

The Irish People

AN CHOISMHUINTIR

Vol. 2 No. 29 Price 6p.

FRIDAY, JULY 26, 1974

PROFIT BEFORE PEOPLE

SEE PAGE 5

*... but you don't get another
job on the spot ...*

This Friday 60 workers at Irish University Press will get their first batch of redundancy notices. First National City Bank will give them no com-

pensation. On Page 5 TOM REYNOLDS opens up the corpse of Irish University Press and gives the anatomy of a closedown.

The Irish People
EXCLUSIVE

S.D.L.P. PLEDGE FAILS

The Irish People report on Austin Currie's dismal record (14/6/74) as Housing Minister in the defunct Northern Executive (subsequently carried by the U.V.F.'s magazine *Combat*) has been followed by a series of explanations in the Northern press as to why young Currie failed to cope with the North's falling housing production. The magic figure of 20,000 new houses per year was the S.D.L.P. election pledge, but last year Currie barely scraped past 50 per cent of the promise; only 10,500 dwellings were erected.

The main cause for this failure was attributed to the bombing campaign of the Provisionals and the general violence in the North.

But a brief look at the last annual report of the Housing Executive — the North's sole agency for building public authority houses — shows the real reason for the collapse of the home building programme.

"Much of our problem on the completion of new dwellings arises from high building costs. The cost of a typical three-bedroom dwelling put out to contract during the period under review was in the region of £5,500 which will result in weekly loan charges of approximately £11 per dwelling," (our italics).

Income to the Housing Executive for a new dwelling from rent and government subsidies totals £3 and when maintenance and management costs are taken into account the net loss to the Executive is £3 for every new house completed.

The accounts for '72/'73 show that nearly £20 million was paid out in loan charges. In other words, all tenants' rents go ultimately to meet the high interest charges of the British banks who finance house-building programmes in the North. At the present time the Housing Executive is faced with the responsibility for the repayment of loans to a total value of over £300 million.

The high cost of borrowing money for the new housing programme is the real reason for the drastic fall-off in home production.

In spite of election promises to push up housing production, A. Currie of the S.D.L.P. refused to move against the British banks who are draining the housing fund dry. And it is his inactivity while in office which will enable the completion of the rent rationalisation plans to be introduced this winter.

This will definitely bring rents to the £10-£12 per week mark over the next 18 months.

The Provisionals' "economic" war has not altered this situation in any way except that the increase in sectarianism it has caused is making it more difficult for the mixed religions Tenants' Associations to act in a unified way to oppose the soaring home and rent costs.



Mr. Currie has announced a review of Departmental policy for the encouragement of home ownership.

"Every new private house completed", he said, "is one problem less for the Housing Executive. I would go as far as to say that the greater the proportion of private houses built, the lesser the danger of social instability in the community."



Tallaght case cover-up

The Gardai have been instructed to do a cover-up job on the Tallaght hit-and-run case featured in THE IRISH PEOPLE last week. News of the cover-up was telephoned to our office by a sergeant in the Garda Press Office on Friday last. Confirmation was received from Garda Public Relations on Monday. The order for the cover-up was "handed down", to the Garda Press Office, according to this source.

As reported in our story last week we had put the following questions to the Gardai in connection with a hit-and-run which occurred on December 13, 1972:

(1) Was an appeal for witnesses to the accident broadcast and published in the newspapers? (2) Was the car apprehended? (3) How long after the accident was the car got? (4) Who was the owner of the car? (5) What was its registration number? (6) Were the papers on the case forwarded to the Attorney General?

These questions were telephoned to the Garda Press Office on Thursday, July 11. The Garda answer, telephoned to our office on Friday last, July 19, was "IT IS NOT THE PRACTICE OF THE GARDAI TO FURNISH DETAILS OF THEIR INVESTIGATIONS EXCEPT TO THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED, OR THEIR LEGAL ADVISERS."

See Page 7

The Irish People

An Choismhuintir, Friday, July 26, 1974.

SHIPYARD

There was a famous Belfast Roman Catholic aphorism, "There will never be peace in the North until the grass is growing over the shipyard".

The sentiment was understandable, if incorrect, as it was in the 'yard that the first signs of sectarian trouble manifested themselves in the '20's and '30's. Roman Catholic workers, of which there were but a few, were lucky if they managed to duck the rivets flung at them from the gantries as they swam desperately in Belfast Lough.

It is ironic now that it should be Mr. Stanley Orme, the Minister of State for the Six Counties, who announced the virtual nationalisation of Harland and Wolff. Mr. Orme is well known for his support for the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. A body pledged to end religious discrimination and promote democracy in the North.

That the rescue operation was mounted by a British Labour Government whose spokesman is a 'Civil Righter' must surely make the more conscious workers in Harland's think.

At the same time there can be no complacency as regards the future of Belfast Shipyard. The British Government by the end of this year will probably have invested something like £100 million in the industry. It seems a large sum but compared with Concorde a pittance.

Can the yard survive the intense competition from Germany and Japan? Can it do so inside the EEC which seeks to rationalise industry at every opportunity? This is extremely doubtful.

There is food here for further thought among the men whose jobs are threatened. In what kind of Ireland can the shipyard survive? In an Ireland tied to Britain and the EEC? There could yet be grass in the building docks.

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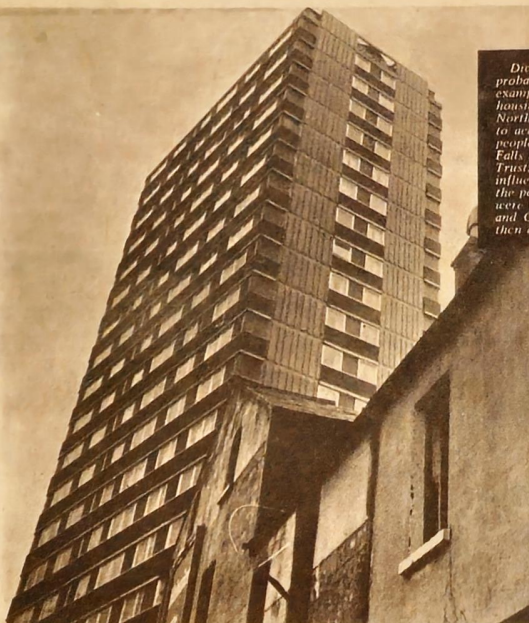
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Divis Flats, Belfast is probably the worst example of post-war housing in the whole of Northern Ireland. Built to accommodate the people of the old Lower Falls by the Housing Trust, the main influence which made the people accept them, were Gerry Fitt, M.P. and Canon Murphy, then of St. Peter's.

NO LIFT OFF HERE

The residents of the Divis Flats complex, Belfast, have for the past three years trudged up and down the stairs of the five- and seven-story maisonettes. The lifts are constantly breaking down. It is only in the twenty-story tower block that a reliable service is maintained.

According to the annual report of the Lower Falls Residents' Association, the "lack of lifts was a cause of great distress to residents, especially young mothers and elderly people". The report adds, "many residents who suffer from heart ailments, poor eyesight, asthma and other illnesses have been unable to move outdoors for shopping, etc. owing to the lifts having been out of order".

The extreme case is link Number 2 where the lifts have not worked for the past five years.

The Housing Executive — the semi-state body now responsible for all housing in the Six Counties — is openly accused by the Lower Falls Residents' Association of having "failed to honour its pledge to have all lifts restored to working order".

Still, the Housing Executive planners have their own problem with lifts. Recently, in its new plush offices in Shaftsbury Square, Belfast, Executive architect Seamus O'Reilly casually summoned a lift and when the doors opened he equally casually stepped in. Not into the lift, but into the lift shaft.

Fortunately, Seamus was on the ground floor at the time; he ended up a few feet down with relatively minor injuries, undaunted faith in the Housing Executive and three weeks' leave.

The lesson for the Housing Executive and its architects is that barrack-type flats and maisonettes served by undependable and easily vandalised lifts are no answer to the housing problem.

Where they do exist, as in Dublin's Ballymun and Belfast's Divis Flats, as the Lower Falls Residents' Association points out, the lifts should be manned by local people paid by the appropriate Housing Authority.

LETTER

Hotel wage rates

Dear Ann Devlin,

I read with interest your report concerning the wages offered to waitresses in a Dublin hotel.

I am a student and wish to work in Ireland for the summer. In Padraic's Cafe, Arran Street, Ballina, for a position as a kitchen help. I was offered £8 for a 52½-hour week. This happened on the 11th

July when I telephoned the establishment.

I was asked to work from 10 a.m.-1 a.m. (15 hours) on alternate days. This means I would have to work seven days a fortnight or 3½ days per week. I would get a rise later if I was good! This is not the only enterprise in Ballina that offers such disgraceful conditions, and young girls are willing to work at these wages because there is so much competition for work.

Congrats. on producing an independent newspaper. The provincial newspapers do not publish any articles concerning the plight of poor workers. They have sold their souls through their dependence on advertising revenue.

You may publish the above incident if you wish.

Maureen Langan,
Carrowmore-Lacken,
Ballina.

COUNTDOWN

Ballinasloe

St. Brendan's Terrace has seventy-four children under the age of fourteen years but there is nowhere for them to play except the street. That is just one of the many problems over which St. Brendan's residents are up in arms with the local Council. Other complaints are that houses have not seen a touch of paint in nine years, the streets are often unswep and wiring in the houses is obsolete and possibly dangerous. Tenants are also seeking a thirty-mile per hour speed limit throughout the area, but have accused the local Council of lack of co-operation in dealing with their requests.

Louth

The Louth County Manager was getting a full-time fire service for 6p per hour, Mr. Liam McCarthy, organising secretary of the POAA, said when announcing the decision of Louth's part-time firemen to strike.

The dispute over pay and working hours has been simmering for some months with the firemen, at present paid at the rate of £3 per fifty-three-hour week, seeking an increase of £20. Conciliation talks at the Labour Court ended in stalemate as, according to a union spokesman, the County Manager "would not concede a penny".

The entire fire service of Drogheda, South Louth and East Meath will be knocked out by the strike, leaving only skeleton crews to man the service.

Drogheda

The campaign to save the Stameen parkland area as a public amenity centre got under way with the collection of two thousand signatures to a petition which is to be sent to the Minister for Local Government. The "Save Our Stameen" committee also intends to hold a public meeting and slide show of the threatened area to recruit public support for the campaign.

Permission for the construction of a housing scheme on the site was granted by Meath County Council many years ago when it exercised jurisdiction over the area but the land is now part of the Drogheda Borough Area.

Wexford

A number of sit-ins were staged by E.T.U. members in various sub-offices of the E.S.B. in Wexford last week. The electricians took action over a status claim which would involve a higher wage rate for those concerned. Offices in Wexford, New Ross, Gorey and Enniscorthy were among those affected by the industrial action but pickets were not placed on the premises. There was no cut in the current supplied to consumers.

Longford

Following major renovations to their newly acquired premises, Longford Credit Union finally moved into their new headquarters in Dublin Street last week. The four-year-old union enjoys a membership of over 1,000 and has an asset base of £42,000. With the new headquarters even further expansion is expected.

Sligo

"Management are not entirely blameless there" was the retort of Councillor T. J. Higgins, branch secretary of the I.T.G.W.U., to criticism levelled at recent strikers in Sligo Ireland Ltd by members of Sligo County Council. "Too many people are leaning too heavily on the few lads involved in this incident."

Many of the issues at stake in the strike, which cost the Sligo economy £300,000, have been referred to the Labour Court for negotiation.

Ballisodare

Fish-ins, organised by the Sligo branch of the National Waters Restoration League, are to become a weekly event until the end of the salmon season. It was announced in a statement recently. Sixteen salmon were caught in the latest fish-in organised at the Ballisodare fishery, while thirty-one were caught the previous week-end.

When Noah was in his ark it didn't rain for forty days and forty nights. There was condensation and the liquid on which Noah's dwelling floated was condensation. That is the information which Mr. Maurice Clancy of 24 Kilbarron Drive, Coolock is convinced Noah would have received from Dublin Corporation had he contacted them in connection with the moist conditions surrounding him.

Because Mr. Clancy has for a considerable time been living in pretty moist conditions. He has been advised by doctors that in the interests of the health of his wife and four children he should leave them. Two of his children suffer from serious chest ailments, his wife having recurring bouts of pneumonia. Doctors have told Mr. Clancy that dampness in his corporation house is responsible for his family's ill-health.

Mr. Clancy has informed Dublin Corporation of the doctors' advice. The Corporation confirms that a transfer application with supporting medical evidence has been taken by Mr. Clancy but that this evidence is not sufficient to warrant priority or emergency attention from their Housing Department.

When Mr. Clancy first noticed the dampness at his home he assumed that the new house was "drying out". However when it did not disappear he contacted the corporation, the health of his family was deteriorating, furniture and clothing was being destroyed.

The public relations department of the Corporation confirms that Mr. Clancy has been in touch with them for some considerable time. However a thorough examination has left them "quite satisfied that the dampness is due to condensation". Measures have been taken to remedy it in part of the house and work is being "extended which will eliminate this complaint". Their examination showed the structure to be sound and there was no seepage of any description.

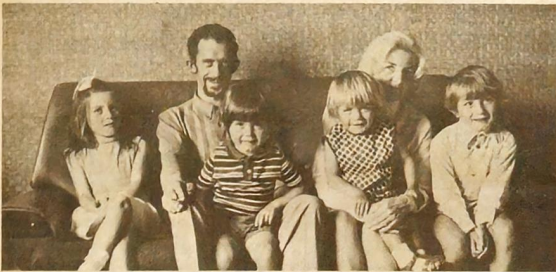
An Irish People reporter who called to the Clancy home found that the Corporation were taking fairly extreme measures to eliminate the "condensation". The plaster had been removed from one wall some time ago but the remedy consisting of an underlay of felt (1/8" thick) coating and new plaster had not rid the Clancys of the "condensation". Our reporter was shown furniture and clothing covered by blue mould and also noted that beds in the rooms could not be placed beside the damp walls.

The Kilbarron houses were built for the Corporation by M.F.N. Construction Co. Ltd. and McInerneys.



Complaints of serious defects in recently built houses continue to flow into our office. The Clancy home featured this week is the only one in the Kilbarron scheme which appears to have serious defects.

NEW HOUSE IS HAZARD



Tallaght oil strike!

A referendum being conducted by the Bolbrook & Avonmore Tenants' Association is almost certain to result in more than 500 Corporation tenants at Tallaght deciding to withhold oil rental payments from the Malone Oil Company.

The tenants are totally dependent on oil for heating and the weekly rental being paid to the Company has risen from £1.25 to £3 per week over the past nine months. The rental has to be paid every week, winter and summer.

After a huge meeting of tenants association chairman, Mr. Paddy Loughney, said the feeling expressed there was totally in favour of strike. "It was nothing short of immoral," he said, "to see the vast profits being made by oil companies who were crying to the public about their hardships to make ends meet." The Government should introduce the full rigours of a wealth tax in this particular area and give some relief to the already overburdened working class, he added.

The meeting also directed the

Association to attempt to halt the E.S.B. from entering into homes to cut off electricity supplies from neighbours. The E.S.B. invasion has been occurring at blocks of all-electric flats in the area where some tenants are unable to cope with huge increases in E.S.B. bills.

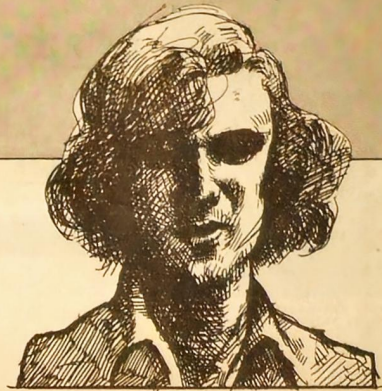
"The E.S.B. has told us they are entitled to enter homes to cut off supplies from neighbours," said Mr. Loughney, "but as far as we are concerned no person has the right to invade our privacy."

The Association is also to demand removal of the Fuel Variation and V.A.T. charges from E.S.B. bills.

Mr. Frank Duffy, association secretary, said it was time both the E.S.B. and the oil companies realised tenants can carry out very effective campaigns to right a wrong as had been proved in the differential rents dispute.

The General Secretary of N.A.T.O., Mr. Matt Larkin was present at the meeting.

The Irish People PEOPLE



BRIAN KENNY

For the best part of a year home to Brian Kenny has been Northumberland Square, a tiny pocket of houses directly off the busy Abbey Street thoroughfare. Once a tightly knit working class community had lived there. It was destroyed when the Irish Life Assurance Company Ltd. moved in to develop the area and prevailed on the residents to leave. As part of the Simon group Brian had tried to create another community in its place, a therapeutic home for the various drop-outs and 'dossers' with whom Simon is involved. Now it too has been destroyed and in Brian's "opinion" Irish Life don't care if they destroy Simon into the bargain, in order to acquire the area for their development.

Looking back on last year's experience Brian feels that Simon were used by Irish Life as an unofficial security group to guard their empty houses and as their usefulness came to an end, so also did the charity of one of Ireland's major assurance companies run its course.

The houses in Northumberland Square were offered to Simon about a year ago under a Caretakers Agreement whereby Simon undertook to vacate the houses at a week's notice when required. Desperate for houses in which to carry on their work and overcrowded in their existing premises Simon jumped at the opportunity and accepted. What they didn't realise was that regardless of the measure of success they enjoy in creating their community and the psychological effects on their 'residents' at having to leave, under the terms of their agreement out they would have to go.

Now one year later, they are faced with the dilemma of whether to accept the ultimatum and leave what were sound, well-built houses

to their destruction or to hang on in the hope of saving the area as a living community.

Two lines of thought have been thrown up by the problem. Those, who for understandable reason, feel they should abide with their original agreement are caught in a trap. The Caretakers Agreement requires them to ensure vacant possession of the houses but to do so they may have to prosecute their own colleagues who have decided to stay in the hope of saving the houses. And while Simon, established to give practical help to the helpless, the dossers, the winos, the alcoholics, is in danger of tearing itself apart over the predicament Irish Life stays in the background, waiting for their houses.

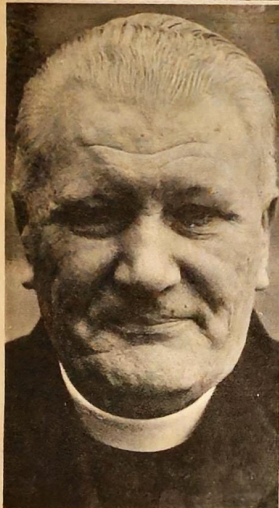
Brian is one of the group who decided that "We wouldn't be used like that by Irish Life, as a security group, and it would have been wrong just to walk out of the houses". So they stayed.

Some of the houses have been demolished around them and they now hold onto a dwindling island of standing houses. Their 'residents' have been scattered and the major Simon workforce has moved out with them to carry on their work elsewhere. Seven others remained with Brian whom they elected to speak on their behalf. They are not altogether sure what they will do if evicted by Irish Life. They want to carry on their work for Dublin's drop-outs, people whom they know and like and that is their main concern.

While we were talking the slates were being removed from a number of houses on the opposite side of the square.

The time for charity is at an end.

PEIGIN DOYLE



Canon Murphy whose Church is attended by many of the Ballymurphy poor.

Poverty

amazes

French

"It is a terrible contradiction — the Church is so rich and the people are so poor, in Ballymurphy, Belfast, for example, such an elegant Church and the people so poor, so poor." So said Madame Valayer Dora, Protestant Minister and Secretary of the National Commission of the Reformed Churches, France, in Dublin last week before returning home.

Madame Dora led a party of 17 French visitors on a fortnight's visit to Ireland. The group comprised trade unionists, left Roman Catholics and Protestants the French Communist Party and

MLAC, whose members are especially concerned with contraceptive law reform.

During their stay here they met a wide spectrum of individuals and organisations including the UDA & UWC, Republicans, NICRA and many Trade Unionists.

Many of the party wish to return to see more of the country. On this occasion they visited Belfast, Dublin, Newry and Derry. Madame Dora and her two colleagues who called with the Irish People felt most at home in Derry, although they felt that "British Army oppression in Derry was terrible".

DUBLIN DOCKERS FOOLED?

The old union head office policy of "keep them voting until they vote right" has paid off again. This time on Dublin's deep sea docks where the docker section of the Marine Port and General Workers Union have accepted a "revised" Phase 2 decasualisation Scheme negotiated between the Union and the Association of Master Stevedores.

The Scheme now accepted is little different from that rejected in April. As well as eliminating earnings for "dirty money", "hardship", "dunnage hours" and "waiting time" the revised scheme contains proposals for the implementation of disciplinary and negotiation procedures which the majority of dockers considered repugnant and unworkable when voting last April.

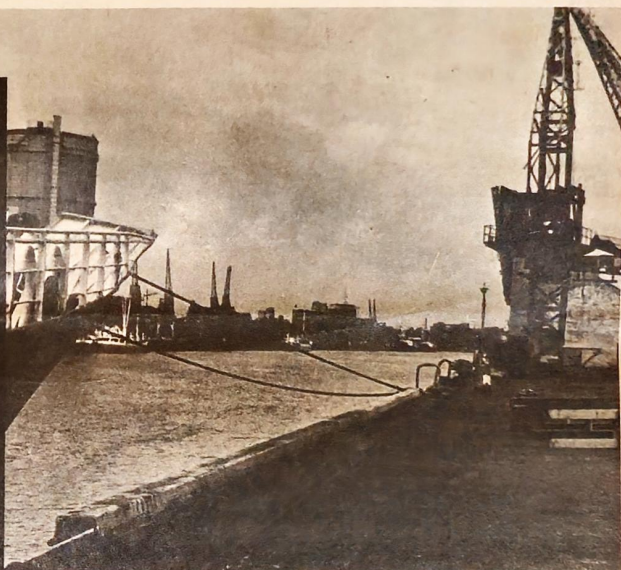
The apparent volte face might be explained by the fact that little time was allowed dockers to consider the contents of the amended proposals. Seminars were held to explain the original proposals and the dockers had some weeks during which to consider them. On this occasion the dockers were presented with the "amended" proposals only two days before the decision was taken.

Just over two-thirds of the dockers attended the Union meeting at which the final decision was taken. The small attendance is attributed in part to dockers being urged over the Ducks public address system to attend a Regatta in Bray on the day on which the vote took place. The voting on the proposals was 288 for, and 109 against. There are 600 dockers involved.

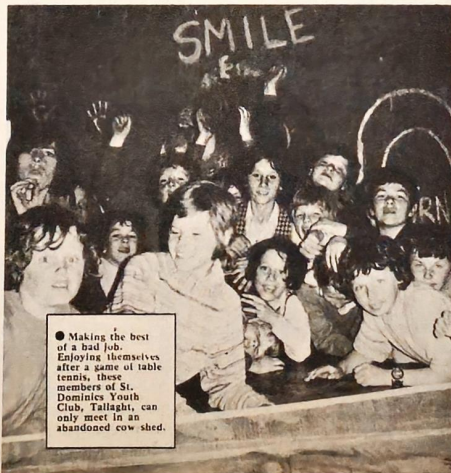
Acceptance of the proposals will be particularly pleasing to the Association of Master Stevedores. The Association's outgoing Chairman, Mr. B. W. Lynch, made no secret of his disappointment when the original proposals were rejected. He felt that they had been rejected because seminars held to explain their complex contents "did not apparently have the right effect". The rejection of the

proposals left him "basically with the impression that the present union organisation or system may not be adequate for a present-day situation". He felt that such comprehensive proposals should not be the subject of a vote by Union members.

Many dockers will claim that although the M.P. & G.W.U. did not comply fully with Mr. Lynch's wishes they certainly ensured that Union members did not have the opportunity to study and understand properly what they were voting upon.



Planners forget youth



● Making the best of a bad job. Enjoying themselves after a game of table tennis, these members of St. Dominics Youth Club, Tallaght, can only meet in an abandoned cow shed.

The scandal of Fortunestown, the subject of a tussle between community needs and speculative interests, has grabbed the headlines recently.

Another scandal, less dramatic, flourishes in the Tallaght area. The scandal is that in a suburb whose population borders on 200,000, the only place in which the one local youth club can meet is an abandoned cowshed!

The 200 members of St. Dominic's Youth Club, which is the only such facility for the youth of Tallaght's teeming suburbs, struggle to provide recreational facilities in an area which lacks a cinema, adequate sports grounds or a community centre. Their efforts are not helped by the surroundings in which they have to work.

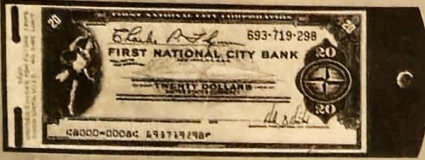
Their current 'clubroom' is a cold draughty shed, standing on a small nettles-filled patch of ground and formerly used to house cattle. In recent years it has been used as a builders' store. In the words of one youthful member "you cannot run anything in it now".

St. Dominics Club settled into this centre when their original clubroom in St. Dominic's Hall was requisitioned for use as a post office for the rapidly expanding area.

They received no form of compensation on their departure and sought around for alternative premises.

Thrown back on their own initiative the club members renovated the old shed and provided a new asbestos roof out of their own funds. Had they been dependent on the efforts of officialdom these two hundred teenagers might still be hanging around on street corners.

What happens in thousands of towns around the world when you lose a First National City Travelers Check?



You get another one on-the-spot.

... but you don't get another job on the spot

The Irish People
EXCLUSIVE

ANATOMY OF A CLOSEDOWN

The Irish University Press close-down is a direct result of a crisis in the property and finance empire of one William Stern, an American who operates from London. Stern also has interests in Britain, France, Belgium, Denmark, Israel, the United States and Ireland. His Irish interests include Cahills, the Government printers, Fallons, the commercial printers, Irish Litho Studios and of course, Irish University Press.

The crisis began on May 17 when Stern's parent holding company, Willstar Securities went into voluntary liquidation. The group had borrowed £212.5m while its assets were valued at £227.5m. Among the banks involved was the American First National City Bank (FNCB) which had loaned Stern £10m.

First National had been involved with IUP long before last May. In December 1969, First National bought 20 per cent of IUP through its subsidiary, The First National Overseas Investment Corporation. It also agreed to provide overdraft facilities. By 1970, IUP owed it £3m. By 1974, nearly £3½m had been repaid by IUP, together with an interest estimated at £¼ million. The original deal had cost First National City Bank £½ million.

But Stern's Willstar liquidation took the guarantee from IUP's overdraft and First National were not slow to make sure every penny was safe. On June 14 First National moved in its receivers, Stokes Kennedy Crowley to get back the £350,000 they were owed. There was no question of keeping the firm going — First National wanted their money.

The arrival of Crowley (who like First National are up to their neck in Irish oil companies finance deals) was the end for IUP, an end that was to be dragged out while an elaborate bluff was played.

Crises are nothing new in the Irish University Press. It was founded in 1967 as a subsidiary of the Cahill group, by a smooth talking Scot, James Mac Mahon. Mac Mahon was a salesman whose main product was himself. He talked another Scot, Ronald Nelson into investing £1.5m in IUP. Mac Mahon envisaged a continuous publishing programme for 30 years. The basis of the plan was to be the massive reprinting of the nineteenth century British Parliamentary Papers. Through editing and selection, the original 5 million pages were to be reduced to 1,000 bound volumes arranged in 82 subject sets. Each set was to sell for £30,000. Mac Mahon's market was to be the university libraries of the world. Mac Mahon's lifestyle matched his elaborate project. For his Dublin visits he acquired a luxurious executive suite and a

penthouse apartment. The furniture in one room cost £2,000. He also had a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce on 24 hour call. A carpet was made especially for the Shannon boardroom at a cost of £1,500.

But the sales performance didn't match Mac Mahon's ego. In 1970 Richard Nixon's war against the Peace Movement resulted in a drastic cutback in the budgets of American University libraries. Mac Mahon's best market was gone. By March 1971, a stockpile of £½m worth of unsold books built up at Shannon. By June, O'Connell Holdings (which then controlled IUP and Cahills for Ronald Nelson) was in receivership.

In December 1971, William Stern arrived at the bedside of the ailing company. His Willstar Group bought it for £1.65m. Mac Mahon left IUP and moved to London, where he registered a company, International University Press, which he claimed would publish the entire Vatican archives. Soon after, he disappeared, having attracted the attention of the Scotland Yard Fraud Squad.

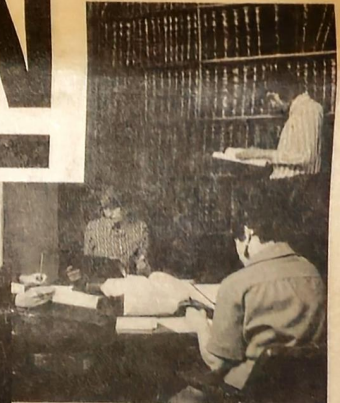
Stern's portfolio, when he arrived in Ireland was worth about £30m. He had broken from the Freshwater Group in America, controlled by his father-in-law, Osias Freshwater, taking with him the First Maryland Bank and the Nation Life Assurance Co. This was the launching pad for Willstar Securities.

On taking control of IUP, Stern began a ruthless drive for profits. Thirty printing workers at Shannon were made redundant. But the militant printing unions forced him to give generous redundancy payments. Stern, then fired Capt. Tadgh McGlinchey, brother of one-time Blaney lackey, Senator Bernard McGlinchey from the Board and joined it himself along with Christopher Gore-Grimes.

These changes seemed to have no effect. In April 1973, the whole printing plant at Shannon was closed down. But once again trade union militancy got a generous settlement. The printing workers insisted that Stern meet them face to face, to discuss final terms. As a result they got the best redundancy settlement in the history of Irish industry.

The closedown at Merrion Sq. was a softer job. The workers had none of the Shannon printers' class consciousness. They dutifully accepted Stern's word that the Shannon closedown would not affect them. They forgot that the First National City Bank was hovering like a hawk. Earlier in the year IUP had established a subsidiary, Millington, to publish 'popular' titles in an effort to boost sales. They were barely on the market, when

● A group from the IUP Indexing Department. In the background are volumes of IUP's most famous produce, the British Parliamentary Papers.



First National sent in Lawrence Crowley's boot boys to root out the loot.

The suave Mr. Crowley first cancelled all staff contracts. His performance at meetings was worthy of Liberace. Flicking ash from his cigar, he whispered to the staff that they were employed by him now on a day to day basis. Smoothing his bouffant hairstyle, he begged for their co-operation. "We are all," he drooled, "in this together." Crowley forgot to mention that he was in it for 10 per cent of all money recovered for the First National — in this case £35,000, plus fees.

The staff swallowed it all. Only 11 out of the 60 were trade union members. Key areas like Sales and Accounts — critical for information during a receivership — were unorganised. The social democrats among the staff wasted time, discussing issues as seen by Crowley and the management, rather than from their own viewpoint. Despite the unsettled history of IUP, they had settled for managerial paternalism. When Crowley emerged on the scene, he didn't even have to walk on the staff; he simply glided through them.

On Monday, July 15, Crowley brazenly told the staff that First National City Bank had totally rejected their request for a redundancy fund. This finally goaded even these willing serfs into action. They withdrew co-operation from Crowley. This being the only language he understands, Crowley hastily said he would postpone redundancy for a week and hinted that First National might reconsider on the redundancy fund. The gullible staff voted to resume co-operation — thus handing the initiative once again to Crowley.

Last Thursday, July 18, Crowley took off the smiling mask. Under no circumstances, he told the staff, would First National set up a redundancy fund. The first redundancy notices would be served on July 26. He then delivered an incredible message from First National. They would award the staff "result related remuneration." As the staff struggled with the exotic phrase, Crowley bade it murkier by explaining it. If, with staff co-operation, FNCB recovered a certain amount of money (unspecified) within a certain amount of time (unspecified) a portion (unspecified) might be made available to the staff. In answer to a pleading question, Crowley said that the reward would be based on "result, not effort." A trade unionist asked Crowley whether it was true that he was asking the staff to sell their labour, not merely for a price, but for a price that might not be paid at all. Crowley sweetly agreed with him, and having disposed of the dialectic, warned the staff that rejection of FNCB's vague deal would mean immediate closure.

The staff, intimidated, demoralised, confused and suffering from managerial paternalism meekly accepted the non-offer of the FNCB.

The lesson of the IUP is simple. Irish industry is dominated by sharks like Mac Mahon, entrepreneurs like Stern, financial monopoly parasites like FNCB and glorified debt collectors like Crowley. Against them those who only have their labour to sell need both class organisation to defend themselves and class politics to guide them. The IUP workers, even at this late stage, can learn to fight. The place to start is the First National City Bank.

TOM REYNOLDS

IN A STATEMENT last week, the Confederation of Irish Industry announced that a specialist group to represent the interests of Irish firms supplying services to the offshore exploration industry had been formed under its auspices.

The new grouping, the Irish Offshore Services Association, has been launched in anticipation of the granting of exclusive exploration licences by the Government this autumn and its aim is to "ensure Irish participation in this activity".

It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that the chairman of the Association should be Mr. B. W. Lynch of Seahorse Ltd., a company which was formed by a consortium of Fitzwilliam, Irish Shipping and the British company P. & O. In fact, P. & O. controls 33 1/3 per cent of Seahorse's authorised capital of £500,000.

Also listing as a committee member of the new association is Mr. R. J. Bunyon of United Dominions Trust, another British based company.

Of the 67 or so companies that hold non-exclusive prospecting licences, only six have an "Irish interest".

Writing in The Irish Times on February 21, Denis Coghlan said: "The six Irish companies have a number of things in common: they have all come into being in the past two years; from 50 per cent to 100 per cent of their shares have been placed privately; their slice in the actual wealth taken from the sea bed will vary from 2 per cent to 20 per cent; they are all controlled by foreign oil companies; and they hope, because of their Irish interest, to receive favourable treatment from the Government."

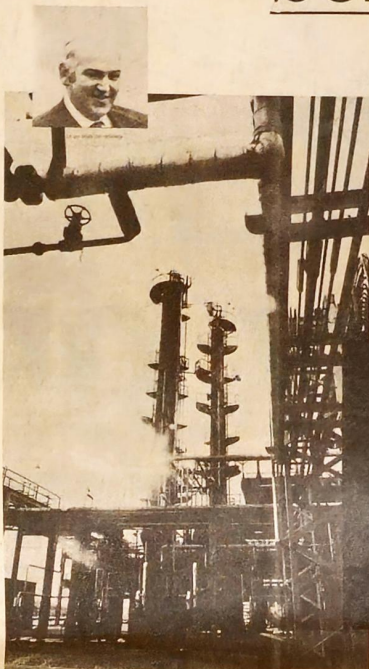
Among the companies listed in this category are Celtic Oil Ltd.; Irish Marine Oil, holding a 50 per cent equity in European Marine Oil (Ireland) and a 5 per cent stake in European Marine Oil N.V.; Irish Shelf Exploration Ltd.; and Petroleum Royalties.

Since then Seahorse has entered the exploration business in a service capacity and Oil and Gas Exploration has decided to get in on the offshore exploration activity.

Of the companies set up to engage in the exploration business, 80 are almost totally financed by non Irish sources. Yet whatever their origins or sources of funds, one thing they all share in common is a belief that there is big money to be made out of exploration in Irish waters. This is a belief which, it seems, is not shared by the Minister for Industry and Commerce Mr. Justin Keating.

While Mr. Keating, to use his own words, is "satisfied that people are not holding back information from us...so there isn't a big oil find", the private companies prefer to base their strategy on stockbrokers' assessments and a considerable amount of

Multis select their men



Informal information supplied by the oil companies that are backing them.

Irish Marine Oil, for example, includes in its backers Ranger Oil of America while Irish Offshore Oil is backed by two U.S. companies, three Canadian companies and a West German Oil company. Among Petroleum Royalties interests are a 20 per cent stake in the Marathon/Esso royalties — and it was Esso that struck oil off the Old Head of Kinsale.

It is highly naive to underestimate the commercial instincts of any of these companies (and Mr. Keating is displaying all the hallmarks of naivety in this respect) or to believe that they equate their interests with those of the Irish public at large.

The oil companies have no national interest and neither have their front companies.

JOE MCGARRY



Will Wilson have the courage?

REMOVE OIL MOGULS

A CALL for the nationalisation of the entire oil business in Britain covering particularly the present activities in the North Sea and the British sector of the Celtic Sea has been made by a British Labour M.P.

Mr. Dennis Skinner criticised the British Government's decision to make only limited moves against the monopolistic position of the oil companies through its plan to take only a majority share in most of the British oil fields while at the same time leaving the oil moguls with a substantial share of the business.

"What is about to take place is a carve up between the major oil companies and the government. This question will have to be dealt with afresh: the oil moguls will have to be removed from the scheme", Mr. Skinner said.

In Glasgow, the Scottish committee organiser of the Communist Party, Mr. Ian McKay said that the British Government's proposals for offshore oil developments fell far short of the measures needed to ensure that this vitally important asset is to benefit the people of Britain.

Mr. McKay said that the only answer to the ills of Scotland and Britain was to end the power and dominance of the multinationals by a determined programme of nationalisation.

Meanwhile, in Dublin pressures are mounting on the Government to state clearly its policy on our offshore resources. Although Mr. Keating, the Minister for Industry and Commerce, has stated that his department is engaged in an intense information gathering process, many interested parties are convinced that it is the Government's intention to follow the British lead and allow the oil companies to retain the giant's share of the wealth generated by offshore oil.

WAGES NOT TO BLAME FOR PRICE RISES

THE CENTRAL BANK in its annual report published last week, places the blame for some, if not all, of the inflation of the last few years on the rise in money incomes and government policies to redistribute incomes to the needy.

While acknowledging that half the rate of inflation last year was due to external factors, the Bank claims that domestic factors accounted for the other half.

Linking the National Wage Agreements — over and above "already large salary and wage increases" — to the Consumer Price Index has, in the opinion of the Bank created a new inflationary influence.

The Bank says that if the Government imposes direct taxes in an effort to curb inflation or to redistribute incomes to the needy, the price increases which result are used as a basis for further pay claims by the high paid workers.

The Report has little or nothing to say about the expansion of credit facilities by the commercial banks, which in itself contributes to a large amount of speculation, one of the root causes of the present inflation, not just in Ireland but throughout the world.

Instead, the Bank concentrates its main attack on the expansion of Government and public expenditure, which the report says, "can lead only to disaster". Expansionary policies could be more effective, the Bank says, if they operated at a lower rate of increase in money incomes and prices, with its emphasis on incomes.

It is the "over rapid" growth in money incomes that is the major cause of inflation, the Central Bank contends.

The present line being taken by the Central Bank concerning wages should not surprise anyone since it is a familiar one. The policy of the economists in the Bank has always been to blame wages for the economic ills of the country which in reality are caused by a get-rich-quick attitude by business interests. The profit returns for the major Irish companies over the last few years show only too well the origins of the inflationary spiral.

AN BEAL BOCHT



A MEETING WITH DANIEL O'FRANKENSTEIN

Scene: Midnight at Daniel O'Connell's tomb in Glasnevin. The evil Dr. Cosgrave and his mishapen assistant, Burke, are crouched with pick and shovel under the flickering light from a Tedcastle coal. Beside them in a cask bubbles the heart of the Liberator on a makeshift operating table.

Burke: Are you sure its here, Teesh?

Dr. Cosgrave: Of course I am you fool. Its in a little casket a foot above him. Buried it with my own hands forty years ago. Hurry up.

Burke: Some one might have found it, Teesh.

Dr. Cosgrave: You mean the mongrey foxes. Aargh. (foams at mouth)

Burke: (hastily) No no Teesh. Go bhfoire Dia orainn. But it might have rotted.

Dr. Cosgrave: Heh heh. You remember what you said in the Dail about copper fastening the Church's position. Well, the object we're looking for is encased with lead from the trousers of the Front Bench of Cumann na nGael. Aargh. Why are your teeth gleaming?

Burke: I copper fastened them too, Teesh. Just for TV Thiarcais, I've struck it.

Dr. Cosgrave: Careful, you fool. Knock the padlock off. Carefully now.

Burke (reverently) General O'Duffy's blue drawers . . .

Dr. Cosgrave: Put them on. Hurry, you fool. Have you got the other things. The contra . . . Aargh . . . captives.

Burke: Hee, hee, of course, Teesh. A quick raid on Willow Park School turned turned them up. Ten of the best Durex . . .

Dr. Cosgrave: Well, put them on, you fool. No not there. On your fingers. Hygiene. Now dig.

Burke: (Whisper) There he is Teesh. The Liberator. God, I better say a little decade . . .

Dr. Cosgrave: Get up you fool. Help me to lift him. Yuk. Onto the table. Now forceps, scalpel. And the heart . . .

Burke: . . . All the way from Rome. Like wing from the Pope (sings) "A Roisin, na biodh bron ort . . ."

Dr. Cosgrave: Not that you fool. He's ready now. Now sing amhran Am Dochail.

Burke: He's moving Teesh. He's alive. He's horrible. D'you think Dermot Breen will cut him out?

Dr. Cosgrave: (Loudly) Arise, Daniel O'Frankenstein. Arise. Go. Kill. Now. Show him the blue drawers, you fool.

Burke: Help. He's chasing me. He's got his hand on my . . .

Dr. Cosgrave: Never mind. To the Atheist of Houth — go. Smash the Family Planning clinics. Root out all the mongrel foxes. Spare nobody under 15,000 a year. Aargh!

Burke: As go brach leat anois . . .

Dr. Cosgrave: Less that of Irish, you fool. Now for the Castle.

Burke: You mean . . .

Dr. Cosgrave: Heh heh. That's right. We're going to bring the Castle Catholic back to life. Aargh.

Stay of axe for Ardee firm

Workers laid off by the closure of Chairs of Ardee Ltd. have been given one month's stay of execution. The Receiver appointed to the firm Mr. Alex Stain, of Kennedy Crowley & Co. Ltd., has given an undertaking not to sell either factory or machinery before the month's grace is up.

This will give redundant workers an opportunity to canvass for orders and to undertake market research in order to gauge the feasibility of taking over the company under co-operative worker control. The results of these efforts will be brought up in future negotiations for government aid for the co-operative venture. There have been no promises made but financial aid from Fair Teoranta is expected if workers can produce enough firm orders to keep the factory viable.

A number of orders have already been received verbally from Irish concerns and personal contact with these and other potential customers will be made in the coming month.

According to Mr. Christy Cunningham, chairman of the newly elected Action Committee in the factory, "If all that was ordered on the telephone proves definite there is a fair good chance of keeping the factory going."

Notice of impending closure was received a fortnight ago when

management told workers of their forthcoming redundancy at five to five on Friday evening.

The fifty two year old company, originally owned by local businessman Mr. J. Thorne, was taken over in 1971 and Enigma Variations and Maher Nominees became the principal new shareholders. While exact information on the financial position of the firm has been difficult to come by workers have been told that the company has returned losses in the past two years but they plan a switch-over to the production of economy type kitchen furniture for the home market if they take over the plant.

Job prospects for the redundant workers in Ardee are poor and most would have to travel to Dundalk for alternative employment. Twenty out of the forty workers have already expressed interest in staying with a co-operative company and many are expected to invest their redundancy money in the firm.

Approximately £40,000 will be needed to keep the factory afloat and public collections will be taken up to supplement any government aid received.

Crannac furniture factory, itself a worker-owned co-operative, has already offered both financial and moral support to the Chairs' workers.

ACRA INTEND ACTION

The payment of ground rent and the legal rights enjoyed by ground rent landlords to repossess property in the event of non-payment are unconstitutional, in the opinion of ACRA which is considering bringing a challenge to the constitutionality of ground rents in the Courts.

The legal implications of such a move are to be investigated and ACRA is taking Counsel's opinion on the matter. The ACRA view is that the existing legal rights of ground rent landlords supercede the individual right to ownership of a home and thereby infringe on the constitutional articles on property rights.

ACRA also intend to defend individual cases in which ground rent strikers are summoned to Court for payment of ground rent arrears. Civil bills "are beginning to pour in" according to Mr. John Fitzgibbon of ACRA's Ground Rent Action Group and all ground rent strikers who receive a civil bill are advised to contact their local ground rent officer or residents association with copies of their lease and other relevant documents. Details of these cases will then be forwarded to the central ACRA ground rent committee.

Tallaght case

Sergeant Murray who was dealing with our enquiries refused to elaborate on the answer and referred us to his Press Office chief, Superintendent Carey. Supt. Carey, on Monday, also refused to elaborate on the reply or to say why even our first question could not be answered. He was, he said, acting on instructions which had been "handed down". He refused, however, to say from whom or from what office the instructions had come.

We also reported last week that a query from us as to whether papers on the Tallaght case had been received by the Attorney General and what decision had been taken on them brought the following reply from the Government Information Services: "The Attorney General's Office won't say anything".

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FLYING COLUMN



Jersey Jumpers

Property speculators who transfer their money abroad to dodge tax were this week defended in a letter to the Irish Times, by the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland and by a mealy-mouthed editorial in the same paper. The island of Jersey is the centre of this tax dodge. During the week a bank clerk who had just returned from the island told me of a conversation he had with a drinking companion in a Jersey finance company. The Irish bank clerk expressed astonishment to his Jersey friend at the amount of Irish property on the company's books.

"You poor sod," his Jersey friend confided, "We've got every building in Dublin here, except the bloody General Post Office."

Prince Charles

The Creation Group, under Hugh McLaughlin, never loses a chance to light a candle in memory of the exiled Prince Charles Haughey. Republicans, who remember his performance as Minister for Justice and later Finance can only hope the candles never turn into bonfires. The Whiteboys, the secret small farmers' group of the early nineteenth century, had no illusions about what would happen if the exiled Irish Princes returned from France and Spain. An unknown poet pointed out that if these princes returned —

"Do thacfaidís ar lucht na bheistí bana."

But the Jacobite tradition dies hard and the efforts to canonise Matt Talbot runs a poor second to Hugh McLaughlin's efforts to raise Haughey to a peerage. Last Sunday a front page story in the Sunday World about rock'n roll singer Cahir O'Doherty treated Cahir's alleged romance with Elmea Haughey with that peculiar mixture of titillation and reverence, which the British Press reserves for the Royal family's flirtations. And Cahir O'Doherty, with due humility quashed the rumours that a commoner should be aspiring to high places. "It's laughable really," he said, "an aristocrat's daughter marrying a pop singer." The

chief bard of Lord Inishvickillane, having now run out of indirect plugs is now about to invent the Dan Direach or direct plug and launch a paper called The Sunday Haughey.

Bastas

A row has broken out among the Gallagher Godfathers that is likely to end up with one of the family being thrown out of his Gallagher Home. The Gallagher brothers are meeting in London this week to carve up their giant Abbey Group empire, which made £2.6 million last year. Patrick, Hubert and James, the T.D. feel that Charles' soldiers aren't bringing in the loot fast enough. Last week his three beloved brothers replaced him as managing director in a deal with the Flynn Family. The Gallagher brothers are one of the few Irish capitalists to carry out Arthur Griffith's lunatic scheme for setting up Irish gombeen colonies abroad. At this moment Turkish troops may be enjoying the bliss of a Gallagher home at Abbey Homesteads Ltd., 38 Maria Syngliti St., Famagusta, Cyprus, which is managed by the well-known Mayo footballer George Economou.

Pink shirts

Some people were moaning about Liam Cosgrave's volte face, as if they expected something better. Cosgrave was true to his class and religion and to the essentials of the Blueshirt philosophy. Far more hypocritical is the behaviour of labour aristocrats, who have been going around seeking Republicans to condole with them. The top management of the Labour Party including Thornley will be back under the riding crop next month. They were well described by Lenin as a "Labour aristocracy who are quite phillistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook... and in our days the principal social prop of the bourgeoisie." The rank and file of the Labour Party didn't need Liam Cosgrave to show them the light. Justin Keating's performance on natural resources was a better education.

Sir Basil

Sir Basil Goulding is easily the chief twerp of Irish gombeenism. Instead of planning to use Irish oil and gas in his fertiliser factories, he spends his time playing with rock pools in the secret garden at Enniskerry. Last week Tony O'Reilly involved Basil in yet another foolish

project. A new group called Seahorse was set up to service the oil rigs off the Cork coast. Instead of using natural gas to protect the jobs of his workers, Goulding is now moving in to the menial and shortlived business of supplying nuts and bolts to the rigs. The workers in his factories should watch out or O'Reilly's Daughter will have them sold off in a bean-deal.

Second Devlin Report

Last week's figures on the fees and salaries of Irish company directors might have given the impression that the huge increases these gentlemen gave themselves represented their total earnings.

Of course this is not the full picture. The gentlemen also get a cut from their shares in the 18 companies listed. If profits go up, so does their cut. The table below shows the percentage profit increase in the 18 firms. Meanwhile food last year went up by 50 per cent, while wages under the two National Agreements went up by approximately 30 per cent.

COMPANY (After-Tax Profits)	1970 £	1973 £	% INCREASE
1. H. Williams & Co. Ltd.	22,772	171,588	672%
2. Cement Roadstone Holding	745,167	3,773,000	400%
3. Glen Abbey Ltd.	56,873	241,683	328%
4. Concrete Products of Ireland	164,000	611,000	272%
5. Irish Ropes	53,234	192,846	259%
6. Independent Newspaper	173,704	463,873	167%
7. Fitzwillton Ltd.	(1972) 541,000	1973 1,325,515	145%
8. City of Dublin Bank	57,302	136,961	138%
9. Solus Teoranta	67,026	144,423	115%
10. Arnott & Co. Ltd.	270,923	535,872	98%
11. Swan Ryan International	187,089	363,693	97%
12. Waterford Glass	896,000	1,749,000	95%
13. Dubtex (Clothing) Ltd.	21,000	38,420	80%
14. F.Y.E. (Ireland) Ltd.	57,524	101,637	77%
15. Helton Holdings Ltd.	198,481	312,815	60%
16. Lyons Irish Holdings	133,308	212,986	60%
17. Merchants Warehousing	94,411	138,887	47%
18. Irish Oil & Cake Mills Ltd.	166,472	208,161	30%

ANN DEVLIN