



Ogra Fianna Fáil
Dublin North West

NEWSLETTER

No.1

May 1990

In the Beginning...

The pundits said it could not be done !! But here it is printed, bound, copied, reved up and rearing to go. Dynamite reading. Number 1 of the Ogra Fianna Fail Dublin North-West Newsletter - your Newsletter has come and its here to stay.

The Newsletter was set up to fill a gap - a very wide gap - that existed in our Ogra: the Current Affairs BLACK HOLE. It was not a Policy gap (our monthly policy topics, guest speakers, Political Education Programme, Policy Officer and Constituency Youth Conference deal with Policy) it was a gap relating to what happened today, yesterday, last week and last month. We always discussed important public events - months after they had occurred. Rarely did we discuss the NOW of political life.

But with our usual brilliance we the members of Dublin North-West Ogra, the young Gorbachevs of Fianna Fail, changed all that. Our Newsletter has been set up SPECIFICALLY AS A FORUM FOR CURRENT AFFAIRS DISCUSSION. By the members. Its primary focus will be on ordinary members' opinions on what is happening around them.

By discussing and voicing our opinions on Current Affairs as ordinary members of the Party we will be educating each other and preparing ourselves intellectually for the supreme moment of crisis in a political activist's life. When someone you don't know, have met for the first time and on whose doorstep you're standing asks: 'Why should I vote Fianna Fail?' We must know the news, learn the issues, find out what the Party has to say, disagree sometimes among ourselves (though never in public), come to a democratic decision and then canvass like we're selling the Gospel to the Gentiles.

This is our task. We must not fail to accomplish it.

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All Articles and gossip to each of the co-Editors respectively.

A Background to the Irish Presidency

Ireland came to the Presidency of the E.C. as part of the Rotation system, whereby each member state presides over the ministerial council meetings for an equal period of six months.

Most of Dublin's citizens, have, by now experienced the sight of heavy limosines, with tinted windows, and the sound of high pitched motor-sirens. The impact of this has been to lend symbolism to the location of the city, as the centre of a number of important ministerial meetings. These meetings cover the major departmental areas. Positively speaking, this has promoted Dublin as an important political city in world affairs.

Two Summit meetings are now scheduled for Dublin. The first was held on 28 April. The Council discussed political and monetary union, and has instructed their twelve Foreign Ministers to prepare Position Papers for the coming June summit, with an ultimate objective of an inter-governmental conference to prepare for political union. The agreement of this approach to the matter is seen as a diplomatic achievement for Charles Haughey. The Second Summit meeting is to be of a standard nature and will take place at the end of the Presidency. It will review the overall progression towards 1992 especially in the light of plans for the re-unification of Germany.

Ireland has been both fortunate and competent in her term in the chair. She has been fortunate in so far as German unity, Lithuania, and Nelson Mandela's release have emerged as burning topics. Our competence has been demonstrated by our calm role as an intermediary in these matters.

The Presidency, as a conclusion, has been benifical to Ireland. The Taoiseach has demonstrated his flair as a performer, and some ministers have handled their briefs with expertise, notably Albert Reynolds, Maire-Geoghan Quinn and Bertie Ahern. Ireland has therefore asserted itself as an equal partner in world affairs.

Liam Kelly
Chairman

Fisheries Development ?

At this year's Fianna Fail Ard Fheis there were cries from Cumanns around the country to Minister for the Marine John Wilson 'To make more money available for the development of inland fisheries to bring them to their full potential'. As one reflects on the methods used by Minister Wilson in the past to raise much needed funding for inland fisheries one cannot help but smile. For example the Rod Licence, in theory, an excellent method to fund development in inland fisheries. For it is the government who pay for the maintainence and up-keep of the fish farms, for the breeding and cultivation of the fish until the day comes when the fish are required to stock our rivers to provide game for the anglers. Yet when the anglers are asked for what can only be regarded as a reasonable contribution, the less genuine angler refuses. Thus we got what is now known as the Rod Licence Dispute. A dispute which allowed unscrupulous politicians to make political gains. The only

one who really suffered as a result of the Rod Licence Dispute, was the true and genuine angler who purchased a licence. And for his troubles suffered intimidation and victimisation. Last year it was for fishing during the dispute and this year for not supporting the dispute last year, and all he is guilty of is wanting to fish. It is ironic to have watched people, who last year denied all rights to people who wanted to fish, claim this year that their only interest is in the development of inland fisheries. That is having fulfilled all their self interests.

Having said that, there is a strong case for additional funding of inland fisheries, and I agree that development is necessary as inland fisheries are a valuable natural resource in the same way that our forests, boglands, agricultural lands and minerals are. I believe that if exploited in a rational manner, fisheries can contribute to our economic well being. Ireland's lakes and rivers have an abundance of high quality fish stocks. A resource which is unique to Western Europe who's large angling population has access to few, if any, high quality natural fisheries. If there is an initial financial injection and inland fisheries are well managed and rationally exploited it will generate significant revenue and employment and will give an excellent return on state investment. The potential for development is there, the Central Fisheries Board is an organisation more than capable of carrying out the development given the right amount of autonomy and of course funding.

Ray Boyne

The Winchester Appeal - an historic decision

The release of the Winchester Three on 27th April was an historic act of judgment on the part of the English Court of Appeal. It was historic in that three people, three Irish people, arrested in clearly suspicious circumstances were considered to have had a prejudiced hearing. What was even more important was that the Court unquestionably implied that the blame for their lack of a fair trial was caused by a senior British cabinet minister. There could be no more pointed a reference to the complete separation of the judiciary from the executive.

The judgment was an historic decision, too, in that English courts have not always acted in this way. In the very building that saw that Friday's judgment, there have been frame-ups, prejudiced juries, judicial bias, unfair trials, perverted verdicts and barbarous sentences. The Old Bailey, often, and especially where Irish people were concerned, proved not the seat of justice but the centre of an immense legal conspiracy. The English judicial system has not been in the past, and still is not today, free from the corruption of bigotry. But positive signs are emerging.

The lives, and I use the word lives advisedly, of three young Irish people were spared in the Winchester Appeal Judgment. Not because they were innocent or because they had no sinister intent in their 1987 'camping trip'. But because there was a doubt as to the fairness of the judicial proceedings that would free or ruin them. This must be progress.

Finbarr Cullen, John McCann and Martina Shahahan are now free. And despite the pettiness of their exclusion orders and re-arrest, their release represents a step in the right direction. The Birmingham Six verdict remains unsafe and unsatisfactory. But following on the vindication of the Guildford Four,

we can slowly see a more objective attitude on the part of their bewigged Lordships, becoming noticeable.

For everyone's sake we must hope it will continue.

Quintin Cross
Secretary

Visit to the North

The visit of An Taoiseach Mr Charles Haughey T.D. to Belfast on Wednesday April 11th was of major significance. It was the first such visit of any Taoiseach north of the border since the present period of violence and murder erupted on the streets of Northern Ireland more than twenty years ago in the summer of 1969.

Mr Haughey was in the Europa Hotel in Belfast on that day on the invitation of the Institute of Directors to address their conference there. The decision of the Institute of Directors to invite Mr Haughey to address them was embroiled in controversy from the moment it was first issued. Indeed the invitation was still in some doubt during the previous weekend, due to threats of protest from Unionists. Mr Ian Paisley described the invitation as irresponsible in the light of recent UDR killings and controversial extradition decisions. Mr Paisley also described Mr Haughey as the 'Arch Enemy of Ulster' who had constantly attacked the whole structure of Northern Ireland.

The protests turned out to be somewhat of a damp squib however, with only around 500 protesters gathering outside the Europa Hotel. Mr Paisley and other members of the DUP were among the protesters, they were kept well away from the Taoiseach however, by a very tight security presence.

During his address to the conference Mr Haughey asked for greater co-operation between North and South in an economic sense, as being the only way forward in ensuring greater growth and greater job prospects for everyone on this island. With the advent of the Single European Market in 1992 greater co-operation was of vital importance Mr Haughey said, so that industry on both sides of the border could reap the benefits, as well as face the problems the Single Market would pose. Mr Haughey also said that the fact that cross border trade only amounted to £1265 m indicated a major neglect of opportunities. At the end of his speech Mr Haughey received a standing ovation from the Institute.

Before returning to Dublin Mr Haughey held a press conference on his visit to Belfast, and he also dealt with the recent extradition controversy. Mr Haughey also said that he was in Belfast representing the people, that the protesters represented.

Eamon Lawless

All articles represent the individual views of the writers concerned and are not necessarily those of the Ogra or of Fianna Fail

Observation Post-the column that snipes at you

Repeated reports of cigar smoke have been coming into Observation Post from our sources in Santry. They appear to originate from a well known

anna Fail house on Shanliss Road. But Observation Post understands the new arrival will grow up in more southerly surroundings! Our best regards go to our most distinguished member Jim and his wife Anne on their first-born, Ashling.

Marriages are also in the air we hear from Observation Post's powerful cousin BACKBITE. Suzanne Carpenter, who came first in class in College and who is a former Ogra Vice-Chair is mentioned. Best of luck Suzanne!

Another intriguing story this month is the tale of the 'reluctant' Chancellor. Brendan M.O'Moore Jr, the financial wizard behind Ogra Dublin North-West for almost a decade, already its President, was 'persuaded' to become the first head of the Ogra's Union of Friends. He strongly denies wanting to be called Der Fuhrer (like another well known President and Chancellor). How about Il Duce, Brendan?

Big things have been happening in UCD's giant Kevin Barry Cumann this month. Under the leadership of Dublin North-West Mafia Chief Liam Kelly, a concerted assault was made on a number of prestigious Officer Board positions at the May 8th AGM. A hush fell during the announcement of the results for Vice Chair - it was obvious there had been a number of recounts - Liam, one, of the candidates, strained his ears. The result was a draw! 25-25! So at the suggestion of our intrepid Chairman the names went into a hat. LK came out first - and was eliminated. An appeal to the courts was quickly considered - after all the names were pulled out of a CAP and not a hat! But legal counsel advised against. NW's luck did not improve in the PRO election - despite last minute manoeuvrings. At this stage LK retired from the fray (was he heard to be muttering 'I will return' ?!)).

Eoin Manus Mac Meanmain then took over command. Placing himself at the head of NW's battered legions he charged the Comhairle Delegate positions. But the Fates were cruel and the votes contrary. A flood of defeated candidates from the other positions overwhelmed brave Manus. It was just not our night.

One interesting event was the appearance of WHITE ballot papers during the election for Chair when only PINK ones were handed out!!!!

Observation Post congratulates incoming KBC Chairman David Harmon, Secretary Gail Conlon and all the other new Officers on their election.

A high ranking Ogra Dublin North-West Officer has recently been spied around the south side. As he is always accompanied by an attractive female teacher, analysts believe he is taking extra curricular lessons. Just what these lessons comprise however remains a mystery.

Before enraged members mentioned in Observation Post begin forming assassination squads that might seriously damage the health of the Social Editor, one final fact must be revealed. The editor of the first Observation Post is NOT Conrad Donlon (who will take up his duties starting with Issue No.2) He/she is and will remain anonymous for security reasons.

Thats all folks - see you in Issue No.2!