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BUDGET 1976

The ultimate in skid-row behaviour

By
JACK LYNCH

THE DOMINANT problem overhanging the Government's mismanagement of the public purse has been the disastrous increase in its reliance on borrowing.

Over the past three years, we have seen the reckless spending spree lead to a position where the deficit on the current budget has risen from the negligible figure of £5m. in 1972/73 (which was of course our last year in office) to £92m. for 1974, £259m. for 1975 and £327m. in 1976.

This enormous level of borrowing to pay for, or more accurately to postpone paying for the day-to-day expenses is quite unprecedented in the history of this State and is totally unjustified on any financial or economic grounds.

In three years the Minister for Finance has been able to create a national debt 1½ times greater than what it stood at after 50 years of the coming into being of this State.

No evidence

If these borrowings were, as was claimed, intended to maintain employment and output, then we have to ask where is the evidence that they succeeded? The answer, of course, is that there is no such evidence.

We know only too well that unemployment has risen as rapidly, indeed more rapidly, in Ireland than in other E.E.C. countries and output in industry has fallen just as heavily here as elsewhere.

As manager of the nation's debt, the Minister for Finance is pursuing a disastrous spend-thrift course — borrowing more and more at higher and higher rates and has reached the ultimate in this kind of classic skid-row behaviour — he is now borrowing to service his borrowings.

The changes announced in this Budget suggest that there is still no commitment or policy on the Government's part towards curbing the spending spiral. In so far as any attempt was made to close the awful gap between income and spending, it took the form of further tax increases to sustain a higher level of public spending.



★ Mr. Lynch signing the visitor's book in the office of the President of the European Parliament, M. Georges Spénale, in Luxembourg.

This, despite the Taoiseach's publicly proclaimed view that it is the spending growth which must be halted.

Monster

If spending were to go on rising at the same rate as the past three years, then in little more than 10 years of Coalition Government the public sector would absorb 100 p.c. of G.N.P. and all debate about the future of private enterprise in agriculture, industry or commerce would be futile since all would have been devoured by the public spending monster.

This is a drift towards extreme socialism which is causing grave apprehension among the general public and indeed among traditional Fine Gael supporters as well as many new doctrinaire Labour supporters.

I emphasise the word "drift" towards Socialism because there seems to be no possible evidence of any conscious plan or policy to go in this direction.

The more likely explanation is that the Minister is being forced to go on this course of creeping Socialism because of the confused policies he has advocated.

There may very well be of course some elements in this Coalition which would welcome this trend which could perhaps explain why there is so little effort being made to choke off this rapid growth in public spending.

Taxation

Let us be clear, last month's raid on the taxpayer's purse is only a tiny fraction of what is needed to restore balance in the current accounts.

Despite the £100m. of extra taxation, their current deficit still rose from last year's level of £259m. to £327m. or a rise of about 26 p.c. which is still way above any inflation increase. So their borrowing level to pay for the day to day running of the Government is still rising.

The tax increases which the Minister introduced must have the affect of raising prices by up to 5 p.c. so that his pre-Budget estimate of a much lower inflation rate this year is now in need of drastic revision.

It would now seem that for 1976 prices will rise by at least 15 p.c. This is hardly the sort of performance which will inspire confidence in either our own businessmen and workers or in any prospective overseas investors.

Pay pause

Adding to inflation in this way must also raise serious question marks about the Government's ability to secure a pay-pause.

With prices rising at this rate, the real spending power of workers and other consumers will be significantly reduced and this is bound to intensify the pressure for further pay rises.

The price of profligacy

THE PACE of the profligacy of this Government is measured in terms of our ballooning National Debt as follows:

March 31st, 1973 —	£1,298m.
March 31st, 1974 —	£1,464m.
Dec. 31st, 1974 —	£1,766m.
Dec. 31st, 1975 —	£2,376m.
Dec. 31st, 1976 —	£3,200m. (estimated)

There was, and still is, an overwhelming duty on the Government to take action which will help the employment position. Even modest amounts of public money, if used selectively, could have the effect of guaranteeing work for thousands.

One could list again the shameful lack of progress in constructing a smelter or the shameful way in which orders for ships and furniture and Government printing have been allowed to provide jobs in other parts of the world, but not at home where they are so desperately needed.

And so, with all this evidence of their total inability to provide the leadership which is so desperately needed, the only sensible course open to this Government is to resign before they are run out of office by the just wrath of an unjustly treated people.

GERALD BARTLEY

THE EDITORS offer their appreciation to Paud Kenneally, B.A., N.T. of Ballyconnelly, Clifden, Connemara — a leading Western freelance journalist — for his excellent appreciation of the late Gerald Bartley.

IRIS wishes to be associated with the many tributes paid to Mr. Bartley for his long and unselfish service to the nation as a Minister and Deputy.

In our 50th Anniversary edition, Mr. Kenneally's memorial, together with many others, will be published.



Second National Youth Conference



Sean O Riain — Tipperary

Dúirt sé gur rud maith é ceannáireacht cinnte dearfa, cosúil leis a bhí sa bhFrainc fé de Gaulle.

Chun cearta an duine a cothú sé is ceart an Gaelachas a cothú agus spioraid an náisiúin a bhuanú.



Ignatius Lynam — Offaly

Public sector incomes in protected employment have risen 42 p.c. and in the private sector a mere 17 p.c. in risky jobs — an anomaly that is both unjust and unproductive.



Oliver Craghan — Meath

Irish-made furniture should be zero-rated for V.A.T. purposes to boost employment in a growing industry.

of Fianna Fáil. There was a certain impatience.

Some were demanding to know why the under 25s should not *ex officio*, as it were, have permanent representation on the National Executive. As was announced at the conference, this is being strongly considered.

Still others thought that the delegates themselves should have more say in running future youth conferences, particularly in the matter of fixing the agenda. And very many indeed thought that there was a disproportionate allotment of time given to speakers from the platform.

Crusade

One young man who could not have been much more than 17, but who struck me must have a very long political pedigree indeed, suggested over lunch that elections of youth officers should take place at the national conference, to "give the business a bit of bite". He was of course, from Kerry.

All these, I think are fair points. But it is equally fair to point out that Fianna Fáil is the first party in Irish politics to launch a meaningful youth movement. And, of course, it is very much in its infancy still.

What then of the future of this crusade? Our young people up and down the country must more and more involve themselves in the established levels of the organisation — and the hard work that this entails. Joe Brennan put it very well at the conference dinner when he said that it is not easy to give up a night at a disco to go out in the rain making the national collection.

Message

They must make their presence felt as members of Fianna Fáil in local community affairs, in their schools, universities, trade unions, business and professional bodies. And I myself have a vested interest in hoping that they will lend their energies to this journal — itself a new Fianna Fáil experience.

All this must be the Message of the Conference of 1976 for all our young people. For those of us who observed them last month know, like John Milton, how soon will Time, the subtle thief of youth, steal on his wing their five and twentieth year. And then like Degas a century ago, they will begin to realise that "everyone has talent at 25. The difficulty is to have it at 40".

— MAURICE HÉARNE, who covered the Youth Conferenc for IRIS.



Andreas O Caoimh — Dublin S.C.

I would rather that the E.E.C. had chosen a confederal as opposed to a federal method of union. At all events, Fianna Fáil should oppose the "two-tier" evolution to unity envisaged in the Tindemans Report.



Dermod Mahon — Dublin Artane

Until Cosgrave is dethroned there is no hope of creating the 200,000 jobs needed by 1986, let alone getting the 118,000 unemployed in 1976 back to work.



Pat McCarthy — Cork City.

I hope that Conor Cruise O'Brien's Chamberlain-like appeasement will not lead to a holocaust of 500,000 Catholics in the North.



Our young leaders

Let's be the politicians of today



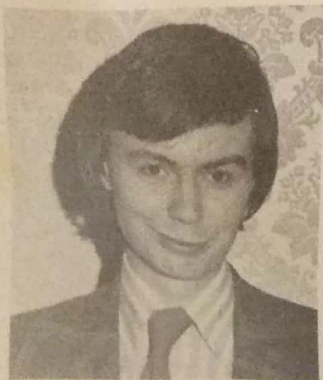
Mary Harney — W. Co. Dublin.

It was irresponsible of Fianna Fáil to call for a British withdrawal from the North at this time.



Thomas McCarthy — Waterford.

Fianna Fáil is the republican party committed to constitutionalism and not violence. That is essentially what distinguishes us from those who would debase the coinage of patriotism by the gun.



Rory Fanning — Dublin S.E.

We must reconcile the welfare of the consumer with the need to make a profit. This principle must guide our code of commercial ethics and practice.



By COLETTE MELEADY

FOR TWO years now we, the young people of Fianna Fáil, have had our own special place in this party. A place that all of us under 25 years of age will, I hope, recognise as a challenging beginning in public life.

The qualities we all display in these our first years in politics are vitally important. I mean the qualities like unselfishness, willingness to listen, tolerance of one another's point of view — in a word, maturity.

All of these things cost nothing; yet they are priceless. For without them our place in politics is meaningless and we deserve the respect and attention of no one.

We young people in Fianna Fáil are pioneers every bit as much as those men and women — most of them about our own age — who began as simple volunteers and will always be remembered as the Soldiers of Destiny.

So let's speak out. Let our voices be heard loud and clear. We have perhaps a unique opportunity of telling our elders how we think and how we feel.

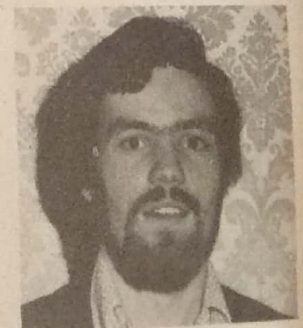
And if we do so confidently and carefully and compassionately, we won't be regarded as the politicians of tomorrow. But the politicians of today.

That, at least is where I think we belong.

Colette is secretary of Dublin Finglas, Comhairle Dail Ceann-tair.



★ The huge attendance of delegates at a standing ovation to Mr. Lynch at the conference. He had just flown in after a long absence.



Neil Dempsey — Meath

The Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act was an over-reaction because, although the State has a duty to protect society, the freedom of the individual must just as jealously be protected. On this criterion, the Act is repressive legislation.

EMIGRANTS

What can we do to help them

IN MAY of last year it fell to me as Spokesman on Social Security to visit the Irish Centre hostel, Hope House in London.

What prompts me to mention this is that again the spectre of emigration on foot of the gross and frightening job loss figures must be a matter of immediate concern to both Government and Opposition — Government because they created the spectre and must accept responsibility for the consequent social harm of unemployment, the Opposition because it offers us the opportunity to put forward solutions to a problem of concern to all the Nation.

Dublin City and County provide the harbours from which many people bade their last farewells. For others, of course, they were the points they disembarked on Irish soil for the first time and for still more, it marks the place where they begin to put into effect their resolve "never more to roam" — the end of exile and the start of a new life strengthened by experiences and new skills acquired.

Motives

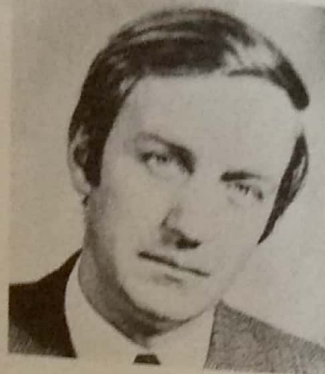
What prompts people to emigrate? The answer is to be found in the diverse and gregarious character of the Irish. We went around the globe and first encountered signs of "No Irish need apply".

Yet, we took pick and shovel in hand and our womenfolk did housework so they could make the path easier for the next generation.

The second generation Irish in America were known as "narrow-backs" because they could avail of the educational opportunities their parents sought to give them.

We have striven since independence to eliminate the situation where people had to emigrate through dire necessity. Those efforts have not always been successful, but whether the efforts were sufficient or not, it is fair to say that there was a bona fide belief that it was the duty of public men to provide equal opportunity for all the children of the Nation.

People may still emigrate. They may emigrate for adventure; to gratify; to improve their knowledge and skills.



By **DAVID ANDREWS, T.D.**

Spokesman on Social Security

various schemes to discharge the Nation's obligation to those in need.

It may be very difficult to produce comprehensive and consistent social priorities. Because social policies deal with questions of distribution and fair play, they call repeatedly for choices between conflicting interests which only the Oireachtas has the authority to make.

It is easy to talk about wealth, poverty and equality and not too difficult in extreme cases to agree about their meaning, but the analysis of social policies repeatedly calls for finer distinction.

Census

How much larger, for example, must the income of a three-child family be than that of a two-child family, if both are to obtain the same living standard?

How much larger, for elderly widow need? Do those in the West need more or less than those in the East?

The present Government in abandoning the census of population have done a grievous disservice to the Nation.

What was required in addition to the normal census was considerable improvement in the quantity and quality of Irish social statistics. That could have been an adjunct to the programme as it existed.

Very little is known about income distribution or about the net effects of Government data are necessary for the policies in re-distributing income. Reliable and adequate formulation of social policies and for the measurement of the social implications of economic policy.

When important changes in policies, programmes and procedures are proposed, the Government should publish estimates of the amount and the distribution of the benefits likely to be conferred. These estimates are necessary if rational decisions about social matters are to be made.

emigrant ship — that is, the economies of other countries.

The short answer to that is if people have to emigrate, it is infinitely preferable that they should go abroad with a good education and with skills, than that they should be thrust upon an unreceptive market without those advantages.

What must be a cause of pain, and indeed shame to all of us, is that there should be emigration of the very young and the disadvantages.

The idea that anyone should arrive in a city like London with just a few pounds in his pocket is abhorrent. We need to bolster our social services at home and to make it crystal clear that this type of emigration is just not on and the streets of London are no more paved with gold now than they were in Dick Whittington's day.

It is to deal with such emigrants that Hope House was set up. But we need, the Irish Nation needs, to recognise the needs of the Irish abroad, especially in Britain and to make provision for them.

If travel companies can provide a comprehensive courier service to make the holiday-maker content and happy, why can't we provide social couriers to establish liaison with the emigrants?

Our emigrants have the right to play their part in the formulation of Government policy. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, but it also lets the eye see with a rare respect.

Emigration should be a cause for concern for any government — recognition that the problem exists and the will to ensure that centres like Hope House are acknowledged and supported officially.

Record

Fianna Fáil has a good record in the area of social security. Successive Governments recognised the need to introduce



★ Alderman and Mrs. Michael McGuinness being presented with a silver tea service by Mr. Jack Quinn (right) chairman of St. John's Cumann, Kilkenny.

Education

It has been suggested that Ireland spends vast sums to educate young people for the

rs... what they're saying

Students — an anomaly in the rules



By BRIAN CURTIN

THIRD level education is still—unhappily—the privilege of the fortunate few in Ireland. But that's being put right gradually.

In the meantime, it is right that those of us who have the opportunity of furthering our studies beyond secondary school should be able to play an active part in public-affairs.

Not only is it right, but in my view it is essential that students should be involved politically.

A great many students who support Fianna Fáil are prevented from playing their full part in the affairs of the party by what I believe to be an anomaly in the *Coru*.

Although there are now a number of *cumann* organised at institutions of higher education, there is a rule against any one member belonging to more than one *cumann*.

Accordingly a student who spends, on average, 21 weeks away from his home, is debarred, as it were, from actively taking part in the functioning of the party.

If he or she joins the *College cumann*, an even greater period of absence occurs.

So let's think about changing the "one *cumann*" rule for students.

I think it makes good sense.

Brian is secretary of the *cumann* at Trinity College, Dublin.



Anne Hughes — N. Co. Dublin

It is terribly sad that in our modern Ireland, little children of five or six years of age are begging in the rain in our capital city.



Cormac Meehan — Donegal

Our forestry is being sadly neglected at a time when timber imports have risen from £22m to £66m in the last few years.



Alice Dillon — Mid-Cork

There is an ever-growing need for more intensive courses in agriculture and horticulture for young people.



Delegates in the Burlington Hotel rise to give a cheer when he arrived to address the Congress after an arduous trip to Brussels and London.



Chris Birrauc — Dublin Ballyfermot.

Let's give our people another chance (as in the U.K.) to say whether we stay in Europe.

Dinéar Bliaintúil Chonamara Theas

Ba mhaith liom dhá pictiúr a chur chugat le tuiscint san gcead eagrán eile de IRIS Fianna Fáil. Seo iad na pictiúr a thug fear an Connacht Tribune ag an dinéar bliaintúil a bhí ag Comhairle Ceantair Chonamara Theas ar an 13ú lá de mhí Nollaig, 1975.

Tá mé cinnte go m'fóilséigh tú cuid den áthas a thug Ceantaire Fhianna Fáil an oíche sin. I measc na gcainteoirí freisin bhí na Teachtaí Dála áitiúil chomh maith leis an gComhairleoir Condae Micheál Ó Flatharta. San bpictiúr mór tá ina suígh 6 chlé; Máirtín Ó Márta, Máirín Leainde, Seán Ó Loinsigh, Bean Uí Staunton, ina sheasamh tá; Pádraic Ó Biadhá, Séamus Ó Cearra, Peadar Ó Conghaola, Nioclás Ó Corchu-



Wháit, Cártaibh...
 Ceantaire Fhianna Fáil
 hólá Ó Loinsigh, ag
 Bernáid Ó Loinsigh, Kínnáil
 San dara pictiúr tá 6 chlé; Cárta Iníon Uí Fíllá harta, An Caorán Mór Bean Uí Neachtain, Cór Pharraige, agus an Comhairleoir Condae Micheál Ó Flatharta agus a bhean, a Cheathrú Rua.
 Mise le moir mhéas,
 Bernáid Ó Loideáin,
 Rúnáil.

The greatness of de Valera (from page 13)

parison with the value of the language enriching one's personal life. Put into this context, the whole question of compulsion recedes into the background. Love of the language is part of one's development and comes, essentially, from within oneself.

This is also true for the nation which can only be awakened slowly to its heritage. Although many of the people reading this will not respond, their children may do sometime in the future. It is in this realisation that the crux of compulsion lies. A middle path

of the language to succeeding generations and ensuring that through our enthusiasm we do not disturb the process growth of love for the language springing from within the heart of the individual.

The challenge of fostering a culture and its language is one which has not been accepted by Western nations such as ours in this century. China and Israel have achieved much in this area but in very different circumstances.

As a nation, we are unique in the role we could play with regard to our language. In regard to the struggle between

guages the two come close to finding a balance in Ireland.

On one extreme America and Canada are struggling to find a cultural identity of their own. On the other, countries such as France see the distinction between their native French and the international culture based on English and are trying to stem the tide of the drift towards the latter despite the practicality of English for commerce and international communication.

It may take America years to come to terms with its own separate identity. Similarly, it may take years for the French to realise that their own lan-

France.

We, however, are at the stage where we can address the problem — where do we go from here? How does a nation grow in the modern world of mass communication from the point where the native language as the international language has achieved some sort of balance?

By accepting this challenge we will not only be building a suitable monument to the memory of Eamon de Valera we will be putting Ireland back on the map as a leader among nations because we will have provided an example and a experience whereby many other