lately. But for all their reputation for being romantics, the Celts really want their feet on the ground to do a bit of marching so why not give them a real celebration in which everybody may join?

I would like to resurrect the dream of George McCann the great Belfast sculptor. He agreed with the late Myles na gCapailin who said that the future of Ireland would be safeguarded the day we were able to persuade governments to repeat the bogs.

George's wish was simpler, and on a less vast scale. In a cracked voice and without the aid of flute, harp or bodhrán, he sang about the wonders of that great dog, Master McGrath. It appears that on the thirteenth day of December 1869 the pride of Lurgan accepted a challenge to race against Rose, the pride of the Sassenachs for the prize of the Blue Riband of Racing, the Waterloo Cup.

Lord Lurgan stepped off the train at Euston holding our hero by the head — for, it was said, if the Master got so much as a sniff of an English sporting type he'd

have chased him up a lamppost, deerstalker hat and all.

The English gentleman came — according to the song — to laugh and scoff and indeed one verse of the song has a chap in a frock coat asking his Lordship if that is the dog you call Master McGrath. His Lordship responds in turn in the peasant accent of most Oxford undergraduates and it would appear that he was doing his common man bit on the day in question:

*'Lord Lurgan stepped forward and says,*

*'Gentlemen*

*If there's any among yeh with money to spend,*

*For yeh nobles of England I don't care a straw,*

*Here's five thousand to wan upon Master McGrath.'*

McGrath himself of course had to get in on the act by 'stepping forward and wagging his ould tail' and saying to his Lordship, 'I know what yeh mean'. And small wonder since a dog can be as democratic as a Lord any day of the week.

Anyway didn't Tom Lavery who owned the 'Cobbles' and the 'Elbow Room' boozers, commission George to paint a mural around the frieze of the 'Cobbles' — or was it the 'Elbow Room', I can't remember which, since it was such a long time ago. I'm never likely to find out since they were both subjects of demolition orders by one or other of the preserve-the-past societies. Those people give less time for appeal than a landlord in search of a quick eviction. Five minutes seems to be the average warning you get.

It was a great continuing event, for the painting went on for years, and the last time I looked up at the mural Master McGrath was about to come from behind to knock Rose out of the betting. Around the late fifties and early sixties we came from far and near to marvel at George's work in various stages of completion and George sat with us to admire, and that is maybe one of the reasons it was never finished.

We could have grown old in the 'Cobbles' or the 'Elbow Room' advising George from the bottoms of whiskey glasses about the actual running of the race from hundreds of correct versions of the song. But it wasn't to be and that's that. It was never finished because George felt it was lacking something. And that is what I would like to see celebrated in Ireland — the Feast of the Unfinished Mural. Perfection as represented in completeness is all very well, but not if we are to wipe each other out in the achievement. Most people know the result of the race anyway. Ireland is winning by a distance from the Irish.

THE AFRICAN National Congress of South Africa was founded in 1912, only six years after the colonising powers had finally crushed the last flaring of resistance to foreign domination. Those who came together on that historic date, January 8th, did so because they had been forced to understand the desperate need for unity among the different peoples and tribes of the country. The workers, farmers, chiefs, churchmen, traders and professional people who rallied around were all conscious that in the land of their birth, "Africans are treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water," as one of those present said. Their main aim was to create a united body to remove the colour bar and to win a voice for the African in parliament.

In those early days, the ANC concentrated largely on drawing up petitions and sending delegations to press their cause. Interestingly, it was conceived as a regional organisation for southern Africa as a whole, but the colonial conditions of the time and the fact that there were then three colonising powers in the region — Great Britain, Germany and Portugal — confined its development to South Africa alone. However, it has always had very strong links with the liberation movements of Namibia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and the other countries of southern Africa.

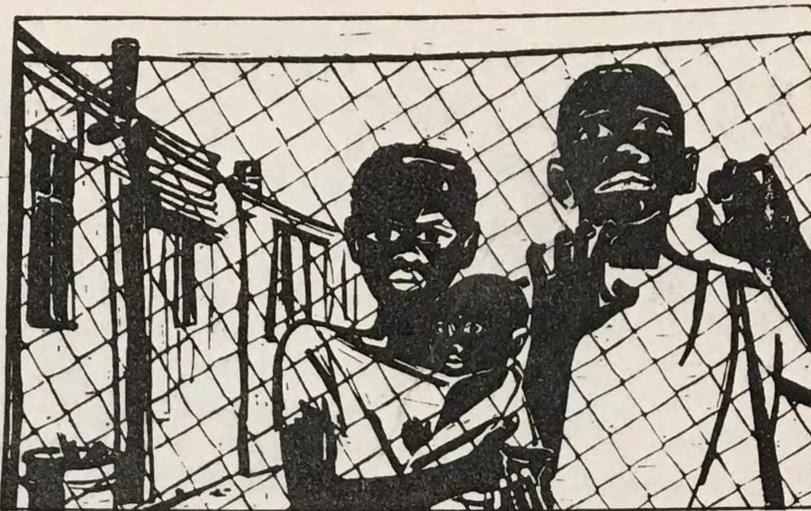
An integral part of a changing world, the ANC has influenced and has been influenced by the socio-economic and political transformations that have come in the course of humanity's struggle for a better world. The ideals for which the Second World War were professedly fought gave rise to a whole new generation of ANC militants who stated boldly that "the African now elects to determine his future by his own efforts"; while the growth of a vast new African working class brought about a much more radical and concrete approach to bringing about self-determination.

## FREEDOM CHARTER

Strikes and mass action now became the order of the day. The Campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws, for example, involved thousands and thousands of people in deliberately breaking the racially discriminatory laws. Eight thousand of them went to jail, but the campaign was eventually broken by government violence. Nevertheless the organisation was greatly strengthened and next, in cooperation with the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, and a sprinkling of white

# South Africa: 70 years of struggle

Louise Asmal



churchmen and members of the Congress of Democrats, embarked on the process of consulting all the people of South Africa on their aspirations and demands from life.

The document that emerged was adopted at the Congress of the People held in 1955. To this day, the Freedom Charter remains an inspiring document which starts with the uncompromising declaration that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, and demands that the wealth of the country be restored to the people and that every man and woman have the vote.

In 1955 too the South African Congress of Trade Unions was formed as a non-racial federation supporting the aims of the African National Congress, and this enhanced the possibility of mass struggle. Plans were laid for a nation-wide anti-pass campaign, but before it had begun 69 Africans were shot dead by the South African police at Sharpeville while on a peaceful demonstration. In the ensuing furore, both the ANC and the break-away Pan-Africanist Congress were banned.

## SOWETO

Nelson Mandela and a number of other ANC stalwarts saw clearly that it was no longer possible to ask the people to embark on mass protests which had become a form of suicide. They set about forming Umkhonto We Sizwe, the Spear of the Nation, which was to be the "fighting arm of the people", their striking force for liberation. The initial plans were however severely disrupted by the arrest of Nelson Mandela and his colleagues, and

their sentence to life imprisonment. Yet the terror and violence which the apartheid state unleashed on its opponents could not succeed in quelling the people's anger. Fuelled by the successes of Frelimo and the MPLA in Mozambique and Angola, it once again took fire. The young people refused to accept the indignity and injustice of the so-called bantu education, and took to the streets of Soweto in their thousands to protest.

Once again, as so many times in South African history, peaceful protest was met with guns and bullets. This time, however, the ANC was prepared. Its underground forces are now deeply entrenched and multiplying daily. Its armed cadres are striking ever more boldly at the centres of apartheid military and economic power — the police stations in the townships, the Sasolburg oil-from-coal installations, and even the Voortrekkerhoogte military headquarters outside Pretoria. The growing sophistication of these blows, their frequency and their high level of organisation have inspired the people and convinced them that the cause of freedom will triumph. Trade union action, community resistance to forced removals, and student pressure against their inferior education, all continue to grow.

1982, the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the ANC, is therefore a time of hope, a time in which the balance of forces is clearly tilting in the direction of liberation. Even though the military and industrial machine of apartheid is backed by international imperialism, fuelled by

the investments and economic aid of Western countries, armed with Western arms and technical knowledge, even given nuclear capability with their aid, it cannot prevail in the coming struggle.

1982 has been named by the ANC as the Year of Unity, a year in which the ANC is endeavouring to unite all the oppressed people of South Africa under its banner. It is now the unchallenged leader of the national struggle for the emancipation of all the oppressed and exploited Black people of South Africa, the struggle to overthrow the racist regime and to liberate the country from exploitation.

## UNITY OF ACTION

In 1982, which has been declared by the United Nations as International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa, it is the responsibility of the international community to rally behind the liberation struggle and do everything possible to isolate the apartheid regime. The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement is campaigning to end all collaboration with South Africa, to cut off all trade, end Irish emigration to South Africa, and cut all sporting and cultural links.

Unity of action, the ANC's watchword this year, is an aim which is equally relevant and essential to international activities if they are to be successful. Ultimately, the Irish Government must be persuaded to impose comprehensive sanctions against South Africa; meanwhile, united action by all those opposed to apartheid can cut many links and close many channels of support to the regime. Our success, and the success of solidarity groups campaigning all over the world, can make an important contribution towards overthrowing apartheid.

However, only the liberation movement inside South Africa can achieve the final victory. There is no doubt that the struggle within the country is now becoming a tidal wave, which all the might of white supremacist South Africa and its allies will be powerless to hold back.

## DAVITT AND THE LEFT

*Paul Bew*

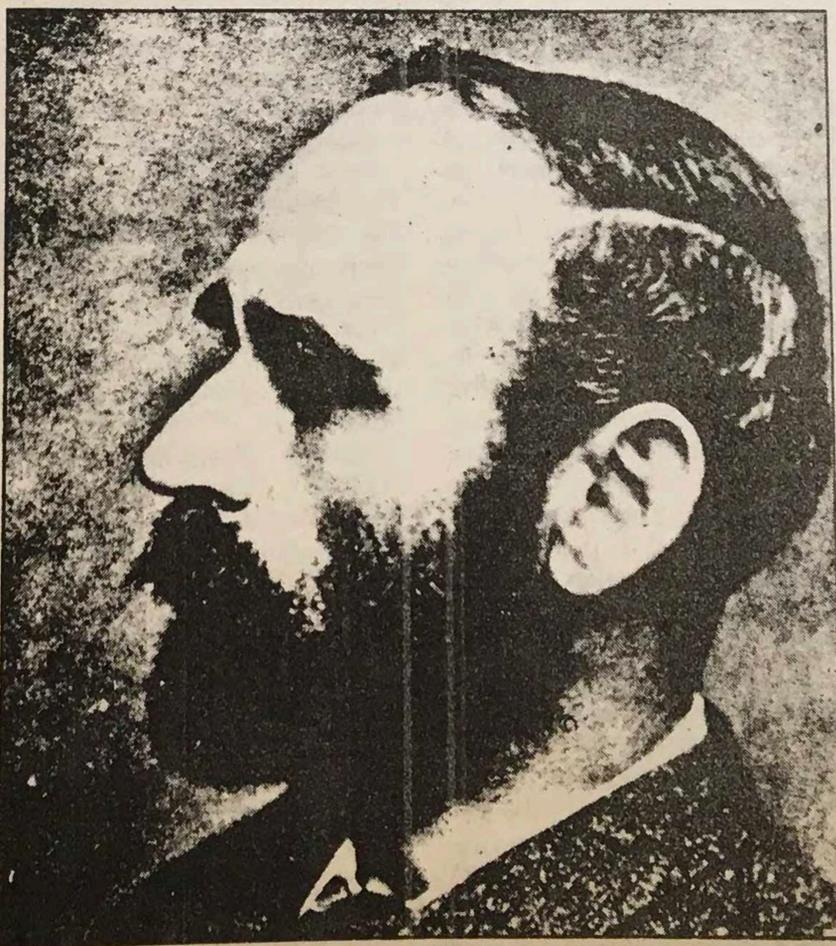
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**DAVITT AND THE IRISH REVOLUTION** by T.W.Moody; Clarendon Press, Oxford; £22.50 sterling.

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### BOOKS

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*Davitt: pioneer of Irish socialism.*

COMPARE Michael Davitt to his political enemies; those who opposed Irish self-determination and land reform. Those who incarcerated this one-armed Fenian — he lost the arm in a factory accident — and held him under degrading conditions for seven years. Today it is the evicted cottier's son Davitt — with his generosity, bravery and intellectual gifts — who appears the giant and the cocksure Victorian Tories who sneered at him who appear the pigmies. This much emerges from Moody's splendid and enthralling biography.

But consider Davitt in a different light. Davitt, to his credit, was one of the first to espouse the causes of socialism and non-sectarian democracy in Ireland. What does he have to say to those who are today engaged in the same struggle? Here matters are more complex. If there is a problem with Moody's excellent book, it is that it stops in 1882 when Davitt's life had twenty-four years to run. Or to put it another way, it stops when the political questions start to get harder. Up to 1882 all Irish 'progressives' might easily agree on the need to break the back of the politically unimaginative and economically parasitic clan of Irish landlords. This is what Davitt's Land League (1879-82) was all about.

Indeed, even during the Land League crisis, difficult problems had cropped up. Was it right to raise the national question in the north, or was it right to concentrate on the land question which unified catholic and protestant

tenants against the landlords? Against the advice of other Land Leaguers, Davitt insisted on raising the national question and thus allowed the terrified Ulster

Tory aristocracy the chance to fight back. Similarly Michael Davitt had seen the Land League primarily as an agency for protecting the poorest and most

oppressed sections of the Irish peasantry. Those who benefited most in the end were the richest and the strongest. Davitt turned away in disgust from this spectacle and espoused land nationalisation. The peasants — all sections, rich and poor — had the whiff of property in their noses and tossed out the idea. The workers were too weak to keep it alive, and by the mid-1880s Davitt himself was watering it down.

1890 and things get harder still. The bishops turned against Parnell after the O'Shea divorce crisis. Perhaps surprisingly — perhaps even shockingly — Davitt the old non-sectarian democrat chooses the clerical side. The foundation of the United Irish League in 1898 allowed Davitt the chance to redeem his radical reputation. It is specifically designed to help those small farmers left out of the Land League settlement. Davitt joins in with blood-curdling threats but at the same time is rather inconsistent. He drinks in the evenings with the very Roman Catholic ranchers he has denounced during the day! (Who can imagine Davitt boozing with Protestant landlords during the days of the Land League?)

This presages an inability to see that the Protestant Ascendancy was now a fading force. When the British government began to dismantly landlordism in 1903, Davitt — in this he was at least principled in a way John Redmond was not — refused to believe it was really happening. He continued to maintain a

# WORK AND CULTURE

grouchy attitude not just towards the landlords, but also to very much more conciliatory unionists.

The very most he could manage for the new vigorous Labour movement in Belfast was a patronising pat on the back. He was never really at home with the new movements of the 1900s

which threatened to break the sectarian moulds of Irish politics.

Perhaps soured a little by a bout of unsuccessful gambling on the Stock Exchange — a friend remarked that the best way to bring down the British government would be to get Davitt to invest in its stock! —

the last years are not really Davitt's best. But even then he is head and shoulders above his contemporaries. The ambiguities and difficulties of his career are not so much personal flaws as ambiguities of the Irish revolution itself. In his commitment to socialism, democracy and his opposition to political terrorism,

Davitt laid down the ground rules for Irish radical politics. And in 1904 he did at least have the wit to present an inscribed copy of his own book *Fall of Feudalism* to a young Russian revolutionary who had just completed a brilliant study of his own country's agrarian question — V.I. Lenin.

## Ten years of failure

**BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND FROM DEVOLUTION TO DIRECT RULE** by Martin Wallace; David and Charles; £6.95 sterling.

WALLACE provides a clear narrative of the main political, military and judicial developments from Direct Rule to the dismal Atkins period. He claims that he has generally tried to let events speak for themselves, and the reader looking for analysis will be disappointed. The conclusion, where he is critical of the whole policy, is too brief and cryptic to satisfy. Thus his statement, "Arguably it had been a critical error to destroy the old Stormont without having a clear idea of what viable local alternatives could replace them" raises a host of interesting questions, none of which are addressed in the text.

Of course events *don't* speak for themselves. They are selected by the author and the sort of evidence he uses. Here Wallace has an unfortunate tendency to rely on official pronouncements and the various enquiries into aspects of the Northern Ireland situation. The latter, he claims, "display a studied objectivity often lacking in the utterances of Ulster politicians or the emotions of Ulster people". This approach is bound to end up laying the blame almost wholly on the "unreasonable" people of Northern Ireland and white-washing the role of the British government.

Yet why, for instance, do we accept Whitelaw's protestations in the Green Paper of 1972 that it is the aim of the British government to set the people of Northern Ireland "free to realise their great potential to the full". After all, the Heath government, of which he was an important member, had attempted to keep the lid on the situation in Northern Ireland for as long as possible and were only impelled, very much against their will, into direct rule by the massive Catholic reaction to Bloody Sunday.

By this time Heath in particular was extremely hostile to the

Unionist prime-minister, Brian Faulkner, for dragging Britain deeper and deeper into the Ulster quagmire. The suspension of Stormont, it was thought, would not only get the SDLP interested in negotiations but would divide and demoralise the unionists. This would allow the moderate elements to be pushed into some form of power-sharing with the SDLP.

This approach had two crucial defects. It completely ignored the danger of the Unionist moderates losing their support amongst the Protestants, because they were seen as being forced into negotiations under British pressure. The concern with high-level manoeuvring and the neglect of mass politics has been a consistent feature of British policy. Secondly, it ignored the effects of Direct Rule on the SDLP where it generated unreal expectations — that a united Ireland was a real possibility. As the SDLP seriously believed that the road to reunification had been finally opened up, the Protestant masses can be excused for agreeing with them and acting accordingly.

Wallace shows no awareness of the role which the "Irish Dimension" and the Council of Ireland proposals played in mobilising opposition to the power-sharing Executive. In fact his own (not very explicit) position seems to be on the urbane wing of nationalist ideology, arguing that as the "two traditions" cannot live together in Northern Ireland, some reconstruction of the "totality of relations" between Belfast, Dublin and London is necessary. But it is precisely the perspective which takes the "two traditions" as given, which accepts the unalterable division of the Catholic and Protestant working class, which is as much a part of the problem as the division itself.

*Sam McCurley*

## Irish education

**IRISH EDUCATION: Its History and Structure** by John



**Coolahan; Institute of Public Administration; IR£9.90**

JOHN COOLAHAN has produced a comprehensive analysis of Irish education at all levels from 1800 to the present. The book, 300 pages of well recorded detail and analysis, is as readable and enjoyable for the layman as it must be interesting and informative for the professional educationalist.

The book is divided into two parts: the first dealing with 1800 to 1960, and the second with the educational system since 1960, a period which he says "represents a watershed in Irish education".

Each level of education is dealt with separately for both periods. The second part also includes interesting chapters on "Education and the Irish Constitution", "The Role of the Department of Education", "The Position of the Irish Language in the Schools", "Teachers and Teacher Education", and "Adult Education". The summaries at the end of each chapter of important events and reports provide a useful reference for researchers or students of Irish education.

Socialists and other progressives who want a democratic and secular system of education should study this analysis. The book gives a good insight into the determination and skill which has secured denominational control for the churches over most of the educational system. In the early part of the nineteenth century the "concept of a distinction between secular and religious instruction remained a cornerstone of state policy but was opposed by the churches".

This opposition broadened in the 1850s.

As Coolahan points out: "the arrival from Rome of Dr. Paul Cullen as Archbishop of Armagh in 1849 heralded the start of a strong attack against the national school system. Attitudes in Rome had hardened against mixed education and the Roman Catholic Church had become more suspicious of the state's involvement in education. Pope Pius IX feared the increasing trend towards "secularisation and liberalism in European society."

By the end of the century, although the vast bulk of expenditure on primary education was coming from central state funds, the system was becoming increasingly denominational "with the great majority of schools being managed by individual clergymen. In fact the Catholic hierarchy declared in 1900 that the national system of education 'in a great part of Ireland is now, in fact, whatever it is in name, as denominational almost as we would desire'". When Chief Secretary Wyndham gave notice in 1904 that he intended establishing management boards for national schools his plans "were strongly and successfully opposed by the Catholic Church and the Irish M.P.s"

After Independence "successive ministers of education", says Coolahan, "adopted the view that the state had a subsidiary role, aiding agencies such as the churches in the provision of educational facilities".

The non-denominational training colleges for teachers in

Marlborough Street was closed after Independence and the training of teachers in the Irish Free State was carried out in denominational boarding training colleges.

"The wealthy classes in Ireland were infamous," says Coolahan, "for their lack of support for and interest in the promotion of education... unlike England there was no tradition among the Irish landowning classes of public service towards education." It is not surprising, then, that secondary schooling was seen as very much a middle-class concern. In his chapter on the history of secondary (intermediate) education the author summarises the class nature of secondary schooling:

"It was the professional and merchant classes of the towns and established tenant farmers who aimed at giving their children the benefit and prestige of a secondary education; for most parents survival or an emigrant ticket were the main concerns. Schooling was not viewed as a means of achieving greater social equality; rather the poor and the working classes were largely seen by leaders of church and state as a self-perpetuating sector of society for whom a limited education in literacy and numeracy was deemed sufficient.

In the area of vocational/technical education, non-denominational schools were established at the turn of the century. "Following Independence this pattern was maintained by the Vocational Education Act of 1930 which updated and revamped the earlier legislation but kept its essential features. Having been given ministerial assurances on the limited role of the 'continuation' education being provided under the 1930 Act, the Catholic hierarchy tolerated the system. Individual clergymen did of course play a prominent part in vocational education committees and from 1942 a more religious aura was promoted in the schools, yet they remained non-denominational schools under lay control and financially accountable through official audit."

Denominational control of education is still a matter of importance for socialists and democrats. In the January 1914 campaign for the municipal elections in Dublin, Alfred Byrne, later to become Lord Mayor, joined the chorus of right-wing and nationalist attacks on Jim Larkin. The basis of Byrne's attack was that he knew a man who had heard Larkin "favour secular education" at a meeting of Belfast Trades Council. Nearly 70 years

later there are still very few voices heard in favour of secular education.

*Oliver Donohoe*

## Weak energy study

**ENERGY FORECASTS FOR IRELAND; The National Board for Science and Technology; No price**

*Energy Forecasts for Ireland* limits itself to attempting to forecast the growth in demand for energy in this country. The study does not go beyond this narrow limit; it looks forward to the year 1990 or to the year 2020 and does not suggest any radical changes in the sort of energy used which may lead to very different conclusions.

It is a basic economic truth to say that the price of energy will be a deciding factor when the possibility of industrial expansion or development in certain sectors of the economy is considered. Two examples will make this argument clear — Cement-Roadstone intend to spend £15 million over the next few years converting their plant to coal. This will enable the firm to reduce the cost of the manufacture of cement by replacing expensive residual fuel oil with much lower cost coal. The same argument applies to the Clondalkin Paper Mills but in this case there is no commitment to convert to coal.

Reduced electricity costs are an important deciding factor when attempting to project whether there will be an expansion or a contraction in manufacturing industry over the next twenty years.

Industry is a very low consumer of energy in the Republic of Ireland and that fact speaks volumes about the unhealthy nature of our economy. In 1980, for example, industrial consumption of energy amounted to only 33%. The forecast is for an increase to 47% by the year 2020. This is far from healthy for industrial job creation over the next thirty years. In most industrial countries industry uses two-thirds of energy consumed.

The means of generating electricity — the fuel used for this purpose — is surely a matter of first importance in relation to the study of energy.

The ESB have a plan to use our low grade coal resources for the production of cheap electri-

city. There are considerable deposits of this type of coal at Arigna and in other places and the life of the present mine will run out in another three years. A State investment, through the ESB, of £40 million would bring the low-grade coal project into being. This project has nothing in common with the present situation at Arigna — a private enterprise mining operation using 19th century methods of producing good quality coal. The ESB is at present subsidising private enterprise mining at Arigna.

France has the cheapest electricity in industry in the EEC — just over 2p per KW hour. This is because a large part of the French electricity generating capacity is nuclear. It is obvious that our high-priced electricity to industry will place our manufactured goods at a serious disadvantage when competing with French industry; it seriously reduces our chances of breaking into the French home market.

It seems rather odd to produce a study of Irish energy needs and fail to mention the question of costs — except to hint at it in relation to conservation. Conservation which will save on the import bill for expensive oil is only a small part of the battle. The more recent studies of saving arising from conservation measures show that substantial savings cannot be made by this

means.

A projected estimate of saving by means of conservation measures for the year 1990 shows that in transport a saving of 3% could be made. A similar study in relation to households shows an ever smaller saving — one per cent. Industrial savings by this means do not rise above three per cent. These figures are worked out by projecting the 1974-75 trend. The best description of the whole exercise is that it is a wild guess. Is it a useful exercise? It may well be very dangerous for the following reasons.

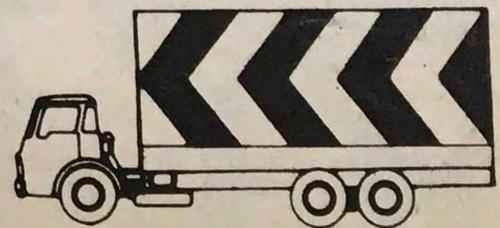
The economy needs two developments in relation to energy to be carried out with the greatest possible speed. Industry using expensive fuel oil needs to be converted to coal. The ESB needs to be given funds to build an electricity generating capacity burning low grade coal — in plentiful supply in Ireland. They have developed the technology to do this.

Studies like "Energy Forecasts for Ireland", will enable the conservative minded to argue that the demand does not exist to justify investment on the needed scale. If this happens the economy will continue to decline.

*Eamonn Smullen*

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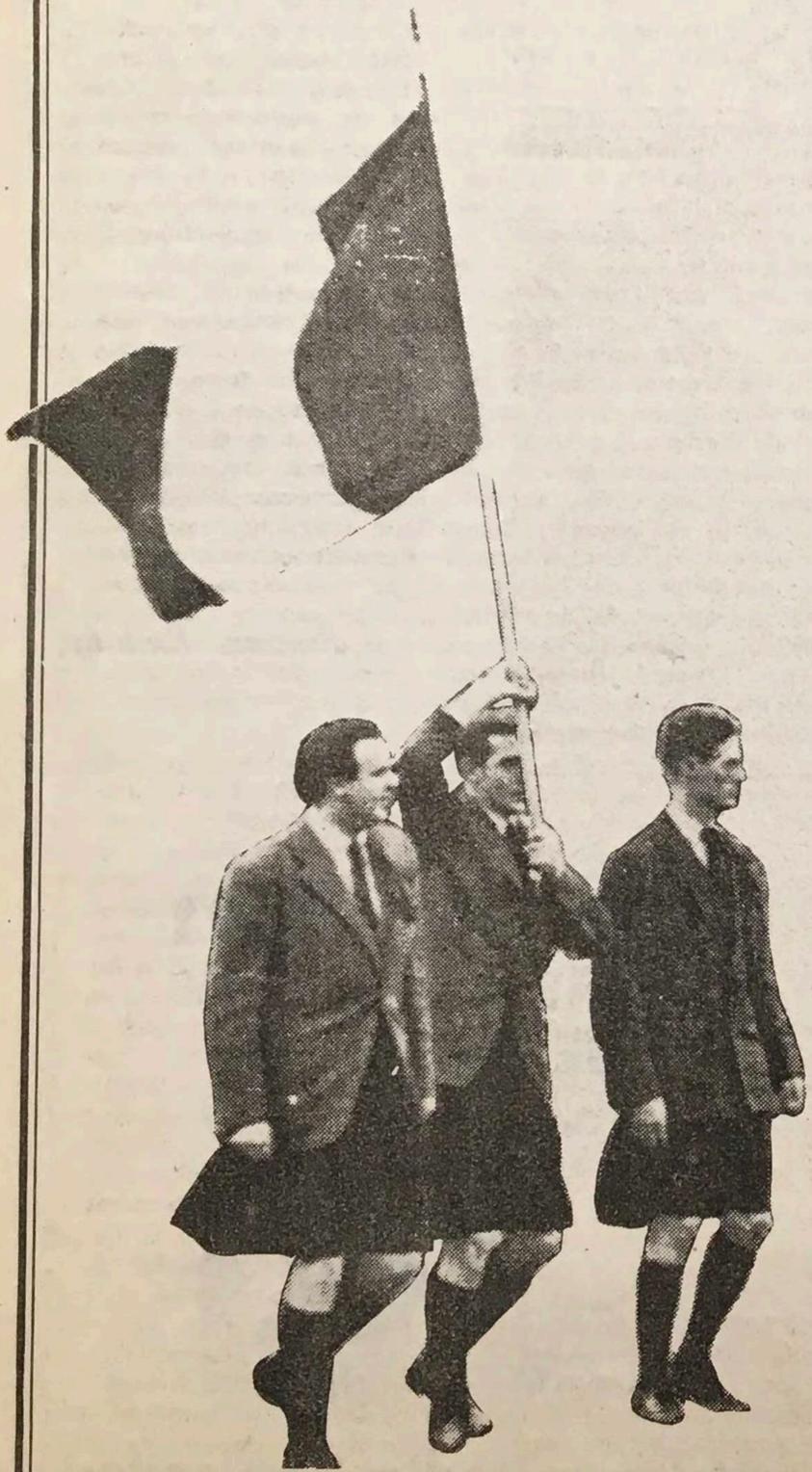
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# BETTER BED THAN RED

Bill Nolan

WHEN Jack Reed's eye-witness account of the events of 1917 in Moscow was published, the Russian revolutionary leader, Lenin, heralded *Ten Days that Shook the World* as a true account of that historic period. For Reed, this accolade was the culmination of a life devoted to the spreading of communism, a life that has been dramatised in the movie "Reds" currently showing at Dublin's Adelphi cinema and shortly to be seen on general release around the country.

Jack Reed must be the most unlikely subject for a Hollywood bio-pic and Warren Beatty must be the most unlikely 'auteur' for such a movie. Beatty's reputation was based more on his success with the ladies (Joan Collins, Natalie Wood, Leslie Carron, Julie Christie, Goldie Hawn, Diane Keaton) than his talents as a film-maker. While Beatty's output has been small, his movies *have* however managed to combine two qualities in an uneasy partnership, namely commercial success and a certain artistic merit. Beatty was a good-looking leading-man of many Hollywood movies of the sixties such as "Splendour in the Grass". Then suddenly he shattered this image within the Hollywood hierarchy when in 1967 he starred in, produced and marketed the sensational success "Bonnie and Clyde". His 4% interest in the movie, which turned-over \$30 million in the US in its first year of release, made him an extremely wealthy twenty-five year old.

His next project as star, producer and co-writer was the not altogether successful political satire "Shampoo". This was followed by "Heaven Can Wait" in which Beatty starred and co-directed and which has netted him an incredible personal profit of twenty-five million dollars. This fortune was the basis for his production "Reds". The story of Jack Reed had fascinated Beatty for a decade and its realisation is a personal tour de force in which he fulfils the roles of star, producer, co-writer and director. It remains a mystery that he convinced investors in the via-

## FILMS



Diane Keaton and Warren Beatty in 'Reds'.

bility of the project. The story of a "commie intellectual", lasting 3½ hours, containing interruptions in the narrative by real-life friends and contemporaries of the 'hero', reminiscing in the rambling manner of old people. That the movie was made under the circumstances, ideological and financial, that prevail in Hollywood, is a tribute to Beatty. The degree to which his project succeeds is less certain.

When we first meet Jack Reed he is an American journalist in the liberal mould whose work involves him in the coverage of the growing labour movement in the

Socialist Party. His appeal to the conference floor is cut short when the police arrive to remove him. He immediately invites those of the rank and file to join him at an alternative venue, where the Communist Labour Party of America is formed and Reed is elected to travel to Moscow to win recognition of the organisation.

At this point in its history Russia is living under siege with all bordering countries refusing supplies or safe passage. But Reed's determination sees him arriving safely in Moscow where he is invited to join the propaganda bureau. While other emigrés American revolutionaries become disillusioned with the state bureaucracy, Reed asserts the hard-line. "No one said it would be easy, there is a continuing war to be waged against counter-revolutionaries."

It is one of the strong points in the movie that Beatty never compromises his character's staunch pro-Moscow line. Beatty at all times shows Reed's acceptance of the need for party discipline. Towards the end of the movie there is a sequence where, having fought for and been defeated on a point, Reed resigns his position on a point of principle. This classic liberal-dissident action is exploded in a subsequent scene when Reed requests the resignation and tears it up. This scene must have proved particularly unpalatable to an American audience. To ease his audience's digestion, Beatty coats this political story with a sugary romance. Diane Keaton plays Reed's wife Louise Bryant as a trendy feminist who is jealous of the politics that engage so much of Reed's attention. When Reed invites her to go to New York, she wants to know "What as? As your mistress, your concubine, your lover, ...what as?" To which Reed replies "Well it's nearly Thanksgiving ...come as a turkey".

"Reds" is strongly recommended but with the reservation that there is more romance than politics in the movie — too much Dr. Zhivagoism and not enough Marxism.

States. His proximity to the struggle leads him irrevocably to a harder political position and a more active involvement both in the radical union, the IWW and in the American Socialist party. We follow Reed to Moscow in 1917 where he covers the Bolshevik revolution interviewing the leadership and identifying Lenin as the inspiration and prime-mover of the struggle despite Trotsky's apparent ability to move the crowds with rhetoric and emotionalism.

Reed returns to America as an uncompromising communist but is met on arrival by a well orchestrated attempt to smash the influence of the left within the

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# CONFLICT OF INTEREST

THIS MONTH I will tell you an interesting story. It concerns a major conflict of interest in public service broadcasting. The background is interesting.

Thirteen years ago RTE commissioned its first co-production. It featured a man walking along a beach in Donnycarney. That man was Charles J. Haughey. The director and instigator of that programme was Rory O'Farrell. In last month's column I referred to the fact that Rory O'Farrell Productions have been responsible for all of Charlie Haughey's party political broadcasts in recent years.

There is nothing wrong with an idealistic young current affairs director leaving public service broadcasting to follow a man he admires. Indeed when Rory O'Farrell left the *Seven Days* programme shortly before making that historic first co-production he also had other motives. RTE does not pay very well. Some people leave because the private sector pays more, especially in the making of commercials. O'Farrell first concentrated on the film editing business and his RTE connection ensured that this too was lucrative. O'Farrell employed many a youngster anxious to 'get a break' in film. While some made it, others didn't and the wages were low — common in an industry with so many looking for work.

For RTE the arrangement worked too. Television production is cyclical in nature. Most programming happens in the peak winter months. Most commercials are made in the summer. It makes sense that RTE use free-lance film editing companies during peak periods.

Then as O'Farrell broke down the barriers more people began to make co-productions for RTE. O'Farrell was followed by Gerrit Van

Geldern, David Shaw Smith and the Radharc team.

### Singing pubs

O'Farrell himself never made anything of note for RTE. The productions were normally low budget stuff. One series involved six programmes about singing pubs in New York's Manhattan.

It was back in Manhattan last month that the 'bad thing' I mentioned earlier was done.

Sometime after Charlie Haughey was elected Taoiseach, the Controller of Programmes in RTE 2, Ted Dolan, concluded negotiations with O'Farrell for a film about Charlie Haughey's visit to America. Now, Rory O'Farrell has been at Haughey's beck and call for some years. He is a regular visitor to Kinsealy, family friend, party canvasser, Fianna Fáil member, official archivist and producer of all Fianna Fáil's party political broadcasts for the last ten years. He is currently compiling a biographical film on the Taoiseach.

How Ted Dolan could spend RTE's and the licence payers' money in commissioning Rory O'Farrell to make a so-called independent production is beyond comprehension. But it is not the first curious relationship that O'Farrell has had with RTE.

### Dairy council

Only five months ago, O'Farrell got RTE support to make another film in America. The programme studied the relationship between eating and drinking milk products and heart disease. The outcome of the programme, presented by Gay Byrne, was extremely favourable to milk consumption. What the viewers did not know was that the National Dairy Council were secretly spon-

soring the programme. Their public relations man, Michael Hutchinson even got a production credit on the film. Since its transmission O'Farrell, Hutchinson and Noel Gilmore, the NDC chief executive, have been to the States to sell the film to other television networks.

Rory O'Farrell also makes thirty-second commercials for the National Dairy Council. So the last two productions O'Farrell has made for RTE have involved seeming conflicts of interest. On each occasion he was promoting people who normally pay him a wage or fee for such promotion. Of course there is nothing intrinsically wrong in that in itself. But trying to keep the relationship secret and spending licence payers' money to sponsor such double-edged deals is unforgivable. Ted Dolan, as Controller of Programmes has no mandate to hire the P.R. man for Charlie Haughey to make a film about Charles Haughey's trip to America. *Today Tonight* were there as well and did a very good job. The future of co-productions is seriously threatened by such behaviour.

Yet another co-production appeared last summer when RTE 2 broadcast a television series titled *What's Cooking*. This time again, Rory O'Farrell and the NDC promotions man Mick Hutchinson, were the co-producers. Again too, Ted Dolan of RTE and Noel Gilmore of the NDC jointly financed the venture.

The cooking series was presented by Denise Sweeney, an NDC cookery demonstrator. But this series was more above board. The NDC did not hide their sponsorship. Needless to say, Ms Sweeney nearly always used milk, butter or cheese in her recipes.

# Liam Cassidy calls on women to put a spring in their step

CONSIDERING the fact that John Tracey was injured, Ireland's team did fairly well in the recent World Cross Country Championships held in Rome. The first Irishman home in the men's race was Jerry Kiernan in 26th position, followed by Deegan in 32nd, Woods in 36th, and Tracey in 47th position. Unfortunately, Ireland had to go back to 101st and 107th for their last two scorers.

Kiernan was only forty seconds behind the third finisher. This was an excellent performance considering that all of the best distance runners in the world were competing. The race was won by G. Kedir from Ethiopia with Salazar of the USA second and New Zealand's Rod Dixon third. The winner ran the distance of seven and a half miles in 33 minutes 40 seconds, so interested joggers can get out their calculators and work out the speed at which the world's best run. The Ethiopians won the team race for the second year in succession and the great Miruts Yifter was their fourth scorer in 16th position. England came second with the Soviet Union in third place.

The men's junior race was completely dominated by the Ethiopians who had four runners in the first five and a solitary Italian who came third was all that stopped them from taking all the medals. These performances add weight to the arguments that athletes who live at high altitudes well above sea level have an advantage over others when they compete nearer to sea level.

Greta Waitz from Norway failed in her attempt to win the women's

race for the fifth time. After leading to half way she was passed by two runners from Rumania and had to settle for the bronze medal. Ireland fared poorly in the junior and women's events. Ireland's first woman finisher was Patricia Appleby in 43rd position.

Jim McLoughlin was Northern Ireland's first finisher in the men's race in 61st position, and the team finished at the end of the field in 18th place with a total of 731 points.

MORE has been written in the sports pages of newspapers last month about Ireland's Triple Crown win than on any other sports event in recent years. To put it mildly this is something which surprises me. To win the Triple Crown Ireland's rugby team won three games beating England, Scotland and Wales, and it was the first time they succeeded in doing this since 1949.

Perhaps it was the fact that there was a gap of 33 years coupled with the fact that over the previous two seasons Ireland had lost seven and drawn one of its eight games that led to the euphoria surrounding this achievement. The Irish team's success was put in its true light however when France, after losing their three previous games, beat Ireland by 22 points to nine in Paris. This Triple Crown victory has meant a boon for the troubled textile industry even if the pullovers, scarves and ties are being sold at inflated prices.

NOW that the weather has improved and Spring shows signs of

eventually becoming Summer, Cospoir, the national sports council, has launched a timely publicity campaign to encourage women to participate in sport and exercise. Having designated 1982 as Women in Sport Year the Sports Council has adopted the slogan of 'give your health a sporting chance'.

Two helpful programmes for beginners in both walking and jogging exercise have been produced and distributed to women's centres and groups. The leaflets provide common-sense guidelines on building up your programme over ten weeks, and on the loss of calories from various exercises. But like all the good things in life, they're best done in moderation.

A large number of single women take an active interest in sport as well as the social side afterwards. Unfortunately, after marriage, many women find they have little time to participate in clubs, or even to get an hour for exercise at a nearby park or track. More women are rightly seeking creche facilities near sporting fields and more co-operation from husbands who often follow sport from the armchair in front of the television or the racing pages. They dismiss participation and exercise as amateurish or vain, without appreciating the liberating effects of leaving kids and worries at home while you jog for a few miles and then relax.

Two years ago, the Sports Section of the Department of Education organised a seminar on 'The Greater Involvement of Women in Sport'. Amongst the speakers was Professor Dorothy Harris of Pennsyl-



GIVE YOUR HEALTH A SPORTING CHANCE

# WOMEN IN SPORT YEAR ♀ 1982

vania State University who delivered a paper on 'Women in Society and their Participation in Sport'.

She told the conference that "in today's cultures the female is neither expected nor required to develop athletic abilities; she is expected only to be physically attractive. She is socialised to use her body to attract and please the male, while the male learns to use his body to please himself and to gain recognition for his abilities. The male discovers early in life that athletic accomplishments open doors to his masculine identity and image. The female will find that certain groups consider her socially unacceptable if she displays physical prowess and skill in sports."

In nearly all schools "sports" have been synonymous with "male

sports" and athletic facilities for girls and women have usually been decidedly inferior. Consequently, few females have retained an interest in sport.

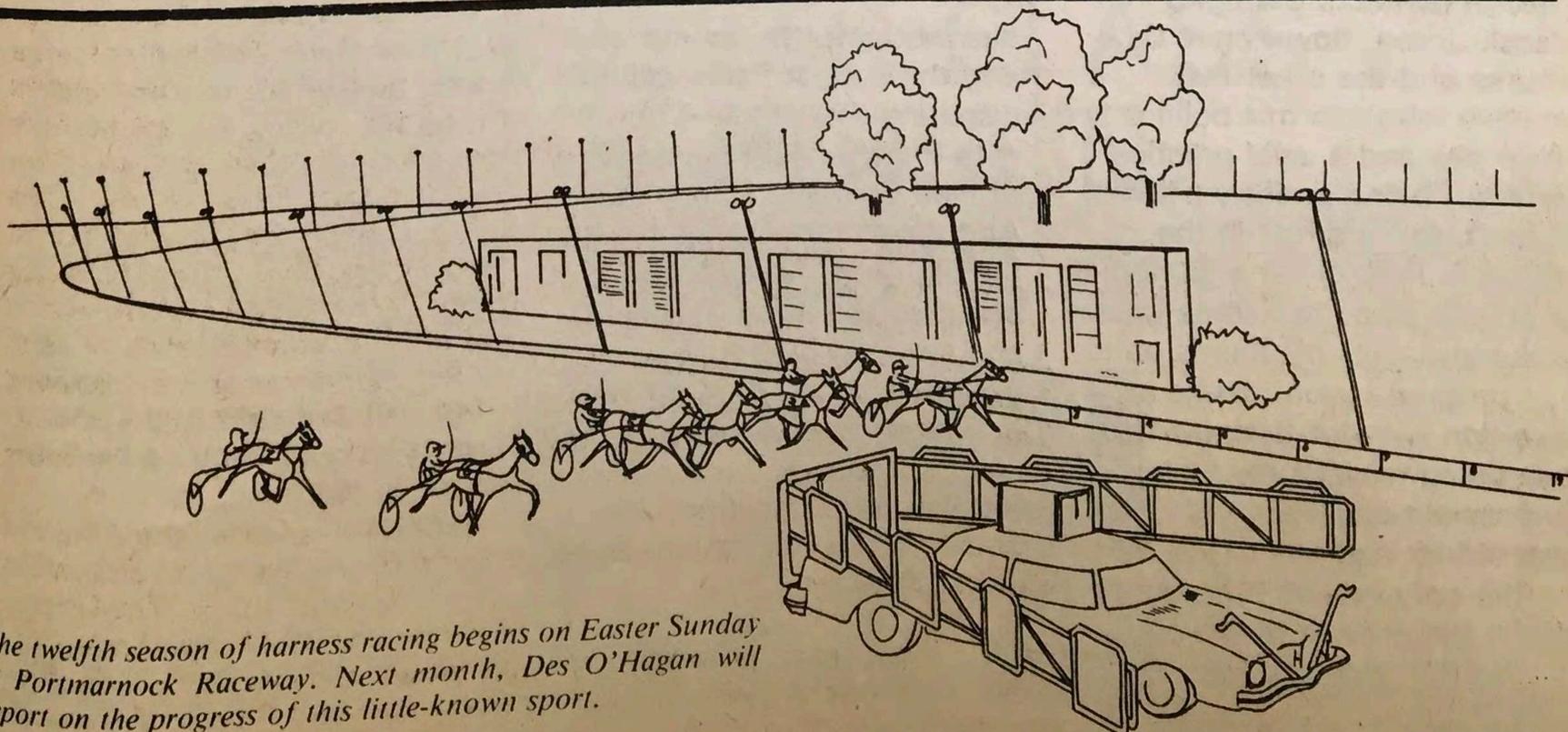
Women make up less than 20 per cent of the participants in the Olympic Games and those women are representative of the industrial countries of the world. Women are allowed to participate in only 32 per cent of the Olympic contests, reflecting the notion that sport is the prerogative of the men.

The status of female participation in sport merely reflects the practices and culture of any society. In the socialist countries, and the advanced industrial economies, women play a more active role in sport. Encouragement of women in sport cannot be provided by extra

facilities alone. There must be a change in how parents and teachers view sports for all.

There is no evidence that men gain more from participating in sports than women, yet men control most of the finance and administration of the more popular sports. Women must take up positions in the structures of sporting bodies if they are to influence and change attitudes.

Cospoir, through its leafletting campaign to 'give your health a sporting chance', has gone some of the way towards encouraging more female participation in sport. It is now up to real sports fans to ensure that Women In Sport Year ensures real changes in the patterns of discrimination which exist from jogging to highly competitive sports.



The twelfth season of harness racing begins on Easter Sunday at Portmarnock Raceway. Next month, Des O'Hagan will report on the progress of this little-known sport.

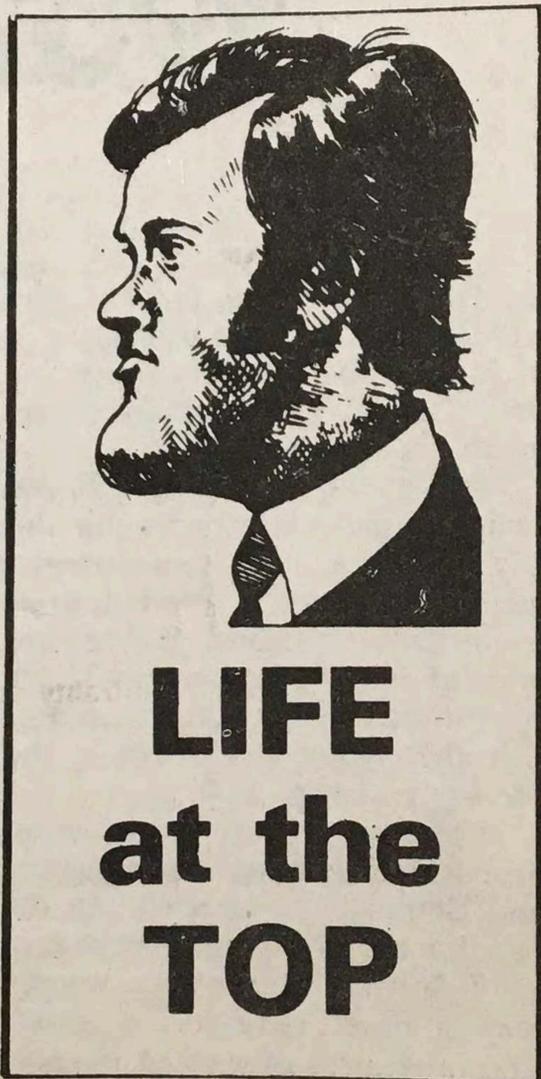
# THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Dear Dad,

I'm sorry to hear that you're a bit down in the dumps (actually I have a bit of a sore throat myself) because I lost my chauffeur etc. You are right about the media making it hard for me. That Minister for Snow tag was worse than the Minister for Prices label that buried Justin a few years back. Well, at least I'll make sure they can't focus on my living accommodation in the future. I have left the penthouse and have my name in with the City Manager to get one of the Gregory flats on the Port and Docks site. I know you're right — it's my only chance of survival.

Between you and me, though, I haven't the stomach to go on. I'm on the verge of throwing in the towel and trying my hand at the Bar where I have established a few useful contacts through Fine Gael. Jesus, how I envy Dick Burke and the other F.G. people who can mix politics and business and a legal practice without being publicly pilloried. I can't go for a ride in the Phoenix Park or for a gambol in a private plane but some gossip columnist gets his hands on it.

I promise I won't make a decision without talking to you but being realistic my task is an impossible one. Even if I wanted to lead a Socialist Party — the only way to temporarily arrest the growth of the SFWP — the P.P. doesn't want to



hear about it. If I continue as I am, the Labour Party will be disputing the middle ground with the Michael Keating wing of Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil. And we cannot compete with the big guns. Meanwhile I am being sniped at by Michael D and savaged by the Militant Loonies. Nor is there any talent or young people of calibre coming through the ranks despite John Carroll's Pied Piper of Liberty Hall bit. To give you an idea of what I have to put up with, I met a whingeing delegation from the Trade

Union Group last week moaning about Coalition. All I can say is that it is no wonder the Stickies are reported to be taking over the trade unions.

Anyway I have resolved to stay on for the moment principally for two reasons. Firstly, I can't stand the prospect of who might succeed me and, secondly, if I play my cards right I may be able to get my European seat back. The prospect of the unctious Babyarse Barry becoming leader is a good reason for holding on. Indeed, as you well know I feel similarly about the resurrection of the Bearded Butcher but it might transport me (the FWUI would be supportive) back to the wider panorama of Europe and out of the native pigsty. I can no longer look interested when lectured to by the Looney Left. That is not to say that I do not appreciate the dilemma of the present Labour Party.

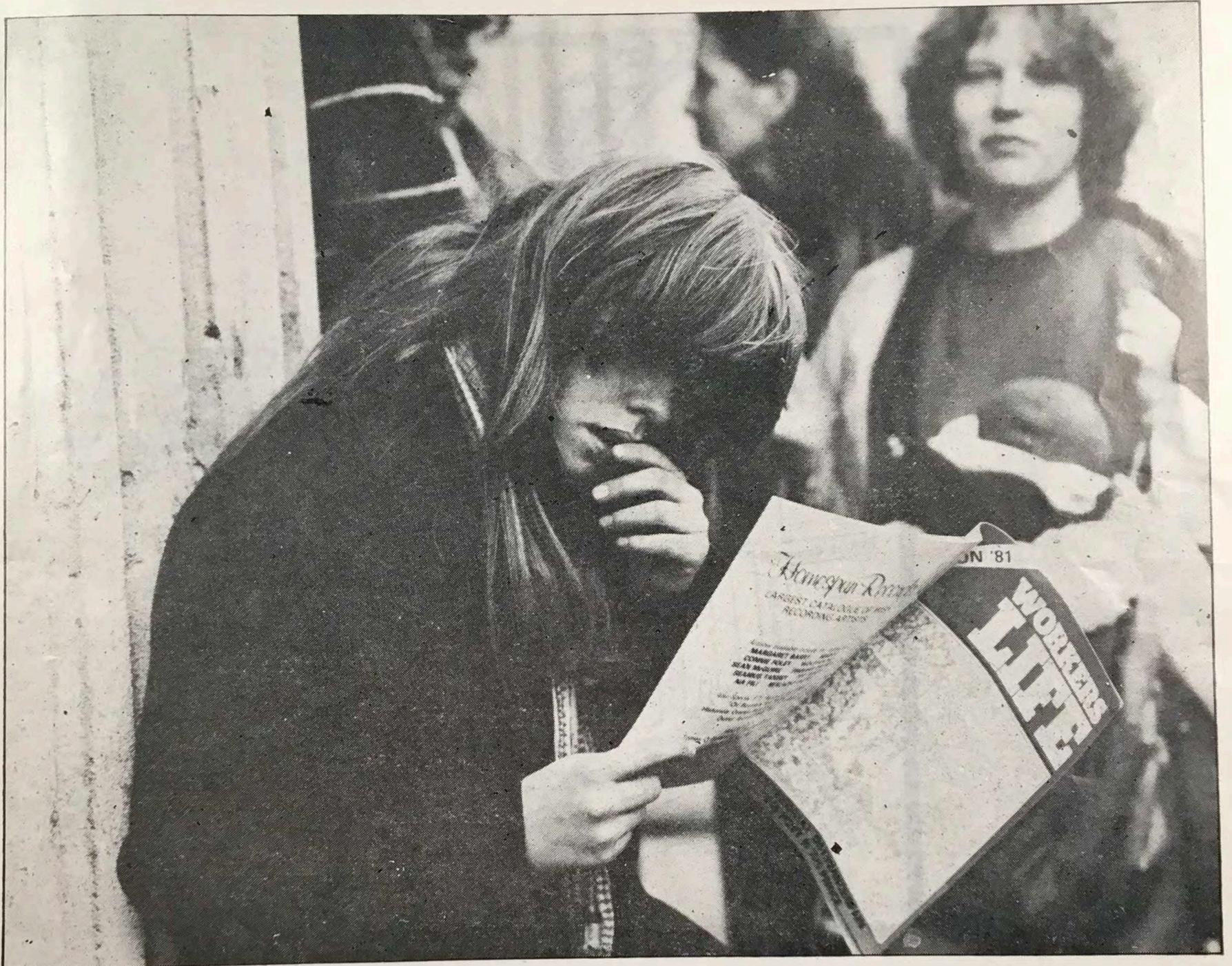
They say an Irish man cannot read the writing on the wall until his back is up against it. Right now my back is against that wall.

I'm glad you liked the *Irish Times* photograph of me having my throat blessed. I have asked Paul Tansey to get me a copy out of the library and I'll send it on to you as soon as he does.

Well, I'll finish for now because that sore throat is not getting any better.

Regards  
Michael.

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