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An Choismhuintir

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Stick 'em up!

The first major confrontation between a ground landlord and ground rent strikers is taking place on the Oaklawn Estate, Leixlip, Co. Dublin. More than two hundred civil bills have been served on residents withholding the £20 annual ground rent by Elm Grove Development Ltd. The residents are summonsed to court on Monday, March 11.

The estates concerned include Oaklawn, (76 houses), Oaklawn West (139 houses), Oaklawn Close (42 houses). Residents of Easton Park, also affected, held a meeting and decided by a majority to pay up.

Oaklawn held a general meeting of residents last week attended by almost one hundred residents and decided to fight the landlord. An Action Committee was elected and is planning future moves in the dispute. One course of action already agreed to is to fight the case in court on March 11.

The Action Committee will have the active support of the Association of Combined Residents Association in its fight.

It will also have the support of The Irish People now that it is precipitated into the front line of the struggle to abolish ground rent.

As a contribution to the campaign we print the cut-out slogan below and urge residents of Oaklawn and others on ground rent strike to cut it out and stick it up in their front windows.

It should have the effect of increasing solidarity of neighbour with neighbour in opposition to this mediaeval form of robbery.

GROUND RENT STRIKE ON HERE

CUT HERE



• Hawth fishermen get 11p for a pound of cod — housewives are charged 50p; on the same day! — Irish People pic.

BLAST PERIL

Eight explosions have occurred in one housing estate in Cork in the past two years. And a doctor who has treated a number of the victims has requested action to end the blasts from the Minister for Local Government, Mr. James Tully.

Terrorists or subversives have not been responsible for the blasts which have been a daily and nightly hazard to residents in 200 centrally heated homes in the Mayfield estate. At fault are the gas heating units in the now infamous Sisk built N.B.A. estate in Cork.

The doctor involved refused to talk about his communication with Mr. Tully other than to say he would "not deny" that he had written to the Minister.

However, it is believed, he told Mr. Tully that although no lives had been lost up to now fatalities could occur in the future unless swift action was taken.

In a statement to THE IRISH PEOPLE the Government Information Service said: "Arising from representations received by him last Friday from Dr. Norman Murphy, Mangerton, Mayfield Rd., Cork, the Minister for Local Government has requested the National Building Agency to examine the position urgently and report to him on the matter as soon as possible."

The doctor did not treat a boy who spent several weeks in hospital as a result of an explosion three years ago. He did attend to the boy's mother, who was injured by a further explosion a few months ago.

She suffered a miscarriage shortly after the blast and because of her present nervous condition Cork Corporation has been asked by doctors to move her family to a house without central heating as a matter of urgency.

The doctor has told Mr. Tully that he does not wish to "appear hysterical" but that he does consider the heating units a serious health hazard.

The number of Mayfield tenants seen by this doctor represent only a relative few of the number affected by exploding heating units in the N.B.A. schemes. Several explosions have also occurred in the Toghier and Glen estates.

The mistake wasn't discovered until experts arrived from England to investigate the cause of the early explosions. No remedial action was taken.

The schemes were designed by Messrs Delany, MacVeigh and Pike of Cork. Messrs Pettit were the consultant engineers who supervised the construction work.

(See "N.B.A. RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING SHAMBLES" on page 6).

The fish mart sharks

BY PEIGIN DOYLE

Question: "When is an auction not an auction?"

Answer: "When it is the Dublin Fish Market."

A further question. Why does such fish as plaice, whiting and cod, knocked down in the Fish Market for as low as 8 pence per pound for gutted whiting or 9-10p per pound for cod, suddenly zoom in price between the wholesale and retail outlet to up to 68p for plaice and 32p for whiting? Last Wednesday at 8 a.m. cod was sold in the market for 11½p per pound. At 11 a.m. on the same day a Rathmines shop was asking customers to pay 45p for cod. Making the greatest allowance for processing and transport costs one might expect the fish to have doubled in price at the most but where on earth did the 45p come from? Mr. Justin Keating, Minister for Industry and Commerce, recently decided to establish a Prices Advisory Body under the Prices Acts to undertake a public enquiry into the price of meat.

True?

Mr. Keating might turn his attention as well to the situation in the fish trade.

The Minister should ascertain whether in fact it is true that the Dublin Fish Market is controlled by a tight ring of auctioneers; whether prices in this market are fixed by mutual agreement among these vendors to their own advantage and whether much of the fish which reaches the market never gets to an open auction but rather is bought up beforehand by the major fish merchants at their own prices, to be processed or for sale in their own retail outlets. All the evidence points in this direction.

This brings us back to the retail price.

Last week an Irish People reporter visited the Fish Market and took note of the prices set by the bidding. Some of the prices paid were as follows: plaice went for 6-17½ pence per pound, cod was 11½-12 pence, white pollock fetched 10p and black pollock 6p while gutted whiting sold for 6p per pound.

A check with M. and P. Hanlon Ltd., Moore St., revealed that the going price for such fish had rocketed on its way to the shop counter. For example, customers were being charged 88p for filleted plaice, 50p for cod and 32p for whiting. Fish on the bone was being sold for roughly half the price.

M. and P. Hanlon Ltd. is one of the major auctioneering firms in the market along with Molloy & Co., Thos. Nolan &

(Continued on page 2)

the irish people

An Choismhuintir, Friday, March 1, 1974.

THE OLDEST TRICK

Townpeople and farmers have always tended to misunderstand each other, especially when prices and incomes are involved.

The scandal which is now breaking about the high price of meat and the huge meat stocks being built up by the Government might tempt townpeople to put the blame on the farmers.

If they do so, they are off-target.

The two real targets for blame are, firstly, the butchers who have not dropped the price of meat in their shops in step with the collapse in the price of cattle since last autumn, and, secondly, the Government who are operating an E.E.C. policy which does not allow them to subsidise and unload the meat surplus to those who cannot buy meat now — the old, the unemployed, the badly paid, the big families.

Justin Keating is working the oldest trick in the political game — he has set up an inquiry into meat prices. Justin knows the answers without any inquiry — he has forgotten more about agriculture than most of his experts will ever know.

The purpose of most Government inquiries and commissions is to buy time until the voters forget their anger.

A diet of bread and tea will be a daily reminder to the voters on this issue: and Mr. Keating may find that the price of his inquiry is too high.

WELL WORTH IT

The £2.3 million tax-free capital gain on speculation in Ireland's mineral wealth by a number of her capitalist families could be money well lost.

Judging by the reaction to the deal public opinion began to wake up for the first time to the enormity of what is involved in the Government decision on the Navan mine. For the first time editorials in leading newspapers and staid financial columns began to talk of nationalising this wealth.

Of course, nationalisation is not necessary. Under the Constitution all that wealth belongs to the Irish people already.

If the decision be that the Irish people keep their hands on this wealth then the O'Reilly and Co. rake-off was well worth it.

If the Government still hesitates to do the right thing then it can only be hoped that Mr. O'Reilly and his pals or Mr. Pat Hughes and his pals make ten times as much again — if that is what it takes to rouse public opinion on the issue.

Because the loss to the people, if the mines are handed over either to the O'Reillys or the Hugheses, will be counted not in millions or tens of millions but in thousands of millions of pounds.

Building Societies to go scot-free... Public cheated by non-inquiry

THE LONG-AWAITED National Prices Commission investigation on Building Societies will never appear. Instead, the public will be treated to a "background study" of building societies prepared by an academic in Swansea University! This emerges from the January report of the Commission published last week.

In March, 1973, when home loan interest rates soared to the 10 per cent mark the Commission investigation was announced. Quarter-page advertisements in the public press invited interested parties to submit suggestions not later than June 1. The investigation, due for completion on October 1 last year, will now never see the light of day.

Brian Sheridan, Chairman of ACRA's Mortgage Strike Committee, which is coordinating the campaign for drastic reforms of the Building Societies told The Irish People that the public had been misled into thinking that an investigation was underway. "ACRA has not been criticised both the terms of reference of the alleged study and the composition of the Commission."

ACRA, Mr. Sheridan explained, felt that the basic question — "What is the cheapest and most efficient way of organising home loan finance?" — was not being put by the Commission. "Now it appears that even the questions many of the public thought were being investigated have been sidestepped."

Referring to the Swansea consultant, Mr. Sheridan stated that it highlights the old problem of looking abroad for solutions to Irish problems. He pointed out that ACRA's long-term plan, submitted to the Government many months



● Edmund Farrell, Managing Director, Irish Permanent Building Society, appeared on the "Seven Days" programme.

ago, has been entirely ignored. "Is it because it's Irish that it's no good?", he asks.

The Irish People financial expert writes:

On the face of it the Commission seem to be attempting a confidence trick. The terms of reference of the inquiry announced in March, 1973, clearly stated that the purpose was "to examine the Building Societies operating in Ireland".

All this time people were expecting a report on the operations of the major Building Societies. Already the media have brought in their report — notably the Seven Days programme — and many people looked forward to comparing it with that from the Commission.

The defensive legal-type language used in the present (January) report to break the news that there are to be no conclusions drawn show that much thought was involved in drawing it up. "Our study was not made because we had any reason to suppose that any

aspect of the activities of building societies coming within the terms of the Prices Acts was such as to require investigation, or because the societies had submitted any proposal to increase any of their charges."

Going on to give the official excuse for producing no report, the Commission state: "The purpose of the study was to provide the background information and analysis that would be needed if the Commission at some later date were required to examine any proposal relating to building societies' charges."

Coup

The Commission comes out baldly in the final sentence: "At this stage we have no recommendations to make on the basis of the consultant's report".

How exactly the Commission investigation first became a "study" and finally ended up as a "non-report" might never be known. But it will go down in history as one of the best coups for the backroom boys of the Building Societies unless public pressure forces a change of mind.

The members of the National Prices Commission are: Professor W. J. L. Ryan (Chairman), Professor of Political Economy, Trinity College; Mr. Liam Connellan, Confederation of Irish Industry; Mr. Peter E. O'Brien, Federation of Trade Associations; Mr. John F. Carroll, Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Mr. Harold O'Sullivan, Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Mrs. Mairead Allen, Irish Housewives' Association.



● Roibeard O Farachain.

Free speech award to censor

MR. ROIBEARD O FARACHAIN, for long Controller of Programmes for Radio Eireann, was presented with a Jacobs award at the R.T.E. Jacob Awards ceremony in Waterford last week.

The citation accompanying the award referred to Mr. O Farachain's "defence of free speech since the early days of broadcasting". Late in 1971 Mr. O Farachain, in his capacity as Controller of Programmes, ordered that the hit record "The Men Behind the Wire" be censored from the "Disc a Gogan" programme which played the top best selling hits in the Irish charts.

The record was duly censored despite being number two in the Irish hit parade. Following widespread protests Mr. O Farachain allowed the anti-interment song to be played on Radio Eireann where it held the No. 1 position for eight weeks. Someone in Jacobs or in R.T.E. has a sense of humour!

Fish price rigging on the Dublin market

(Continued from page 1)
Co., Clayton Love & Sons, The East Coast Fishing Co. and Thos. Murphy (Dublin) Ltd. Any fish which is sold on the market is the property of the fisherman until such time as it is sold but the fishermen do not receive anything remotely like the retail price charged for their catch.

Figures issued by Bord Iascaigh Mhara, which are quoted on Radio Eireann each market day as the market price paid for fish, are not the actual prices but rather an agreed price which the merchants have jointly decided to report as the average price for that day. A check into Bord Iascaigh Mhara's figures, which are recorded by the B.I.M. market information officer stationed permanently in the market, revealed a discrepancy between the B.I.M. price and the actual prices which the Irish

people had recorded as having been paid for fish on that day. B.I.M. seems to be aware of this as no attempt is ever made to mark up fish prices publicly on the board which is provided for that purpose.

For example, the quoted price for plaice was 6-18½p per pound, a gap of 1p per pound between the actual price while the price recorded for cod, which had sold for between 1½ and 12p was 8-10½p per pound, a differential of 1-1½p. The same discrepancy applied to most other varieties of fish. The lower agreed prices, quoted by B.I.M., is the most which the fisherman can expect to be paid, especially if his catch is not auctioned openly and it is the auctioneer who makes that decision.



● Fishing boats at Howth pier.

A final question for Mr. Keating. Can the fantastic jump in price, between the time the fish is sold on the market and bought over the shop counter, be accounted for by processing and production costs? If it cannot but is found to be pure and outrageously high profit secured by means of the monopoly position which the fish merchants enjoy in the market, what, Mr. Keating, do you intend to do about it?

COUNTDOWN

Limerick

"The employers' statement that they would not feel obliged to pay increases already agreed upon in the last national wage agreement unless the present new proposals are accepted goes dangerously close to blackmail" according to a statement issued by the Shop Stewards' Committee of the Limerick/Shannon region.

Kilkenny

A sum of £16,496,000 will be required to run the health services in the South East Health region, it was estimated by the regional Health Board.

Thurles

Thurles is the venue of the annual general meeting of N.I.T.R.O., the first to be held in the organisation's existence. The A.G.M. will be held on Thursday 28 February.

Galway

Under the E.E.C. farm modernisation scheme over 75 per cent of western farmers will be unable to survive in farming, the County Galway Committee of Agriculture was told recently. Under the terms of the scheme farmers are divided into three classes: transitional, development and commercial and only "development" farmers will qualify for the best grants. Priority in the allocation of land by the Land Commission will also have to go to the development farmer under E.E.C. rules.

Kilbeg

The Kilbeg branch of the National Land League has complained that a picket placed by the league on the Kollan estate at Drakerath was broken by some members of the Federation of Rural workers who continued working on the site. The league is in dispute with the Land Commission, who own the estate, over its proposed allocation of the land of the estate.

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O'Brien again in dispute with a reporter

BY OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Conor Cruise O'Brien's Waterford speech in which he announced his intention to rephrase the clause in the Broadcasting Act referring to the Irish language has landed him in hot water on two fronts.

Many of his Coalition colleagues feel that he has gone too far in taking a gratuitous swipe at the Irish language. And for the second time in three weeks he found himself in dispute with a reporter following the account of his speech which appeared in the 'Irish Independent'. On the previous occasion he had criticised

R.T.E.'s Michael Heney during a radio interview on Radio Eireann's 'This Week' programme.

The too frequent public disputes with reporters is what most worries Coalition supporters. Twice in three weeks almost makes it a habit and an image of Dr. O'Brien as domineering and arrogant has begun to emerge. Another such incident in the near future and the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs will have earned himself an image which could be difficult to shake off. In his difference with the 'Independents' Michael Brophy he accused the latter of "seriously misunderstanding" his speech.

On the content of the speech Dr. O'Brien has got widespread support for his description of Fianna Fáil's language policy as 'ecology' and 'hypocrisy'. But he did give an opening for Conradh na Gaeilge to point out that the average weekly content of Irish viewing is only two hours out of a total of 52.

In his Waterford interview following his speech he said he fully approved of Radio na Gaeltachta. This attitude is seen as highly significant by people interested in the revival of Irish who point to the reopening of Dun Chaoin school in the Gaeltacht in comparison with the neglect of all-Irish education in



• Dr. Cruise O'Brien.

primary schools outside the Gaeltacht. It would seem to confirm that the present Government are treating the Gaeltacht as a ghetto while phasing out any attempt to make Irish the national language once again.

Credit union challenge to youth

The Directors of Blarney Credit Union have thrown out a challenge to the youth of the district. A juvenile section is being formed and will be run by the young people themselves. The guidance of senior directors will be given when required.

The services of the Credit Union will in future be available to residents of the Donoughmore and Greenagh parishes. A decision to extend the common bond was taken at the Annual General Meeting on February 27.

Shares totalling 119,387 were saved by members of the Kinsale C.U. in the nine months up to September last.



• Pat Rabbittie, president, Union of Students in Ireland.

Students leaders allege discrimination

The nine day campaign of students organised by the Union of Students in Ireland ended on February 27 following widespread protests in virtually every organised college in the state.

In a speech at Cathal Brugha St., Kieran Mulvey, Deputy President of the U.S.I., explained that the campaign was concerned with more than just the provision of an adequate grants scheme. It also aimed at highlighting the present discrimination against technological education, he said. He claimed that the Local Authority (Higher Education Grant) Act, 1968, discriminates in its provisions between students studying degree and non-degree courses.

Of 7,000 students in the Dublin Vocational Education Committee colleges only 44 had qualified for grants.

Admission

Speaking on the same subject in Galway Regional Technical College, Pat Rabbittie, President of U.S.I., said that the building of the Regional College in Galway was an admission that the University there had failed to shoulder its responsibility in the area of sub-degree education. "We have no wish to see education serve the narrow needs of industry which serves the few rather than the many."

Industrial expansion must be accompanied by social transformation so that it will serve the many, not the few", Mr. Rabbittie stated.

Strikes in Dublin, Waterford, Tralee

WORKERS AT THE Ever Ready Garage in Donnybrook have been on a strike for more than a week expect a long battle before the firm concedes union recognition and introduces normal industrial relations procedure. The employer's hand is being strengthened by workers who are passing the pickets and working on the repair and servicing of ministerial and ambassador cars which provide much of the Ever Ready business.

Workers employed at Waterford Carpets stopped work on Thursday of last week because, according to a statement, "conditions had deteriorated to such an extent that drastic action was deemed necessary".

The Waterford workers are

demanding (i) the management abide by an agreement that the basic weekly wage rate at Waterford Carpets be brought up to the average rate existing in other concerns on the industrial estate; (ii) that the system of assessing bonus in operation be scrapped and a system based on factory output be introduced; (iii) that canteen facilities be made available to day workers; (iv) that a proper dust extraction system be installed; (v) that a proper communication system be set up between management and worker be created; and (vi) the introduction immediately of a pension scheme promised some years ago.

In Tralee the German-owned Kingdom Tubes has had its first strike since 1969. The firm's production had been regularly interrupted in the preceding decade by strikes, many of them prolonged.

Militant

However, militant resistance to the imposition of the National Wages Agreement in 1970 resulted in a substantial wage increase which brought weekly rates in Kingdom Tubes up to the average of similar employments.

This was not accompanied with an improvement in general working conditions nor with a change in management attitude to workers and the cycle of strikes, official and unofficial, appears to have recommenced.

Workers on strike last week sent a message to the German headquarters of the firm demanding a radical improvement in conditions. Otherwise, headquarters were told, we advise you to remove your plant and machinery because we will not allow them to be used".



• Ambrose McInerney



• Dan McInerney



ST. JAMES'S GATE
DUBLIN 8
8th February, 1974.

Abatement for State Contributory Pension

You know that, in accordance with the Rules of the Pension Scheme, Guinness pension is abated when the pensioner becomes entitled to and receives State Contributory Old Age or Retirement Pension. Unemployment Benefit, when claimed in lieu of Retirement Pension, is not liable to abatement for those who entered service before 30th April 1969.

The State has reduced the qualifying age for Contributory Old Age Pension from 70 to 69 - this change became effective from July 1973. This means that from that time persons reaching age 69 will no longer be entitled to claim Unemployment Benefit but will receive instead Old Age Pension. They will also be eligible for other services provided by the State - free travel by public transport, free electricity allowance and free television licence.

Whereas the Rules of the Pension Scheme permit the Company to abate pensions immediately on becoming entitled to Contributory Old Age or Retirement Pension, the Board has decided that abatement at age 69 will not apply until July 1974. After that date abatement will apply from date of qualification for Old Age Pension, whether that age be 69 or any lower age fixed by the State in the future.

We have in operation a system whereby we notify individual pensioners in advance when they become entitled to State Contributory Old Age Pension. The reason for this advance notification is to remind each individual that Old Age Pension is taxable income, and must be included in the annual return to the Inspector of Taxes. Those approaching age 69, and who will shortly be entitled to Old Age Pension, should make sure to advise the Director of Taxes and thereby avoid a build-up in tax liability. Mr. Booth and Mr. Menzies or Mr. Smith of this Department will be happy to assist you in this matter.

P. Gallagher
Manager Personnel Services

• The letter sent by Guinness to the company's old age pensioners.

The Guinness O.A.P. bonanza

The decision of Richie Ryan, Minister for Finance, to reduce the qualifying age for Old Age Pension from 70 to 69 from July last year was widely welcomed.

As the accompanying letter signifies the change was noted by Arthur Guinness, Son & Co. (Dublin) Ltd.

This letter was received recently by a retired worker who, in his own words, had given "40 years' loyal service in Guinness Brewery". He will be 69 this year and the company is anxious that he should be informed well in advance of his entitlement to O.A.P.

Guinness will of course deduct the equivalent of the O.A.P. (£7.40) from the contractual pension being paid to their former "loyal servant". It would be interesting to know just how many £7.40s will be saved to Guinness and other companies by Richie Ryan's reform of last year.

The company, public spirited as ever, does its duty before taking the £7.40 cut. The pensioner is informed of his obligation to inform the Inspector of Taxes of his O.A.P. entitlement.

The pensioner in question has what we consider a fairly pertinent suggestion.

"It's about time the Trade Unions took this matter up remembering that the workers of today will be the pensioners of tomorrow", he says.

The Guinness Annual Report for 1973 shows that the group's pre-tax profits reached a tidy £25.7 million. Reporting this, the Chairman and 26 County Senators, the Earl of Iveagh, spared a thought for those who had retired from service with the group. "We send best wishes for their future happiness", he said.

A. A. protest

A major anti-apartheid demonstration is being held outside the Irish Rugby Football Union headquarters, Lansdowne Road, on Friday, March 1.

The demonstration, in opposition to the British and Irish Lions Rugby team's proposed tour of South Africa, will commence at 5.30.

Call for full health deal

A call for the urgent provision of a comprehensive free health service has been made by Mr. Joe Sherlock of the Sinn Féin Ard Comhairle and Mallow U.D.C.

"Until such time as this is provided", said Mr. Sherlock to the Cork City and County Regional Sinn Féin Executive, "we should press for the provision of the present benefits without any means test and call on the Minister for Health to use the powers vested in him under the Health Act 1970 to make regulations specifying the classes of persons deemed to be fully eligible for health services".

Supported

Mr. D. Doherty supported Councillor Sherlock's call and said that because of present inflationary trends the existing income limit "is insufficient in many instances to allow ordinary working people to become eligible for Medical Cards".

Had the National Wage



• Joe Sherlock, Mallow U.D.C.

Agreement proposals been accepted, said Mr. Doherty many more workers could have been rendered ineligible by very marginal amounts. Officers elected to the Executive were B. Madden, Chairman; Bert Twomey, Vice-Chairman; S. Hayes, Treasurer; John Madden, Organiser; John Kelleher, Education Officer and W. N. Sandham, Secretary.

N.E.E.T.U. rejects agreement

By a three to one majority the 16 Dublin branches of the National Engineering and Electrical Trade Union have rejected the revised National Pay Agreement.

Dublin branches of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union have also rejected it. Their decision was unanimous.

A call for the postponement of the vote on the national agreement until details of the promised income tax reliefs are announced in the Budget has come from National Income Tax Relief Organisation.

N.I.T.R.O. protest marches scheduled for Saturday at Tullamore, Carlow and Limerick will go ahead as planned.

ACTA GROUND RENT CENSUS

- (1) Name and address of the landlord.
- (2) Number of house sites liable for ground rent.
- (3) Annual amount paid on each such site.
- (4) The number of years over which ground rent has been paid.
- (5) (a) The number of ground rents (if any) bought out.
(b) Amount paid per house on such sites.
- (6) Any other action taken, e.g., attempts to buy out ground rents; refusals to pay ground rents, etc.

TYMON BAWN ESTATE, TALLAGHT, DUBLIN.

- (1) Henry Hunt Ltd. Directors of this company are Dan and Ambrose McInerney.
- (2) & (3) 750 houses paying £18 ground rent each. Approximate annual total collected = £13,500.
- (4) Being collected between one and three years as houses built. Approximate total collected to date = £20,000.
- (5) No ground rent bought out.
- (6) Company offered to sell at 7 times the annual rent with no legal fees to be paid by residents.



● Michael O'Leary, Minister for Labour: I fully accept the authenticity of that democratic decision.



Leaders lose credibility

By Denis Foley

Can a Union leadership which threw up its hands in horror and said "we have no mandate to participate in new National Pay Talks" when workers rejected proposals for the 15th Round at the end of January and which can now recommend "new" proposals which it had no part in negotiating retain any credibility?

The question might not be answered on March 7 when a special delegate conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions meets again but the signs of stress should begin to show shortly afterwards. Irrespective of whether a YES or NO is said to the 'Federated Union of Employers' latest offer on March 7 the Trade Union Movement will be a house divided against itself.

A "YES" vote will mean that the workers have been forced by three weeks incessant propaganda to accept something which shows only a minute improvement on what was overwhelmingly rejected in January.

A blinkered horse will have been dragged to the watering place and liquid forced down its throat.

A "NO" vote will mean that the Trade Unions will have to pursue the demands of their members. And these claims will be pursued by Union leaders convinced that workers should have accepted the National Agreement proposals. With what conviction will these leaders "convince against their will" press the demands of union members?

But if a "YES" vote emerges it will be as a result of a ploy which boomeranged once, being more neatly utilised on the second occasion. It will be remembered that some days before the January rejection a much ballyhooed meeting between the I.C.T.U. leadership and the Minister for Finance brought headlines about imminent tax reform legislation being promised. It took less than a day before it became clear that if tax reform was promised it certainly was not a promise

of an increased tax-free allowance to wage earners. Workers who were dithering quickly made up their minds and said a vehement "NO" to the wage proposals.

Now two weeks before the crucial March 7 I.C.T.U. decision the ploy is tried again. Nothing is left to chance on this occasion. Despite Richie Ryan's statement to the National Income Tax Relief Organisation that he could not breach "budget confidentiality" by giving a definite promise of an increase in the Tax-Free Allowance, the Taoiseach, Mr. Liam Cosgrave, is able to assure both the Unions and Employers that improvements can be promised in an early budget. "Budget confidentiality" had to be breached so that the definite promise of tax reforms could be used in the propaganda barrage to convince workers to accept the Wage Agreement.



● Senator Michael Mullen: not rocking the boat.

All that workers still have is a promise. The National Income Tax Relief Organisation was quick to note this and asked that the Minister for Finance should specify the amount of the proposed minimum increase in personal tax free allowances immediately. Otherwise N.I.T.R.O. asked that voting on the National Wage Agreement should be deferred until after Budget Day.

Did the Unions similarly note that what was being offered amounted merely to a promise. Did they request specific details of budgetary intent? Did they recommend that voting on the National Agreement be delayed until workers had an opportunity of seeing the pig in Richie Ryan's tax ploy?

Not on your life. Like greyhounds released from traps they bayed and they bayed. "Accept", "accept", became the cry. The Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, through its secretary Senator Michael Mullen, followed the tax promise with a strong recommendation that



● Liam Cosgrave: "a special sense of fellowship."

members should accept the Employers' offer.

"The N.E.C. (National Executive Council) points out that the agreement will be of a short duration, one year, during which the trade union movement will have the responsibility and the opportunity to determine a future economic and social programme in consultation with all I.C.T.U. affiliated unions."

The I.T. & G.W.U. is around long enough to have had "the opportunity to determine a future economic and social programme" but the "responsibility" which it has displayed up to now has been one which spelled "don't rock the boat".

And top-heavy with "responsible" Senators and "responsible" commissioners could they be otherwise? What is the betting against a Resolution Number One to outdo all the previous Resolutions Number Ones for this year's Annual Conference agenda in Co. Donegal?

The W.U.I. led by the "no mandate to negotiate" president of I.C.T.U., Denis Larkin, did not even wait for the tax promise to issue its "Accept" recommendation. The unions came in right on cue in the well orchestrated propaganda scheme. First the employers, then the politicians and finally the unions — appears to have been the order of the score given to the public relations conductors.

The major speeches from the Taoiseach, Mr. Liam Cosgrave and the Minister for Labour, Michael O'Leary. The occasions were not insignificant — Cosgrave to the Annual Dinner of the Dun Laoghaire Chamber of Commerce; O'Leary first to the Annual Dinner of the Institution of Engineers of Ireland and then to that well known body of trade union members and international socialists, The United States Chamber of Commerce in Ireland, at a luncheon meeting in the Shelbourne Hotel.

"In addressing you tonight I

feel a special sense of fellowship", was how the Taoiseach opened his speech to the Dun Laoghaire Chamber of Commerce.

He quoted Dickens's "It was the best of times — It was the worst of times" and tore into a text outlining the virtues of a national wage agreement which, if accepted by workers, would ensure the continuance of the "best of times" for his chamber audience. The chambermen's sense of fellowship with the Taoiseach did not suffer as a result of his speech.

"I believe there are substantial benefits in the concept of central bargaining", Michael O'Leary opened to the Institution of Engineers of Ireland.

Few of his audience grumbled about the absence of a statutory minimum wage or about the plight of the 115 a week wage earner.

Neither did any of the luncheon partakers among the United States Chamber of Commerce in Ireland gathering protest when he



Richie Ryan, Minister for Finance, should specify tax reliefs when "I can conceive of no alternative available to us at the present time which would offer the same prospects of industrial peace, growth in living standards and protection against inflation to that which is available through centralised collective bargaining".

O'Leary spoke to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions shortly after the initial proposals had been rejected. "The rejection of the terms of the proposed National Agreement was a disappointment to me, a disappointment which I have already expressed. Indeed the same disappointment had been expressed by members of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions."

Then a sentence which must have reached the depths of Rualdhri Roberts' understanding heart: "There is no reason in any industry by industry wage bargaining with individual employers with financial rewards to workers varying in degree depending on the particular industry and the ef-

fectiveness of comparability, to disbelieve the conclusion that many workers, who would have been assured of certain and automatic gains under centralised wage bargaining, may not be so fortunate in a bargaining series with individual employers."

During his lecture to the Unions did he mention any intention on his part to legislate for a statutory national minimum wage or any intent on the part of his Cabinet colleague, Patrick Cooney, the Minister for Justice, to make amendments to the law which now deals with pickets as a Minister for Agriculture would handle an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in cattle? Not at all.

The Minister, however, did not query the ballot rejection of the pay proposals. "The ballot is over and I fully accept the authenticity of that democratic decision on the terms of the National Agreement", he said.

He was speaking to men who had no intention of complying with that "democratic decision". This one like many in the past could be overcome by the extra fifty pence and a promise, the "organised by Flanna Fall" rumour will go out again.

But Flanna Fall cannot be blamed for the rise in the cost of food and fuel news of which shares the headlines with the "accept the pay agreement" propaganda day day out. Fifty pence and a promise will not pay for coal nor will an escalator clause pay for last year's bread.

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But not to worry, a "YES" vote will remove worries about next year's bread. "Yes" means only for a year "during which", according to the I.T. & G.W.U., "the trade union movement will have the responsibility and the opportunity to determine a future economic and social programme in consultation with all I.C.T.U. affiliated unions".

And as well as that the N.E.C. of the Transport "has decided to intensify its campaign in pressing for a total re-casting of the income tax system". The originality of this takes beating.

Who said promises only come from the politicians? Then again who believes that Senators Kennedy, Mullen, Moynihan and Commissioner Carroll are not politicians — some of them disappointed ones? Who, indeed?

It only remains for Liam Cosgrave to express his feeling of "a special sense of fellowship" with them.

The occasion could be a



● Rualdhri Roberts: would have been pleased.

special dinner embracing the Dun Laoghaire Chamber of Commerce and the leadership of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to be held sometime after March 7.

Car men fight

An action committee to fight the closure of three Dublin motor assembly plants has been formed within the automotive section of the Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union.

The closure of the McCairns and Armstrong plants is scheduled by the American General Motors for the end of this year while British Leyland are due to close their plant at Kimmage by April next year.

The action committee consists of representatives from all the motor assembly plants in which the A.T. & G.W.U. is organised. It is expected to liaise closely with the representatives of the I.T. & G.W.U. and the A.G.E. & M.O.U. both of which also have members in the industry.

Workers at the Ford plant in Cork are also likely to seek liaison with the action committee. Ford's plan to build an assembly complex employing 11,000 workers in Valencia, Spain has put a large question mark over the future of their operations in Cork.

Ford is only one of the motor multi nationals which has been attracted by low wage rates, light taxes and anti-worker repression in Spain. British Leyland, Fiat, Chrysler and General Motors are also extending their assembly plants in that country.



● Denis Larkin: did not even wait.

Up and up and up goes the meat mountain!

UP AND UP and up goes the meat mountain! First exposed in detail by the IRISH PEOPLE, the Government's Common Market policy of buying up meat to prevent market prices falling below a certain level has led to the buying up of hundreds of tons of meat each week.

The meat is stored in cold storage in Doncaster, South Kirby and Liverpool in Britain, in Antwerp, Belgium and Rotterdam, Holland.

It is also stored in cold storage warehouses in Cabra, Tallaght and on the North Wall in Dublin.

With each week that has passed since January the Government intake has increased on the previous week's figure. The increase on the latest weekly figures available is almost 100 tons! In the week commencing January 21, 608 tons were bought up. In the week commencing January 28, 648 tons were bought up. In the week commencing February 4, 688 tons were bought up. In the week commencing February 11, the latest week for which figures are available, a total of 779 tons were bought up at "intervention" prices of about 27p per lb. All the time the housewife has

been paying up to 90p per lb. for meat in the local butchers. As a result of the IRISH PEOPLE pressure the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr. Keating, has announced an inquiry into the prices charged by butcher shops. Undoubtedly, there has been profiteering between the wholesale and retail levels and an inquiry in this area will do no harm. But Mr. Keating should not think that such an inquiry will divert attention from the artificial famine being created by direct Government action.

Irony

Indeed, it is ironic to see Mr. Keating, Labour's spokesman on agriculture during the Common Market debate, now having Mark Clinton cover-up for implementing the very policies which Labour condemned during their anti-Common Market campaign. What is Mr. Clinton doing about the high meat prices he is creating week by week as he builds the Coalition meat mountain? He is offering E.E.C. and Industrial Development Authority grants to meat factories to increase their cold-storage plants the



● Mark Clinton, Minister for Agriculture: still storing it away.



● Justin Keating: he campaigned against the present meat policy.

better to store away the hundreds of tons of meat. And even this anti-price policy is of no help to farmers as cattle die in the fields for lack of fodder and grass. The situation in Britain is in sharp contrast to that prevailing here. Up to the end of January, according to official information issued by the Intervention Board for Agricultural Produce in London, a total of only twelve tons of beef had been taken into intervention. The twelve tons came from the North of Ireland.

Will petrol cost £1 per gallon...? How the oil companies manipulate prices

BY JOE MCGARRY, NEW YORK

THE EXXON oil corporation is currently worth 21 billion dollars which is twice the value of Texaco, the second largest oil company in the world. An indication of its size is that the mammoth British oil concern, B.P., is worth just 4.68 billion dollars.

What is more relevant is that in the last full year for which figures are available, Exxon made a profit of 625m dollars in the last quarter of 1973, the period when, allegedly, the Middle East oil situation was severely restricting earnings for the major oil companies.

During a Congressional hearing into the oil industry in the United States last month, Exxon was one of several companies which admitted that it had been stockpiling crude oil since last September, which was a full month before the Middle East war began.

Little wonder is it, then, that the prices to Western consumers have been artificially boosted up in the last two months, for consumers would do well to remember that the first increases attributable to the Middle East situation came in December at a time when it was impossible for the Arab cut-back to have any effect whatsoever.

Generally speaking, consumers both in Ireland and Britain have been conditioned in the last two months to accept the oil prices which have to go up because of the higher prices being demanded by the Arab states. The announcement last Wednesday of a 9p per gallon rise in petrol prices was, therefore, totally expected.

Yet companies like Exxon and Gulf Oil, which dominate the world oil wholesaling business, determined last September that prices would be increased. This fact will be readily testified to by the evidence of the numerous New York stockbrokers who have been recommending their clients to keep investing in the oil companies.

A look at the earnings potential of these companies will reveal just why they are such a "good buy". According to one New York broking firm, the net earnings of the U.S. international and domestic oil companies are

expected to have increased by 40 per cent in 1973 over 1972. This compares with a growth rate of only 2½ per cent per annum between 1968 and 1972 for the international companies and none at all for the American domestic companies.

During the last year the background to the oil industry may have changed quite radically but the oil companies will go on growing just the same. Although they now find themselves in a situation where instead of oil surpluses there are oil deficits which have resulted in higher oil prices, the oil companies have merely maintained their profit margins by passing on the increases to the consumers. More important, they will also charge the consumers more for oil that has been stockpiled since last September.

Irish consumers may have trepidations about having to pay 50p a gallon for petrol. It is likely that by the end of this year the price will be £1 PER GALLON.

Of course, the oil companies have felt the reaction to the current oil situation. Since January 1973 all but one of the major U.S. companies have experienced declining share prices. The exception is none other than Exxon, the giant in the field. Although Exxon's price has remained unchanged in absolute terms, in real relative terms it has experienced a 25 per cent gain on the New York Stock Exchange.

Brokers optimistic

Nevertheless, all the oil companies are determined to restore their earnings levels and hence the increasing pressure for higher prices. It is precisely because of this resolve that New York brokers are so optimistic about the long-term prospects for the international oil companies.

The general view is that increasing prices will mean better earnings for shareholders, even if the overall volume of oil product sales remains static or even falls. The basis for this is that "oil represents an increasingly valuable raw material".

It is anticipated that whereas in 1972 the average American price for crude oil was three dollars 40 cents per barrel, this year it will rise to between six and nine dollars per barrel (a figure of 16 dollars a barrel has been suggested but this is not likely to be a long-term price). These prices would be far higher were it not for the American Government's controls on oil prices but, even so, by December 1974 10 dollars a barrel is likely.

While this is the picture in the United States, a similar situation will emerge in Europe. The three major American bidding up oil prices has already been hinted at by Dr. Henry Kissinger and such a policy will undoubtedly affect price rises already decreed by the OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) states.

It is important to realise that until recently the cost of imported crude oil in the United States was lower than home produced oil and, thus, America was competing with Europe for Middle East supplies. Even now, with U.S. plans for self-sufficiency in oil and energy conservation plants, by 1980 25 per cent of U.S. domestic demand will have to be met from imports.

The Americans realise that a large degree of self-sufficiency in refining capacity will be easier to achieve than self-sufficiency in crude oil production. In order for them to encourage further production, the U.S. internationalists will push up the price both at home and abroad in order to generate an "earned surplus" to finance the exploitation of new fields.

It is evident that the American oil situation is of vital importance to European consumers and particularly to countries like Ireland which are dependent upon the multinational.

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The E.E.C. farm modernisation plan

Is beag duine a léann an m-ion-chlo ar na doiciméid go léir a thagann chuca nó a mbíonn orthu aims a chur leo. Is ionad duine a d'óc go daor as sin, mar nuair a tháinig am na prainne d'headaif a mhalairt de bharr seachas a shl sé a bheith ann a bhaint as.

Is amhlaidh don Farm Modernisation Plan a tháinig on Rialtas tamall ó shin faoi Theoir 159 an Chomhghaird. Beidh trí chineál feilmeirí ann faoin scéim seo: (I) iad siad go bhfuil ar a laghad £1,800 an duine de theacht isteach acu; (II) iad siad a bheith in ann a t-ioncam sin

a bhaint amach ach pian forbartha a ceadúint le cunamh an Rialtais; agus (III) an fuilalach.

Is ionann an fuilalach sa chás seo agus ar a laghad 60% d'fheilméirí beoga orthu go dtéann siad ann.

Ní tada in ann dóibh. Is ar na feilméirí forbartha (II) a bheidh gach rud dírithe, na deontais is mó ag an ráta is ísle. Beidh na feilméirí beoga ar an gcóidhuid, deontais níos in agus rataf is níos mó, má ceadaitear ann ní dó; agus faoi 1978 is doicéid go mbeidh deiradh leath an mbeagán sin féin.

Beidh an mbeagán sin droch-socla as an bPlean. Ach tá rudai eile ann a tháinig an feilméirí beag gan deis forbartha, go praiticiúil. Beidh feilméirí beag ag brath ar an gcóidhuid, deontais níos in agus rataf is níos mó, má ceadaitear ann ní dó; agus faoi 1978 is doicéid go mbeidh deiradh leath an mbeagán sin féin.

Dá bhri sin, fíú má thairgíonn feilméirí beag an praghas is airde ar phiosa talún, rud a bheidh ina mhíoriúil ann féin, ní gheobhaidh sé é; tabharfar d'fheilméirí Forbartha ar phraghas níos ísle.

Mion-chlo

Ní aon amhras faoi ach go leathanófar é seo tar éis tamall go dtí go mbeidh an ceangal ceannach ar an talamh uilig a thagann ar an margadh.

Ar aon nós, os rud é nach dtabharfar aon chinamh chun talamh a cheannach, is annamh a thairgíodh sé go mbeidh feilméirí beag sách acmhainneach le tabhairt faoi ar chor ar bith. Sin cuid den mion-chlo.

Dream eile mbeidh sé ri-dheall orthu aon cheart a bhaint as seo ná iad siad a mbíonn idir lascaireacht agus feilméirí beag ar bun acu. Caitfidh ar a laghad leath a dtéacht isteach a theacht on bhfeilméirí. Conas a chruthóidh a leithéid aon ní mar sin nuair a bhíonn síor-atrú ann ó bhliain go bhliain ag brath ar an aimsir, ar an margadh agus ar an ádh?

Tá Comhairleacha Réigiúna ar siúl le tamall ag na Comhairleoirí Talamhaíochta agus tá easaontas mór eatartha faoin scéim seo uilig. Feiceann siad obair a saoil ag dul le gaioth má bhrúitear na feilméirí beaga amach. Tá cuid acu ag bagairt reábhóirí, ach ní dhéantar iarracht ar leas a bhaint astú féin chun daoine a scrios a bhfuil a saoil caite acu ag cuidiú leo. Cuid den dream ag chuma leo, b'fheall leo post oifige i gcannas nua an I.F.A. nó sa Buiséad. Ní ar dhaoine atá a-nírd siad. Ní deiradh cloiste faoi seo go fóill ná baol air.

DROGHEDA RENT CLASH

A clash of opinion between Brookville Park Residents Association and the Drogheda Anti-Ground Rent Association came out in the open at a meeting held by the Brookville Association in Drogheda last week.

The meeting, called by the Brookville Association, demanded a "firm commitment" from Drogheda Corporation for the takeover of the estate in return for an

ending of the ground rent and rates strike by local residents. The Association had issued a statement the previous week dissociating itself from publicity issued by the Anti-Ground Rent Association which had mentioned the Brookville Estate.

Mr. Donnchadh Mac Raghnaill, Chairman of DAGRA, in a letter to the Drogheda Independent, stated that at no time had he

represented his organisation as speaking for Brookville Residents Association. But DAGRA did speak for the people of Brookville, he said.

"A majority of the people of Brookville had completed application forms and paid a membership fee to the Drogheda Anti-Ground Rent Association", Mr. Mac Raghnaill said.

DAGRA covered the entire town of Drogheda and was open to all who paid ground rent, private resident, Corporation tenant, purchasers and business people.

As Chairman of the organisation, Mr. Mac Raghnaill pointed out, he had a very clear mandate from the residents of Brookville to speak on their behalf on the subject of ground rent.

Mr. Mac Raghnaill, a prominent Sinn Féin personality in Drogheda, went on to allege that the Brookville Association statement was politically motivated.



● Donnchadh Mac Raghnaill: a clear mandate.



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N.B.A. responsible for homes'

shambles



● M. J. Cranley, Director General, Institute of Industrial Research and Standards.

At least two organisations have a very good idea of what went wrong in the Cork housing schemes. One cannot tell what it knows, the other won't.

The most reputable organisation in this country, The Institute for Industrial Research and Standards, was commissioned by Sisk Construction Systems to prepare and furnish a report on the dwellings.

The IIRS did this but are not free to make their findings available to anyone but SCS. Sisks have received a request from Cork Corporation to make the IIRS report available to the Corporation but have not complied with the request. One report of the IIRS, however, did reach the light of day (in THE IRISH PEOPLE). This was the result of laboratory tests on a sample of mild steel pipe which formed part of the central heating system for the dwellings.

The Institute found that the piping was unsuitable for the job and will have to be replaced or, alternatively, a suitable coating will have to be put on it.

To comply with the Institute's recommendation all the piping from boiler houses to 30 blocks of flats will have to be ripped up and replaced or insulated.

The Department of Local Government has denied knowledge of this report. They will still deny knowledge until public indignation forces them into holding a public inquiry into the whole affair.

A number of Cork tenants will be in jail this weekend because of the condition and cost of homes built by Sisk Construction Systems for the National Building Agency in Cork.

The tenants are not responsible for either the condition or cost of the houses. Their crime is that they attempted to take the cloak off one of the greatest housing scandals this country has seen.

Despite the fact that almost £10 million is involved, the Cork dispute was looked upon until recently as a local affair. But now evidence is building up of serious defects in N.B.A. schemes in Finglas, Dublin, Kilmacanogue, Wicklow and Galway which would tend to spotlight the Cork situation as being the tip of a national building scandal iceberg.

It wasn't until July of last year that attention began to focus on the protests of tenants living in the Cork Estates.

Then information published in this paper showed that more than the

question of high rents was involved.

First there was the question of just how much was paid by Cork Corporation to the National Building Agency and thence to Sisk Construction Systems (Cork) Ltd. for the construction of the schemes.

The second figure published in our July article showed that by the half-way stage in the construction of the scheme (August, 1970) the contract price had been increased by almost £2 million to £8,148,233. And for this extra £2 million 18 dwellings less were being built.

The final cost is not yet known. Before the tenant agitation became national news a figure of £10 million was being mentioned. But as the campaign gathered momentum inspired "estimates" of the final cost began gradually to reduce. It had fallen to "less than £9 million" by October last and last week Cork Corporation in reply to a query from

THE IRISH PEOPLE gave the figure as "about £8½ million".



● Mr. John Sisk.

Councillors change tune

One of the greatest barometers of whether a cat is likely to emerge from a bag can be the conduct of local politicians. Their ears are always to the ground and their eyes set on future electoral prospects.

Until last week the members of Cork Corporation (the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Burgess as they are called in Court when tenants are prosecuted in their names) had been uninterested if not hostile to the tenant campaign.

One of the exceptions was Councillor Sean O'Leary (F.G.) who as long ago as 1970 presented a detailed memorandum to the Corporation on the cost of the Mayfield scheme. "An increase of £2 million, one-third of the total cost, is totally unacceptable to me," he said.

Sean O'Leary was appointed by Mr. James Tully to the board of the National Building Agency in July of last year. Since then he has been singularly silent on the whole affair.

He had very little to say at a Corporation meeting last week. Many of his colleagues at last have found their voices and have realised that Local Elections are to be held next June, however.

Alderman Pearse Wyse, T.D. (Flanna Fall) who twelve

months ago described the N.B.A. dwellings at Togher, Mayfield and The Glen as "the best housing in the country" changed his tune somewhat at a Corporation meeting last week.

"The defects in the dwellings are anything but normal," said Alderman Wyse.

Mr. R. Murphy (Fine Gael) declared that the defects found in the dwellings were not matters of simple maintenance but works for major reconstruction, perhaps even razing to the ground and rebuilding.

Mr. G. Carroll (Aontacht Éireann) maintained that it should be easy to compile a list of the defects to be rectified. That work should be found in the report of the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards commissioned by the contractors (Sisk Construction Systems (Cork) Ltd.) and sought by the Corporation but not made available to it. Who was to determine what was attributable to maintenance or necessity for normal repairs? Who was to say what was due to faulty design, workmanship or materials?

What were the financial implications for the Corporation and its ratepayers? If the Minister knew what the extra cost was going to be would he



● Councillor Sean O'Leary

tell the Corporation what it was, and if the Corporation took over the estates and did the necessary work, would reimbursement come from the N.B.A. or their contractors?

Mr. T. J. O'Sullivan (Ind. Lab.) said the Corporation's dependence on the N.B.A.'s expertise had led to this shambles. The Minister was suggesting that the Corporation should now issue a blank cheque to take over the estates and to carry out the repairs without knowing what the final financial outcome would be. Apart from that, the Corporation had not got the manpower to bring these estates up to a proper living standard. "The Corporation is

losing money on rents, the people are living in shocking conditions," said Mr. O'Sullivan who described the situation as "the most ridiculous set-up that has ever thrown into the lap of a local authority". It was a disgrace to modern technology and ingenuity, a slur on the engineering and architectural professions of this country, said Mr. O'Sullivan. The fault, he said, clearly lay with the N.B.A. and its contractors.

Alderman Wyse said the N.B.A. had failed to carry out minor repairs, and the Corporation should not be made responsible for either major or minor defects. It had to be remembered, said Alderman Wyse, that a minor defect quickly became a major one if it was neglected.

The Lord Mayor, Alderman Senator Patrick Kerrigan (Labour) told Mr. Pearse (Labour) that the Corporation had asked the contractors for a copy of the report furnished to them by the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards and had not received a reply.

Mr. Leahy said nobody should treat a city corporation with such discourtesy. The failure of these contractors to supply a report from an independent body looked very badly and suggested that the firm did not wish the Cor-

poration to see the contents of that report. The obvious implication was that the report was not favourable to the contractors.

The Lord Mayor said he had criticised the terms of the contract with the N.B.A. and their contractors, Messrs. Sisk, in the beginning and he was still critical of it.

Mr. P. Clayton, acting city manager, said that every officer of the Corporation was concerned with the situation. The City Engineer estimated a survey to prepare a list of the defects in the N.B.A. houses would take six months and cost about £11,000. The acting city manager did not think that the Corporation could, out of its own resources, bring the houses up to a reasonable standard in a reasonable time.

He told the meeting that a "substantial sum" was being withheld by the Corporation from the contractors. From memory, he said, this amounted to roughly £100,000. Mr. Carroll pointed out that this represented £35 per house, a sum insufficient for even normal maintenance.

The deputy Lord Mayor, Mr. Tadhg Philpott (Lab.), suggested that a task force to carry out repairs in the 800 dwellings should "be a small, compact unit" consisting of "a labourer, carpenter and plasterer".

After the ballot — the bullets still fly

BY OUR
POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT



DID I.R.A. AND U.V.F. hold meeting?

Did the Official I.R.A. and the U.V.F. meet? This remains the unsolved mystery of the election campaign. The mystery can now be ended by disclosing that the meeting did take place, but there are a number of other mysteries to be solved now — why did the U.V.F. deny it took place, and what kind of future relationship can there now be between the two groups?

News of the meeting came from one newspaper only, the Times of London. The story had all the appearances of a deliberate "leak" and many political commentators in the North regarded it as a legitimate piece of electioneering in its timing.

It was, in fact, the only good election move by the Officials during the election campaign — if it was an election move. Whatever it was, the U.V.F. did not like it.

Denial

They issued an immediate denial that the meeting had ever taken place, which the Officials countered by saying that it had and there the matter ended.

It is thought that the reason for the U.V.F. denial was that they had not been previously consulted about the statement. Indeed it is reported that the Official I.R.A. in Belfast were not previously consulted.

If the statement was good

election politics for the Officials it was bad electioneering and worse politics for the U.V.F. As it attempts to assert its authority over other Loyalist groups the U.V.F. cannot look soft on any of the basic principles of Loyalism. A meeting with any Republican group would be regarded as a breach of these principles.

Therefore the only way out for the U.V.F. was to issue a swift denial. This they did and made the Officials look rather embarrassed.

Like one

In a television interview on the whole affair a U.V.F. spokesman repeated the denial. But for a man who claimed that he had never met the Officials he certainly talked a lot like one.

He referred to the Officials as "the Republican Movement" and to the Provisional as "the Provisional Alliance". He understood the difference between the Officials' Socialist Republic and the Catholic Republic of the Provisionals. He was class conscious and he was well informed on southern politics.

If that man has never met the Officials he should make a point of doing so. They have a lot in common. And when he meets them he should tell them how and when to organise a press leak properly.

As the people of the Six Counties turned their attention on Thursday to the ballot, they were unable to ignore the more dominant theme in Northern politics — the bullet. While most political groups fought an election campaign the Provisionals continued fighting their military campaign and now that the spotlight is turned on the other parties, how are the Provisionals faring?

Their campaign continues. About that there is no doubt. But it continues at a greatly reduced level and, like Reginald Maudling, the Provisionals must ask themselves are they maintaining what is to them an acceptable level of violence? In Belfast the level of violence is probably just about right to keep the campaign ticking over. Any less and it might stall. Their main military tactic is still the twofold aim of hitting the British Army and the city centre businesses.

Their hits on the Army are becoming more infrequent. The death of a British soldier in Belfast has become a news item once more. Their record against city centre businesses is somewhat better. This improved record is based on two things: their switch to incendiary devices in large stores as opposed to the more dramatic but more cumbersome explosives, and their switch from using their own drivers to using other (hijacked) drivers to bring their bombs to the target area.

To date no hijacked driver has been accidentally killed while carrying one of these bombs, but it is only a matter of time. When that happens most drivers will prefer to be shot on the spot rather than run the risk of being blown up. Then it is back to Provisional drivers. The arrest of the alleged O.C. of the Belfast command Ivor Bell, is unlikely to have a great effect on the Provisional activity in the city, although there are now more Belfast O.C.s in Long Kesh than there



—Patriot graves.

was in the city from 1922 to 1969. In rural areas the campaign goes on on two fronts. The bombing of rural towns continues, as witnessed in Dungannon and Omagh, and here again the hijacked driver has been forced to carry the bomb to its target.

South Armagh

Along the border the two main Active Service Units continue to thrive. The one in South Armagh has now overcome its initial shock at the death of its former O.C. Michael McVerry, and the recent elaborate booby traps in the Crossmaglen area are evidence of this. In the Strabane area the helicopter raid and the recent gun-battle show that the campaign continues there.

But in both these areas the Provisionals are losing on one important front — publicity. In both cases they have carried out the dramatic and the daring, so that most of

what is to follow can only be an anti-climax. It would take a B-52 bombing raid on Crossmaglen barracks to make the front pages again. The other aspect about border activity is the role played by the southern Army and Garda. Both now play an active role supporting the British Army and already the Garda have been shot at. Admittedly it was above head level, but it is a short step to a shot at or below head level — either deliberately or accidentally — and then the border campaign can fold up.

The Provisional campaign has been compared to a bus running down a hill. The leadership knew how to release the handbrake and initially control its movements, its speed, or its direction, and it continues to career its merry way down the hill of Northern politics. Where and when it grinds to a halt is anybody's guess.

The political terms it should have ended months or even years ago. But if the

Provisionals thought in political terms they would never have started it. And that is where their mistake lies — in terms of politics. They have fought a military war and lost. Now there is little left for them to do but to commemorate victorious battles and fallen heroes. Politically they are all fallen heroes now. That may explain their election boycott.

Rights of arrested persons

The Civil Rights Association have issued a leaflet detailing the rights of arrested persons in the North. Based on a letter written by Fr. Denis Faul, the leaflet gives the answers to the continuing harassment by the British Army in the North, and it has been issued because "every citizen should know their rights, and how best to protect themselves".

The C.R.A. advises arrested people to demand a solicitor as soon as they are brought in, and when asked a question — any question — the reply should be "I want that question in writing and when my legal representative is present, I shall answer your question in writing, when my solicitor has checked it". Those arrested are advised not to hold any conversation with the army or police on politics, the troubles, civil rights, etc. "It is all being taken down and will be produced in court against you."

Challenge

The C.R.A. states that "we believe the R.U.C. are illegally stopping lawyers getting in to see men detained under Section 10 of the Emergency Provisions Act. If this happens to you ask your solicitor to challenge it in court".

Those who have a complaint about their treatment at the hands of the police or army are asked to adopt a four-point procedure: get a medical certificate of your condition; get a solicitor; inform N.I.C.R.A.; make a formal complaint to the R.U.C.

Where was the Republican Club leadership?

For the Republican Clubs the British General Election proved two things — that they have a mandate from the people to continue in politics and that to continue in politics they must learn how to behave in a political manner.

The mandate from the people can be measured in terms of votes cast for the four Clubs' candidates and Mrs. McAliskey. In each case the message is obvious — the support is there. The problem is how to enlarge on that support.

In terms of election politics the Clubs were poor. They were unable to recognize issues which could have been used as election flashpoints and only Jack Brady in West Belfast showed any flair when he challenged Gerry Fitt to a public debate on the issue that Fitt was running a sectarian campaign.

Lack

Although the candidates were personally presentable, usually articulate and often well informed, they lacked the array of supporting advisers, speech writers and other talent which goes to make up a successful election team. They also lacked a few good

personalities. Where was Malachy McGurran, for example, the best known Republican in the North? The British Army certainly knew of their whereabouts as they continually harassed him, but why was the electorate of Armagh not given a chance to vote for him? With an excellent television personality, an impeccable political record and a history of harassment, he would have been an ideal candidate.

Where, too, was the Belfast leadership? Jack Brady was a good candidate, but where were Councillors O'Hagan and Sullivan? Again in Northern politics (as in Southern politics) the leadership escaped the election dragnet.

The electorate, unfortunately, did not escape the political clichés. The Club candidates talked incessantly about "British Imperialism" and "native capitalism" to an electorate which did not understand either term.

The Republican Clubs must learn to speak English — or Irish, or some language understood by the people whose support they seek. The Republican Clubs have a future in Northern politics — but they will have to fight hard to make it a successful future.



● Republican Club candidates at an election press conference last week (L. to R.): Jack Brady (Lower Falls), Michael Montgomery (Derry), Ivan Barr, Tom Moore (Armagh), Hugh Golding (South Down), Sean Kenny and Malachy McGurran.

British gunman trapped!

As fighting continued in Britain last night between rival groups of Conservative and Labour supporters, Ulster troops were flown in to restore peace. The 1st Battalion the U.V.F. arrived in the notorious Kensington area of London just in time to stop a full scale massacre of Labour people and the 2nd Battalion the Provisional Greenjackets came under fire in Birmingham during the night.

The Northern Ireland Prime Minister, Captain Black, said that Ulster people had a duty to protect life and property in Britain, and he said that terrorists on both sides would be smashed.

In a surprise move he banned the British Army and their political wing, the Conservative Clubs, and he has ordered the internment of ten million people in the new luxury prison of Long Kesh-on-Sea.

As the fighting increased last night military sources in Belfast indicated that the crack top division, 1st Battalion Airborne Division, Official I.R.A., may be sent into action in some of the worst trouble spots in Britain.

Although not normally used in non-nuclear wars, this division may be sent to the infamous Wexford-South area, where bitter hand to hand fighting has been going on for over a fortnight.

There was a major con-



● Bishop Tickle: helping with inquiries.

frontation in London last night as the 2nd Battalion the Queen's Own Provisional Highlanders from Crossmaglen moved into billets in Buckingham Palace. The problem was solved when the Commanding Officer, Mr. P. O'Neill, Rnail, sent the occupants on a ten-year tour of the Far East and other missionary magazines. Meanwhile, on the political front, it was announced yesterday that new elections are to be held in Britain with a view to setting up a power-sharing executive at



WHEN I SAY YES TO YOU - I MEAN NO! BUT WHEN I SAY NO TO THE SPECULATORS - BROTHER I MEAN YES - AND YOU BETTER BELIEVE IT!

Westminster. The new supreme in charge of Britain, Mr. J. J. McGarrity, said that when British politics had been reduced to an acceptable level of violence he would consider ending direct rule. The Commanding Officer of the Ulster Troops in Britain, Captain Black and Tan, has jubilantly revealed that his men have captured the leading terrorist gunman, Bishop Tickle, Catholic Chaplain to the British Army.

He announced that the Bishop has been handed over for questioning to their special Religious Investigations Branch, called the U.D.A. A U.D.A. spokesman said last night that he was helping them with their inquiries. PLEASE NOTE: Letter from Long Kesh-on-Sea by William Whitelaw will not be published this week as usual.

BILL FOR PILL

The Government have asked the World Bank for a loan to pay their new Contraceptives Bill. The Bill now stands at £276-4-6. Mr. Cosgrave said last night that the Bill was in old money because the Government had bought old contraceptives.

Senator Mary Robinson said later that this was a load of old hat, but a spokesman for the Irish Medical Association warned that if Senator Robinson's claims were true, then it was not only physically impossible but medically unethical.

Already there is opposition to the Government's plans on contraception. The leader of the anti-contraception campaign, Miss Concepta Murphy, said that the concept

of a contraceptive ridden Ireland was inconceivable. When asked how she felt, she said she never had been.

In a statement supporting Miss Murphy, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Ryan, said that this was something he too was unable to conceive. A doctor later confirmed that he was unlikely that the Archbishop will ever conceive — certainly not in the conceivable future. Dr. Ryan announced that in view of the Government's actions the Church had decided that contraception was acceptable in some cases. Because of this he has decided to place a new brand on the market called the immaculate contraception, which is designed to protect Catholic morality.

Our economics correspondent writes: The announcement of the new bill means that the national debt is now likely to be greater than ever. This is especially so because the homosexual bill and abortion bill have not yet been taken into account. The Government expect these bills through the post tomorrow.

Our Daily correspondent writes: I have just seen the text of the Government's new bill. It introduces a uniquely Irish form of contraception which will keep the population down and remain within the laws of the Catholic Church. It is called emigration. A special indulgence will be granted to all those who emigrate during Lent.

S.F. candidates record

SINN FEIN has ratified a record seventeen candidates for the Wicklow urban and rural districts in the June Local Elections.

Heading the list as a candidate for both Wicklow County and Bray Urban District Council is Seamus Costello, currently a member of both bodies and Chairman of Bray Urban Commissioners.

Also standing for re-election in the Bray urban area is Councillor Joe Doyle. Messrs Matt Heaney and Tony Foley have been ratified as candidates both for Wicklow County Council and Arklow Urban District Council.

The only other double nomination is that of Mr. Bernard Cahill, Bray, who is standing for the Bray Urban District as well as for the County Council.



● Seamus Costello, chairman, Bray Urban Commissioners.

The full list of candidates is as follows: BRAY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL —

Councillor Seamus Costello, Dublin Rd.; Councillor Joe Doyle, Strand Rd.; Mr. Bernard Cahill, Fitzwilliam Tce.; Mr. John McCormack, Old Court Park; Mr. Al Byrne, Fassaroe Park; Mr. John Lowe, Wolfe Tone Sq., all of Bray.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL — Councillor Seamus Costello, Mr. Bernard Cahill, Mr. Seamus Doyle, Monastery Park, Enniskerry; Mr. Derry Kelleher, Hillside Rd., Greystones; Mr. Jim Timmons, Moneystown, Roundwood; Mr. Jack Burke, Glenealy; Mr. Matt Heaney, Arklow; Mr. Tony Foley, Arklow, and Mr. Justin Ward, Parkmore, Balinglass, Co. Wicklow.

ARKLOW URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL — Mr. Matt Heaney, Arklow; Mr. Tony Foley, Arklow.

Foreign Cos. in Ireland

This county by county series is intended to illustrate the degree to which Ireland is dependent on foreign-owned industry.

Name of Company Parent Company in brackets ()	Location	Product	Date production started
Celmac (Ireland) Ltd. (Robert McErdie and Co. Ltd., Denton, Manchester, England)	Wicklow	Plastic toilet seats	1964
Lotus Bryan Chemicals Ltd. (Dr. Schuler & Lange Laboratories, Hamburg)	Rathdrom	Pharmaceuticals	1961
Shanks (Ireland) Ltd. (Shanks & Co. Ltd., Barrhead, Glasgow, Scotland)	Arklow	Vitreous china sanitary wear	1967 expanded 1969
Yeha Ltd. (Parent company not named)	Wicklow	Pressed steel radiators	1956
Waller Adhesive Ltd. (Leicester Lovell & Co. Ltd., Southampton)	Bray	Casein glue	1956

NO. 27 WICKLOW

VIEWPOINT

If any member of the Coalition Government should look to his laurels it is Brendan Corish, the Wexford Labour leader who led his party into an alliance with the most right-wing, reactionary party in modern Irish history.

As the junior, weaker partner in the Fine Gael-Labour inter-party government, it has fallen to Mr. Corish's lot to have foisted upon his men some of the more troublesome ministries of the government.

It is doubtful if Mr. Corish or Messrs. Keating, O'Leary and Tully really knew what Willy Cosgrave was walking them into when he gave them the portfolios for Health and Social Welfare, Industry and Commerce, Labour and Local Government.

How neatly Willy Willy has arranged that all the

CORMAC DUNNE

ire and anger of many sections of the electorate should be directed solely at the Labour men in his government!

Indecent haste

One might be tempted to sympathise with Mr. Corish and his Labour comrades-in-misfortune if one could overlook the fact that he and they walked into their current positions with rather indecent haste, so intent were they on achieving power and attaining positions of political influence and prestige.

Mr. Corish himself must be held responsible for most of the troubles now besetting himself and his colleagues. His political ambitions over-rode all other considerations in entering into a coalition.

His family, now following in his footsteps in Wexford, are displaying the same naked ambitions.

But, as I said earlier, he will have to look to his laurels — and especially in his native Wexford. Denied attention for so long by Fianna Fail, Wexford's weak industrial position now shows signs of total collapse. The town's big industries like Pierce's and the Star Engineering Works are (like the Star) no longer in existence or (like Pierce's) a mere shadow of its former self.

Now the other big employer, Fine Wool Fabrics, is in danger of closure, while Smith's (assemblers of foreign cars where once the Star's agricultural machinery plant flourished) have a mere ten years of life left under E.E.C. regulations . . . if they do not die sooner.

No wonder Labour men in Wexford are asking what Mr. Corish and his pals are doing — not just for Wexford, but for the country!