

Price 30p
(incl. all taxes)

WORKERS LIFE

MAY 1980

THE MAGAZINE
FOR WORKERS



**FOR ALL YOUR
POWERSCREEN EQUIPMENT
*CONTACT***

BROSNA PLANT LTD.

LOWER MAIN STREET

KILBEGGAN

CO. WESTMEATH

Phone 0506-32115 or 32139

**WE SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEEDS
IN THE SAND, GRAVEL AND
QUARRY INDUSTRY.
SCREENING EQUIPMENT
STOCKPILING EQUIPMENT
AND A RANGE OF
AGGREGATE WASHING
EQUIPMENT**

WORKERS LIFE

PRESENTING a new magazine to the public invites, apart from the inevitable criticism (and we look forward to readers' letters), a few words of explanation.

Every journal, newspaper, broadsheet, has a point of view, often carefully concealed and equally often smuggled in. It is important to say this because Workers' Life will not be subscribing to any of these positions.

It is our intention to be firmly and openly on the side of the Irish working class. Partisan but not prejudiced. In this we hope the magazine will make a unique contribution to Irish political life.

But political life as understood by the working class. An understanding that stretches from the factory floor to the management of our State companies; it embraces the student as well as the teacher, the shop steward and the trade union official.

In short all those workers and potential workers who have the stake in the country, because it is they who create it and recreate it daily.

We aim to cater for the needs of workers struggling to arrive at the truth behind the headlines, the television images and the constant barrage of propaganda to which they are subject; the truth about financial, economic and political programmes. We will decode the messages that absorb the media in the interests of the capitalist system and its masters.

However, Workers' Life will not be restricted to the political and economic dimension of human affairs. Indeed we will venture into the spiritual realm, the activities of the churches, at least where they impinge on the more mundane matters of everyday life.

And we hope to keep our readers in touch with the expanding area of leisure, in the widest sense. Sport, music, drama, television, books, the cinema, travel.

In a world also where international affairs are no longer a matter for the great powers, where events in distant countries become urgent issues for every citizen, Workers' Life will be seeking to print reliable facts to enable mature and independent judgements to be formed.

The global character of the magazine, both in the national and international sense, will make it the most stimulating, thought provoking and entertaining medium of the working class.

It is obvious then that our intention is to be outspoken, genuinely radical and in no way at the service of any of the different varieties of hibernian-nationalism which manifest themselves in various guises in the media.

Workers' Life is convinced that social, economic and political changes have produced a working class both in Northern Ireland and the Republic prepared to challenge the ruling classes at every opportunity and are seeking a voice to make that challenge heard loud and clear.

That's Workers' Life.

Editor: Des O'Hagan
Asst. editors: Economic Affairs,
Eamonn Smullen; International
Affairs, Sean Garland; Arts, Paddy
Gillan.

Cover pic. D. Sears
Joe Byrne pic. Ruth Rogers
Design and layout: Paddy Gillan.

Printed and published by Cló na hÉireann on behalf of Sinn
Féin the Workers' Party, 30 Gardiner Place, Dublin 1.

HAUGHEY'S DILEMMA

V. O'Reilly

TIME has begun to run out for Charles Haughey. Within two years from now he must call a general election. But within that time, his room for manoeuvre is becoming severely limited. In the short term, he is hampered by a continuing low rating in electoral popularity for Fianna Fáil, while the party itself remains deeply divided despite the show of support for the new party leader at the Ard Fheis. In the longer term, the slide of the economy into deeper recession will only increase the party's unpopularity among urban workers as the full impact of Fianna Fáil's stewardship becomes even clearer.

Mr Haughey is drifting towards the same dilemma faced by James Callaghan in Britain in autumn 1978. Faced with unsatisfactory poll ratings Callaghan postponed the British election to last summer, and later paid the price of the continuously declining economy.

Whatever chance Haughey had of calling a snap election to take advantage of his "honeymoon" period is now gone. Even if he had decided to go to the country early this year he would have had to contend with the deep disaffection within Fianna Fáil resulting from the defeat of the Lynch camp in last December's leadership contest.

Haughey's attempt to portray himself as the stylish millionaire, the statesman and the man of action, as evidenced in the 'soft' interview he delivered to *The Irish Times* last month, is not succeeding. His mastery of the meaningless



Charles Haughey

statement, as seen in his much heralded TV broadcast, and his Ard Fheis speech, is backfiring as workers see the *reality* of Charlie Haughey: a skin deep showman who takes his ideology from Margaret Thatcher.

After five months, Haughey's leadership pattern has become familiar. His relationship with those around him is exemplified by his dealings with the media whereby favours are dispensed to a selected elite. His ruthlessness in dealing with those he does not favour has been revealed again in the treatment of the Coalition-appointed Muiris Mac Congail of RTE who has now

been offered his walking papers by Haughey.

Inevitably Haughey's vacuous style has had its converts. Anthony Cronin, erstwhile columnist in *The Irish Times* went to work for Haughey to advise him on "cultural affairs". In a farewell explanation of the move to his readers Cronin expressed his belief that Haughey might turn out to be the most creative leader in the history of the state.

So far Haughey's creativity has gone little further than a "creative" application of Friedmanite British Tory party policies to Irish conditions. His creativity, as far as the Irish working class are concerned, has led to nothing but disappointment. Fianna Fáil, more than ever, is the party of free enterprise gombeenism.

The budget was a concerted attempt to trim back the potential of the state sector. Commitments made by the Lynch administration under the National Understanding have been shelved, and Haughey has completely downgraded the priority of employment as a Government objective. In the context of the present environment of redundancy and rising unemployment, it is somewhat eerie to remember that the Fianna Fáil manifesto promised the creation of an extra 30,000 jobs in 1980. The feelings of three-quarters of a million Irish PAYE workers expressed on the streets of the country in January have only resulted in a diversionary tax commission on which PAYE

workers have only two nominees out of 11.

As SFWP's General Secretary Sean Garland put it last month: Haughey has introduced inhumane policies against the interest of workers in favour of the balance of payments and the punt. And, on the side, the Fianna Fáil gravy train has rolled on. In the 1977-79 years of boom, it was the wealth owning class who benefited most from FF policies: capital gains tax was emasculated, wealth tax abolished. Now, in the years of slump it is the workers who must pay. The Stock Exchange millions continue to be made and a new breed of Fianna Fáil businessman has come to pick up the profitable hived-off trading opportunities created by the state sector workers.

And what of the Fine Gael-Labour opposition to the new Haughey dynasty? Fine Gael leader Garret FitzGerald in true Christian Democrat tradition criticised Haughey's budget on the grounds that it did not go far enough along the Thatcherite path. Not a squeak has been heard from FG about the downgrading of even FF's pretence at planning or about the forgotten promises of the Manifesto and National Understanding.

Even to the most superficial observers of the Fine Gael Ard Fheis this is not a liberal party. The populist blusterings of people like Jim Mitchell and Michael Keating mean nothing. FG has not changed its anti-worker spots. FitzGerald on the farmers, on the reintroduction of the wealth tax, on the Moscow Olympics (which is supported by an overwhelming majority of the electorate) still does his predecessor Liam Cosgrave proud.

Meanwhile the Labour party finds itself outgunned by the brilliant manoeuvre of Fine Gael in declining to even contemplate a pre-electoral Coalition pact. Many don't realise how dependent the Labour Party is on Fine Gael

transfers for a number of its seats in Dáil Eireann. Frank Cluskey himself, the leader of the party, only got into the Dáil in Dublin South Central in 1977 on the basis of Fine Gael transfer votes. So Labour must try to keep on the right side of Fine Gael, while looking with trepidation at the steady erosion of its working class support through the advance of Sinn Féin The Workers Party.

But for Charles Haughey above all the outlook is bleakest. A year at least of recession lies ahead. Public

sector workers have become increasingly annoyed, the tax commission try-on to the PAYE workers will fail. Internally, Haughey finds himself hampered by the coolness of the establishment rearguard, and by the pitiful lack of talent available from his own faction of the party. Above all, Haughey's broken promises will come home to roost some time between now and the summer of '82.

FIANNA FÁIL'S BROKEN PROMISES

● **JOBS:** The Fianna Fáil manifesto promised 25,000 extra jobs in 1979, and 30,000 in 1980. Employment is set to fall this year following the budget and rose only by 15,000 in 1979.

● **EDUCATION:** The manifesto said: "As the party of investment in education and free education Fianna Fáil on return to Government will... embark on a school building programme to cope with existing suburban pressures and to replace obsolete schools... treat the reduction of the pupil teacher ratio as a priority and will set about reducing all classes to 40 with a final objective of 32." Haughey's budget slashed £4 million off investment in education, a cut of nearly 25% after inflation.

● **SCHOOL BUSES:** The manifesto promised to encourage the use of school buses for extra mural and after school activities. The buses will hardly get children to school this year after the budget freeze of last year's allocation at £16 million. This at a time when fuel costs have gone up by over 50%.

● **PRICES:** FF promised an inflation rate of 5% in 1979 and 1980. The reality was 13% last year and a rise of near 20% this year after the 5% added on in the budget.

● **HEALTH:** In the manifesto FF said they aimed at a "first class health service" to ensure the highest possible standard of physical and mental health" and to maintain the level of health spending as a share of the GNP. This year's spending on hospital building is £28 million, only £500,000 more than last year while total health spending is limited to a rise of just 5%.

● **GROWTH:** FF in the election said that they could get the national income to grow by 7% in 1979, and in its White Paper last year forecast a similar rise in 1980. The reality was a 3% growth rate last year, and Haughey himself has admitted that national income will only rise by 1% this year. The recession will have disastrous implications for jobs and living standards.

● **MORTGAGES:** FF said in the manifesto "it will be made easier to buy a house and cheaper to keep it". With mortgages now at all time high record rates it has never been harder for a young couple to get a house.

● **A PROMISE THEY KEPT:** FF told the farmers they would get their rate payments as an instalment against income tax. This will save farmers £46 million this year.

TAIGS OUT, PRODS OUT

Des O'Hagan

IT IS all too easy when reading about Northern Ireland to allow the ongoing terrorism and the apparent intransigence of some major politicians to force one to the conclusion that it is a society welded to the beginning of the last decade. Or even further back. This is understandable for the tourist whose impressions derive from the British Army checkpoints at city and town centres and an infinite variety of slogans, often entertainingly perceptive, which splash the walls of most of the ghetto areas.

"Is there a life before death?"; "No surrender (I give in!) Rem. 1690 or 1916"; "Brits out"; "Prods out"; "Taigs out" and a bewildering variety of paramilitary organisations (UDA, UVF, PROVO) all claiming to rule.

If the bemused tourist were directed to certain Saturday afternoon soccer matches he would certainly depart convinced that gangwar and tribalism are the two main features of Northern Ireland society, particularly among the teenagers.

At some future date we will be taking an in-depth look at the values and culture of young people in Northern Ireland which we strongly suspect bear little relationship in the main to the sectarian fancies of the generations preceding them.

However there does appear to be little serious analysis of developments in Northern Ireland. It is still fairly common to describe the community from the chic

atmosphere of Belfast's Europa Hotel or to be swayed by support for one side or another particularly if the accounts are to be read in the Republic.

There is a sure fire thesis here for some ardent American who can wheedle the funds out of the Ford or Rockefeller Foundations: Objective journalism in Northern Ireland: Fact or Fantasy.

The absence of public life, other than at local government level, has had disastrous consequences for Northern Ireland. A society in the throes of change, faced with major problems of unemployment, urban renewal, an anxious population, young and old, cannot afford to be without a major political institution providing not only guidance, but also a forum within which debate and indeed anger may be heard.

This vacuum has not been filled by the paramilitaries as some journalists would have it. Rather there has been that most disquieting phenomenon of all, as far as political life is concerned, a withdrawal into privacy.

There will certainly be disagreement with that statement, as it does not lend itself to checking by observation. As opposed to the massive "fact", like the wanton gutting of £1 million pounds worth of hotel bedrooms, it will be dismissed as mere speculation.

However this would be to ignore the prevalence of reverence for the father figure in Northern Ireland. The cult of the leader has replaced

the cut and thrust, the heat of political discussion. The party polarisation which existed previously due solely to sectarian forces has been replaced by loyalty to heroic individuals. Private sentiments usurp public action.

But this is not to say that real forces of change are not operating within Northern Ireland while the Paisleys, Humes and Powells strut the stage. It should be impossible to ignore that the majority of voters, no matter how they divided, opted to join the Common Market; that Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin (how many others?) could take no more of the backwoods sectarianism of the S.D.L.P. and that all the right of centre parties have agreed that politics cannot proceed in Northern

Dr. Ian Paisley



Ireland without a firm Bill of Rights.

But amazingly there are scribes who can continue to churn out material based on the latest sectarian tit-bit, paramilitary or British Army handout.

The SDLP managed to struggle along as a nationalist-Roman Catholic amalgam largely in response to what was understood as traditional Protestant triumphalism. On reflection its relatively short existence should have been anticipated once basic political and economic issues surfaced. The recognition of what is now being described as a rural-urban dichotomy is in reality a belated acceptance of the class antagonisms expressed by the polarities Fitt/Devlin versus Duffy/Mallon.

At the same time the efforts of Hugh Logue to provide an economic veneer to the hibernian-nationalist programme or of one-time chairman Denis Haughey to evoke the "Labour" content in the party name have always seemed somewhat unreal. Social and economic issues were only a ritual part of party conferences; prime consideration was absolutely for the so-called Irish dimension.

Hence the persistent cordial relationship between the green John Hume and Dublin-Washington and the uneasiness Leinster House politicians always felt in the company of tempestuous Falls Road republican Paddy Devlin and ex-seaman pinko Gerry Fitt. That uneasiness would appear to have been well justified.

Equally the emergence of the Alliance Party, in the main, did not receive the serious political attention it deserved. The tendency to dismiss it, which still persists, as a benevolent side show to the real battle, displays the extent to which most political commentators and feature writers are in the geip of one

or other sectarian camps. Where for example as in the case of The Workers' Party Republican Clubs, analysis, contact or dialogue were undertaken, this has provoked invective rather than political comment.

In fact the Alliance Party have demonstrated programmatically that they are clearly to the left of centre. Such personalities as leader Oliver Napier, general secretary John Cushnahan, and former Belfast Lord Mayor David Cook would well find themselves on the fringes of the Tribune group in the British Labour Party. Furthermore it was certainly the strong presence of Alliance on Belfast City Council which enabled the breaking of the Tory-Unionist stranglehold on the position of Mayor. It should also be noted here that the Workers' Party Republican votes were vital in the election.

Finally there is the cluster of Unionist parties which tend to be grouped in a "them" category by myopic commentators who simply

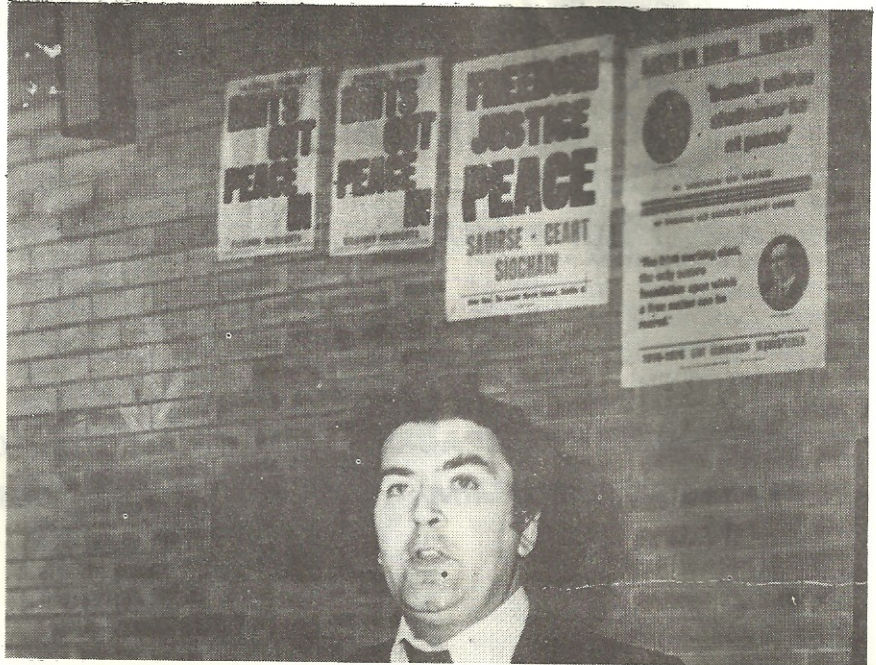
identify Protestants. There are vicious antagonisms, which are not solely personal, between Harold McCusker and Paisley's D.U.P. between the latter and the remnants of Faulkner's party and North Down maverick Jim Molyneux who barely conceals his distaste for white academic Enoch Powell.

In such a volatile situation the continual dismissal of Northern politics as Protestant versus Roman Catholic is not only not helpful it is ludicrous.

Serious changes have taken place, including a significant shift away from "power sharing" towards "partnership" by Alliance. Democratic politics is lurking in the wings. The question now is can a mass class party of the Left emerge to contest the vast areas where the Tories have it all their own way.

Significantly the only group moving in that direction is The Workers' Party Republican Clubs. Their growing appeal across religious divisions is the most hopeful sign on the Northern Ireland horizon.

SDLP leader John Hume

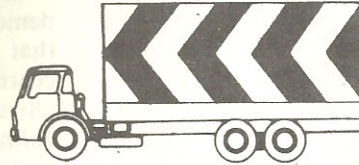


MARK McLOUGHLIN LTD.

**Footwear Distributor
General Wholesale and
Manufacturing Agent
228 Bay Estate, Dundalk (Ph.31456)
Specialists in Protective Footwear**

ON THE SPOT TYRE & BATTERY SERVICE LTD.

44 Queen Street, Dublin 7
Tel: 770629-724877



**24 Hour Radio Controlled
Breakdown Service**

COMPLETE TYRE REPAIR SERVICE

Patrick Ross & Sons Ltd

10 Red Cow Lane
Dublin 7
Phone 770592

**SPECIALISTS IN PREPACKED AND GRADED POTATOES
SUPPLIERS TO SUPERMARKETS, HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS**

DEVLIN'S BUS STOP

Gerry Flynn

Behind the scenes, while the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union leaders debated their on-off industrial action over CIE's plans to repeat the disastrous Van Hool bus building experiment by starting a similar operation in Shannon, Co. Clare, the CIE Chairman, Liam St. John Devlin, had to back down from his high-handed scheme, to also denationalise the rail coach building operation at Inchicore Works in Dublin.

The good news is that the government, after concerted pressure from the trade union movement, has ordered Mr Devlin to guarantee that CIE will retain control of the coach building section. The other demand of CIE workers is that the company should build its own buses and not contract the job to the Canadian controlled firm of Bombardier Ltd. who have begun to employ workers in Shannon and, with the backing of Liam St. John Devlin, plan to steamroll their doubtful scheme through despite repeated trade union objections.

Up to 1973 CIE built its own buses at its Spa Road works in Dublin but in that year the company tried to off-load its bus building section and negotiated an incredible deal with Van Hool, a Belgian bus firm. The Van Hool firm went into association with the small Dundalk coach building firm of Tommy McArdle and negotiated a cost-plus deal whereby CIE paid whatever the buses cost to build and then

provided Van Hool's profits on top of that. Up to 1973 CIE had imported chassis at cost price and had built the bus body at a relatively keen price which was slightly more expensive than the cost of similar buses in Britain but marginally cheaper when transport costs were considered.

Within a few years of Van Hool taking over, the cost of Dublin built buses escalated to over twice the price in Britain while Van Hool ended up importing every material, mainly from Belgium, down to and including the cleaning rags used by the mechanics to clean their hands. Some workers claim that Van Hool's parent company often sent worn or unusable parts at inflated prices which were paid for but could never be used.

After exactly five years in operation, in March 1978, the gut reservations of CIE's trade

Bus blacked by unions



unionists proved correct when Van Hool went into liquidation leaving unstamped insurance cards and unpaid holiday money, trade union dues and life assurance deductions. In all, each of the 300 workers made redundant lost an average of £400 personal money.

Van Hool built single decker buses in Belgium and had numerous design problems with their continuous welds and poor paint finish on the double decker buses. Despite promises in 1973 that they would employ 600 people at Spa Road, the maximum of Van Hool bus building workers was slightly over 300. Now, two years after Van Hool went bust they are suing CIE for £2½ million compensation because of their refusal to re-new the bus building contract.

In July 1978, a few months after Van Hool went bust, CIE Chairman Liam St. John Devlin arrived in Shannon, Co. Clare, and announced that CIE had found a new foreign firm to take over the former Rippon Piano factory. American Motors General proved to be less than gilt edged on New York's Wall Street stock exchange so, some months later, adding to the confusion, it was proposed to ask the General Motors Corporation to build the buses. They seem to have shown little interest when they learned that the proto-type buses were being blacked by CIE's main trade unions. Shortly afterwards, it was announced that the little known Canadian firm of Bombardier Ltd. were going to build CIE's buses in

ECONOMIC LIFE

Shannon.

Bombardier (Ireland) Ltd. is an associate firm of the doubtful American Motors General which was formed in July 1978 with two Dublin solicitors' secretaries acting as the only directors. A month later American Motors General made an unsuccessful panic bid to change their name to General Vehicle Corporation. One year later, in August, Limerick-based Minister

for Industry, Des O'Malley granted permission for a change of name to Bombardier (Ireland) Ltd. Two of the firm's American directors James Currie and George Sharback, both living in Michigan, are vice-presidents of American Motors General.

When the Irish Congress of Trade Unions' industrial relations committee enquired about this new

deal they were told that the ink was dry on the contract and that it would cost CIE £5 million to break the contract. Despite earlier verbal commitments that CIE would retain its bus building operation in Dublin, the semi-state managers seemed to have bowed to Limerick inspired political pressure to not only de-nationalise but also decentralise the bus building section of CIE.

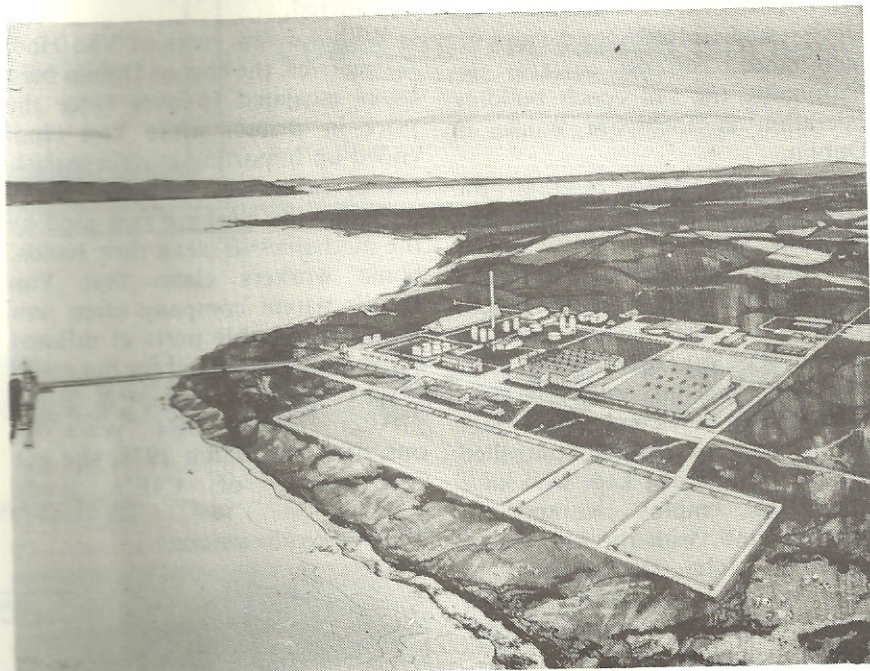
THE FIRST SMELTERS

On the top floor of Limerick's most prestigious office block, Sarsfield House, hardnosed mining company managers shout down telephones and dictate letters to equally hardnosed builders constructing Ireland's largest industrial complex on a thousand acre island, eighteen miles downstream on the Shannon Estuary. High above the dilapidated grey buildings and squalor of Limerick the planning for Ireland's first alumina processing plant continues.

The £350 million project will begin production — seven days a week and every day of the year — in 1982 and provide 800,000 tons of Alumina, the white powder from which aluminium is made — for export to smelters abroad.

The Aughinish Alumina project is the first step in the major industrial development of the country's widest and deepest natural estuary. The experiences being gained at Aughinish Island will be of use in the other oil and mineral processing plants proposed for the area.

The vast scale of the site is strange to anyone working in a small factory or office. The 1,500 construction workers arrive at the main gate and are ferried three miles across the site to the 900 metre jetty



Model of one of the smelters for the Shannon Estuary.

being built beside two huge bauxite — which contains about 50% alumina — storage buildings.

By next Spring, at the peak of construction, nearly 3,500 workers will be based on site.

Already, the problems of feeding and accommodating this industrial army are well on the way to being solved. There are a total of thirty-

two canteens, in six units, on the site and the catering workers boast that they will feed all 3,500 hungry builders within the space of half an hour.

The accommodation problem was less easily solved with various suggestions ranging from proposals for vast caravan parks, a floating hotel barge, a labour camp on site,

to the purchase and renovation of the nearby Mungret College but all of these schemes have been dropped in favour of block leasing of hotels in Ballybunion and provision of digs in local houses throughout County Limerick and North Kerry.

The immense size of the scheme led many to believe that the plant was an aluminium smelter — it is not. The 1,000 workers employed when production begins will unload bauxite at the jetty from ships of up to 70,000 tons weight. The bauxite, which is the earth's most common and plentiful mineral, is stored and later mixed with caustic soda before being heated under high pressure. About half of the bauxite is disposed of as waste or "Red Mud", while the soda and alumina combination is fed in liquid form to a thickener and roasted in a kiln to remove the water content. The end product is a fine white powder known as alumina and which is half aluminium and half oxygen.

The "Red Mud" waste is similar to a dirty toothpaste but as the caustic soda is recycled it is not a toxic waste and is quite harmless to the river and island. The "Red Mud" — red from the iron oxide — will be stored in a liquid state on a 300 acre section of Aughinish Island. As the waste solidifies in six weeks and ends up as clay there are no serious environmental dangers despite the size of the scheme.

The £350 million scheme is being mainly provided by three giant mining companies; one Dutch, one American and one Canadian (see box), who between them form Aughinish Alumina Limited. The Industrial Development Authority is providing £16.8 million in grants which the company says constitutes 3.5% of the total cost. The real benefits to the three big mining companies are Ireland's membership of the E.E.C. and the total tax free allowances on exports of alumina. According to Aughinish Alumina Limited it would not be

possible to operate an aluminium smelter in Ireland because the vast quantities of cheap electricity needed could not be provided without huge coal deposits or hydro-electric facilities nearby.

Co-ordinating and protecting the site's 1,500 workers is Limerickman, Tony Walsh, who is the full-time official of the I.T.G.W.U. on site since June 1978. He is also secretary of the Trades Union Group formed by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to liaise with the twelve unions on Aughinish and to do the day-to-day administration.

In the six months up to last December the alumina project had, what the management describe as, nineteen "industrial relations incidents". All the disputes have been unofficial and three months ago when the most serious unofficial action took place over a bonus scheme Tony Walsh as group secretary had his hands full. The group of twelve unions have negotiated a special thirteen week industrial relations allowance for all their members who abide by their union's agreements.

THE THREE PARTNERS

ALCAN

Probably the best known aluminium company, its name is a combined abbreviation of the words ALuminium and CANada. Its headquarters are in Montreal, Canada. In 1972 Alcan controlled nearly half of the metals traded in the non-socialist countries. The company was established in 1928 and now employs nearly 62,000 people. Alcan mines bauxite in Jamaica, Brazil, France, India, Africa and Australia where it claims enough reserves for fifty years. Alcan operates twelve smelters and presently owns one-third of Britain's smelting capacity. It has a 40% share in Aughinish Alumina.

BILLITON

The company derived its name from the Indonesian island of Belitung where it started tin mining in 1860. In 1970 Billiton became part of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group and now comprises that petro-chemical group's main arm in metals and minerals. Billiton is based in The Netherlands and has been selling bauxite since the 1930s and alumina since the 1960s. It mines in Surinam and the Amazon basin of Brazil where it opened a new bauxite mine last year. Billiton has a 35% share in Aughinish Alumina.

ANACONDA

A mining company mainly associated with copper and it derived its name from the area near Butte, Montana, where the company started mining in the late 1800s. Before World War 2 Anaconda had control of various mines outside the U.S.A. and also diversified into copper and brass wire production. After the war Anaconda went into aluminium. In 1977, Anaconda was taken over by the huge oil, gas and coal company Atlantic Richfield, which also owns the *Observer* newspaper. Anaconda, with 17,000 workers is the largest employer within the Atlantic Richfield group and it has a 25% share in Aughinish Alumina.

Banks bonanza

THE latest increase in interest rates by the big banking gang of four — Allied Irish, the Bank of Ireland, the Northern Bank and the Ulster Bank will cost the country over £6 million per month. That is more than £70 million over the next year if the rates stay up that long.

The 2½% rate of increase applied to Government borrowings (some private gombeen businessmen paid a smaller increase) will cost the taxpayer an extra £21 million a year to service the £850 million debt now outstanding between the Government and the four Associated Banks.

This imposition on the PAYE taxpayer is greater than the amount the tax evading banks will pay the Revenue Commissioners in income tax this year.

Of course the latest twist in the upward spiral of Irish interest rates is a reflection of the worldwide usury now being imposed on the workers of Western Europe and America by international finance capital.

The early eighties are characterised by an ingenious plot by the sinister faceless forces of world capitalism which hide behind multimillions in Switzerland — a plan to induce a recession by raising the return on finance capital to levels unseen since the second world war.

The plan is fronted and made palatable by right wing economists such as Milton Friedman and faithfully applied by subservient politicians such as Sir Geoffrey Howe and Mr. Michael O'Kennedy.

O'Kennedy and his cabinet colleague Desmond O'Malley tried to make political capital by pretending to oppose the banks' attempt to put up interest rates. The public posturing of the ministers meant nothing and the rates stayed where they were — where private banks put them.

The public posturings of Fianna Fáil are hypocritical because the party has played its full part in driving up the cost of money to the taxpayer and the

worker — where ultimately the bills have to be paid. They did it by allowing too much unproductive borrowing. Not, as the even more right-wing Garret FitzGerald said in the Dáil last month, by allowing the public sector to borrow too much, but by allowing too much wasteful borrowing by the get-rich-quick men, for horses, boats, land and the other trappings of millionaire life in the 80s.

The new record interest rates will, as with all machinations in the world of money, ultimately be paid for by the worker. As a taxpayer he will be hit for the Government will have to take more to pay for the higher interest payments on the national debt. His employer will have to put up prices to pay the bigger bill — hitting his wagepacket in the supermarket. His wage packet gets squeezed too when the profit squeeze cuts down the corporate kitty for future investment or wage increases.

It certainly will help the shareholders in the banks. In 1980, banking in Ireland will be a growth industry — but it will be just about the only sector to perform well. The stock market last month celebrated the rise in interest rates by pushing up the shares of Allied Irish Banks and the shares of the Bank of Ireland.

Garret FitzGerald and Fine Gael have blamed the state sector companies and the spending of public money on services for the community for the record high interest rates. In this he is totally at one with his right wing economist mentor Friedman, and his "opponent" Mr Haughey. We say it was the wasteful ways of the private sector, both in Ireland and abroad, which put the cost of money up. Our answer is give them less, and allow the workers through more economic planning to get on with the job of building a better life for all.

MONEY TALKS

Wage squeeze

EMPLOYERS' spokesmen whose job it is to keep up the cry that workers' wage rises are pricing the country out of jobs haven't been quoting statistics lately. No wonder, when the latest Government figures show that the weekly earnings of a male industrial worker of £93.62 last June was only 11.2% higher than June 1978.

That was more than 1% below the rate of inflation at the time, so who's to blame for the inflation rate of 20% we have now?

Assuming that the average industrial worker was married and had two children, his £93.62 shrunk to £77.35 after income tax and social insurance contributions were deducted. That left his take home pay only 7.2% above what it was a year earlier. The 1978 budget cut the workers' living standards by 4%.

Michael O'Kennedy with his much trumpeted, 1980 tax allowances took away with the other hand what he gave with the one hand and did nothing to boost the real income of workers. His contribution was a new assault on living standards through cuts in the level of public services.

Whose welfare?

THE Minister for "Health" and "Social Welfare" Dr. Michael Woods announced last month a new drive to combat what Margaret Thatcher likes to call welfare spongers.

His colleague Michael O'Kennedy in the budget speech revealed that "in recent months" some 6,150 cases of tax evasion among the self employed had been uncovered.

These 6,150 tax evaders make up 7.7% of the 80,000 self employed. By contrast, only 0.69% of the 42,000 recipients of unemployment benefit in 1978 were involved in abuse of the system.

Therefore tax evasion by the self employed is more than ten times as widespread as welfare abuse. Indeed, it's even greater than ten times because the units set up by the Revenue Commissioners to find tax evaders has only touched the tip of the iceberg because the tax offices are so undermanned that most Inspectors of Taxes don't even leave their desks to inspect the tax returns of the self employed.

Does the CAP fit?

IRISH consumers forked out £175 millions because of the operations of the Common Agricultural Policy during 1978, according to a report just published by the Institute of Fiscal Studies in London. This represents a direct handout by Irish consumers to each individual Irish farmer of £1,030.

The total cost of the Common Agricultural Policy has been growing steadily since its inception. At the moment it is costing in the region of £20,000 million or almost £80 per person in the Community. The main burden of this cost is being carried by Community consumers. In fact up to £16,500 million is given annually as a direct transfer from consumers to farmers within the EEC.

The net loss to the Community because of the CAP works out at £4,400 million. The reasons for this are: a reduction in consumer demand, an increase in production costs, storage cost for surplus products, export sales at world prices, and administrative costs.

The facts regarding the crazy workings of the CAP are fairly well known, i.e. that over three-quarters of the total EEC budget is spent on buying, storing and dumping food surpluses grown by farmers who make up less

than 8% of the Community workforce. As an illustration of this bizarre policy last year alone the EEC spent £397 million on just storing the butter mountain, while it only spent £350 million on schemes to alleviate unemployment through the Community Social Fund.

The high prices paid to EEC farmers (sometimes up to 6 times higher than the world prices) are an incentive to further over-production while at the same time reducing consumption of these very products because they are over-priced to the consumer. The net result of this situation is that consumers lose more from CAP than farmers gain. In 1979 for instance milk production rose by 8% but butter consumption actually fell by 8%.

A recent study of the Common Agricultural Policy by the Institute of Fiscal Studies in London makes it clear how the CAP robs the consumer to pay the farmer.

Ireland's economy receives a direct transfer from the CAP of £233 million. When we look at the gains and benefits presented in this way we see a very different picture to the one normally projected in the Irish media. The



Soaring storage costs — yet beef a luxury.

figures show that while farmers gained £408 million (on which they paid little or no tax), Irish consumers lost £175 million of their wages as a direct result of the workings of the CAP.

Immediately after his election to the European Parliament T.J.Maher said his victory was largely due to workers' votes, even if this is true it is highly unlikely that T.J. (the farmers' friend) will be calling for an end to this unjustifiable burden on

consumers. T.J.Maher was elected to the European Parliament to represent the interests of Irish farmers and their multi-million pound Co-Ops, all of which depend on the further expansion of the CAP.

Neither can the Irish working class get any solace from the fact that there are four members of the Irish Labour Party sitting in Strasbourg. Each time there is a crucial vote on the CAP the Irish Labour Deputies, in the

"National interest" of course, fall in behind Maher to increase the economic burden of Irish consumers. The only way that calls for the reduction of the burdery that CAP places on Irish workers will be heard in the European Parliament is when the Irish working class elects workers' representatives to voice them. As the CAP continues to expand the need for such representation becomes even greater.

THE IRISH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The first study of its kind since James Connolly's 'Labour in Irish History'

Price £2.20

Repsol Publishing
30 Gardiner Place, Dublin 1. Telephone 741045

The Bookshop

30 Gardiner Place
Dublin 1

★★★★★★★★

Biggest stock of socialist & working class literature in Dublin

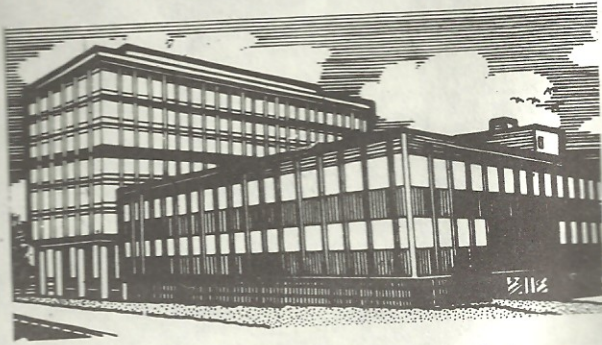
★★★★★★★★

Open 9.30-5.30
Monday-Saturday

LEXAN

Panels for Glazing

THE UNBREAKABLE GLAZING —
BEATS VANDALS FOR GOOD
(If broken we will replace FREE of charge)



Used in Offices, Factories, Schools,
Machinery, Greenhouses, Domestic
Windows and Doors, etc.

For cut-to-size prices and fitting instructions, consult us —
TRADE SUPPLIED.

Newray Signs Ltd

Greenbank Industrial Estate, Newry
Phone 5272/61430

Mark's Bar

Crowe Street
Dundalk

Home of folk music
Traditional sessions
every weekend

PROP. TEDDY FARMER

Repsol Printers use
Polychrome Offset Plates
Cow Offset Blankets
Webril Wipes
Afgfa-Gevaert Rapidoprint Film
Kray Type Disc Headliners

BUDGET OFFENSIVE

Ann Buchanan

The British Conservative Government's Budget introduced on March 26 has been described as a 'vicious head-on attack on the working class'. Leading Cambridge economist Bob Rowthorn sees it as an Iron Fist monetarist budget ultimately to be replaced with the Velvet Glove as the Tories seek to stay in power.

Much of what he had to say in a recent London lecture — "Budget or Bludgeon? And what are the alternatives" — related specifically to the political and economic problems facing the British Left. However Northern Ireland workers are already realising that the current economic situation is but the beginning of a further masive attack on their living standards.

Rowthorn's analysis therefore can help to provide a deeper understanding of the present crisis and the urgency of united action to rescue Northern Ireland from an economic policy which threatens to create a human mountain of unemployed in excess of 100,000.

Massive unemployment (in Britain) is also forecast by the Cambridge economist aimed at "searing the wits out of the working class". Exceptionally high interest rates, brutal reductions in permitted business overdrafts forcing many small firms to close and a 2½% reduction in output all add up to a dismal picture under the Tories for the next few years. But why tear an already sagging economy apart at the seams?

Basically the Budget was a three-pronged attack on the independent power of the working class: economic, ideological and "coercive".

Unemployment may double



Young Belfast workers march against cuts.

over the next few years. Therefore workers will learn to do as they are told. If not they'll get less; earnings related unemployment benefit has been abolished completely; families of striking workers will have £12 per week automatically deducted from any social welfare benefits they are entitled to; these benefits will be taxed for the first time; heavy taxes have been placed on such consumer goods as petrol, alcohol, tobacco, car licences etc. (Hit them where it hurts). And at the same time tax-free enterprise zones will be set up enabling businesses to reap huge profits. Finally the soaring profits of the banks will go

completely untaxed.

All in all an atmosphere designed to make capitalists feel strong and workers anxious, fearful and disorganised.

Furthermore the Budget is designed to weaken collective social provision and encourage competition and privatised social services. Local government housing is to be eliminated, virtually, by equalising council rents and private rents. Tenants will also be encouraged into "home ownership" as rents will rise by over 200% in many cases. Naturally special low mortgage rates will be found.

The health service is to be cut back with prescription charges

jumping from 40p to £1 within a year. And possibly the most vicious step of all, child benefit, basic unemployment, sickness, injury, invalidity and maternity benefits will not be permitted to keep pace with inflation, currently at an all time high of 20%.

Underlining the new values of Prime Minister Thatcher's welfarism is the decision to increase spending on the military by 3% in the coming year. Obviously in response to Britain's new found role as President Carter's special agent.

Still in the long run workers can hope for some improvement in their lot as the moderate right

LIFE UNDER THATCHER

all the Tory Party decide that Mrs. Thatcher's programme was not much of a good thing, even for Tory big business. Then comes the day of the Velvet Glove. But what about Northern Ireland in the meantime?

Since 1974 unemployment has increased to pre-1940 levels; the monthly average in 1979 being 64,948 or 11%+ of the workforce. What is most frightening about the character of the present army of unemployed is its increasing percentage of young workers. Nearly 1 in 3 on the dole are between the ages of 16 and 29.

This must be set against the fact that emigration has doubled compared with the late '60s and that live births have fallen by 25% in the past ten years. Both statistics indicate important critical population trends within Northern Ireland.

However, at the moment, the labour market is facing a period of exceptionally high job needs with the numbers available for work increasing rapidly. At a time when Mrs. Thatcher decides deliberately to expand the "pool" of unemployed.

The actual increase in fact in the Northern Ireland labour force is liable to be a minimum of 6,000 per year over the next five years, of which more than 50% will be young female workers. Contrast these figures with the Government predictions of 2,000 new jobs per year in the same period.

It is small wonder that leading Northern trade unionists are describing the coming decade as an "industrial timebomb". It is the young workforce in the 16 to 29 age group, perhaps the best educated and most highly skilled, who will take the full force of the certain unemployment explosion. Certain that is unless the Tory policy is not only halted in its tracks but put in reverse.

There are signs of serious disagreement beginning at Westminster, with the Priors and Heaths lining up against Thatcher, Howe and company. And this is increasingly being backed by leading economists at Oxford and Cambridge. Priority must however attach to a Jobs Creation Programme for Northern Ireland.

There are a few incontrovertible points that the Northern Ireland trade union organisations need to hammer home at Stormont Castle. First the Tory cuts threaten any job creation programme in Northern Ireland at its very base. As the private sector folded, losing 13,000 jobs per year the public sector beefed up employment to the tune of 10,000 jobs annually. And as the National Institute for Economic and Social Research pointed out, increased public expenditure of £1,000 million would create 235,000 new jobs in a year while a similar amount in tax cuts would only produce 39,000 units in the same period.

Second the job creation agencies must be rationalised. As all the Tory eggs are in the private sector basket this step is necessary to ensure that any planned expansion is not frustrated.

Finally Stormont must be persuaded that economic viability depends on drawing upon the expertise available within the EEC, the British State Sector and the Irish State Sector. The proposal to reconnect the Northern Ireland Electricity grid with the South is just the sort of hard-headed economic thinking which should take over from the dogmatic monetarism currently being peddled by Westminster.

Northern Ireland Committee chairman of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions Jim McCusker, (Public Service Association), summed up the feeling of the vast majority of workers in the province at last month's annual conference: "Those of you who remember the 1930s will recognise the signs all around us that foretell a bleak outlook for the men, women and children of our community. Even the present government has been forced to admit that the omens for the future indicate that worse is still to befall us."

"What we need above all else in Northern Ireland is jobs for our people. We should all be united to achieve this goal. While we all have our sacred cows, vested interests and hobby horses, in the interest of the common good we must be prepared to sacrifice some of them," he said.

films

produced by Sinn Féin The Workers' Party

Caoineadh Airt Ui Laoire

Inspired by the famous 18th century epic poem, 'Lament for Art O'Leary', this film has won critical acclaim both in Ireland and abroad. *Colour/60 mins.*

Going, Going, Gone!

The story of how Irish resources — and jobs — are being stolen with the help of some of the finest Irishmen money can buy. *Colour/35 mins.*

Both films available for hire
Full details from
Margaret O'Leary
30 Gardiner Place, Dublin 1.

The Dalkey Archivist

by Anne Harris

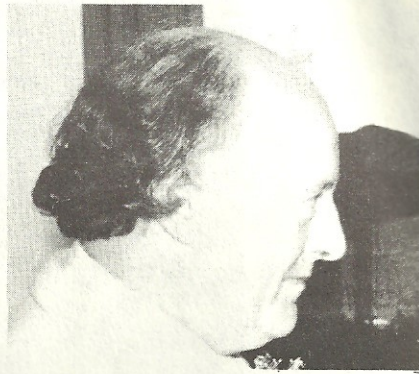
THE happy group of women you see below were carefully posed in the sunshine of 1890 in Balbriggan, Co. Dublin. Naturally enough, these sewing women were known as "the Balbriggans".

We know this and much more because of the tireless work of a man called George Morrison who works in Dalkey overlooking Dublin Bay. His painstaking restoration of actuality material, that is photographs, has literally shed new light on obscure corners of faded prints. Lighting them up George Morrison lights up our past.

Many Irish people associate George Morrison with his famous epics, *Mise Eire* and *Saoirse*. In these films, George Morrison seemed to breathe movement and life into the frozen and cracked prints of the past. But in many ways his real and enduring work is as obscure to the public as some of the prints with which he deals.

This is the penalty he has paid for eschewing the tinsel and glamour of the commercial film world and taking on his own shoulders the work that in another country would be done by a state body and a state archivist with a large staff. George Morrison works alone, to his own incredibly high standards and out of a passion which can only be described as patriotism. This arises from his love of the Irish people, recorded making their material history.

George Morrison knows himself to be a film maker — he has won many European awards. He knows



George Morrison

himself to be a documentary film historian whose work, *Mise Eire* recently played to packed houses in

London. What he does not know perhaps, is that his greatest contribution has been to inspire and uplift those who would lift the material life of our people to a new level and who need as part of that struggle, clear pictorial perceptions of our industrial and social past.

For the next three months, George Morrison will be talking to *Workers Life* about aspects of our pictorial past. It is a unique opportunity to follow the thought and technique of a man who in a better Ireland would be publicly recognised by the state and lauded for his technical and intellectual perception.

The Sewing Balbriggans, 1890



“Instead of capturing
a period through old
men talking I creep up
from behind...”

“I present the past in
the present tense...”

“Good. You noticed
that there are no
backs on the workers’
chairs... That’s very
important.”



*The Stripping Room, Goodbody's Cigarette Factory,
Dublin, c 1890*



LIFE PROFILE

“When general education came to Ireland what was meant by education was Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic. The Renaissance scarcely touched Ireland. So we knew nothing of the graphic arts. Our visual sense was stunted.

There is a grave cultural problem here — more serious than the revival of the Irish language. We just don't have the language, the means to communicate with the modern world.

As for social history I come to it through my work as a technician. I am first of all a film technician and from this I come to history and industrial archaeology.

The North was more stable in the nineteenth century. It hadn't the backward agrarian structure of the South. So the North had the conditions of industrial capitalism and an industrial revolution. Shipbuilding and linen became possible. And shipbuilding drove industry in the direction of serious industry, of heavy industry.”

Workers Life invites readers to send us old photographs, showing the social and industrial scenes from the period 1900 — 1960. Any information on the pictures should be enclosed. Pictures of unusual interest will be submitted to George Morrison for comment. Mark letters “Life Profile”.



Building the Oceanic Belfast, 1898

Beleek Pottery, 1898



Rights in employment can only be maintained by trade union action

Aidan Carroll

WORKING PEOPLE have always been wary of the law. The law is not generally an instrument geared to our needs and, in the past, employers and judges have used it against worker and trade union interests. Nevertheless trade union pressure has secured a set of legal minimum employment rights which can be exploited. We have laws providing workers with legal rights in regard to holidays, hours of work, unfair dismissal, redundancy payments, health and safety, equal pay etc.

In order to gain the benefits of this legislation and to use it effectively one must know about it. Workers will not learn about rights from newspapers, which have business, finance and property sections to inform employers, farmers, banks and property speculators of *their* rights. We intend to rectify that situation. Over the coming months we will be publishing a detailed analysis of legislation such as the Holidays (Employees) Act 1973, the Unfair Dismissals Act 1977, the Factories Act, the Employment Equality Act etc. In addition to spelling out rights under these Acts we will tell how one can set about getting what the law has provided. Remember that rights in employment, even those which the law protects, are often the result of trade union action and can only be maintained by trade union action.

Many Acts providing for workers' rights have deep political significance. The relations between

the individual worker and employer, and between unions and management, are *power* relationships. They involve a *balance of power*. As Paul O'Higgins in a book on Workers' Rights stated "Law regulates the balance of power between the worker and his employer, between unions and management. It may tip the balance one way or another. It may help or hinder the growth and exercise of union power".

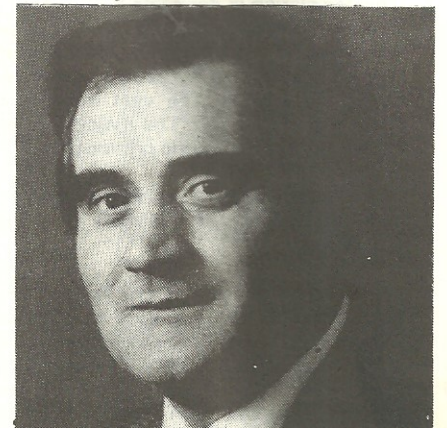
At any one moment in time the extent to which the law helps or hinders workers and trade unions is itself largely a reflection of the balance of power in Irish society as a whole.

Employers and their political allies have always strenuously resisted the introduction of legislation providing minimum rights for workers, declaring that the new laws would destroy industry. In 1838 Daniel O'Connell, himself a large employer with brewing and banking interests spoke against factory reform. He castigated Ashley and other factory reformers for their "ridiculous humanity" and said it would end "by converting the manufacturers into beggars." In 1855, the textile manufacturers in Manchester formed the Factory Law Amendment Association to combat 'undue restrictions and mischievous interference with trade'. This organisation was merged into the National Association of Factory Occupiers whose object was 'to watch over factory legislation with a

view to prevent any increase of the present unfair and injudicious enactments'. This Association was frequently referred to by Charles Dickens as the 'Association for the mangling of operatives'.

Attempts to improve workers' legal rights are still resisted today by employers and employers' organisations, such as the Federated Union of Employers, the Confederation of Irish Industry and the Construction Industry Federation, with a firmness and ruthlessness comparable with that shown by their forbears. The only difference is that resistance today takes more subtle forms. They still use the argument that legislation will ruin industry. They now use, however, their political allies in Dáil Éireann and in Government Ministries to prevent or delay legislation by saying that all the various interests must be consulted; that there are difficulties as to the

Gene FitzGerald
Minister for Labour



WORKING TO RULE

precise form the legislation should take; and of course, that there is a problem of parliamentary time.

All legislation providing for workers' rights must be introduced by the Government of the day, and in particular by the Minister for Labour, and must be passed by Dáil Eireann. This fact alone should point to the need for a strong Workers' Party in Dáil Eireann.

It should be noted that workers in the UK and Northern Ireland and in other EEC countries have much better rights laid down by legislation. In fact some of the legislation introduced by Irish Governments was forced on them by EEC Directives, e.g. the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974, the Employment Equality Act 1977 and the Protection of Employment Act 1977. It should also be noted that in 1975 when the Coalition Government attempted to postpone

the introduction of equal pay for Irish women workers, the combined strength of the I.C.T.U. and the European Trade Union Confederation ensured that the EEC Commission refused permission. This was about the only time, however, during the Coalition's reign when Congress and Congress officers, many of whom are prominent members of the Labour Party, used their power to protect workers' legal rights.

During the coming months I will outline workers' legal rights as regards holidays, hours of work, unfair dismissals, safety and health at work, equal pay etc. This outline will allow readers not only to tackle employers about *your* conditions of employment, but to put pressure on unions and Congress to have these minimum standards improved and extended.

Who said what?

The manner in which the current Dáil parties protect the interests of employers is best illustrated by the following extracts from Dáil debates on workers' legislation. The speakers are A Gene FitzGerald, Fianna Fáil, B Michael O'Kennedy, Fianna Fáil, C Michael Enright, Fine Gael, D Michael O'Leary, Labour. The editor will award a fiver to the first reader who matches the statements to the speakers.

1. It would be unwise to introduce legislation which would act to the detriment of what otherwise would be an amicable relationship between employer and employee. In comparison with British firms most of our businesses are small. Therefore there is more of a community feeling in a factory here than in the more industrialised countries.
2. This legislation is desirable but I would like to convey the fears being expressed by those who employ a small number of people. We depend to a large extent on such employers. The vast majority of our employers are decent people who are interested in their business, in the country and its well-being and in their employees. They have social conscience. The vast majority of employers would never like to have a dismissal of any sort. The majority of employers when they take such action more often or not it is extreme provocation.
3. The religious superiors managing the secondary schools are very strong in their view that the two-year probationary period is a necessary and essential element in this legislation.
4. Traditionally our people are wary of legislation. My fear is that all the Bills being introduced at this time may scare small employers from engaging more than the minimum of workers. In small firms, small employments, where there are one, two or three employees, whether it be on a farm, in a shop or perhaps a blacksmiths forge, employees and employers constitute a combined effort, there is friendship and good relations between them and they are probably social friends.

QUOTES

"I wouldn't deny that Charlie Haughey has given more emphasis to the Northern issue than his predecessor, but why the hell hide the real purpose of that emphasis which is Brits Out."

NEIL BLANEY, T.D.

"The tuppence ha'penny politician is no good to the country."

JIM GIBBONS, T.D.

"The question of who wants power, and why they want it, and the uses to which power will be put, should always be matters of major concern to a freedom-loving people."

JACK LYNCH, T.D.

"May the Lord preserve Ireland and Irish farming from the irresponsibility of Gay Byrne."

FARMERS JOURNAL.

"I think also that Dan McCarthy could alter his line a bit. After all, his members are small farmers who want to be big farmers, and he has left the ranks of small farmers himself for some time, if one takes the definition of a big farmer as one with 50 acres, which was given by one contributor. The sticks they cut may yet be used to beat them with."

MICHAEL DILLON, THE IRISH TIMES.

"I have been doing the Late Late Show for eighteen years, and it is my experience when any particular group comes out badly from a show, invariably Gay Byrne is to blame. They never think of looking at themselves."

GAY BYRNE.

"Who the feck wants to talk about leisure anyway?"

DELEGATE TO YOUNG FIANNA FÁIL CONFERENCE.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

Pat Rabbitte

THE IMPACT of the new technology on employment in the 1980s is one of the greatest challenges facing the trade union movement. The advent of micro-electronics has been described as "the second industrial revolution". Trade unionists and working people generally are usually the first group in society to pay the social costs of the application of new methods of production. The task of ensuring that the harmful social impact of the new technology is minimised and its benefits equitably distributed will rest primarily with the trade union movement. The ability of the movement to persuade the Government to play its proper role in achieving this balance between the two contradictory features of technological change was recognised as being crucial at the ICTU Conference in Dun Laoghaire on "The Industrial Relations implications of new Technology" on March 26/27 1980.

The Conference heard speakers from the EEC Commission, the ETUI, the TUC, the NUJ, and the ASTMS contribute to different aspects of the debate and conclude with a general discussion in the Irish context led by a panel comprising of representatives from the ESBOA, the NUJ, the NIPSA and the ITGWU.

Mr John Evans, author of a very informative report for the ETUI, entitled "The Impact of Micro-Electronics on Employment in Western Europe in the 1980s", told the conference that despite the severe impact that the technology is likely to have on working people over the 1980s, trade unions in Western Europe recognise that a



policy of opposition to technological change is not viable. Trade unions concerned with negotiating new technology agreements have all recognised that the improvement of living standards in the long-term depends upon harnessing technological development to production. The pre-occupation of the international trade union movement is, therefore, to ensure that the technology is introduced at a pace at which its social impact can be spread fairly over societies and to ensure that the benefits of the new technology accrue to working people.

Ultimately, whether the expansion in productive potential is translated into improved living standards or into increased unemployment depends primarily upon the political responses of Governments. In the context of 6 million people unemployed in the EEC (and rising) there is no room for complacency.

On the question of negotiation, Mr Evans instanced the situation in Sweden where unions may bring in outside consultants at the expense of the management to advise them on the issues involved.

The essential demand for a positive input from the trade union movement was returned to by Mr David Lea, Assistant General Secretary of the TUC and Chairman of the TUC's New Technology Committee, when he said "...technology was a necessary — albeit insufficient in itself — condition of rising living standards". The overall implications of the introduction of the new technology should, he said, be put on the agenda of any future round(s) of centralised collective bargaining. He was convinced that a qualitative change in approach to the

NEW LIFE

negotiation of the introduction of new technology was necessary. At local level it was imperative that the principle of "No change without agreement" be enforced. This would require in Ireland, as in Britain, a new approach to traditional union demarcation lines and the development or improvement of inter-union machinery embracing the largest possible proportion of the workforce.

Dealing with the vital question of full provision of information and acknowledging the involvement of the trans-national corporations, Mr Lea stressed the necessity for the international trade union movement to develop machinery to enforce participation at that level.

The TUC recognises that the new technology also offers great opportunities — not just for increasing the competitiveness of British industry but for increasing the quality of working life and for providing new benefits to working people. In the Irish industrial context — given proper planning for its introduction and the control of its use — the new technology also offers the opportunity for real social progress for working people. However, in the absence of Government intervention and planning, the benefits from introducing micro-electronics will almost certainly be unequally distributed.

Obviously the target of "no redundancy" agreements probably involving job relocation within the enterprise should be the objective of union negotiators. Where "no redundancy" agreements prove impossible, such matters as shorter working hours and improved redundancy payments must always be on the agenda. Where the employer fails to make adequate provision for re-training, the shortfall must be made up by the State.

The general discussion on "Aspects of New Technology in Ireland" focussed on the urgency of the ICTU New Technology Committee compiling a draft policy document geared towards Irish industry. The projection of 30,000 jobs in the electronics industry by 1985 was recognised as constituting 15% of our

manufacturing sector. Already, exports of electronic goods now account for 20% of manufacturing exports as compared with 9% in 1973. The growing significance of the electronics sector within overall IDA strategy is evidenced by the fact that in 1976 electronics accounted for 8.9% of total job approval, whereas in 1979 it was between 20% and 25%. Therefore, in the short term at least, Ireland is showing a net gain from the development of the new technology.

However, there are dangers

inherent in the fact that research and development is usually located outside Ireland. Therefore, Irish industrial strategy should be geared towards having not only the capacity to make the 'chips' but also the capacity to devise and produce final goods or systems incorporating the chips, together with the capacity to programme the systems. Accordingly, the trade union movement must be in a position to establish a clear set of principles to govern the movement's total response to the new circumstances.

Closing the conference, Mr John Hall, Chairman of the ICTU New Technology Committee, said that "Negotiation, agreement and planning represent the only way that technology can be introduced in such a way that it benefits us all while protecting our future as an industrial state". "It would be necessary", he added, "to re-think employment and remuneration concepts and society itself would need to change with the technological changes."

A silicon wafer, which will be cut into individual chips, is examined at Mostek's £40 million microelectronics plant.



A View From Paris

John De Courcy Ireland

THE WORLD takes on a different shape according to the spot from which it is observed.

Just before I left for France Greatman FitzGerald, taoiseach-to-be, intoned a lengthy sermon to the faithful at Ballsbridge.

It seemed as if addressed to a world shaped by woolly mists and a returning Celtic twilight from either the heart of the mid-western prairies or the steppes of Siberia. Certainly not from an ancient seaport city in a small island whose life is dominated by its maritime situation. He never mentioned the sea, still less declared that an Irish maritime policy was 58 years overdue (the only "founding father" to propound one was the often reactionary Griffith); and this although rumours were loudly buzzing that the Department of Finance was insisting on the laying up of our small but only oceanographic research ship, the Lough Beltra.

But seen through the eyes of the French press the world takes on the form claimed for it; five inhabited continents surrounded by seas that make up 72% of its surface. During my stay French papers of every complexion published lengthy items on maritime affairs affecting France or the world at large.

Above all, there was considerable coverage of developments at the ninth session of the Third Conference on the Law of the Sea, just adjourned until July. At this session the French delegation insisted that neither multi-national companies nor the very rich states should be allowed to monopolise what is going to become highly important to the world economy — the right to mine the seabed for nodules of minerals essential

to modern industry. It would be interesting to know how the Irish delegation at the conference has been voting.

Certainly the story of France's stand against the multi-nationals came appropriately, as another piece of widely reported maritime news was the brazen admission by Shell that part of the cargo of oil loaded in the flag-of-convenience tanker Salem, later sunk in suspicious circumstances off West Africa, has been discharged at Durban, South Africa. This was oil from Kuwait which categorically forbids export of its oil to the home of apartheid. What particularly annoyed much of French opinion was that Shell had declared previously that the oil had been destined for France.

The fact that four large tankers have disappeared mysteriously at sea, within a month, when there is now too much tanker tonnage afloat to assure steady profits for the ship-owners, also came in for comment. There was the rude suggestion that some shipowners would rather claim insurance money than face the expense of keeping an idle tanker laid up in a Scottish loch or Norwegian fjord.

The tanker Tario which sank off Brittany in March is currently leaking oil that threatens additional ecological damage to that often stricken part of France and naturally Breton opinion is becoming more and more indignant.

The influential Nouvelle Revue Maritime states that out of no fewer than 1,129 infractions of the agreed rules for keeping shipping in safe and separate lanes well away from the Breton coast, 223 were by

flag-of-convenience ships, and 292 by Greek ships. Some of us did say, at the time, that Greece should have been welcomed into the EEC only on condition that her merchant fleet improved its safety record, (which has given the Irish coast some shocks in recent years incidentally).

Then *Le Monde* published a long exciting list of research to help medical science by CNEXO, the great French state oceanographic research organisation, and two other state bodies which are confidently expected to speed up the battle against various infections and against cardiovascular and metabolic troubles, rheumatism, nervous diseases and cancer. All through the use of products from the sea.

And the French fishing industry, like ours, is crying out for the EEC to speedily work out an equitable sea fisheries policy. The EEC fleet as a whole is threatened with disastrous decline through growing fist imports from overseas countries having 200 mile exclusive limits and which also have sunk capital in modern fishing vessels with scientifically trained crews.

Yet the Greatman FitzGerald forgot the sea, the fishing

industry facing crisis, Irish oceanographic research facing suspension, the Irish sea unlaned and unpoliced despite the tankers and atomic waste carriers that frequent it.

Finally, will Dublin ever come up with anything half as remarkable as the Centre Pompidou in Paris? Opinions may differ about the grotesque charm of its outward appearance; but where else can one spend hours and days without being charged a halfpenny, filling up a single bureaucratic form, or being asked one's business, consulting a vast reference library in eight languages (probably more), enjoying an exhibition of the works of Salvador Dali, reading the day's newspapers, learning from a huge display of pictures on the origins of modern technology and watching in seated comfort, I don't know how many, educational sound slide-shows?

And on the roof there is not only a superb bird's eye view of a proud city but refreshments or a meal at very reasonable prices. Nor was one of the thousands there breaking the 'no smoking' rule.

Oil tanker Pacific Glory on fire.



MARCHAIS AND THE FRENCH LEFT

Joe Mulholland

THE MOST recent scandal in French political life involving George Marchais, the aggressive General Secretary of the Communist Party, has been dismissed pragmatically by most seasoned commentators as irrelevant. Marchais' personal life, it is argued, is of much less concern than the policies pursued at the present time by his Party.

But in France who did what and where during the controversial period 1940 — 1945 matters a great deal. And when doubts are cast on the behaviour of the General Secretary of the French Communist Party, not exactly the most loved man on the French political scene, it is open season.

The "Marchais Affair" began with the publication in the weekly magazine 'L'Express' of a document alleged to have been found in the archives at Augsburg in West Germany. According to this document George Marchais was still in Nazi Germany in 1944 and had not escaped back to France in 1943 as he himself had claimed when he joined the Communist Party several years later. For many workers in France during the War, starvation was the alternative to seeking employment in Germany. Many worked for French firms that were manufacturing for Germany and over 700,000 were deported to Germany to work in factories and in agriculture there. Marchais claims that having arrived in Paris in 1935 a young lad of 15 years without a trade, he was struggling to survive

when War broke out. At that time of despondency and defeat, he says, without trade union leadership and Communist Party organisation, the struggle was really that of personal survival.

The story of hardship is one that is familiar to many of Marchais' generation. But his story has drawn attention once more to his lack of "Communist pedigree", and to the fact of his not having fought in the Resistance and to his having come to the Party, relatively speaking, quite late, (in 1947), after an enigmatic few years that have yet to be satisfactorily accounted for.

The present "affair" will hardly affect Marchais' strong position in the Party, and, on a national level, will not have much influence on the number of votes he receives in the Presidential Election of April 1981 when he will almost certainly be the Communist Party candidate. French political parties have become accustomed to dealing with such personalised attacks over the past number of years.

The real effect of the Marchais affair is to highlight the depth to which relations between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party in France have plummeted. The common programme of the Left, drawn up before the General Election of March 1978, has been well and truly buried. The Socialists are accused daily in the columns of L'Humanité and on television and radio programmes of conspiring with the right to hurt Marchais electoral chances and to whip up

anti-Communist feeling. The quarrelling in public between the two parties, the insults, the attacks and counter-attacks contributed enormously to the defeat of the Left in 1978.

It is now unthinkable that the two parties will unite on the second round of the two ballot system in install a left-wing President in the Elysée. Were such agreement to be arrived at, a Socialist Party candidate like Michel Rocard would certainly stand an excellent chance as a recent opinion poll has shown, of ousting Giscard d'Estaing. But Rocard is even more unacceptable to the Communist Party than the leader of the Socialist Party, Francois Mitterand, and that's saying a lot.

The disagreements and the antagonism between the two Parties, as well as exasperating the French electorate, are causing deep anxiety in the trade union movement particularly in unions like the giant C.F.D.T. (Confederation Francaise des Travailleurs), and the Primary Teachers' Union, the F.E.N. (Federation de l'Education Nationale) where the two parties have much support. The condemnation of the constant infighting has been a feature this of trade union annual conferences.

The C.P.F., used as it is to the flux and reflux of its popularity, and with a constant intake of new members, can easily withstand the present crisis but there is evidence that among the higher echelons of

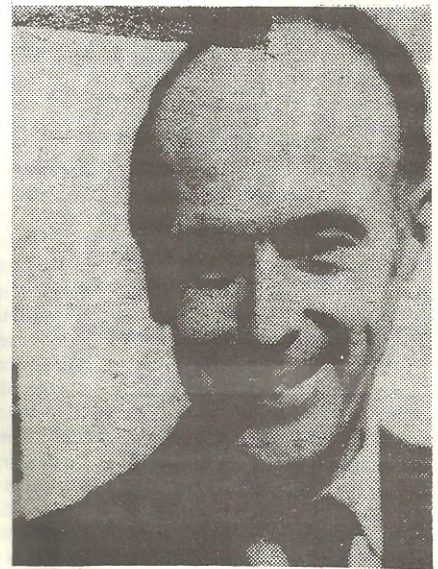
the Party all is not well. In May 1979 one of the Party intellectuals, Roland Leroy, was expelled without explanation from the central committee. Now the First Secretary of the Paris Federation, a member of the Central Committee, Henri Fitzbin, together with five other

officers of the Federation have resigned their posts in a blaze of publicity fanned by the publication of Fitzbin's book "Que les bouches s'ouvrent..." ("Let Mouths Speak"). The book, with as collaborator, one of the most eminent of French Communist intellectuals and specialist in Irish affairs, Maurice Goldring, calls for an open and frank analysis of the reasons for the Party's loss of support in the local election of 1977 and the General Elections of 1978. Fitzbin argues for a closer working relationship in the Party between the intellectuals and the workers. The opposition to Fitzbin and his colleagues has been led by Marchais who condemns such criticism as the rumination of intellectuals "sitting at desks".

A major question for the future is whether or not the French Communist Party can come to power or even whether, as it did in 1936, it will support a minority Socialist Government. The Party's withdrawal from the Euro-communist movement, its stand on foreign policy, as opposed to the stand of the Italian and Spanish parties is a firm indication that important changes have and are taking place within the Party.

Soviet policy in Europe for the past twenty years has been to maintain good relations with a politically independent and stable France, the basis of which was laid down by De Gaulle. Since that time France has always insisted on deciding in its own interests what foreign policy line to adopt. The present crisis over Afghanistan and the attempted boycott of the Olympic Games is evidence that the Elyssé Palace is not going to upset any appercarts in French-Soviet relations.

The importance of a stable independent France was emphasised by Leonid Brezhnev, much to the annoyance of some sections of the French Communist Party, when he



President Giscard d'Estaing

paid a visit to Giscard d'Estaing in the middle of the Presidential campaign in 1974.

The meeting in Paris (late April) of some Communist and Workers' Parties which was convened by the Polish and French parties is a major reason why Pravda and the Soviet Union feel that they have a strong ally and friend in the French Communist Party. The absence, of course of the Italian, Spanish, British and Romanians will in the end probably make for the conference falling between two stools. Given the state of relations between the various European parties it is even less surprising that the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party seems to have more in common, at the moment, with Francois Mitterand than with Georges Marchais.

Nevertheless one of Europe's oldest and most powerful communist parties must in the end respond to the pressures and the situation in France itself and not only to events outside the country. To this extent the outcome of the Marchais affair may determine ultimately the shape of Euro-Communism.

Burke's Lounge

Hill Street
(off Gardiner Place)
Dublin 1

**The quiet spot to
meet your friends**

DERGVALE HOTEL

Proprietress (Mrs) M.Nolan

Hot and cold water
and central heating
in all bedrooms
Fully Licensed

**4 Gardiner Place
Dublin 1**

*Five minutes walk
from City Centre*

KAVANAGHS

Cork Street
Dublin 8
**FOR ALL YOUR
GLASS NEEDS**

C. Mac Ualghairg

**Tógaidhe
agus
Conrathóir
Ginearálta**
15 Bóthar Ceadogán
Baile Bocht
Baile Atha Cliath 3
Guthán 741278

GRENADA

Rod Prince

FOR two weeks in March, the 110,000 people of Grenada celebrated the first anniversary of the revolution of 13 March 1979, when the New Jewel Movement overthrew the dictatorship of Eric Gairy. After 12 months, prime minister Maurice Bishop and the Provisional Revolutionary Government have a lot to celebrate. When they took over last year, 'Hurricane Gairy' had devastated the island's economy as effectively as any natural disaster. They found a bankrupt treasury; stagnation in agricultural production; 17,000 people out of work, 50% of the workforce; parishes without a doctor or dentist; neglected schools; roads which were a series of potholes separated by occasional stretches of tarmac; hospitals without sheets, bandages or medicines; a finance ministry without a trained economist or accountant. Public revenue was siphoned off by Gairy and his henchmen for their own enrichment; civil servants were notoriously idle and corrupt; women could not get jobs in the public service unless they agreed to sleep with a government minister.

In 12 months, the government has turned a current account budget deficit into a surplus, by imposing strict daily accounting on each ministry, thus attacking waste and corruption. Over 1,500 jobs have been created; new health facilities have been set up, education fees cut and students enrolled at the University of the West Indies for the first time in years. School repairs, a housing programme, road repairs and reconstruction, and new agriculture and fishery projects are under way. Sexual exploitation of women in employment has been outlawed. The crime rate has dropped by 75%; the police are being disarmed and are being retrained to regard themselves, in the words of attorney-general Kenrick Radix, as 'brothers and sisters with the people'.

The most dramatic project is the international airport, now being constructed with help from Cuba, Venezuela and Middle Eastern countries. When opened in 1983, the new airport, situated near St George's and the famous Grande Anse beach, will end the present problems of tourists and other travellers, who now face a change of plane in Barbados or Trinidad and an hour's drive over the mountains from the tiny Pearls airport in order to reach the town or the beach hotels. Since the revolution, many visitors have complained that in Barbados or Trinidad, attempts have been made to persuade them not to go to Grenada. The business community, which stands to gain from an increase in tourism, is enthusiastically supporting the new airport plan, and public sales of airport construction bonds have topped £100,000 and are still climbing.

I visited Grenada in February, and was impressed by the overwhelming support of the people for the government. People I met in shops, bars or just on the street told me to 'tell the truth about Grenada' on my return home, to counter the hostile propaganda abroad. When the People's Revolutionary Army marched down the streets from their headquarters behind my hotel, passers-by waved greetings and children joined in behind the squad. In St George's, unlike some other Caribbean capitals, I felt completely safe out on the streets at night. At two big open-air meetings which I attended, the atmosphere was very relaxed and informal; Maurice Bishop and the other ministers who spoke used a refreshingly honest and straightforward style, giving information, making jokes and following through quite complex lines of argument, all with the close attention and enthusiastic involvement of the hundreds of people present.

Of course, there is still a lot of work to do. A poor island dependent on tourism and exports of nutmeg, cocoa and

bananas, Grenada has to increase output and set up agro-industrial enterprises; 1980 has been declared the 'year of education and production', and every penny saved on current spending is being put into capital spending. Exiles are returning to help rebuild the country, in contrast to the rest of the Caribbean, where there is a steady flow of emigrants out to the United States, Canada and

Europe. Grenada's High Commissioner in London publishes a regular news bulletin, and can also supply details of the airport bonds scheme. Write for information and application forms to: Grenada High Commission, Rooms 102-105, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London WC2. (Telephone 01-839 5922).

CLUB MED FOR LOVERS

Sailing, water-skiing, scuba-diving, tennis, yoga, archery, gourmet food, free wine

Special Departure Corfu May 11th £299

Interested?

Contact



CLUB MEDITERRANÉE,

1st Floor,
4 St Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 719942/719144.

And pick up your personal copy of our superb 250 page colour paperback.

YALTA

Sun & Sea Holidays

15 Days (14 nights)

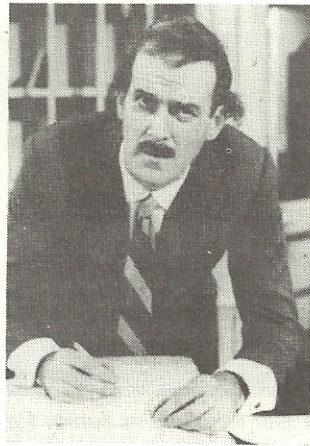
August 23 1980

Price IR£275

Optional excursions to Moscow & Leningrad
Information on this tour and others from:

**Sean O Cionnaith, The Bookshop,
30 Gardiner Place, Dublin 1.
Telephone: 01-741045 or 01-740716**

FILM *Bill Nolan.*
The Life of who?



John Cleese

NO SEX scenes! No bad language! No scenes of violence! Frank Hall took one look and declared: this is just not good enough for the Irish people, they deserve better than this! He forbade any public showing of this film in Ireland. The movie that so incensed our sensitive censor was "The Life of Brian", the new Monty Python film. I took advantage of a recent trip to London to go along to the Plaza, Leicester Square, and see for myself just what it is that I am being protected from.

"The Life of Brian" is set in Judea A.D. 33, ("...Saturday afternoon... around tea-time...") and it opens with a brassy Bassey-like signature tune, which sounds as if it could have been lifted from an early James Bond movie played over Terry Gilliam's witty cartoon credit sequence. The film tells of the misadventures of Brian Cohen whom we first meet at a gathering in the desert.

The opening sequence gives us a shot of a luminous figure preaching from a small hill. The camera pulls back further and further over the heads of the throng, with the figure becoming a blur in the distance and his voice inaudible. Here, at the back of the crowd we find Brian and a certain confusion as to the substance of the preacher's text.

WOMAN: "Blessed are the Cheesemakers?"

MAN: "Don't take him so literally, dear, it's symbolic. What he means is, blessed is anyone involved in the manufacture of dairy products."

This is instantly recognisable Pythonese and sure enough there is the tall bobbing figure of John Cleese as Radical Reg complaining, "Blessed are just about everyone with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo". Reg is the founder of the PFJ (People's Front of Judea), not to be confused with the Judean People's Front, or the Judean Popular Front or the Popular People's Front of

Judea, or indeed the Free Galilee movement.

Brian, played by Graham Chapman, joins Reg's group for quite vague reasons and is given as his first assignment a job as the group's graffiti artist, covering the walls of the Roman garrison with the slogan "Romani, ite domun". However a Roman patrol comes upon him and so begins a chase which ends in the market-place with Brian disguising himself as one of the many preachers to avoid capture.

In the general confusion the mob becomes convinced that Brian is the messiah they have been waiting for and so the remainder of the film deals mainly with Brian's attempts to rid himself of their unwanted adulation. This proves to be more difficult than it would appear at first glance.

"Eventually Brian is captured by the Romans and sentenced to death by crucifixion. The grand finale of the movie is a chorus line of about 40 crucifixes (?) giving a rousing rendition from their crosses of a song entitled "Always look on the bright side of life".

Throughout the Python team are at their most inventive, with an array of excellent comic characters flitting in and out of scenes, particularly Michael Palin's ex-leper who complains bitterly at being left without a decent trade when one day while begging for alms he was cured of his leprosy by Jesus.

In comparison with the Python Movies previously seen

in this country, "The Life of Brian" is a more disciplined and structured film. A lot of the credit for this must go to Terry Jones who directed the film. As with the other films, any lack of substance is completely compensated for by the wild and zany comedy.

But what of the charges levelled against the film by the popular press? Blasphemy, said the clerics and the critics. The album of the soundtrack of the film was withdrawn from the record stores. Fr. Brian D'Arcy felt the need to condemn the film so vehemently that he couldn't even wait to see it first.

My immediate reaction after seeing the movie was to wonder what all the fuss had been about. This was certainly not a parody of the life of Christ, as I had been led to believe. A Christ figure appears in one scene in the film and there are no comic lines delivered by or about Him. By verbal and visual references, we are constantly reminded that Brian and Jesus are two different people. Brian is not a representation of Christ.

Indeed, if I were to read any "hidden messages" into the film I would see it as a warning against religious fanaticism, as represented by the mob who seize upon Brian convincing themselves that they have found the messiah and close their ears to the voice of reason. The message for the Christian is that fanaticism leads you away from the true saviour and along the path of false prophets. But to be quite honest, I don't believe the Python team had either such sinister or serious motives.

Given an AA certificate (i.e. recommended for adults but children over 12 years allowed entry in the company of an adult) by the British censor, the film should by time of print be on general release in Northern Ireland. Already, religious extremists in both communities are preparing to lobby local councils. This is a system available under UK legislation where a film passed by the censor can be reviewed and have its certificate changed or banned, at local level by a committee of the local council, if a petition of complaint is received from the

public.

I see that already in the North a campaign to "Let Brian Live" has been started. I wish them every success in their efforts to save a dying species — a film that can give people a good laugh.

THEATRE
A roof under our heads

MARTIN LYNCH's play, "A Roof Under Our Heads" is excellent. The cast, although amateur, are not identifiable as such from their performance. If one did not know that it was being staged by a local drama group it would be natural to assume that the performance was professional from start to finish.

This is high praise and is intended as such because to praise this play is to do no more than tell the truth.

The theme is a fairly common problem — living in high rise flats.

"Oh! a problem play!"

Well, I suppose it is; but to put it into a box and label it, to put it into a category would do it less than justice.

When one thinks of "working class problem plays" one immediately recalls what came to be known as "kitchen sink" drama, fashionable for a time around the early sixties and late fifties. Some were not too bad but the characters usually creaked a bit because they were working class as seen by the middle class or else tailored for viewing by middle class eyes.

The plot and the characters in "Roof Under Our Heads" are absolutely genuine. The portrayal of the working class characters seemed to me also to be absolutely genuine. I, of course, had the disadvantage of not being a native of Belfast and because of this I looked at the characters with the eyes of a person, to some extent an outsider. But if this play moves away from Belfast, and it should certainly be seen in other places, then it will be judged by the eyes of outsiders.

REVIEWS

It is a play which should go into professional theatre and if the professed wish of many people in professional theatre is really to foster new talent, then Martin Lynch's play will appear in cities other than Belfast.

I have allowed my enthusiasm to run away with what I have written so far and realise that I have said very little about the production itself.

The awful thing, however, about everyday problems is that they just grind on. They are very real but are not immediately recognisable as the stuff that drama is made of. To take a plot having a large helping of natural drama — provided there is plenty of natural movement in it — is, well if not easy, to a talented person not so difficult.

What Martin Lynch has done is to make a piece of excellent drama out of, until the very last moment, everyday life. The play is a tragedy but like most of the really great tragedies it has a very successful line of comedy running through it.

The mother is excellent indeed and the part demanded a very fine distinguishing of a range of emotions at the sad and despairing end of life. She must cry, and to cry convincingly is difficult; she has to get drunk and to project abject despair. All achieved very successfully.

To present that character (the mother) in an absolutely genuine way in that setting and, in a very natural way, to introduce a character in complete contrast — a comic character — who appears to be just as natural in his reaction to the same set of soul destroying circumstances, is

an achievement. The comic character does not, of course, have the same personal problems.

It is a mature play in more senses than one. The Housing Authority officials are not made the villain in the piece, although they are on the receiving end of the people's anger. They are seen to be operating a set of rules which do not allow people once caught in a trap, not of their own making, to break out of it.

Many dramatists in that situation would attempt to produce 'soul-less' bureaucratic characters and so personalise the anger in dramatic terms within the confines of the play. Martin Lynch does not do this; the officials are hopelessly caught by the rules.

The daughter gives a very good performance as one who has not been destroyed by life and its problems. She is the character with hope — without the despair of her mother nor the savage cynicism of the comic characters. She loses the battle she tackles but leaves a strong feeling that she has the character to win wars.

The brutal husband, in a difficult part, is very well done. That he turns his back on the audience in the scenes of actual violence makes it much more credible and justifies breaking the accepted rules to achieve greater effect. A great play.

Eamonn Smullen



Peter O'Toole as James Larkin

T.V. Strumpet City

STRUMPET CITY was the first undertaking of its kind by RTE. In its scale and scope, it broke new ground which will hopefully chart the way for future productions. Technically, it achieved a high standard and the competence — and confidence — evident in RTE Drama productions of recent years was present throughout the series.

Its faults were largely those of the novel by James Plunkett. The worst of these were magnified rather than diminished in Hugh Leonard's adaption.

Rashers Tierney is a case in point. The problem was that there was too much of him and too little reason for his wandering in and out of the story. As a loveable tramp, he

was well-played by David Kelly. But as a character, he was too much a typical — rather than a specific — tramp.

A number of other characters were equally stereotyped. Lily the prostitute had the predictable 'heart of gold' — although she had a rather prim tongue, which was more 'angel cake' than tart. Hennessy, the Bradshaws and Doggett are characters who presented difficulties in the context of television which were not wholly overcome.

Strumpet City got off to a slow start in a rather disjointed first episode which did however serve to introduce the main characters. Peter Ustinov's fleeting cameo role was probably intended to encourage international sales but was little more than a distraction.

The series came to life with the appearance of Mulhall and Fathers O'Connor and Giffley. Donal McCann, Frank Grimes and Cyril Cusack gave strong



FOR CLOTHES
THAT WORK & PLAY FOR THE 80's
MICHAEL MORTELL
IRELAND'S LEADING YOUNG DESIGNER

performances which resulted in some of the best scenes in the series. Frank Grimes's prissy curate was reminiscent of the Reverend Brian D'Arcy at his most unctuous.

Sales considerations probably determined his selection for the role, but Peter O'Toole as James Larkin was a case of too much O'Toole and not enough Larkin. The actor's personality tended to swamp the role. Furthermore, Larkin appeared mostly in moments of high drama, which left little room to develop a more rounded character.

The young couple, played by Angela Harding and Bryan Murray never really developed convincingly either. The fault wasn't in the acting — the characters were too virtuous by far to begin with. Fitz and Mary were too good to be true — ideal for the Little House on the Prairie but out of place in the working-class Dublin of the turn

of the century.

RTE's *Strumpet City* was faithful to James Plunkett's book. But how faithful was the book to the times and events it sought to portray? And how accurately did it convey the sense of class struggle which reached its bloody conclusion one Sunday in August 1913?

In this respect, the book was not wholly convincing. The poverty of the tenements, the arrogance of the employers and the birth of militant trade unionism were not adequately depicted but merely signposted. These faults became more evident on the television screen, although the last two episodes went some way towards overcoming them.

Strumpet City ended on a strong note. As a series, it was uneven in parts, but at its best it was very good television.

Paddy Gillan

which had seen Lucky Luciano being given immunity to smuggle heroin in return for his loyal anti-communism.

The bloody fruits of this deal were seen on Mayday 1947 when the people from the little village of Piana Dei Greci joined with another village to celebrate Mayday, which in that part of Sicily is a religious as well as a political feast. A month before, the people of Piana Dei Greci had gone to the polls. Led by the tiny Communist Party the people had defied the Mafia gunmen sent by the landowners to each polling booth. They had also defied what was called the "electoral spaghetti" of the Christian Democrats and their explicit threats of punitive unemployment. The result was an overwhelming victory for the popular front of Communists, Socialists and Independents.

Now on Mayday as they made their way to the pass of Portella Della Ginestra they were in a festive mood having forgotten the public Mafia warning before the election, "Vote for the Communists and we'll leave you without father or mother". At the end of the Mayday an old woman remembered that a rich citizen had not been able to

restrain himself from croaking at the band of peasants, "Just you wait until you see how things go today".

At ten o'clock on a tranquil and brilliant morning as the dense crowd sang patriotic and socialist songs, a heavy machine-gun opened up on the defenceless peasants. Eleven people, men, women and children were shot dead and fifty-five wounded. The death toll was low because the range was too great for accurate shooting.

The man behind the massacre was Giuliano, the young bandit "King of Montelopre". His life was a perfect example of how populism, setting out to kill in the name of the people ends by killing the people. Giuliano had started off as a "patriotic bandit". Soon he drifted into anti-communist terrorism with the help of the Americans. By 1947, Giuliano had come full circle and was now chief butcher for the Mafia. The massacre at the Portella Della Ginestra was his work, commissioned by the Mafia and the landowners. Giuliano the romantic 'guerilla' leader and hero of a hundred ballads ended by telling the father of two young peasants pleading for their life, "They want the land and we're going to give it to them — six feet apiece".

Giuliano having done the dirty work was promptly killed by the Mafia. His life is almost a potted

history of the Mafia's move from agrarian terror to fascist terror.

For centuries feudalism kept back huge areas of Sicily from cultivation. The landlords' private army, the Mafia, represented themselves as folk heroes. They had stood between the King of Spain's Viceroy and justice, taxed the socialism of Garibaldi, done a deal with fascism and ended by massacring those they had in the Middle Ages set themselves up to liberate.

Today as Norman Lewis points out, the final irony emerges. Sicily, meant to provide a reservoir of docile, rightwing voters for landlord, Church and Mafia now provides in its emigrants to the North ardent recruits to the world's numerically largest Communist Party outside the Eastern bloc — voting communist almost to a man.

The Mafia, which dug graves for the poor and filled them has today its own grave and created the force which alone has ever challenged it — Communism in Sicily.

Bookman

BOOKS The Honoured Society

Norman Lewis: *The Honoured Society*. Penguin 1972.

The Schild's kidnap case threw a glaring international light on the survival of feudalism on Italy's mediterranean islands.

But the squalor of Sardinia pales beside the savage and systematic tyranny of the rulers of Sicily — the Mafia.

Films like *The Godfather* help to romanticise this brutal gang of murderers and fascists, whose real rule began as late as 1943 with the help of the Allied Armies thrusting north through Sicily.

Norman Lewis was with these armies and he watched in amazement as Allied officers made deals with Sicily's Mafia boss, Don Calogero Vizzini. The deal was meant to neutralise the emergence of a Sicilian Communist Party. It was a tiny part of the callous Cold War strategy of the Dulles brothers,

Communist electioneering in Sicily



Gaelic

IN THIS first issue we take a brief look at the largest sporting organisation in Ireland — the Gaelic Athletic Association. Readers of the national dailies or listeners to radio and television sports programmes will not be short of information on the G.A.A. It manages more than its fair share of coverage. Most of this however consists of comments and team selections from County Board officials prior to games plus after-match reports. One rarely reads articles critical of the Association which is surprising as many ordinary club players would like to see considerable changes.

So are the sports journalists reflecting the views of the officials who run the organisation or the players who turn out every Sunday?

Some of the burning topics one is likely to hear discussed by the players are the Ceannarus fund, the money collected at All-Ireland finals, playing hurling or football in winter, the open draw dressing room facilities and the number of clubs depending on players travelling home every match in order to complete teams.

On the Sunday of the G.A.A. Annual Congress I watched Swanlinbar beat Cornafean in the Cavan Junior League. The visitors togged out in a bus and the locals in cars; not an unusual sight at any match throughout Ireland. It would be hard to convince the players or the officials that there is a need for an office block at Croke Park. Although that is what the Ceannarus fund is all about. Players state quite bluntly that there is greater need for proper dressing facilities. Surely in 1980 it is not too much to expect a room to undress in and a warm shower after a game? Indeed with the recent winters a cup of tea or a bowl of soup would be equally welcome.

As for changes in the rules, I have yet to meet with a player wanting to do away with the solo run. Yet every year one reads of

officials seeking to either abolish or curtail the solo run. But one of the most exciting and skilful aspects of Gaelic football is the sight of Bernard Brogan or John Egan travelling half the length of the pitch to score.

It is about time therefore that the players were consulted about changes of the rules. An organisation as vast and as wealthy as the G.A.A. could easily send a questionnaire to each club establishing opinions on the solo run, hand pass, suspensions and personal fouls. Management could then implement the democratic decisions of the players, give them a trial period of three to five years before making further changes.

An open draw for the All-Ireland Championship in both football and hurling is a progressive step which I believe the players would opt for, given the opportunity. There seems to be no reason, other than the amount of money guaranteed at provincial finals, for continuing with the present structure. Who would deny that the Cork and Kerry footballers would not welcome a change? As would those who line out for Waterford, Clare, Limerick and Tipperary. This would put an end to the automatic finalists as is the case now.

'Final Whistle' at Croke Park



Then there is the thorny question of the political debate which has taken place at the past three annual congresses. If players are confused by different interpretations of the rules by referees and continued changes in the rules, they must surely be more confused by the political debate.

One glaring example: President Paddy McFlynn has said "the charge that the G.A.A. is political has been refuted many times as a palpable untruth". Ex-President Con Murphy: "The G.A.A. is political and must be political to attain its ends".

One of the major problems with the Association is that it is both a political and sporting organisation. In an amateur organisation such as the G.A.A. it is only natural that if one area receives considerable attention it must be at the expense of the other. The Association must therefore decide whether to develop into a true sporting body with facilities and organisation to move into the 80s or remain as it is and lose members to other sporting bodies.

Perhaps the best thing would be for people like McFlynn and Murphy who show their concern for "National Unity" to join a political party with the same outlook. The G.A.A. could then

Liam Cassidy

be run by people whose sole interest would be to make it the great sporting organisation it could be.

Racing

RECENT suspension of two Irish jockeys, Joe P. Byrne and Tommy (T.J.) Ryan by the English Jockey Club Disciplinary Committee provoked some interesting pieces in the Sporting press, the usual hysterical comments in the British press and the following racist remark by John Comyn, Sunday Independent, when writing about an interview John Oaksey gave on the B.B.C. about the matter.

"For sickening, biased anti-Irish, and typically meally-mouthed English claptrap, I have never heard its equal." Some mouthful. The fact however is that the two jockeys concerned have introduced a new element into racing, that of hammering a horse home.

Irish punters had a first glimpse of these tactics at Leopardstown this winter when they saw Byrne hammer Allibar in the final furlong when he defeated Mightys Honour in a very close finish. On the opening day of Cheltenham this year Tommy Ryan rode Mountrivers to victory in a three mile hurdle. In doing so he actually started to whip the horse about three furlongs out, handing out such a beating that Mountrivers was almost walking at the finish.

Imagine racing in the future, with ten or twelve jockeys hammering their mounts for the last three furlongs.

The following day at Cheltenham, Ryan riding Drumlargin, met the final hurdle wrong, almost falling. Immediately he started to lash Drumlargin who veered badly to the right. Ryan then straightened him up hitting him with the whip on the face. On the final day at Cheltenham Joe Byrne gave a similar beating to Batista in the Triumph Hurdle for four year olds. Subsequently both riders were suspended for three months by the English Jockey Club.



Joe P. Byrne over the fences

Most informed opinion feels that they were lucky to get off so lightly.

Personally I would suggest to trainer Eddie O'Grady, who handles both Mountrivers and Drumlorgan, that he should find himself another jockey. (O'Grady certainly has been unlucky due to injuries to Mouse Morris and the departure of Niall Madded). However a top trainer with some of the best animals in his stables needs a first class jockey and in my opinion Tommy Ryan is not in that category. He rode a poorly judged race on Mountrivers and nearly lost when he should have won easily on Drumlorgan.

J.P. Byrne is currently Irish National Hunt Champion but if he continues to hammer horses as he did Allibar at Leopardstown he will hardly retain the crown either through suspension by the Stewards, being charged with cruelty to animals or owners refusing to let him have the mounts. This would be tragic as Byrne is an excellent jockey, as most would agree who noted him winning two well-judged races at Leopardstown's Christmas meeting.

Lovers of the sport have watched great jockeys over the past few years such as Tommy Carberry and John Joe O'Neill under National Hunt rules, and Lester Piggott, Pad Eddery and

Wally Swinbourne on the Flat. These men can get the best out of a horse in the last furlong without resorting to the cruel tactics of Byrne and Ryan.

Now that the racing authorities have taken a stand on over-use of the whip let's hope that they move against the hundreds of non-tryers running in Ireland every year. I definitely don't mean fining the trainer and jockey £50 each. Horse racing in Ireland is a sport exclusively for the wealthy — there are not many PAYE workers owning or training. So a fine of £50 for any offence is nothing short of a joke.

Soccer

ONE of the surprising features of the League of Ireland soccer season just ended has been Shamrock Rovers' lack of success. They failed to win a single competition. I saw them against Sligo Rovers in their opening league match at Milltown. In the first half they looked a talented team but faded badly in the second and became very ragged. Still I thought they could win the League.

Watching them on other occasions they played the same style of game, excellent in the first half hour but unable to maintain the effort over the ninety minutes. One reason for

this could be that most of their players were young and inexperienced. Equally the loss of player-manager Johnny Giles, through injury, for most of the season was possibly the main factor preventing Rovers from winning the all-important League.

This left a gap in mid-field which none of the other players tried there succeeded in filling. Still Rovers have a stock of talented players and must surely be winning competitions before long.

Rovers and Giles deserve success because they have created the opportunity for young footballers to remain in Ireland and become full time professionals. No mean achievement.

Until now any young soccer player who wished to try his luck as a professional had to join a club in Britain. This led to a situation where lads of sixteen or seventeen could suffer home sickness, boredom and lack of friends; often they returned

home without giving themselves a chance to make the grade. All this has changed now, thanks to Rovers and Giles.

The Club have also organised a special school course for apprentice professionals in conjunction with Dublin Vocational Education Committee. The idea is twofold. To continue their education while they are professionals and to prepare for the future if they fail to make the grade. Indeed other Irish clubs are already benefiting from the progressive Rovers set-up; for example Waterford who bought Mark Meagan and Larry Murray this year.

But the big question must be can Giles keep such talented players as Pierce O'Leary, Richard Bayly, Alan Campbell and Liam Buckley at Milltown? To do so Rovers need to be successful. First they require bigger crowds at Milltown bringing in more money in order to match the wages these players

M. BOLAND
Turf Accountant
22 Hill Street, Dublin 1

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Our Tax is only 15%. Note
the Special Yankee Bonus
All losing bets qualify for
free draw

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Jonny Giles

could command in the English League; second the same players will obviously want to compete in the European scene.

How one might ask are the crowds to be brought back? There is undoubtedly the popularity of "Match of the Day" and the "Big Match" on television. So the job for Giles and Rovers is to somehow persuade these people to come to Milton, then providing enough entertainment to keep them coming back.

There are a number of things which can be done. But for a start the soccer authorities in Ireland seriously must consider closing down during the months of December, January and February at least. Most of the pitches are like ploughed fields making it impossible to play football. Furthermore it is normally so cold, wet and miserable that one could not just bring the children, wife or girlfriend along. Until this step is taken all attempts to bring in the crowds by more attractive football, for example, will be only a waste of time.

As a parting thought: Now that Shamrock Rovers have shown that young talent can be kept in Ireland is it too much to hope that other clubs will follow the lead? Cities like Cork and Galway, towns such as Dundalk, could support a professional team. Will they take the necessary steps?

Marathon

UNTIL recently the glamour event in athletics was considered to be the mile or 1500 metres but now the marathon has become so popular that it might soon become the most attractive track event. Indeed most distance runners have a long-term ambition to run a marathon — some of the world's best such as Dick Quax, New Zealand, Brendan Foster, Great Britain and Lassie Viren, Finland, are running in these tough long-distance races.

The Boston and New York features have attracted tens of thousands of competitors and these city marathons are fast becoming extremely popular.

Now comes the welcome news that Dublin is to have its own race organised by the Business House Athletics Association, prompted by RTE Radio 2 and sponsored by Dublin Corporation — the Dublin City Marathon.

It will take place on Bank Holiday Monday, October 27, 1980; start will be in Phoenix Park at 12 noon and the course will consist of one lap of twenty-six miles round the city. The race is fully open but anyone thinking of competing should have started training by now.

This race should be an incentive to the growing number of joggers to keep at it over the summer months as well as being an important addition to the fixture list for those athletes who might have to go abroad otherwise for a marathon at this time of the year.

RTE Radio 2 will be giving weekly advice on training, diet etc. leading up to the race.

It is no surprise also to learn that Dublin Corporation has agreed to sponsor, as their Press Officer is international competitor Noel Carroll. Noel will be well known to readers of the Sunday Press sports pages for his fine progressive contributions on various sports. With such good back-up the race should be a huge success and there is no reason why it should not develop into a major international event in the future.

Advertising Feature

PLAYSPORT, part of the Eurocentre complex, despite its well appointed gym, its showers and saunas and the trappings normally reserved for expense account executives, is at the same time Dublin's most democratic and friendly training and fitness centre. Here CIE workers and hotel staff rub shoulders with those who employ them. And those with 'backache' can get the expert attention of Bob Doyle, a masseur who specialises in these aches and pains.

Because dynamic manager Wally Dillon has thought long and hard about fitness there's no hasseling or regimentation. You're supervised closely if you ask for that. But if you're feeling down and out on a particular day, Con Enright, one of the instructors will tell you it's the beer and leave you alone to sweat it off in the sauna.

Playsport is, Wally Dillon believes, a small model of what a powerful national health and fitness programme with the trade unions and semi-state bodies playing a leading part could be. "Many unions and state companies have the properties which could be used for training. But they lack direction. The ITGWU for example have the facilities, but lack the specialist organisation."

This dynamic sports organiser would like to know how the £5 million allocated to sport tends to be spent on certain organisations and certain people. He is no believer in health and fitness being conducted on a small shops basis. And while we wait for trade union pressure to give us a national fitness programme, Willy Dillon's Playsport complex offers the best value in town.

PLAYSPORT CENTRE

OLYMPUS GYM

★ *Weight Training:* Specially designed exercises to help you improve stamina and physique.

★ *Figure Form:* A great success for ladies; involving Training, Diet, Sauna Bath and Sun Booth.

MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO

★ Judo, Karate, Kung-Fu and Ladies Self-Defence courses. Popular among all ages.

★ Ladies Log Cabin Sauna Bath
★ Group Classes for Ladies
★ Keep Fit — Yoga — Disco

**GEORGE'S COURT,
5TH GT. GEORGE'S STREET
DUBLIN 2 TEL: 758424**

DENIS WALSH

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING CONTRACTORS

EXPERT INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL
SERVICE

157 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9
Telephone 210845

The Plough Lounge

1 Trevor Hill
Newry
Phone Newry 4091/2

**FACILITIES FOR RECEPTIONS
FULL INFORMATION AND CHARGES
FROM THE MANAGER ON REQUEST**

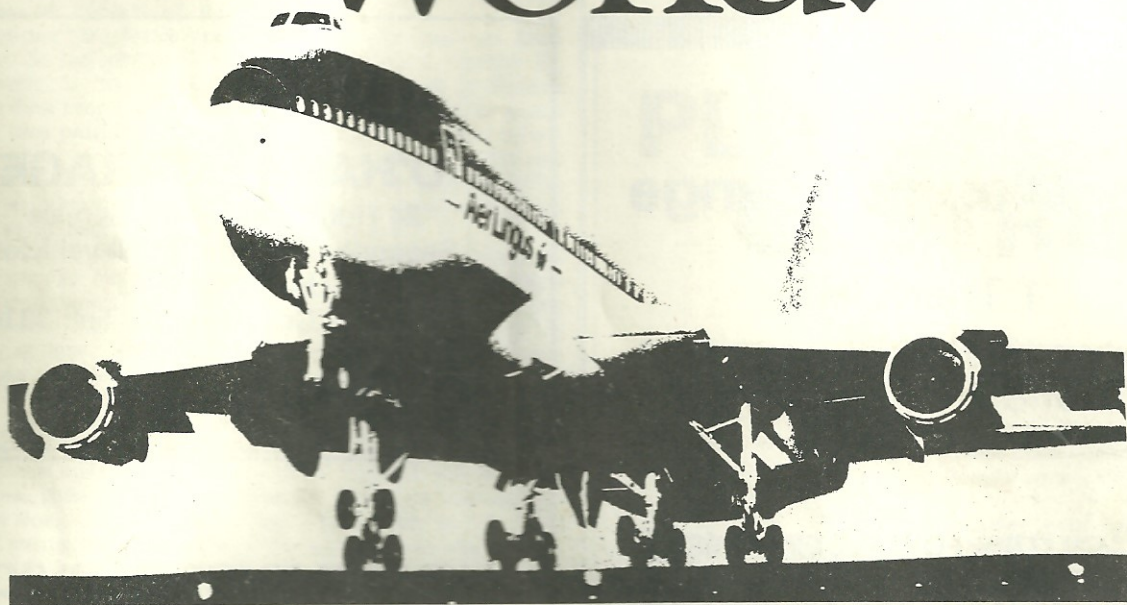
O'HARE'S GARAGE

24 Hour Breakdown Service
Secondhand Parts for all vehicles
Used Car Sales
Bessbrook, Co. Armagh. Tel: 381412

NEWRY TYRE SERVICE

6-10 River Street
Newry Phone 4851 Telex 747730
*Stockist of all leading Brands
of Car, Truck and Agricultural Tyres
Special rates for bulk order*

Fly direct to the business world.



Only Aer Lingus have direct flights from Dublin and Shannon to North America. And flights to more UK destinations from Ireland than any other airline. From Dublin, Cork and Shannon, we've got more direct flights to the Continent than all other airlines combined. That's the service we provide all year round.

We fly to schedules carefully worked out to meet the business-man's needs. To help you make the most of your time.

That's Aer Lingus service. A service no other airline can match. Next time your business takes you abroad, fly with the people who'll look after you best.

Turas mhaith duit.

Aer Lingus 

Working for You!