

The Irish People

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BANK MADE £100,000 PROFIT PER DAY!

"Profits must be allowed to rise", said City of Dublin Bank Chairman Thomas Kenny at the end of last month. And lo, they rose, or, at any rate, the profits of bankers like Mr. Kenny rose substantially.

While he confirmed at the time that his own bank's earnings for the year would show no drop on previous years, Mr. Kenny called for an increase in profits because "the rate of personal taxation makes it nearly impossible for the average shareholder to save, so that the most obvious source of funds for industry must be re-invested profits", he said. On company profits, most of this "gets translated into new machinery, buildings and inventories", he said.

It would be very interesting to know just

how much of the £27.83m operating profit made by the Bank of Ireland will be translated into new machinery, buildings and inventories. The Bank reported a sharp and gratifying rise in profitability from a mere £22.59m to £27m. This was an increase of 23.2% on the previous year's level. Not bad when the economy is supposed to be in crisis and the only salvation lies in a pay freeze.

Shareholders in the Bank of Ireland will earn 64.7p for every share that they own but even at that the dividend they receive will be covered over five times by the Bank's profits.

When the figures are broken down the Bank of Ireland earned over £1½m profit per week or over £100,000 per day!

Not content with that, the Chairman of the Bank of Ireland, Ian Morrison, hinted that bank charges might rise as they had not been increased for four years. Discussions on that are taking place with the Central Bank.

The Central Bank might give Mr. Morrison's plea for higher bank charges a sympathetic hearing, but Mr. Morrison's employees will get short shrift if they look for better wages. The new Governor of the Central Bank, Mr. C. H. Murray, formerly of the Department of Finance, spread "the unwelcome message of the need for restraint" in pay increases when he delivered his Bank's annual report last week also.

Restraint, as Mr. Murray did not hesitate to point out, meant "the need for a temporary

fall in living standards". The thinking behind this is that if wages are kept low profits will rise and, as per Mr. Kenny of the City of Dublin Bank, if profits rise investment will rise also, creating more jobs. But this equation needs a guarantee that profits will actually be put to creating new employment. The Bank of Ireland's annual report stated that the Bank was very much underlent, in other words, that it had money to lend but nobody was looking for it. The level of advances, i.e. loans, remained equal to the level of deposits. If the Bank of Ireland has plenty of money to lend but nobody wants it in order to invest and create employment, it is hard to see how Mr. Kenny's increased profits will be put to that use either.

GARDA PULLS GUN ON U.W.A. MEMBERS



● Picketers outside the Shelbourne Hotel last week.

Staff in one of Dublin's most prestigious hotels are paid, some of them, as little as £8 per week. Average wages vary between £120 and £170 per month. Staff at the Shelbourne Hotel are on a 24-hour stand-by for overtime pay; those who work extremely long hours are getting £12 a week; the food served to the live-in staff is so poor and so skimpy that they have to buy their own to supplement the hotel diet. Yet Trust House Forte, which owns the hotel, reported a profit of £66m last year.

These are some of the facts behind the strike of administrative staff at the Shelbourne Hotel, who are demanding the full 1975 wage agreement. In actual fact, they have not received an agreement increase since 1972 and they are willing to settle for a 10% increase. To avoid this, the Shelbourne has already told them that their bed and board in the hotel is in lieu of the increases and when this had no effect tried to pressurise their union, the ASTMS, into signing a procedural agreement which would have effectively muzzled it.

The agreement included the right of management to be responsible for staff discipline, outlawed any industrial action or sympathy strikes and would even have allowed management the right to appoint officials, such as shop stewards, instead of their being elected.

The dispute came to the attention of the Shelbourne after talks but by the time the hotel had been organised for a week, and some of the staff had left, the business, would have been in a state of chaos.

Strikers are the administrative staff who live-in at the hotel. They fill such positions as receptionists, housekeepers, supervisors, secretaries, typists, clerks etc. Fifty-two in all, they have the support of maintenance and craft workers and laundry staff and they expect an all-out picket to be granted shortly by Congress. One sore point is that management members, who joined the ASTMS before they did, are passing pickets. They have already received their wage increases, as have all the outdoor staff, i.e. those who live outside the hotel.

TOP HOTEL

PAYS £12

A WEEK WAGES

Despite management behaviour the situation of trainee managers is quite bad: "They get about £12 a week but are expected to be in constant attendance. Where a trained barman might get around £14 for a night's work a trainee manager is expected to do overtime, sometimes working into the following morning, for no extra pay. "We think it's slave labour to work like that for £12 a week", a picketer commented.

The situation of supervisors is little better. A live-in supervisor on strike was estimated to be getting £7 less per week than a still-room maid and there is no overtime.

This is one of the major grievances, in addition to the claim for the national wage agreement, and an investigation into salary scales, by management, union and FUE representatives, is being sought. The overtime situation is particularly resented by the live-in staff because their accessibility puts them on constant call for overtime. And while the Shelbourne may boast of its cuisine, the staff complain that what they are given is of very poor quality and that they have to buy more of their own.

Two members of the Unemployed Workers Association were stopped by police and had guns trained upon them in Navan before being held in the local police station for several hours. The men had just completed a survey of the local Labour Exchange and after a brief rest in a cafe were about to return to Dublin when they were approached by police. During their detention in the police station their shoes and coats were forcibly removed, they were put in separate cells, fingerprinted, photographed and questioned about their political affiliations for an hour.

It is the policy of the Unemployed Workers Association to organise public meetings and leafleting outside Labour Exchanges, in particular outside those which are considered to be inadequate, degrading or uncomfortable. The Association distributes leaflets regularly outside of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Exchanges.

The incident occurred last Thursday morning. The two UWA members, Mr. John Clarke, Secretary of the Association, and Mr. Norman McGrath had travelled down from Dublin early that morning and arrived in Navan about 10.30 a.m. They made inquiries around the Labour Exchange about the level of unemployment in the area and the state of local industry, both of which were reported to be serious.

As they were approaching their motorcycle to return to Dublin a police car drew up blocking them both and a uniformed Garda stepped out for identification and their reasons for being in Navan. They were then approached by two plain clothes who asked them to get into the car. Another plain clothes man was seen in the opposite direction and a police car. When the two men showed their jacket to show a holster. At this the driver locked his bike before getting into the car. The armed man drove back and told him to get into the car.

In the car they were taken to the station with in the Garda car.

In the station they were held for about an hour. They were placed in separate cells and had their shoes and coats removed. They returned to their cells about 20 minutes later. They were then taken to the yard and released. Questions were asked of them but they could not answer. Officials, with the Labour Exchange, were observed to be talking to the train room staff.

At about 11.30 a.m. they were allowed to return to their homes. They were released.

The Unemployed Workers Association party people are in the centre of the economic crisis. They are ensuring that they receive their share of the economic changes.

The Irish People

STUDENT DOLE

It has been said that, in the current jobs crisis, our educational system is geared mainly to producing highly educated dole queues. A throw-away remark, it became matter of fact this week when students of Kevin St. College of Technology marched to the employment exchange to sign on for unemployment assistance.

The students' action was decided by a statement from their Principal that their end of year exams or even final diplomas could not be guaranteed. Since further study seemed pointless the students regarded themselves effectively as unemployed. This situation is a result of the dispute between the Teachers Union of Ireland and the Department of Education over payment for marking exam papers. It is bad enough when qualified graduates, entering the labour market for the first time, are left unemployed. But when students cannot even be sure that the educational system itself will last long enough for them to finish their courses, then things are very bad indeed. The NIHE students have already been badly let down over their promised degrees. The entire education system seems to be coming apart at the seams while Mr. Burke remains aloof and intransigent.

Highly educated dole queues there may be but some students may not even have qualifications on paper after several years.

And when male students, convinced further study is useless, sign on and get assistance, is it not doubly unfair that female students are barred from even this pittance?

THORPE

One may not agree with the policies of Jeremy Thorpe, now ex-leader of the British Liberal Party. One may even say that a politician such as he knowingly takes a calculated risk of removal from office. But Mr. Thorpe's policies are more than he might expect an and a

decision of engaged some that is self. such tely t, m s



● Mr. Joe Cooper, speaking at the annual Connolly Commemoration last Sunday.

Provos condemned at Connolly parade

The Provisional bombing campaign, which had divided the working class, and the rapacity of multinational corporations, which had deserted the North after taking Government grants, were both strongly criticised by the President of Belfast and District Council of Trade Unions, Mr. Joe Cooper, when he spoke at the annual Connolly Commemoration in Dublin last Sunday. Mr. Cooper was guest speaker, along with Senator Fintan Kennedy, standing in for Mr. Matt Griffin, President of ICTU. Connolly, the founder member and organiser of the ITGWU, is commemorated annually by the Dublin Trades Council and the ITGWU.

Senator Kennedy gave an unremarkable speech but Mr. Cooper, in a discussion on political and economic freedom, showed how the Provisionals and multinationals alike were hostile to working class interests. The Northern trade unions had gone back to the very basics of these freedoms, in their campaign for a better life, he said.

The objectives of the 'better life for all' campaign include the right to well paid work, to peaceful advocacy of political opinions, to be free from sectarianism, violence and intimidation, to good housing and equal education.

He congratulated the Dublin Trades Council on its decision to organise a demonstration against unemployment in June. Mr. Michael O'Leary, Minister for Labour, who had driven up to take part in the meeting, and who will be the target of the proposed 'Work not Dole' march, meanwhile chatted and laughed in the crowd, heedless of both men's speeches.

Incidentally, to emphasise the non-sectarian, non-political nature of the 'better life for all' campaign, marchers in last week's May Day parade in Belfast, organised by the trade unions, participated under trade union and trades council banners, and not as political parties. That the non-sectarian campaign had workers' support throughout the North could be seen from successful May Day rallies organised by local trades councils elsewhere but it did not appeal to the leaders of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, who organised their own separate rally.

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Cosgrave snubs Fitzgerald initiative

Whatever ray of hope had been held out by Garret Fitzgerald's recent speech to parents who are currently campaigning for a multi-denominational system of education it was effectively snuffed by the Taoiseach, Mr. Cosgrave. Dr. Fitzgerald's attempt to initiate debate on the related issues of divorce, contraception, multi-denominational education and the links between Church and State was itself a discreet and rather timid one, on examination. It was firmly within the framework of overall Christian morality, arguing most strongly in favour of legalised contraception on the grounds that "the chances of holding a line against abortion would... be significantly enhanced".

His arguments were pitched mainly at those who firmly accept the Judeo-Christian outlook and he argued for the rights of adherents to all sects only within that broad framework. In the end he did concede that "a non-Christian, an Athiest or an Agnostic, for example, though he may be one of the relatively small minority in our society could reasonably argue that in seeking a broad consensus for legislation touching on moral issues his views should be considered as well as those of the Christian Churches and their members".

Nevertheless Dr. Fitzgerald must be credited with having made the attempt to open discussion on these issues and he did raise many pertinent points regarding Church-State relations and private or Church morality versus the public morality. He called for a reasonably cool and dispassionate discussion avoiding excessive theorising and abusive controversy.

His party leader could have been described as cool. Very cool.

Dr. Fitzgerald was expressing his personal views on divorce, contraception and inter-denominational education, he assured the Dail last week. He added that there was no proposal for legislation on these matters. He himself refused to be

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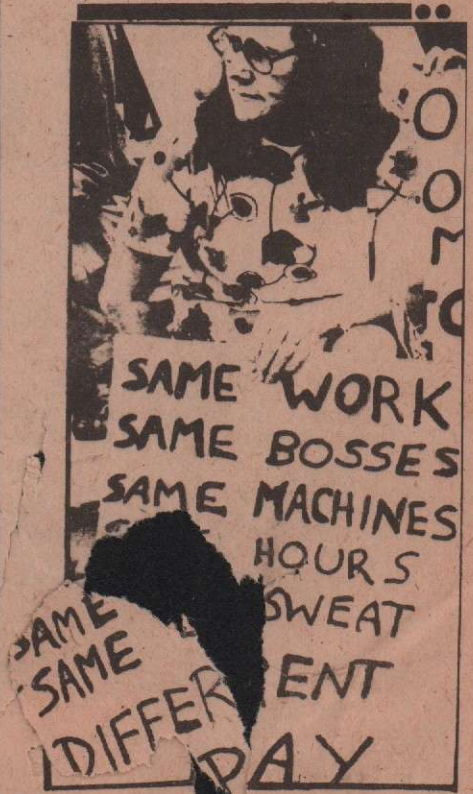
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drawn on his own personal feelings only to say, when asked if he thought that the removal of the ban on non-abortifacient contraceptives was important, "I think that the leader of the Opposition is aware of my views". Mr. Lynch need only cast his mind back to when Mr. Cosgrave, defying his own Government's proposals, voted against a liberalisation of the law on contraception, to inform himself on that point.

Dr. Fitzgerald opened his speech by pointing out that politics poses a "constant moral challenge" to its practitioners; it poses to political leaders choices not merely between principle and expediency but more subtly between conflicting principles and competing rights". Mr. Cosgrave obviously felt no competition; his principles overrode the competing rights of any individual who desired to choose freely on the questions of birth control, dissolution of marriage or their children's educational environment. He was not interested in discussion, dispassionate or otherwise.

Parents in areas like Marley Grange, Firhouse and Dalkey must have wondered whether their views had any rights in opposition to the private religious beliefs of the leader of the Government. The Fitzgerald speech had raised hopes that their plans for integrated religious schooling for their children would be heeded, if not by the Minister for Education who is their local Dail representative in Tallaght, then at least by the Cabinet as a whole. There had been even a slight optimism about getting Department of Education funds for their projects, if the conditions of the Fitzgerald speech, that support for such schools was shown to exist, were filled.

Perhaps it was the parents own fault that they credited the Fitzgerald speech with more significance than it had and then were disappointed. But it leaves the spectacle of the head of the Government adamantly refusing to enter into any debate which might involve changing the legislative position of the Roman Catholic Church even if this means that dissenters from his particular brand of Roman Catholicism are left in a permanent legal limbo. One hopes that Mr. Cosgrave et al have never condemned the Orangemen, who call for a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant People, religious bigots. That would be the very outer limits of hypocrisy.



"Same Sweat, Different Pay" is a play which takes the whole issue of equal pay out of the realms of public meetings and political debate and brings it onto the factory floor, where drama takes over to show the life of under and unequally-paid women workers. The show is playing at the Project Arts Centre, East Essex St. at 1.05 daily until Saturday, 19 May. After that the producers of the play, Team Workshop, are anxious to show it in workplaces and social clubs. The Womens' Trade Union Forum plan to stage it in Liberty Hall soon but there must be many other places people can think of, factories, canteens, community centres and so on, where there are people who would like to see this play and perhaps discuss and organise for equal pay.

The Project Arts Centre would be glad to hear from anyone who can suggest suitable venues for "Same Sweat: Different Pay". Contact Nuala Hayes c/o Project Arts Centre, East Essex St. Dublin 1.



● A 'goon squad' on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Reign of terror on Indian reservation as AIM leader visits Ireland

When American Indian Movement leader, Vernon Bellacourt, arrives in Ireland on 24th of this month another of his co-leaders in AIM, Russell Means, will probably be still confined to hospital with serious gunshot wounds which he and another AIM member, John Thomas, received recently. Both men were shot in the back and for Means, it was the third shooting he had received within the space of a year.

Means and Thomas are only two of many victims of a reign of terror which has swept the Sioux Indian reservation of Pine Ridge, in South Dakota, USA. The Pine Ridge reservation is held under the combined control of U.S. Marshals, State Police, FBI and a private army called the Goon Squads. The Goon Squads are the personal military force of former tribal chairman, Dick Wilson, who, since his first election under suspicious circumstances in 1972 and even more so since he was ousted from that position, has maintained the Sioux reservation in a state of siege. The Goon Squads, paid with misappropriated Government funds which should go to Indian self-help projects, are used to eliminate all opposition to Wilson on the reservation, in particular that coming from members of the American Indian Movement. 'Elimination' means just that. The Goon Squads have, and still are, killing Indian activists on the reservation while the U.S. authorities turn a blind eye.

Wilson, who holds Pine Ridge like a feudal warlord, was defeated for the office of tribal chairman just last January, by a medical candidate, Al Trimble. Trimble had frequently criticised the reservation of the Sioux. Trimble, chief of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, criticised the 92 per cent of the reservation which is controlled by white Indians who have occupied a vulnerable position. But Trimble's victory was a vulnerable position.

Holy Rock who is a Wilson supporter and a member of the John Birch Society. If Trimble goes he will take his place and since Wilson's defeat the level of violence and murders on the reservation has sky-rocketed.

In the week immediately following his defeat one AIM member was shot dead and another beaten to death. Between March and April this year the following attacks occurred: five AIM members were killed on the reservation, including one 15 year old girl, and two more were killed off the reservation. One person was 'executed' by being shot in the back of the head at point-blank range; her hands were cut off and sent to the FBI's headquarters in Washington!

The sister of AIM leader, Leonard Crowdog, was beaten up and then taken out onto the plains to die. She was found frozen to death.

Life on the Indian reservation is far from the idyllic one painted by latter-day U.S. tourist brochures: nor are the Indians the painted savages of John Wayne pictures. If there is any savagery on the Pine Ridge reservation it is on the part of the U.S. authorities and their stooges like Dick Wilson. Anyone who still doesn't believe that should come and listen to Vernon Bellacourt when he lectures on the position held by Indians in modern American society. A full list of venues is not available yet but on 25 May he will speak in the Connolly Hall, Liberty Hall, on "The American Indian and the Bicentennial" Mairin de Burca, joint General Secretary of Sinn Fein, will also speak.

Another meeting will be held in Dublin the day before, in TCD, at 8 p.m. On Wednesday and Thursday, 26 and 27 May, he will be speaking in Belfast but the venue is still uncertain and on Friday 28, he will speak at 8 p.m. in the Newry Republican Club Centre, 1 Trevor Hill, Newry.

Conway joins school's debate

When Garrett Fitzgerald called for dispassionate debate on the question of multi-denominational education he can hardly have had in mind the sort of contribution which Cardinal Conway lent to the debate last week. Blessing a primary school extension in Monasterboice, the Cardinal called for more religious emphasis in the schools, not less. Half an hour's religious instruction daily, in itself, of the school neutral and uncommitted; the devotional life within the school was almost more important than the religious instruction, he declared. And when the religious atmosphere of the school was sufficiently strong the child's personality could develop in a wholesome and rational way. Without these convictions, backed up by a strong supportive

framework provided by the schools, the young people could be left rudderless — tossed about on the waves of every current philosophy and moral opinion, the Cardinal said.

One could argue for hours about the psychological, educational and political flaws of Cardinal Conway's speech but surely the most appalling thing of all is the sheer self-righteousness he displays, in particular in face of the terrible sectarian blight of the North. The Cardinal cannot claim immunity from responsibility for what is the North today. His Church controls the education of what is termed the Catholic 'side' of the community there. If the North is riven with sectarian hatred, some part of the blame for that must rest with the schools which educated the bigots. And while the Cardinal may and does condemn the perpetrators of sectarian murders, and not all of these are Protestants, he cannot condemn in one breath while arguing in the other for the same system which has gone into producing these people.

Special deal for SAS men

"We always go a little further". So reads the motto on the clock tower of the SAS's camp at Bradbury Lines, Hereford, England. This time they went that little bit too far; over the border into the Republic.

For the cynic the most notable thing about the fuss might have been the attempts of the British press to shrug the whole affair off as a map reading error. One would have thought that an army as well equipped as the British might have been able to afford a decent set of maps and sufficient training to enable its personnel read them properly. But then, nobody's perfect. Needless to say, there is no truth in the rumours that the Primrose League is organising a public collection to buy the regiment a proper set of maps.

A more pertinent observation on the whole thing is not that they crossed the border — this has happened in the past and will, no doubt, in the future. In this respect at least one of the British papers was right when it said that their worst crime was to get caught. A deplorable lack of finesse on the regiment's part but service in the army of the Sultan of Oman tends to rob one of some of the more diplomatic niceties.



The sinister badge of the SAS.

No, it was the conduct of the Special Criminal Court in this affair that caught our attention. The arrested SAS men were granted bail by a Court which normally refuses same to Republicans charged with possession of firearms. In the case of these men, moreover, there is some suspicion that they might be responsible for certain murders and kidnappings around the border area recently.

The standard excuse for refusing bail where people involved are from the North is that they live outside the jurisdiction of the Court and are unlikely to show up for trial. How many more miles outside the jurisdiction is Bradbury Lines, Hereford?

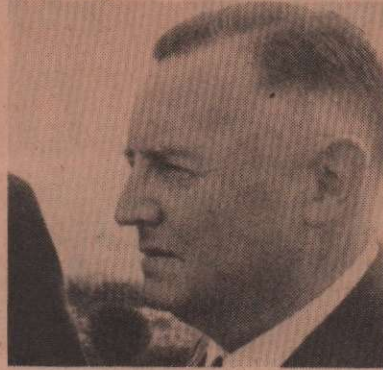
Not only was bail granted, an unusual event in itself, but a cheque for the amount of the bail, £5,000 each, was accepted by the Court. It is highly unusual to accept a cheque in lieu of bail, especially in political cases. So what pull have the SAS over the Special Criminal Court to win such favoured treatment?

LAW BILL

It is not coincidence, of course, that the arrest of the SAS men coincided with the declaration that the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill is constitutional. The Bill will come into effect as soon as the order declaring it to be so is made simultaneously in Britain and Ireland. This is expected to be made within a week.

The implications of the Bill, the major one being that the jurisdiction of the Special Criminal Court will be extended to enable it try people for crimes committed in the North or in Britain, have been overshadowed in the flurry of nabbing a couple of SAS men. If these are put on trial it will be a show trial designed to show that the Government is no mere catspaw of Britain but is ready to take tough action against it when it decides. What people may forget is that under this new legislation the Government may take tough action but the SAS men will be long gone back across the border and the real victims will be people who, in many cases, have been set up on trumped charges by a repressive police system in the North.

No cancer danger, says Sisk



● John Sisk.

John R. Sisk, managing director of the building firm of Sisks, told carpenters working on a company site at Cork Regional Hospital that their fears about handling asbestos sheets were groundless.

The men had refused to handle the sheets after reports in England that the dust from asbestos caused fatal lung disease and cancer. The dust is highly infectious and there have been reports of people contracting the disease after handling asbestos for just one day or not directly handling the material at all.

The asbestos-bearing sheets were being used for exterior decorative panels and for insulation in the hospital and there were secondary fears that this would prove a danger to hospital patients at a later date. Mr. Sisk said that safety regulations in the Asbestos Regulations (1975) were adequate. He said that although he himself was not a medical expert he had received advice to indicate that their fears were groundless.

However the company had not yet communicated to the workers the results of expert medical advice which he said they had taken steps to consult. An official from the Department of Labour was also expected to inspect the site and to advise company and workers on the matter.

LETTERS

Truly, hard times bring out a motley collection of false prophets. With 34,200 new jobs needed every year for the next ten years the best the Confederation of Irish Industry can do is try to revive Arthur Griffith — that is, the small businessman! Has nobody yet found out that the small businessman is beyond artificial respiration? In addition, over the past few weeks, another curious Beal Bocht has appeared on the Irish scene. Called the Irish Federation of Self-Employed the idea is an easy mixture of reasons for unemployment, pro-businessism, pro-unionism, and the phoney begrudging attacks on the State.

This is the price of the State's failure to provide the services which many of us need and another of the reasons for our failure to get out of the economic mire.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SPRING SHOW



Farmers don't have to take to the streets like this any more to make their muscle felt; T. J. Maher and Richard Deasy seen here on the great NFA campaign. Nowadays they are more subtle.

So the power of the farmers is revealed once again and the Government are pulling away from the issue of co-op taxation. The decisive point seems to have been the proximity of the by-election in the Donegal constituency. If this is the result of the election fever in Donegal what can we expect for Dublin South-West?

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Some observant readers were puzzled by the headline on last week's issue. Their bewilderment is understandable since the management of our printing company saw fit to remove an offending sentence from last week's article. They neglected to change the headline which refers to the sentence in question.

• • •

The Spring Show is over now and the farming world is still more or less the same. There were some very interesting stands, exhibits and people at the show. I understand that the several Government Ministers who attended the show steered well clear of the stand which posed some rather embarrassing questions... that of the Farmers Defence

Association, situated close to the entrance in a prime position.

However, some of the Ministers did, I understand, make it as far as the IFA stand, or rather the 'farm centre' stand, which was placed some distance from the main entrance. It was, in fact, situated in the Simonscourt area, where the most expensive machinery is also situated. I wonder is that the type of farmer the IFA is now looking for?

I did appreciate, however, the patriotic colouring of their displays—all green, white and gold. The large photo of Paddy Lane also looked comforting, framed in the same colours. What struck me about the IFA stand was their display about viable and non-viable farms. The IFA, of course, doesn't call them that. That might get people annoyed, or worked up—or something. No, they just put a nice question mark to signify their future. I was particularly interested to see that they have over 100,000 farmers classed as non-viable by 1990. Now, I don't remember T. J. Maher saying that during the referendum campaign on EEC membership. But there it was, in black and white (and green and white and gold).

I also seem to remember the IFA calling

people liars, during the referendum campaign, who were quoting figures which were actually smaller than those that they are now quoting themselves.

I note with interest that the IFA rushed into print with a reply to the Farmers Defence Association pamphlet on the Farm Modernisation Scheme. With Paddy Lane at the helm the IFA line seems to be that the EEC and its attendant schemes, welcomed by them a mere two years ago, are now to be attacked.

The Farm Modernisation Scheme was a fairly popular item for display and it was featured on the Department of Agriculture stand also. Again it made interesting reading. Some time ago the Minister for Agriculture said that no farmer was being discriminated against under the FMS. I hope that he saw his Department's stand. It stated clearly there that Transitional farmer—or 'others' as the Department of Agriculture prefers to call them—will receive smaller and fewer grants than development farmers. In fact they will receive no grants at all for the purchase of stock or mobile machinery. The Development farmer will receive grants for both of these.

When Sinn Fein pointed these somewhat unpalatable facts out during the referendum

campaign they were accused of misrepresenting people. We now know, if we didn't then, who was misrepresenting whom.

• • •

During the Spring Show an important meeting of Clover Meat shareholders was held. The meeting was called by a number of shareholders who were dissatisfied with the performance of the group and with delays in paying suppliers. There has also been a number of lay-offs and threats of further redundancies.

The manager of Clover Meats, Michael Collins, recently refused to speak at a seminar on beef production because of the presence of Raymond Crotty on the platform. Mr. Collins announced to the shareholders that there would be a management overhaul, in what was regarded as a move to forestall criticism. However, many farmers and workers in Clover Meats plants are not satisfied with this red herring. We will be reporting more fully on the situation of Clover Meats in a future article.

Readers may remember that Clover Meats was one of the 'co-ops' which decided to involve itself in speculation in our oil and gas resources. Perhaps they should stick to meat.

Trade union unity — not competition is needed

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Irish trade union movement has only one real strength and that is the power of its members when combined for a common purpose. All other apparent influence derives from that central element. Unity of action is therefore more than a pious slogan from the past but has a meaning for the industrial labour movement which must never be forgotten. The long and bitter history of the movement has shown the power of workers when organised for struggle and the pathetic weakness of the movement when it is divided. Those who claim to lead the workers of the class can never afford to ignore this lesson.

Little such as unity has a little more as there are many who are trying to fragment the movement and even to create rivalries between unions to additional the collar of the Irish workers with the aim of making it difficult to have a united front. The demand must be for Unity — Common Action — The Left Alternative Economic policy.

to respond to the real needs of the membership has in the past caused breakaways which have led to greater frustration and eventually disillusionment by the workers concerned.

Now we are in a period of economic crisis and all the contradictions and strains of the system are being felt by the working class. These pressures will increase the tensions in our own movement and inevitably lead to sectional responses. At this period more than ever before we require a strong national leadership committed to a radical alternative industrial policy. This can only be found in a strengthened and more democratic I.C.T.U. with a leadership prepared to fight for the policies that the various delegate conferences have adopted. The Better Life Campaign in the Six Counties provides a good example as does the campaign of trade unionists for the Resources Protection Campaign. The fight of women workers for equal rights has also set a good example of co-ordinated action in support of the national policies of the movement.

The trade union left have a special responsibility in the present difficult period. Active support must be given to the progressive tendencies of the movement and determined opposition to those which create further division. This is equally true on the question of wages, British-based unions, craft status, or Northern Ireland. The capitalists have moved from free competition to monopoly, our answer to that development cannot be one of free-for-all competition amongst workers for wages and jobs.

The demand must be for Unity — Common Action — The Left Alternative Economic policy.

THE IRISH SOCIALIST

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Civil liberties gap needs plugging

Our man at hatch No. 5

The prospect of future employment for Irish working people is grim with reports in the news that there was no possibility of unemployment easing until well into 1978. It is good to see our unemployed comrades organising to protect themselves against the society that condemns thousands of able-bodied men and women and many students as well to lives of poverty and idleness. Many of these young unemployed are getting nothing for their support or as little as £2 per week.

The great shame is that while these are living in enforced idleness the key to our future employment, our mines and our mineral wealth, is controlled by foreigners while we go cap-in-hand looking for dole. The town of Navan is built on top of great mineral deposits. But there are around 2,000 unemployed there. A carpet factory has recently closed and some other textile factories are in dire circumstances.

When members of the Unemployed Workers' Association went there with a view to organising the workless and to see when would be the best time to organise a meeting they were arrested and in the Garda station were treated as if they had committed some terrible crime. The Gardai and their bosses must be afraid of what will happen if the unemployed in Navan start to organise themselves and ask why they are out of work while there is great wealth on their doorstep.

Remember, all this was allowed to happen to two individuals with nothing on their mind but the right of able-bodied persons to work and all this under the Offences Against the State Act. Obviously, the Act leaves wide gaps in Irish citizens' civil rights; gaps into which legalised gun-toting thuggery can operate at will. All those concerned with those gaps had better get their heads together in order to find a way of plugging them. Remember, Brothers and Sisters, it could be your turn tomorrow.

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