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## Forum : the Magazine of the DIT Students' Unions, No. 1, 5th February, 1987

DIT Students' Union

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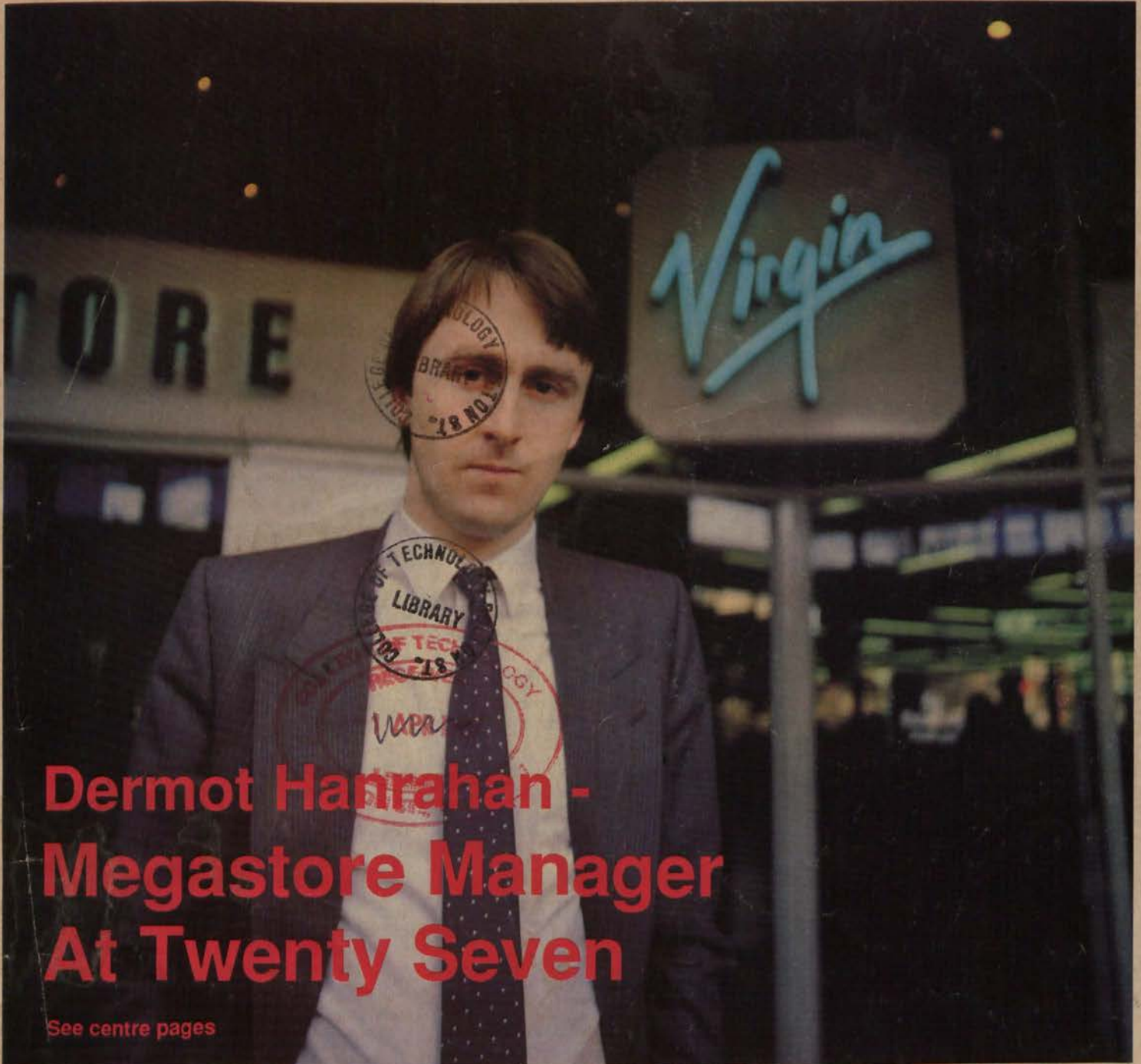
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# FORUM

The magazine of the DIT Students Unions

No 1 - Feb 5 1987 - Free of charge to students and staff in the DIT Colleges

370  
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## Dermot Hanrahan - Megastore Manager At Twenty Seven

See centre pages

PLUS

DIT Poll puts PDs top - A look at the work of the EEA

News and Views from around the Colleges

Aidan Kerins on the DIT

Open Forum - The Case For Nuclear Reactors

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# Editorial

## THE DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Did you hear the one about the Irish third level educational Institute? According to a recent survey, 6% of its students didn't even know it existed.

You are *not* a student of Kevin Street or Bolton Street. You do *not* attend the Colleges of Commerce or Marketing and Design. You do *not* go to the Colleges of Catering or Music.

You are a student of the DIT - the Dublin Institute of Technology.

The DIT was established in 1978 to unify the operations of the six Colleges named above - the third level Colleges of the City of Dublin VEC. It is quite probably the least heard of third level educational body in the country, relative to its size.

The DIT has over twenty five thousand students and over one and a half thousand staff. It runs many excellent courses, and has produced many successful business people. The long awaited 'economic recovery' is more likely to be shaped by DIT graduates than by any amount of politicians. But the DIT has never been properly funded. Successive governments have chosen instead to pump millions into the NIHEs in Glasnevin and Limerick. The case for proper DIT funding is at least as great, if not greater.

The fight for that funding will be difficult. It will mean convincing politicians of the need to invest in technological education, and to channel that investment through the DIT. To oversimplify it, there are three stages in that fight.

The first stage is awareness. Students and staff must begin to see the DIT as a unified Institute, not six separate Colleges. The second stage is analysing what is happening. Co-ordinating the working of six different Colleges is not the same thing as creating a unified Institute. The third stage is action. The VEC must *take* the steps that are needed, not just talk about them. Nine years after it was set up, the DIT are arranging to have a logo designed for their letterhead.

There always have been, and always will be, differences of opinion between the DIT Student and Staff Unions and the City of Dublin VEC. Some are trivial and unimportant, some are serious and fundamental. But on the issue of a unified and properly funded DIT, there is agreement. It must be backed up by action from all three bodies.



Michael Nugent, Editor Forum Magazine

FORUM magazine  
41 Mountjoy Square Dublin 1  
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The magazine of the DIT Students Unions

## Welcome to FORUM

Welcome to Forum, published monthly during the academic year by the DIT Students Unions, and distributed free to students in the DIT Colleges.

The DIT population has many specific interests - course content, graduate employment, examination and assessments, clubs and societies, entertainments and gigs - essentially, College life. It also has many more general interests - sport, films, music, books, humour, current affairs. Forum hopes to cater adequately for both sets of interests. If we get it wrong, let us know.

Editorially, Forum supports adequate financing and democratic control of the education system, nationally and locally. As a DIT Students Union publication, Forum will not apologise for giving prominence to the views expressed by the representatives of those Unions.

But it will not be a mere Union mouthpiece. Forum

is opposed to censorship of all kinds, and will in its news and feature sections give fair and adequate coverage to those who have different views - we unreservedly support the right of individuals to hear all opinions on any issue and make up their own minds.

If you disagree - or agree - with anything published in Forum, write and let us know. We welcome contributions from anybody, on any issue, provided a name and address are attached.

Forum hopes to inform and entertain, but more importantly, to encourage action. We will encourage at all times those who are doing what they believe in rather than those who are talking about what they believe in. If you feel strongly about any of the issues covered in Forum, don't just debate how good or bad things are. There are many people fighting uphill battles for change in this country, but not enough. Get involved.

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Peter Graves, USI Education Officer

## Formal appeals system needed, says USI education officer

A call for a formal academic appeals structure throughout the country has been made by USI education officer Peter Graves.

And personal opinion should be accepted as a valid reason for appeal. "If a student feels he or she is the victim of a biased or faulty assessment, they should be allowed to appeal" he says. "It is just as valid a complaint as administrative error or illness, which are

widely accepted as grounds for appeal". "Students are independent adults, capable of challenging the judgements of others" he continues. "And the right to do so should be enshrined in a formal structured appeals system". Any student who fails an assessment or exam should be told why in writing, says Mr Graves.

The appeals committee should not include any staff involved in the original assessment, nor should it include only

members of one sex.

Copies of the appeals procedure should be given to each student on enrolment, and again when results come out.

And a student should have the right to be represented by their students union during the appeal.

"Informal, unofficial procedures are not good enough" concludes Mr Graves.

"A formal system costs nothing, and safeguards the basic principle of a person being entitled to a second judgement".

## Disabled students need access, says conference

Most Irish Colleges do not cater properly for physically disabled students, according to a USI conference in Roslyn Park last April.

And the conference blamed successive governments for not passing laws forcing local authorities to provide access and services for disabled people, despite draft building negotiation regulations existing since 1979.

Donal Toolin, a leaving cert student from Ballyhaunis in Mayo, told the conference that he had to go and look

around each College he wanted to apply to, to see for himself if the Colleges were accessible for him.

"Most Colleges do not put enough information for disabled students in their prospectus" he said. "Though some do produce special leaflets".

And he found some Colleges totally inaccessible when he got there.

"Doors and stairs are the obvious barriers" he said. "But lack of proper toilet, canteen and telephone facilities also cause problems".

The conference called on all involved in the education system to fight for awareness and change.



COMAD bar course student Amanda Flanagan prepares for the 7UP cocktail competition

## COMAD to host 2nd All Ireland Colleges Cocktail Competition

The College of Marketing and Design Licensed Trades Department is to host the 2nd All Ireland Colleges Cocktail making Competition early next month.

The competition is sponsored by the 7UP Bottling Companies. Colleges expected to enter include the College of Catering, Athlone, Cork and Galway Regional Technical Colleges, the College of Hotel Management Shannon Airport, the College of Business Studies Belfast, Newry Catering College, Northern Ireland Hotel and Catering College Portrush and Cert training centres from Rosslare and Roebuck.

The cocktails can be of an alcoholic or non-alcoholic nature, but one of the mixers used must be either 7UP or Diet 7UP.



Soviet students Yuri Demin, Elena Galkina and Viljar Meister with DIT Director Michael O'Donnell and Bolton St SU President Aidan Kerins

## Soviet students visit Bolton Street

A delegation from the Soviet Student Council toured Ireland last month, visiting Trinity College, NIHE Limerick, the Department of Education, USI and Bolton Street College.

During their visit to Bolton Street, College Principal and DIT Director Michael O'Donnell spoke of the possibility of a twinning arrangement between Bolton Street and a similar Soviet College. He said that he would be pleased if such an arrangement could be made.

The visit was hosted by World University Service Ireland, an international third world agency that works in the area of creating student awareness on third world issues. It also sponsors development programmes in developing countries.

The Soviets also discussed a possible tour of Ireland by their student soccer team with Bolton Street lecturer Bob Eustace, who manages the college soccer team.

## DIT and NIHE's to merge ?

The two NIHE's - one in Glasnevin and one in Limerick - may merge to form Ireland's first Technological University.

And if it comes about, the DIT Colleges could form part of the new Institute.

A study group with professors from Ireland, UK, Canada and West Germany has been set up by the Minister for Education to examine the issue.

They will begin their discussions in March of this year.

## Bolton St Bop for the Shop

Bolton Street Ents presents the first "Bop for the Shop" on Thursday February 12 in Blooms Hotel on Anglesea Street.

The event has been organised to raise funds for the Save The Shops Campaign, which has been running for some months. Admission is £2.50 by ticket or £3 on the door, with free draws and spot prizes to be won on the night.

## Rugby club to visit Scotland

The Bolton Bears rugby team leave for Scotland for their annual British tour on February 20 to play Edinburgh University. Funds for the trip were raised at the Bear Ball in Blooms Hotel on January 29 last.

Hopefully the Bears will be more successful against the Scots than they were against the Parnell Pirates (from Mountjoy Square) who beat them last month by nine points to eight.



Metro Editor Joe Lowry at the launch

## Rathmines students launch newspaper

College of Commerce journalists have relaunched Metro, a newspaper produced as a course project to give practical experience to the students.

The official launch was on Thursday Jan 29 in the College, where Principal Jim Hickey reported that the paper had been passed by "the three critics in my own home".

This years Metro costs 50p. It has interviews with Gordon Thomas, Barry Norman, Frank McGuinness and others. It also has five pages of news, profiles of cyclist Sean Kelly and American Football team the Tornados, and features on fashion and the Civil Defence nuclear attack provisions.

## And they're off ..

Queens University Belfast host this years Equestrian Intervarsities on February 7 and 8.

Bolton Street Equestrian Society are sending a team of nine with two substitutes and are entering the showjumping, dressage, and prix caprilli competitions.

## COMAD Election Nomination Dates

Nominations for positions on the Students Union Executive in the College of Marketing and Design are to open on Monday March 9, and close the following Friday.

The positions to be filled will include President and Deputy President - both of which are full time positions for the year - along with the part time positions of Education Officer, Entertainments Officer, Welfare Officer, Clubs and Societies Officer, Publications Officer, Womens Rights Officer.

The elections themselves will be held on March 25 and 26. Hustings dates have yet to be arranged.

## UCG win at orienteering

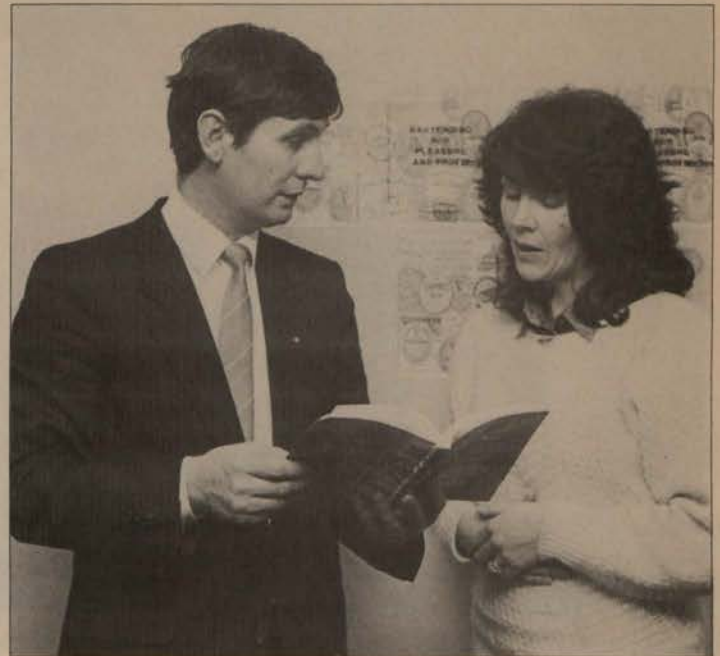
Bolton Street and Kevin Street Orienteers joined forces last week at the Orienteering Intervarsities in Galway.

Despite a gallant effort by the DIT team, particularly from Gareth Blacker, they were unable to stop the onslaught from the UCG contingent.

Despite this setback, both DIT teams have been quite successful so far this year, and are among the most active of the DIT clubs and societies.

## News items

Items for inclusion in next months newsdesk should reach us before Friday February 27 1987.



Andrew O'Gorman at the launch of his new book with COMAD lecturer Aine Rea

## Andrew O'Gorman launches new book

Andrew O'Gorman, Head of the Licensed Trade Department in the College of Marketing and Design, launched his new book "Bartending for Pleasure and Profit", at a reception yesterday, Wednesday Feb 4, in Guinness' Brewery, James Street.

The 300 page book contains information on licensing law, security, bar catering, and liqueurs sales in Ireland. Mr O'Gorman is also the publisher of the book, which is well illustrated throughout and is a comprehensive guide to all aspects of the Irish bar trade.



The COMAD womens soccer team

## COMAD soccer revival

Both male and female soccer teams in the College of Marketing and Design have been active this year under the guidance of club president Colm FitzGerald, a 2nd year marketing student in the college.

The male team has just finished a probationary period with the Irish Technical Colleges Football Association after its expulsion several years ago, and are looking forward to taking on the more established teams from Bolton Street and Kevin Street. According to Colm, the female team have "an undefeated record so far this year", although rumour has it that this record consists of played none, won none, drew none, lost none.

Both teams are sponsored by Budweiser Beer. Mr Shane Humphreys is the team manager.



Jacqui Quinn is presented with the Sunday World Journalist of the Year award by Colin McClelland, Editor Sunday World

## Jacqui Quinn wins Sunday World award

Among the students who graduated from the College of Commerce in Rathmines last week was Jacqui Quinn, who received a certificate in journalism.

Jacqui was also selected as Sunday World Journalist of the Year. She is pictured above after being presented with her trophy by Sunday World Editor Colin McClelland. The graduation ceremony took place in the RDS.



TPat Kenny talks to Pat Munden and Pat Murphy after his lecture to the COMAD Communications Society

## Pat Kenny gives talk to COMAD students

RTE Broadcaster Pat Kenny gave a lecture to the Communications Society of the College of Marketing and Design in Trinity College on December 2 last.

He outlined his own career and talked of job prospects for young people in RTE. Over 300 students attended the talk, which was sponsored by Guinness, AIB and the COMAD Students Union.

Further debates planned by the Society include one on Section 31 of the Broadcasting act, and another on the rock industry and the effect on it of modern music marketing. Speakers at this talk will include Jim Aitken, Mark Cagney and BP Fallon.

## COMAD team wins debate

The national students debating tournament, organised by the Irish branch of World University Service is proving to be very popular this year.

In the last debate in January, COMAD beat Rathmines on the Motion "The rich are not hypocrites". COMAD, captained by Paula Murphy, were opposing the motion. Dermot Coyle vice-president of Rathmines Students Union, one of the judges at the debate, said that "COMAD were a better researched team, and by comparison, Rathmines showed little evidence of research, and didn't make clear what they were talking about".

There are numerous and constant debates taking place all over the country for the duration of the academic year. Last week, Carlow RTC beat Bolton St., knocking them out of the tournament and taking away their chance to win the wonderful prize of an educational trip to Southern Africa, sponsored by "Debate for Development '87".

The next debate is on Thursday 12th February between COMAD and Church of Ireland College of Education on the motion "Tied aid is better than no aid".



The new library in the College of Commerce

## College of Commerce gets library

A new library has been opened in the College of Commerce in Rathmines. It is situated in the former St Vincent de Paul Meeting Rooms.

## Bolton St Welfare Week going well

Bolton Streets Welfare Week, organised by Deputy President of the Students Union in the College, Conor Lalor, and sponsored by Allied Irish Banks, has had a very satisfactory first series of events.

Students have heard talks from Jon O'Brien of the Irish Family Planning Association's Youth Group on fertility control and pregnancy counselling, from Tom Burgess of Sales Placement on job interview techniques, from Vivian Peelo of AIB and Colm Desmond of BOI on banking facilities and student loans, from Mairead Foley of the Dept of Social Welfare on means tests and allowances, and from solicitor Brian Sheridan on civil rights, legal aid and criminal law.

The final talk of the week is on Friday February 6, at lunchtime in the College. The speaker will be Marian Foster of the Community Action on Drugs group (CAD) and she will be talking on different types of drugs, and the dangers of their use and abuse.

The Union of Students In Ireland has produced a comprehensive manual dealing with virtually ever aspect of student welfare, and it is available to students through local SU Offices.



## Kevin St Rag Week

Kevin Street Rag Week 87 is drawing to a close as FORUM hits the colleges.

Pictured above are two of the entrants from the ever popular three legged pub crawl. We have no notion who, or what, they are.

# Fighting For Change

**FORUM** talks to Aidan Kerins, President of Bolton Street Students Union, Chairman of the DIT Inter Student Committee and a member of the City of Dublin VEC.



Aidan Kerins, President Bolton Street Students Union.

**FORUM:** In what ways has College life changed since you started in 1982?

**AIDAN KERINS:** I have seen three main changes. Firstly, students have become more industrious and interested in high grades in the hope of obtaining employment on graduation. I think most students will agree that the level of competition between them and their classmates is rising every year. Secondly, the level of services offered by the VEC to the students has actually dropped. In 1982 there was a Students Services Officer with back-up staff based in Mount Street who worked with the Students Unions on such issues as accommodation lists, medical information and sports and cultural activities. Today all we have is one part time welfare counsellor for over 25,000 students. Thirdly, students are finding the level of fees to be a major burden on them and their parents. Fees have risen by 550% since 1981 in the DIT Colleges and this, combined with the unavailability of a comprehensive grants scheme is making access to the DIT more and more exclusive.

**FORUM:** How have students reacted to these changes?

**AIDAN KERINS:** The main problem is that the majority of our students are on courses lasting less than three years, and hence they don't notice the cutbacks being made to the Colleges. For example, only final year students would remember when we had a Student Services department run by the VEC. Most other students now assume that it is the function of the Students Union to provide these services. They don't realise that in other Colleges the authorities accept responsibility for them. In the NIHE in Glasnevin, with less than 2,000 students, there is a full time staff of five manning the Student Services Department. There is an Accommodation Officer who not only lists

available accommodation for students, but also visits flats and digs to ensure that they are suitable. There is an Employment Office in the College that works full time in the graduate employment area. Here in the DIT we rely on the good will of lecturers to provide this service for us. The DIT is one of the few third level educational Institutes in the western world where you have to travel to the far side of a city to get to a College sports facility. Even primary and secondary schools run by the CDVEC have such facilities adjacent to their school. If we were able as a Students Union to take the DIT students and put them in the NIHE, or in Queens University

**"... only final year students would remember when we had a Student Services Department run by the VEC ..."**

Belfast, for a week we are sure that every student would want us to prioritise a campaign for better facilities for them.

**FORUM:** And who is responsible for this lack of facilities?

**AIDAN KERINS:** Ultimately we must blame the Department of Education. Successive governments have pumped millions into the NIHEs and left the DIT starved of funds. I feel that the VEC could have done more when times were better and money was available in the seventies, to ensure that the DIT Colleges got their fair share. Instead, they allowed themselves to be fobbed off into renting out disused warehouses and old

convents to house third level degree courses. This should not have been tolerated. The DIT students are as entitled to adequate facilities as any other third level students. The new DIT site in Bishop Street is already several years behind schedule. The Bolton Street extension was supposed to be fit for occupation three years ago. While we have been stuck in this limbo situation the NIHEs have been expanding at enormous speed. Work has already started on the latest phase of the Dublin NIHE, while the College of Marketing and Design does its annual impression of the moving crib with some students having gone through four year courses spending each year in a different building. Surely this is non conducive to education.

**FORUM:** So you are putting some of the blame on the VEC itself?

**AIDAN KERINS:** I suppose one must say yes. In my five years I get the feeling that the student only comes second place when decisions are being taken. The old cop out of 'there's no money there' does not hold water for me any more. Last summer after a two year Students Union campaign to get the government to authorise the VEC to employ a grade 4 officer to fill the vacant Student Services position, the VEC abused the clearance and instead employed a person in their admissions office. I accept that admissions are a very important part of the Institute but why had not the VEC been running their own campaign to get clearance for that position? The Student Services Report commissioned by the VEC in 1984 and passed by them in 1985 called for a whole range of facilities to be provided for the students. The only body within the Institute to act on the report so far has been Bolton Street College Council, which at its last meeting passed a motion from the Principal, Michael O'Donnell, calling on the VEC to seek





Aidan Kerins

funding from the new lottery for the provision of adequate sporting facilities and a Student Centre in the DIT.

**FORUM:** But what can the VEC actually do about these issues? Surely it is the government that takes the decisions?

**AIDAN KERINS:** We must remember that the VEC is a body nominated by the political parties. It is a subcommittee of Dublin Corporation, which is elected by the general public every five years. They have a responsibility to the people who elected them and that responsibility is to carry out the objectives of the Vocational Act. The VECs were set up to ensure that local input would be there when decisions are taken regarding vocational education. Local socio-economic and educational factors should be taken into consideration when deciding what happens to courses in the VEC Colleges. But such issues as fees are now decided on at government level and issued as directives to the VECs who merely rubber stamp the decisions already taken at a higher level. The VECs should not tolerate this. They should stand up to the government and put into action the policies that they have decided on at VEC level.

**FORUM:** What do you mean by that?

**AIDAN KERINS:** I'll give you an example that will be very relevant in the near future. The VEC at its last meeting passed an emergency motion tabled by myself opposing the proposed 6% fee increase announced by the government in its book of estimates. To be consistent the VEC should refuse to implement this fee increase when the time comes to do so. There is no point in only having paper policy on issues as important as this. They did this in 1984, when the then government ordered them to increase fees by 20%. After an intensive lobbying campaign

by the Students Unions the VEC rejected this directive and instead raised fees by only 10%. While even this is too high an increase it showed that the VEC can stand up to the government if it wants to.

**FORUM:** You are a member of the City of Dublin VEC. Do you find that you can represent the students viewpoints effectively?

**AIDAN KERINS:** We are very lucky in one sense in that we are the only third level Institute in the country to have a student sitting on the local VEC. From working with other Regional Technical Colleges one can

**"...the rejection by the VEC in 1984 of the govt directive on fees showed that they can stand up to the govt when they want to ..."**

see how much we benefit from having this. Without it we would have to rely on other people to put forward our arguments at committee level. It also means that we can react instantaneously if an unexpected motion or issue is brought up. We can make our point before instead of after the decision has been taken. It also means that the students of the Institute, through their representative on the committee, have access to all information necessary to make informed decisions at Students Union level.

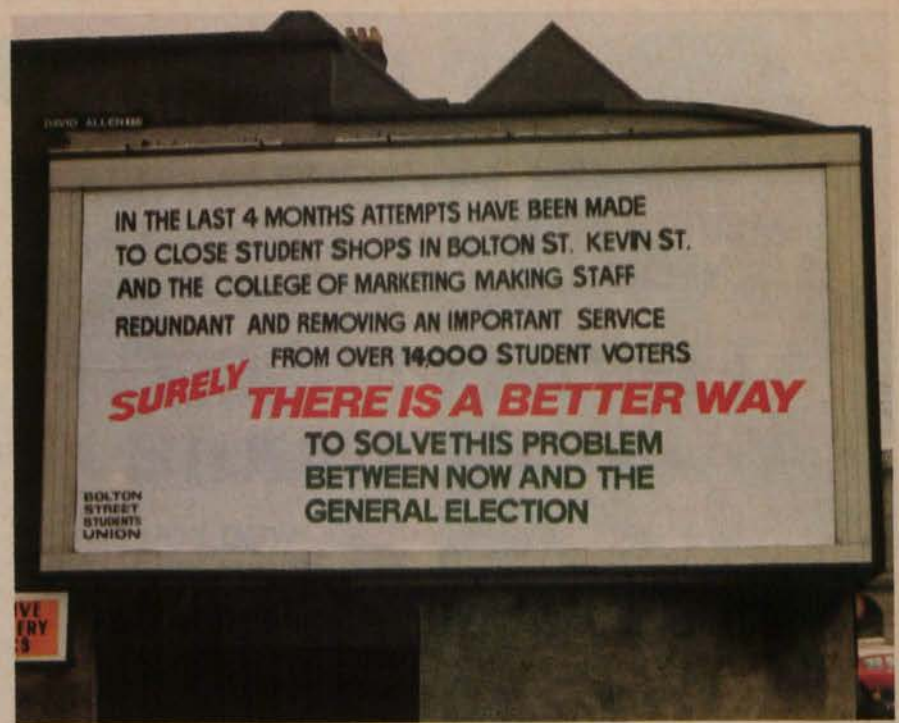
**FORUM:** Are there any drawbacks?

**AIDAN KERINS:** The transition from student meetings to VEC meetings is intimidating at

first. The Committee includes TDs and Councillors who are well used to the procedural wrangles and debate form that takes place at this level. It can be quite frustrating to return from a Committee meeting and have fellow students complain that you weren't forceful enough on a point when you know that you have done all that you can within the constraints of Committee procedure. And to even reach the stage when you can do all that is possible within these constraints, you will have to sit through at least five or six months of meetings, by which time your term is almost completed. The other committee members, whose term lasts from one local government election to the next, and the members of VEC staff who sit in on committee meetings, have much more time to settle in to the day to day running of the committee. They can be in a position to counteract many of your arguments with examples and precedents that you may not be aware of. It took me a considerable time before I could go in to meetings feeling as confident and prepared as the other members.

**FORUM:** The student representation on the VEC has obviously been brought about by the DIT Students Unions acting together rather than independently. Do you see this as an important development?

**AIDAN KERINS:** Yes. Obviously in a situation where decisions are being taken that effect students it makes sense to have a voice at that level. The main decisions in the DIT Colleges are taken at VEC level, not College level. We must work together., and in recent years we have been working more closely together than before. All DIT Students Union staff are now employed through a company we set up in 1985, DIT Student Union Ltd. All of the SU Presidents in the DIT Colleges are directors of this company, along with three



The billboard across the road from the College hired by Bolton Street Students Union

others who have experience in the student field. The DIT Inter Student Committee, of which I am currently chairman, co-ordinates the implementation of policy in areas that effect all five Colleges. It consists of the Presidents of the five Students Unions, and meets on a regular basis.

**FORUM:** What sort of decisions does the DIT Inter Student Committee make?

AIDAN KERINS: This year two areas have taken up most of our time. The first is the new method of payment of our capitation money to the Unions and the delays that have occurred. Secondly, much time has been spent co-ordinating the campaign to prevent the attempted restrictions being placed on our Student Shops, which would effectively result in the closure of the shops, cutting off a source of income from the Union and putting staff jobs in danger. These are both issues that we could not possibly fight on as individual Students Unions. In previous years we would attempted to fight these sort of issues on an individual basis, and without as much success as we have been having recently. We have been running far more professional campaigns, more students are aware of what we are doing and are involved in the decision making processes, and the campaigns are gaining more credibility in the eyes of both the students and the authorities. In Bolton Street, for example, we have been using a public billboard opposite the College to very good effect in recent months to get our message across to the students and to the general public in the Shops Campaign.

**FORUM:** Do you see USI as an important body for the DIT Unions to work with?

AIDAN KERINS: I have always been consistent in my views that we need a strong

national union to defend our interests. The Union of Students in Ireland has always had very close links with my College, Bolton Street. I in fact last year was a vice president of USI, and over the last five years I have been very actively involved in the workings of the national union. There are obviously problems for USI in some Colleges - three of the five Universities in the South are not affiliated, and the Unions credibility nationally has been damaged by undue influence from certain political persuasions, though this has mellowed somewhat in recent months. While my own Union in Bolton Street has not always seen eye to eye with the the National Union, I

"...we have been running far more professional campaigns, more students are aware and involved in what we are doing ..."

feel that the current leadership has done a good job under very difficult circumstances this year. A comprehensive education conference was held in St Pats College in Drumcondra, at which representatives from the HEA, NIHE and USI itself, together with Councillor Pat Carey of our VEC. A detailed welfare manual has been produced outlining necessary information for students in all Colleges. The ballot box campaign has been used to register students in certain parts of the country to vote en masse in the general election. Public meetings have also been arranged to ensure that Education is made an issue in the election campaign. Things have

generally gone well. What most concerns me at this stage of the year is that we continue to concentrate on the real issues, and do not allow ourselves to slip into the pre-congress electioneering trap so common in recent years.

**FORUM:** Tell us about your involvement in the World University Service.

AIDAN KERINS: This is an international Third World charity based in Geneva. I sit on the international committee there and am also treasurer of the Irish branch. WUS Ireland has done considerable work, both north and south of the border, in the area of creating student awareness of the problems in the underdeveloped countries. It involves both staff and students in 32 Colleges in Ireland. At present it is organising inter college debates in Third World issues. In fact, our College's team were beaten last week by Carlow RTC.

**FORUM:** Are you a member of any political party?

AIDAN KERINS: No. In fact I have a very strong position on this. I feel it would be counterproductive for any Union elected officer to be a member of, or show obvious public support for, any political party. All students should be able to identify with the defence side of the Unions work, and this identity may be clouded if the leadership is publicly pushing party political lines.

**FORUM:** What are your plans for next year? USI?

AIDAN KERINS: Ultimately I plan to return to my studies (sure isn't it the handy life!). I have already recieved a 1 yr deferrment from a course in Queens, and I have already spent 2 years as a full time Union officer. But if I decide to stay involved, I'm sure I could rely on the students' support.

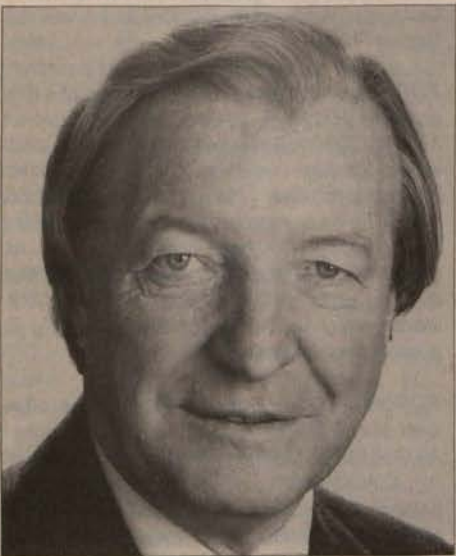
# DIT STUDENT POLL



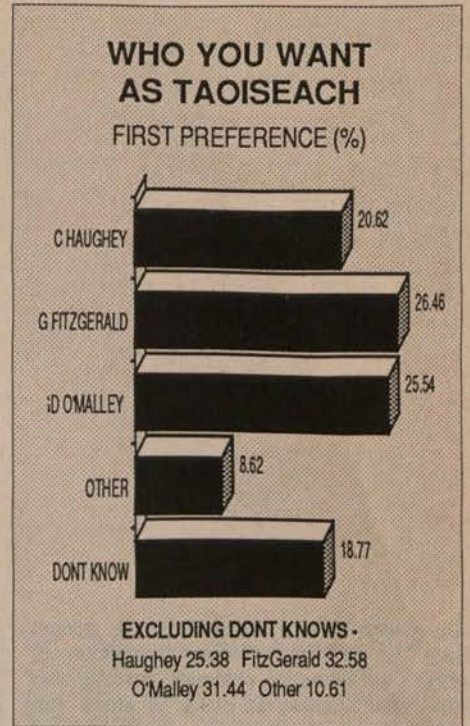
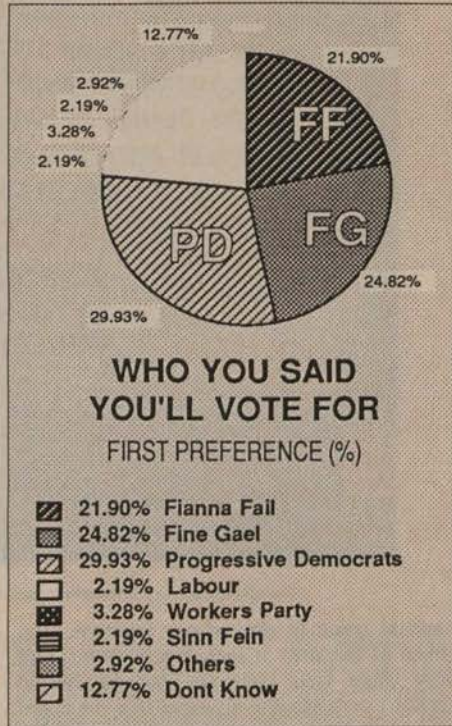
**DES O'MALLEY** - three in ten DIT students support his party



**GARRET FITZGERALD** - 26% want him back as Taoiseach

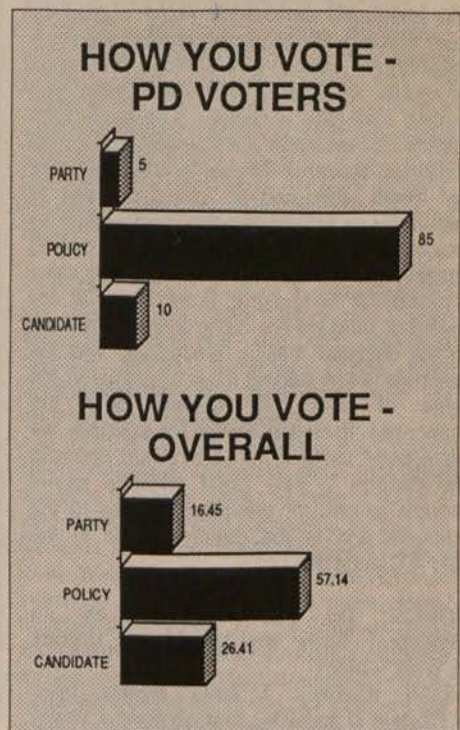
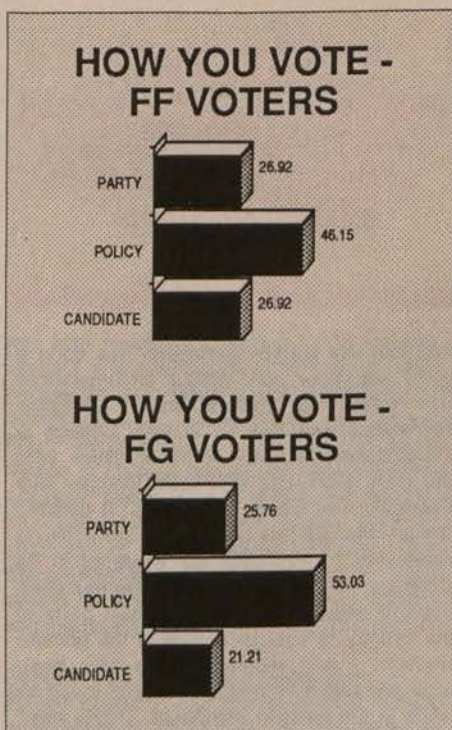


**CHARLIE HAUGHEY** - six in every ten think he will win

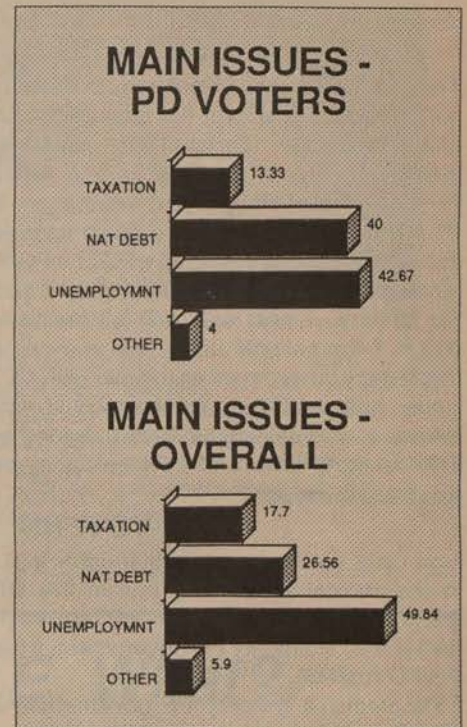
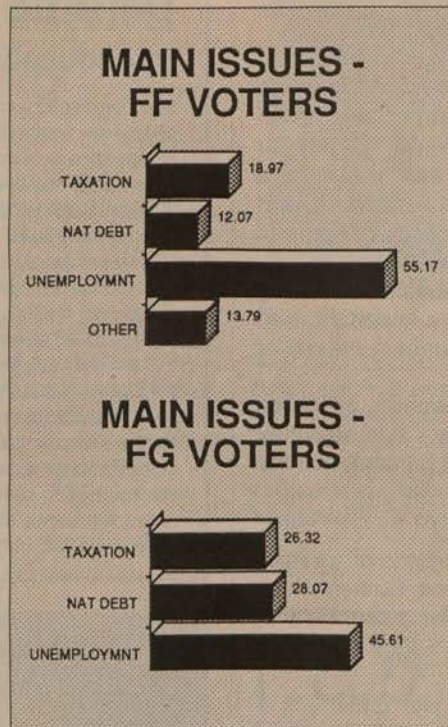
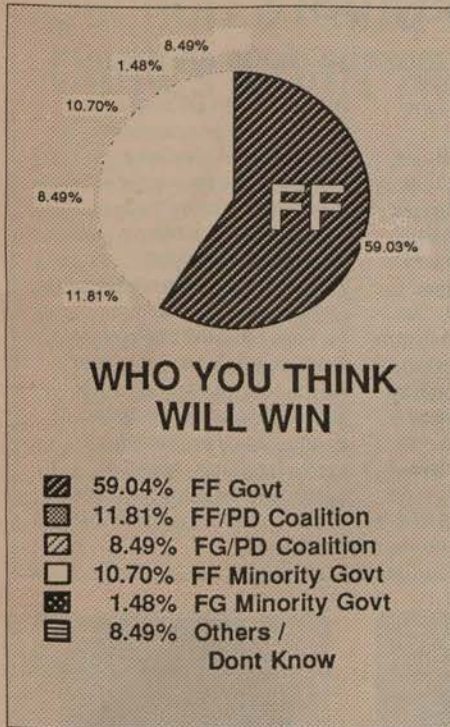


## BUT SIX IN TEN

FORUM magazine would like to thank all who participated in the compilation of this poll. We have only included an analysis of voting intention by party where the number of respondents in the relevant category is large enough to draw meaningful conclusions from such an analysis.



# PUTS PDs TOP WITH 30%



# EXPECT A FIANNA FAIL WIN

On the day Garret FitzGerald asked President Hillery to dissolve the 24th Dail, Forum magazine sought the opinions of 450 DIT students on how they would vote in the general election.

The results showed a DIT student vote that will differ from the national vote as expressed in successive recent opinion polls.

## PDs TOP POLL

Des O'Malley's Progressive Democrats can take most heart from the findings. Three in ten DIT students will vote for them - just about twice their recent national average.

Fianna Fail, often nationally near the 48 per cent needed for an overall majority, drop to less than 22 per cent support among DIT students. Fine Gael, fluctuating nationally between 25 and 40 per cent, are supported by one in four DIT students.

The Labour Party drop to less than 2.2 per cent in the colleges - one voter in every 45. This puts them level with Provisional Sinn Fein, who if elected will take their seats in the Dail for the first time since 1957.

Both Labour and Sinn Fein are behind the Workers Party, who are supported by 3.3 per cent - one voter in every 30. The combined vote for the three socialist parties is just under 8 per cent.

## ONE IN EIGHT UNDECIDED

One in 8 DIT students have yet to decide who to vote for. If they were to vote in the same pattern as those who have already decided, The Progressive Democrats would be supported by 34.3 per cent - over one third of the DIT students. Fine Gael would have 28.5 per cent support - two out of every seven - and Fianna Fail 25.1 per cent - just over a quarter.

One student in 40 would vote for the Labour Party. The same amount would support Provisional Sinn Fein. Two students in every 50 would vote for the Workers Party. Independents and others would have the support of one student in every 30.

## THE MAGIC 48%

The figures above are for first preference votes, a reasonably accurate guide to a party's chances of forming a government. It is generally accepted that over 48% of the first preference vote is likely to translate into an overall Dail majority.

The Coalition's 86 seats in the November '82 election were brought about with 48.8% first preference votes. It put them in a majority voting position, since eroded by defections and resignations.

The previous Haughey administration, with 47.2% first preferences, was dependent on the support of Tony Gregory to stay in office. It had 81 of the 166 seats in the Dail. The 1981 FitzGerald/O'Leary Coalition had 46.35% first preferences. It too was a minority government and fell at the hands of Limerick's Jim Kemmy, the Dail's only ever representative from the Socialist Labour Party.

Both previous administrations had overall Dail majorities, and both had over 48% first preferences. The 1973 Cosgrave Coalition had a 2 seat majority with 48.76% first preferences, and the 1977 Fianna Fail landslide 20 seat majority under Jack Lynch was fashioned with the aid of 50.3% of national first preference votes.

## THE DIT VOTE

While the DIT student vote is obviously not representative of national voting intentions, if the election were to be decided in

the DIT colleges any number of possible governments could emerge. The DIT vote would leave no party in a majority position, and none of the main parties weak enough to be forced into a minor role in any coalition arrangement. And negotiations would certainly be lively, if the DIT students expected election results were to be reflected in post election arrangements.

**FF VOTERS**

The DIT Fianna Fail voters are the most confident of the voters polled. Only 4% accept the possibility of a non-FF government after the election. Three in four predict an overall majority for their party, one in seven a FF/PD coalition, and one in 25 a minority Charles Haughey administration. The 4% - again, one in 25 - who did not expect a FF government were simply unsure of the outcome. None predicted a FG or a FG/PD government.

Over half - 55% - saw unemployment as the main issue facing the country. Almost one in 5 felt taxation more important, and one in 8 the national debt. 14% saw crime, Northern Ireland or single party government as the main issues.

Under half - 46% - said they would vote primarily on policy issues. The remaining 54% were divided evenly - 26% said they vote on party lines and 26% said they voted primarily for the candidate involved.

**FG VOTERS**

Fine Gael voters are understandably less optimistic of a return to the cabinet table. Only one in five DIT Fine Gaelers think Garret FitzGerald will return as Taoiseach. Just under 7% feel he will lead a minority FG government, while 13% think it will be a FG/PD coalition.

15% predict a minority FF government, and just under 7% a FF/PD coalition. Just under half - 48.3% - of the DIT Fine Gael voters believe that Fianna Fail will gain an overall majority.

45% saw unemployment as the main issue; 28% the national debt and 26% taxation. Over half - 53% - said they would vote primarily on policy issues. Just over a quarter said they would vote on party lines, and one in five said they would be voting primarily for a candidate.

**PD VOTERS**

The outcomes expected by the Progressive Democrat voters are perhaps the most interesting of the three, in the context of possible coalition arrangements. 37% of DIT PD voters - almost two in five - expect Des O'Malley to be the next Tanaiste. 21% think the PDs will join with Fianna Fail, while only 16% think they will join with Fine Gael. One in twelve expect a FF minority government, one in twenty are unsure of the outcome, and, like FG, just under half of the DIT PD voters expect to see a Charles Haughey overall majority.

Significantly more PD voters saw the national debt as the main issue to be tackled - 40% as opposed to FGs 28% and FFs 12%. 43% of PD voters said unemployment was most important, 13% taxation and 6% crime or Northern Ireland.

And significantly more DIT PD voters said they would be voting on policy issues - 85%, or 17 out of every 20, as opposed to FGs 53% and FFs 46%. One in ten PD voters said they would vote primarily for the candidate involved, and one in twenty said they would be voting on party lines.

**OVERALL**

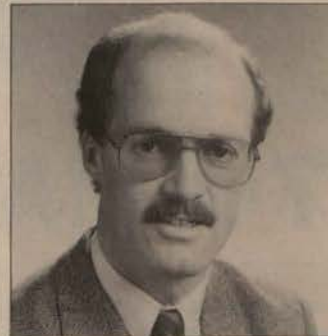
So overall a mixed reaction from DIT students. Most will vote for the Progressive Democrats, most believe that Fianna Fail will form the next government. No comfort for the socialist parties, particularly Labour, who have a lot of work to do in the Colleges to build support. But some consolation for Garret FitzGerald. He is still the students first choice as Taoiseach - with just over a quarter of students wanting him to lead the next government he is ahead of both Des O'Malley and long time rival Charles Haughey.

**Students finally voting independently of their parents, say USI**

**But education must be made an issue**

The Forum poll shows young people are finally voting independently of their parents, says Paddy McPolland of USI. "Only 16% overall say they will vote on party lines" he says. "This is evidence of a mature outlook that would not have existed not too long ago". "The poll also shows that Fianna Fail will not have the credibility in the Colleges that they seem to have elsewhere, unless they start making concrete commitments on policy areas". He is happy to see unemployment emerging as the main issue with most students,

many of whom will themselves face the dole on graduation. "No party has given any indication that they are able to tackle this problem" he says. "The solution is a complex one, intrinsically linked with investment in people and equality of access to education". He hopes that the one in eight students who have yet to decide how to vote - a very high figure, says Paddy, considering the inevitability of an election for such a long time - will listen carefully to the education policies of each party before making up their minds.



Stephen O'Byrnes - PD Policy Director



Sallyanne Godson - FG Youth Officer

**Young people clearly impatient for change, says PD National Policy Director**

The Progressive Democrats are heartened by the poll findings, says National Policy Director Stephen O'Byrnes.

"They clearly show that young people are impatient for change" he says.

"And the fact that the vast majority of PD voters will cast their votes on policy issues shows we are attracting people interested in ideas and not party or personality politics. This reflects our success in developing policy from branch level up, and it shows that young people recognise we have the correct policies".

The 50% of PD voters who expect a FF win in the election "are merely reflecting the opinions expressed in recent national opinion polls" he says. "It is more important to vote for a party than to believe they will win".

**Results good for constitutional parties, says FG National Youth Officer**

The results are good for constitutional parties, says Fine Gael National Youth Officer Sallyanne Godson.

Though disappointed that even one student in fifty is prepared to vote for a party that will not repudiate violence, she is pleased that most students want to work within the democratic system.

But the apparent support for Fianna Fail and the PDs may be misleading, she says.

"The 85% of PD voters who say they vote primarily on policy issues may not stay with the party" she says.

"They could be swayed into voting a different way when other policies become clear".

"And the Haughey factor is still evident - more non-FG voters support Garret as Taoiseach than non-FF voters support Haughey".

## DIT Students Oppose Section 31 and Womens Clinics Court Ruling

Over 83% of DIT students feel that Sinn Fein members should be interviewed on RTE when it is newsworthy to do so, according to the FORUM poll. And this figure rises to 88.2% in cases where the SF member is an elected public representative.

The poll also showed a clear majority of DIT students - almost 83% - opposed to the recent court ruling preventing womens clinics from providing information on abortion services.

The Repeal Section 31 Committee have welcomed the findings of the poll, which they say are a clear vindication of their position. "This insidious piece of legislation operates against the wishes of the public" says Nicky Kelly. "When one takes into consideration the recent Sunday Independent/IMS and NIHE Dublin polls, the trend is that right across the spectrum of society people oppose this state censorship on RTE and want it removed".



Nicky Kelly of the Repeal Section 31 Committee with Christy Moore

And PRO Declan Turnbull says that in the final week before the election an extra effort should be made to make section 31 an issue amongst the candidates by anyone who values the right of free speech. "It should never be

forgotten" he says, "that according to the International Federation of Journalists the only other countries in the western world with such restrictive state censorship are South Africa and Turkey".



Pat Montague - Labour Youth Officer



Brian McDonald - Sinn Fein PRO

## C.D.V.E. What?

Over 20% of DIT students do not know what the CDVEC is, according to the FORUM survey. And almost 6% do not know what the DIT is. The next edition of FORUM will include a comprehensive feature on both of these committees and all of your questions will be answered.

### Labour rebuilding college branches, says Lab National Youth Officer

The Labour party is to continue its process of building and expanding branches in colleges and universities, says party National Youth Officer Pat Montague. Strong branches already exist in TCD, UCD, NIHE, St Pats and some DIT colleges. "We feel that our position nationally, and even in the colleges, is higher than that reflected in the poll" he says. "The Labour Party traditionally have a stronger showing in an election situation, where the candidates name as well as the party name is on the ballot paper, and where people know that they are actually electing somebody to the Dail to represent them". He feels that the party's new more independent stand on such issues as coalition will help bring many supporters back to the party.

### Poll reflects move to new right, says Sinn Fein Publicity Officer

The FORUM poll reflects the move to the new right and the superficial attraction of the PDs to young people, according to Sinn Fein Publicity Officer Brian McDonald. "It is a sad indication of the political niaivty in Ireland and it shows that we have a lot of work to do in the colleges if we are to get our message across to students" he says. "The established parties have shown how little they care about education in recent years, and private sector economics will certainly not help create a better third level education system". It is of course easier, he says, for the established parties to get their message across "when they can take a decision to prevent us from putting our case to the people on television on radio.

### Fianna Fail vote will be much higher, says FF Youth Education Officer

The Fianna Fail vote on election day will be significantly higher than the 22% indicated in the FORUM poll, says the party's Youth Education Officer Mary O'Shea. But she is pleased that over 70% of students feel that Fianna Fail will form the next government, and alligns herself with the 60% who believe it will be a single party majority government. "It is significant" she says, "that only 42% of PD voters feel that unemployment is the main issue facing the country". We would see the priorities differently, especially for students who may spend 3 or 4 years in College and then face the dole or emigration". "We will be making a conscious attempt to build our organisation within the DIT colleges despite the problems of a transient student population".

### Unemployment more important at doors, says Workers Party Youth Organiser

More people at the doorsteps are saying that unemployment is the main issue in this election that are saying so in the FORUM poll, according to Workers Party Youth Organiser Feargal Ross. "The poll shows a swing that started in the late seventies and has continued since" he says. "Students are becoming distinctly more middle class and this is reflected in the votes for the right wing parties - excluding the don't knows more than 9 out of 10 students say they will be voting for right wing parties, and by the fact that 1 in 4 see the national debt as the most important issue in the election". The poll mirrors other surveys in placing the Workers Party ahead of the Labour Party and Sinn Fein, he says. He is confident this will translate into extra Dail seats in the Election.

# CAPITATION CHAOS

## WHY THE NEW STUDENTS UNION FUNDING SYSTEM DOESN'T WORK

The new capitation structure set up this year was meant to herald a new era for clubs and societies in the DIT. Instead, it has been a fiasco with some clubs receiving little or no funds and others claiming the system is basically unfair. FORUM reports on the background to this issue and outlines the DIT Students Unions' alternative.

The new capitation structure introduced this year isn't really that new. It actually arises from a number of recommendations in the report on Student Services adopted by the CDVEC in June 1985. The report recommended that clubs and societies be more directly funded and that a series of local and central councils govern their affairs. The idea was to give clubs and societies more control over their activities and a measure of autonomy from the Students Union. The system is not original, says Students Union administrative officer Eamon Connor. In many colleges sports or athletic councils receive a percentage of Student Union funds.

One difference with the DIT system is that not only is it to operate on a multi-site basis but, in the absence of a properly constituted DIT, it must also operate for five separate and distinct Students Unions. A second difference is that, by and large, it doesn't work.

Aidan Kerins, President of Bolton Street Students Union blames this on two factors. "Firstly, the system itself is inherently bad. Its very bureaucratic and cumbersome. Local clubs have to fight for their funds at two different levels; local and central. In many respects local clubs have lost rather than gained power under this system. The second factor is lack of resources. Under the Public Service Embargo the VEC is crippled for staff. There is simply

no-one there to oversee this system. We have been trying for months to get a meeting with both the Central Sport and the Central Cultural council in order just to get figures agreed. But as the VEC claim the system is "their's" they insist on calling the meetings. The result is that so far nothing has happened"

Aside from being very bureaucratic the new capitation system is also attempting to put together a structure which does not have any practical basis. All the capitation money for clubs and societies is now "pooled" into two central sources: one for sport and one for societies. Thus Bolton Street sports clubs have been competing with other colleges for funds and vice versa. This is despite the fact that there are more clubs and societies in Bolton Street than any other college and that Bolton Street Students Union is well able to generate funds of its own to give to clubs and societies.

Essentially what is happening is that the larger blocks of societies (like Bolton Street and Rathmines) are claiming for substantially larger funds than they would normally get and this works against the smaller colleges. "It's the smaller colleges who are now subsidising the larger ones", says Karen O'Sullivan, President of the College of Catering Students Union. "We are all for developing the DIT but surely not at the expense of each local college."

The new system is also attacked for trying to set up a DIT-wide structure for clubs and societies, when such a structure does not exist in the rest of the Institute. This has alienated many students from the DIT concept, as the focal point of all other activity is the local Union and College. As one Cathal Brugha Street student put it, "I would much rather my local Union give me

£1,000 than a DIT committee grant me £2,000."

Aidan Kerins views the development of the DIT more acutely, "Everyone wants to see the DIT develop and expand, especially in the area of sport. But it can not be done by antagonising people. What we need is an effective but flexible system which distributes clubs and societies' funds and at the same time secures enough resources for DIT-wide sport activities. I believe that the funds clubs and societies get should be based on local capitation and an individual Union's ability to pay."

So what are the Student Unions proposing and what are its advantages? Firstly they want to see clubs and societies allocations made as a percentage of local gross capitation money. They say this is a simpler method - everyone knows how much capitation is and therefore how much clubs and societies should get - and it also means that local clubs only compete against themselves for funds and not with other colleges. The Students Unions recommend that the minimum percentage be 35%. This is 8% higher than that agreed at present and at current levels would mean a total sports/societies budget of over £80,000.

Money for DIT sports activities would come from this percentage of funds. This could be levied from each sports and cultural council on a per capita basis. To help develop sport in the institute as opposed to merely administering money it is proposed that a Standing Advisory Committee on sport be set up.

A second proposal from the Students Union is that all of the unions fixed cost-wages, honorariums etc. be identified as a block grant payable to D.I.T.S.U. Ltd. The Students Union have already centralised this area of activity through D.I.T.S.C. and this would be a recognition of this fact by the V.E.C. It also represents the unions believe, a more efficient use of their limited resources.

Finally the Students Unions are proposing that the balance of capitation monies be then distributed to each union on a per capita basis. "We believe this new structure represents a better use of our resources and indeed of the institutes resources" says Aidan Kerins, "We have simplified the administration structures, and as we are for that - that seems sensible. We also want to concentrate the Institutes' resources on developing sport rather than simply distributing money".

When will this new structure be set up? The Students Unions are intent on bringing forward a proposal to the next Student Services Committee to have the capital structure amended along the lines of the above proposals. However as many of the people on the Student Services Council help draft the existing capitation structure the Students Union will face an uphill struggle. For many people, particularly clubs and societies - that struggle will be of dire necessity if the capitation chaos of this year is to be avoided in future.

## What is capitation money?

Capitation money is how the Students Unions and College Clubs and Societies are funded. £32 per full time student and £5 per part time student is collected for the Unions by the VEC along with tuition fees.

## What was the old system?

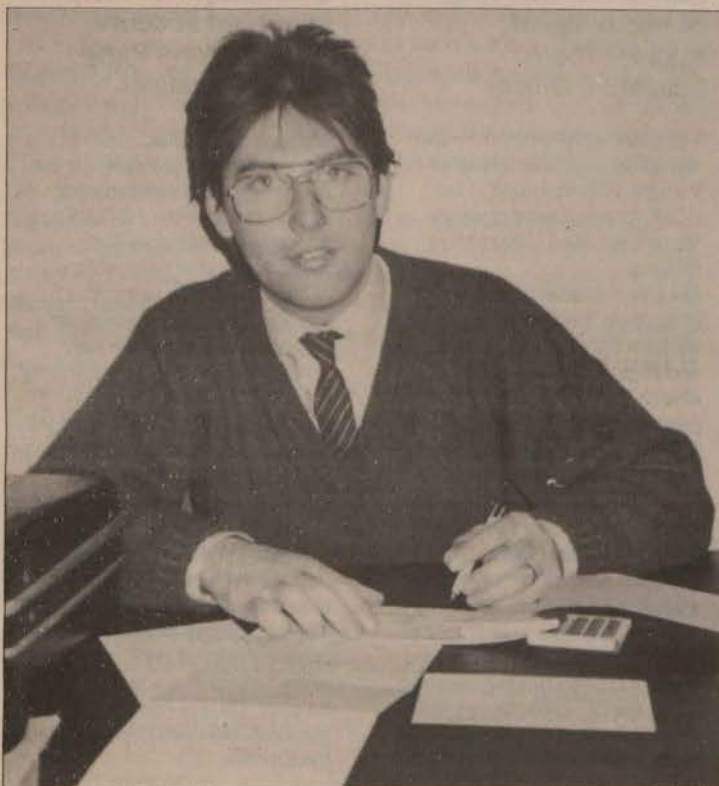
1. The capitation money was distributed to each Students Union in proportion to the amount of students they had.
2. Each Students Union decided internally how much was to be given to Clubs and Societies, and how much spent on Union activities.

## What is the new system?

1. The running costs of DITSU Ltd - the company set up by the DIT Students Unions to co-ordinate staffing and other matters - are calculated and taken from the gross capitation figure.
2. Of the balance, 2% goes to the Student Hardship fund.
3. A minimum of 15% goes to the Central Sports Council.
4. A minimum of 15% goes to the Central Cultural Society.
5. A minimum of 40% goes to the Students Union on a per capita basis.
6. The balance of 28% is distributed by the Students Services Council.

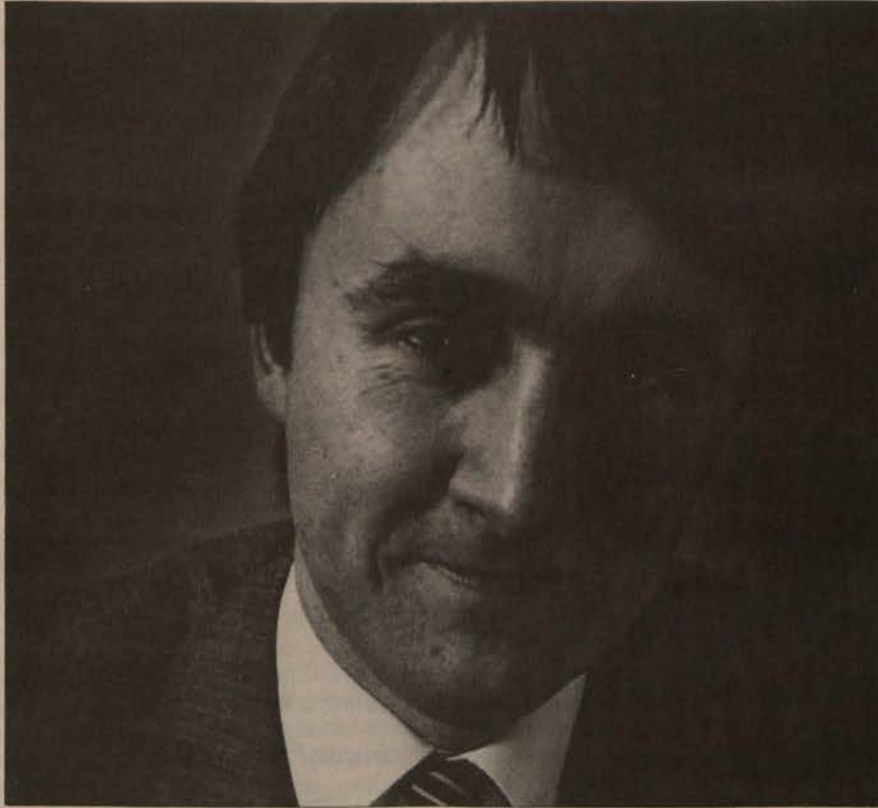
## How does it work?

Take sport for instance (the same system applies for cultural societies). In each college, all the sports clubs form a local sports council, to which they all submit budgets. These local councils compile the budgets and apply for funds to a Central Sports Council. The Central Council compiles the local applications and in turn applies to the Student Services Council for funds. The Central Council gets the money, gives it to the local councils, and they distribute it to their local clubs.



DIT Students Union Administrative Officer Eamon Connor

# MEGASTORE MANAGER AT TWENTY SEVEN



Michael Nugent talks to Limerick born Dermot Hanrahan, General Manager of the recently opened Dublin Virgin Megastore

## AN INTERVIEW WITH DERMOT HANRAHAN

Every week a chart comes out showing the relative positions saleswise of each of the ninety Virgin stores. In the first week of operation the Dublin megastore came third out of ninety. It was only open for two days that week. It had sold more in those two days than 87 other Virgin stores had in the full six-day week. Dermot Hanrahan enjoyed that day's staff meeting.

"When we told the staff, there was a lot of noise and cheering and excited expletives that took two or three minutes to quieten down again. It was the same kind of buzz you get when a football team scores a goal - the very same reaction. They were delighted about it - really delighted. And personally delighted - because they knew they had personally contributed to the success.

"We have a very high standard of employee. Anyone you see on the shop floor who is technically a sales assistant also has a lot of responsibility for buying and pricing stock that they wouldn't have in another store. So they share in the satisfaction, usually reserved for management, of knowing that their decisions are contributing to the growth of the company. And they see it in practice every time they sell something they have bought or priced"

The Megastore has a fulltime staff of 45. None were selected on the basis of one interview - at least two and often three interviews were followed by a detailed induction course. Outside psychological evaluation was used for some management candidates. The result is a tightly knit team proud of their work and fiercely loyal to the company they work for.

**"If all you're achieving is a salary then you're wasting your time ..."**

"If you insult Virgin to any of our staff" says Dermot Hanrahan, "they'll react - they'll take it personally. If you insult the civil service to a civil servant, he'll probably join in the attack."

The Richard Branson empire has finally come to Ireland. The Dublin Megastore, on the old McBirney's site on Aston Quay, is open two months. It is managed by Dermot Hanrahan from Limerick. He is 27 years old. The latest of the Branson whizz-kid management team has

arrived. In 1981 he was assistant manager in Moons retail store in Galway. He was in charge of hiring, firing, staff training and basically making sure the staff were happy. He had 120 staff answering to him. He was 22 then.

He's married with two children, he windsurfs on Lough Derg, he's a member of Mensa (the high IQ society), he enjoys board games and puzzles or a "good tricky discussion over a few pints". He has achieved more in his nine year career than do most people in five times that time. Those nine years hold many valuable lessons for anyone hoping to make it in business. The key, he believes, is enjoying his job.

"If all you're achieving is a salary then you're wasting your time" he says "You're just sacrificing one third of your life to pay for a social life. You only really live for about a quarter of your life. By enjoying my job, I get a feeling of satisfaction from the time I get up till I go to bed. I live for at least half my life. And being aware of that helps me cope with disappointments and problems when they occur."

Dermot Hanrahan did his leaving Cert in Crescent College Limerick in 1977. His parents were delighted when he joined Allied Irish Banks as a teller. He had the proverbial "sound secure pensionable position" and could



eventually end up managing a bank.

He spent two years balancing tills in Ennis, County Clare, and a year touring local villages in the AIB "Wanderly Wagon" - a self contained mobile bank that he found very educational and "one way of getting fairly well known throughout an entire county". But he never woke up in the morning full of the joys of the banking day ahead. Each branch had an

**"You feel you're advancing your company's position, not just maintaining it ..."**

Operations Manual - a several volume encyclopedia of exactly how to do just about everything that had to be done.

"It was soul destroying" he explains. "The banks have very high entry requirements - they want the best. Then having supposedly got the best, they present them with a set of very rigid procedures, to be followed to very minute detail, in every area of banking life".

"The whole environment stifled any degree of enterprise. A sense of patience was nurtured. You keep your nose clean, stay out of trouble, don't do anything controversial, stay long enough and you'll eventually be promoted. But by that time - at least 7 or 8 years - most people had the desire for promotion squeezed out of them".

Salary was another contentious issue. It was

confined to a rigid scale based solely on years of service. Dermot felt he was working hard, becoming a better employee. He was taking night classes in business studies in Limerick NIHE. He felt his extra effort and workrate should be reflected in his salary, but he was getting to the penny the same as anyone who had joined the same year, and less than anyone who had joined a year earlier.

The banks wouldn't change so Dermot did. In 1980 he applied for a job as a management trainee with the Switzer group. His parents were less than impressed, and his friends were puzzled. Nobody leaves the bank, he was told. You don't get sacked in the bank, he was told. But he was offered the job, and he took it.

"The retail trade is very exciting" he says. "Its full of buying and selling, wheeling and dealing, and colourful characters. If you have an idea and you succeed in bringing it to fruition you get recognition for what you've done - you feel that you are advancing your company's position in the world of commerce, not just maintaining it like you do in the bank. And you can see the results of your effort in pounds and pence at the end of each day."

"Lets say you buy something for the company. Then it's sold and you see it going out the door in a plastic bag. And you know theres a profit element of, say £2, on that item. Then you know that's £2 the company has made simply and solely because you made a decision to buy that particular item, at that particular price, from that particular supplier, and that maybe that five extra minutes you spent haggling on price turned what would have been a £1 profit into a £2 profit ..... its a very concrete feedback from your actions that you'll find in almost no other trade. Its what keeps the excitement going on a day to day basis....."

One of his first management responsibilities was to take charge of the Christmas Decoration dept in Todds of Limerick. He picked a good crew, and doubled the turnover from the previous year. He was happy with the recognition his work got, even from those that had sneered at the idea of selecting a 'good crew' for a Christmas decoration dept. If you have the

**"You'll have few problems with people if they feel good about what they're doing ..."**

proper people around you the results will follow, says Dermot.

After a year he was moved to Moons of Galway where he was assistant manager in charge of 120 staff. He was responsible for recruitment, disciplinary procedures and most staff matters. At 22 he was younger than most of his staff. Was management difficult?

"You'll have few problems with people if they feel good about what they're doing" he says, "if they know what's happening, know their responsibilities and know that they won't be eclipsed by a superior when they do something well, but will get the recognition they deserve. When staff feel that way, they develop a commitment to the company. When the company does well, they see it as a reflection of their own effort. They start to work as a team."

There will be problems, he accepts. Regardless of the atmosphere created by management there will be people who are more committed to having a good social life than to the progress of the company. This is fine, he says, and he actively encourages his staff to enjoy themselves, as long

**"If you have an idea and you bring it to fruition, you get recognition for what you've done ..."**

as it doesnt effect their work. Some people feel they're on time if they get in at ten past nine the next morning. But if customers are inside your shop at 9 oclock, then its perfectly reasonable to expect staff to be at their places of work at 9 oclock to servethem. So if someone has a very



Virgin staff celebrate the Megastore's launch with Richard Branson

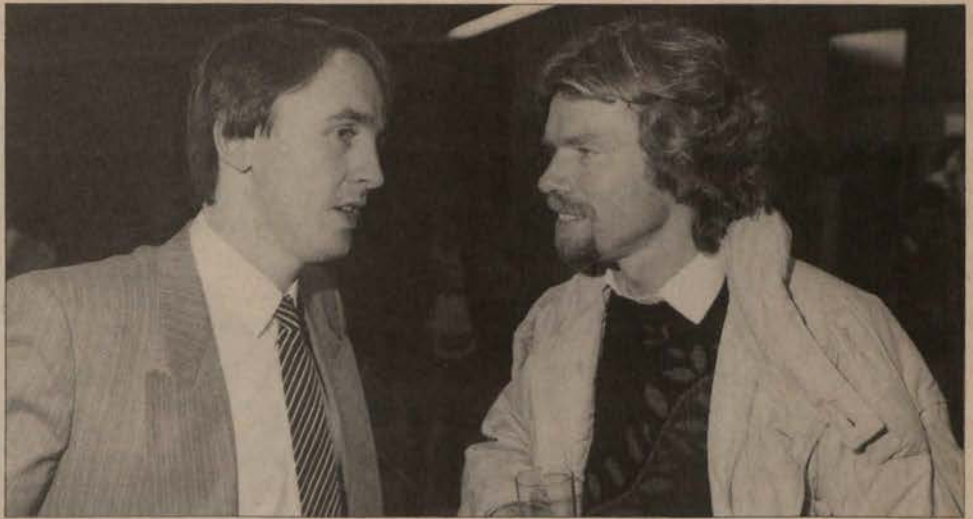
independent nature you might have to curb it slightly."

Did he find it hard to fire people?

"No. It is obviously difficult to make a tough decision concerning someone you have a high regard for, or that you consider to be a friend, but normally if you have to let someone go it is after exhaustive discussions, warnings, advice sessions... you're in a position where it will benefit nobody to let things continue."

"The time I feel most upset is when a perfectly good member of staff with a good track record lets himself or herself down completely out of the blue and is involved in some gross misconduct, such as staff theft ... when someone is foolish enough to make a mistake like that and throw everything away, that's upsetting."

The Virgin group operates in a manner that encourages regular and full communication between staff and management. A shop council is elected from the staff at large on a regular basis. Each section - security, office staff, record staff, video staff etc - is represented. The council meets with Dermot Hanrahan and discusses everything from recent achievements and plans to staff problems. The meeting also decides who is to do what between then and



the next meeting.

"No punches are pulled at these meetings" says Dermot Hanrahan.



"The whole thing ceases to function the moment someone decides that something cannot go on the agenda.

They provide the feedback that is so vital to a successful business."

Everyone in Virgin gets feedback. A preprinted appraisal form is used to score staff - and management - under a series of headings. The idea is that everyone knows how they are doing - what areas they are doing well in,

and what areas they need to improve in.

"Everybody needs to be told you're doing a bloody good job or you're doing a lousy job" says Dermot.



"... lets say you buy something for the company. Then its sold and you see it going out the door in a Virgin bag. And you know there's a profit element of, say £2, on that item. Then you know that that's £2 the company has made simply and solely because you decided to buy that particular item, at that particular price, from that particular supplier .. its a very concrete feedback from your actions that you'll find in almost no other trade ..."

"There's nothing worse than working day after day wondering what the hell do they think of me? Am I doing okay because they don't come near me, or am I just not being bad enough to be reprimanded ... then one day they come down on you like a ton of bricks and it's probably for something you didn't even know you should or

He learned that lesson from his father, who was involved in the drapery business at 16 and manages a shop in Limerick. "He's popular with his staff" says Dermot, "yet he's probably one of the toughest managers I've seen. It's a delicate balance to achieve successfully"

man's sailing" - and finds it very relaxing. "You forget all your problems and concentrate on what you're doing" he explains. "You have to, or else you end up in the water! Concentrating on anything is of great therapeutic value."

This affinity for concentration is

**"Branson makes sure we retain our image as a company ..."**

Richard Branson has certainly done so. It's rare to see someone get so far with so few enemies. "Branson has built up such a competent team around him that he can afford to devote much of his time to public relations exercises" says Dermot. "He makes sure we retain our image as a young ambitious vibrant company. He is probably the person I would most look on as a model, while I would never hope to be equally successful."

**"Always follow through - there's nothing worse than empty words ..."**

shouldn't have been doing ... you've got to communicate."

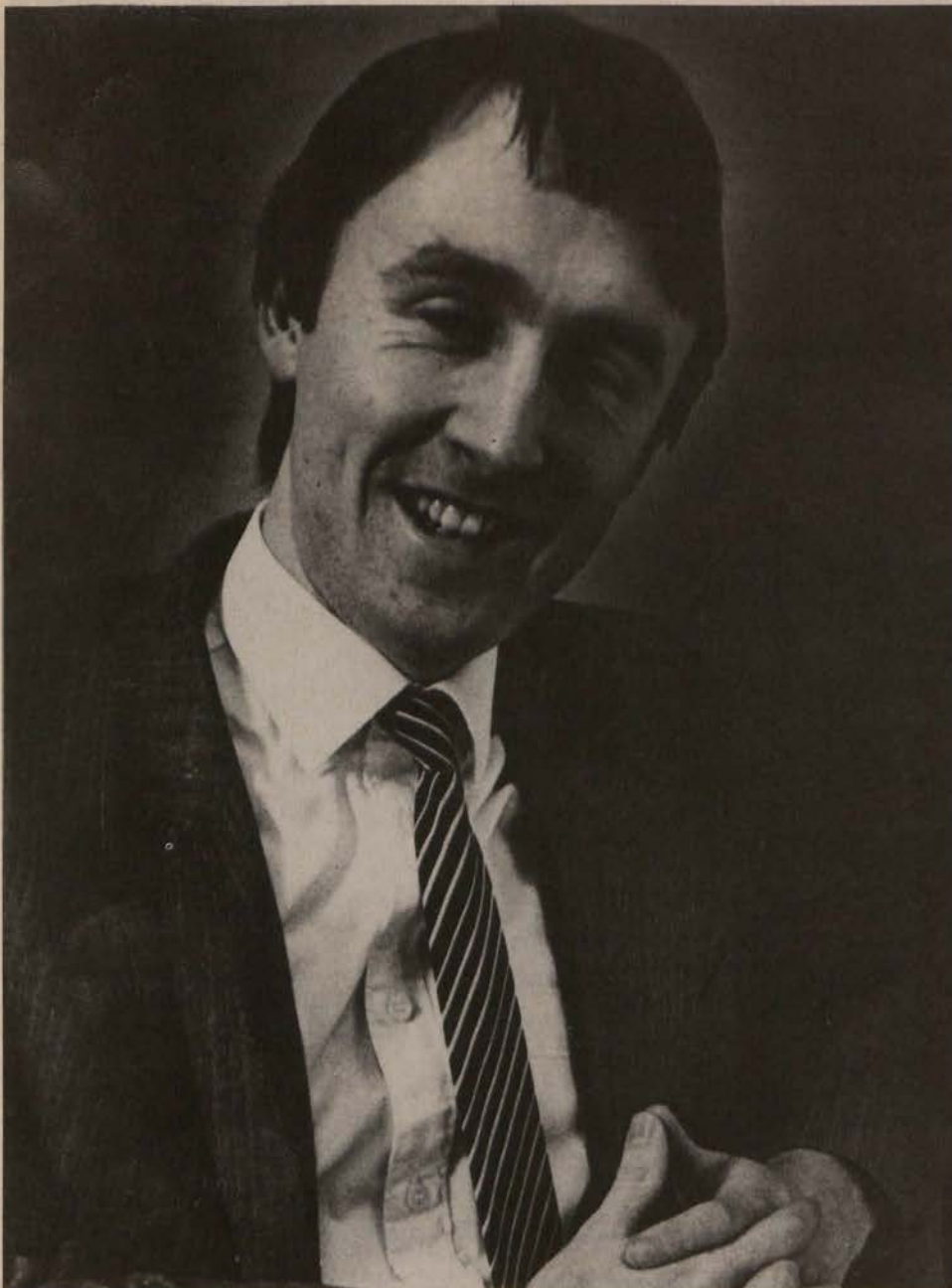
Though he doesn't cross the atlantic in speedboats or balloons, Dermot Hanrahan does windsurf - "the poor

reflected in his membership of Mensa - the society for the top 2% of the population in IQ."It's just another statistic. It's nice to know" he says. "Most people know their shoe size and their shirt size so why not their IQ? And it's not an elite group - 2% may sound very small but in Ireland that's about 70,000 people - enough to fill a city the size of Limerick".

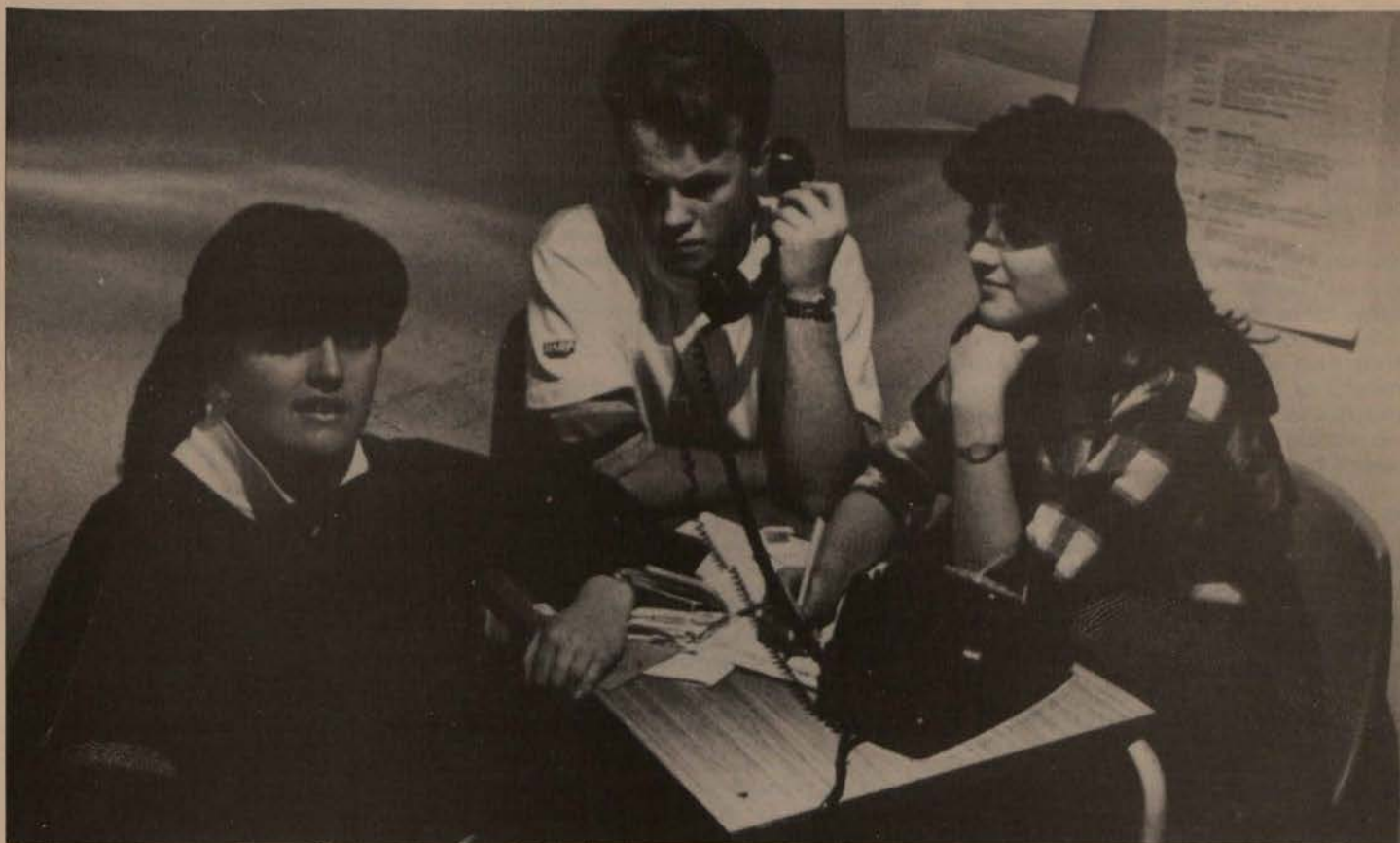
Politically, Dermot admires few people. Noel Browne is one - "he carried through on what he believed in" - and Des O'Malley another - "he's not afraid to do the unpopular thing and he's proved it". He wouldn't, however, rush out and join the Progressive Democrats, who "may become a 'yuppie' party of the educated middle classes".

Fianna Fail, he says, have put their integrity in doubt in recent years, and the Labour Party are "living a lie - the poorest example I've seen of what a socialist party should be". Fine Gael, he feels, have the right ideas but lack the ability to carry them through. Which brings us to Dermot's closing comment - the three traits he feels most crucial to success in business management.

"Ability to listen, ability to delegate, and ability to follow through" he says. "They are the three traits I most try to nurture in myself and my staff - though I must admit I sometimes don't live up to the ideal myself. It's the easiest thing in the world to take decisions and forget about them, to have fantastic plans and do nothing about them - you've got to follow through, and be seen to follow through, whether your decision is good or bad. There's nothing worse than empty words saying we're going to do this and then never actually doing it."



Dermot Hanrahan



Oonagh Crimmins, Daniel Pedreschi and Carla Cerasi of the Cathal Brugha Street Trip Committee

## ORGANISING THE AMSTERDAM TRIP

FORUM talks to students from the College of Catering Amsterdam Trip Committee

The Dublin College of Catering has seen a lot of student activity so far this year, culminating in the week this magazine is published, when over 100 Cathal Brugha Street students have gone to Amsterdam more than six times that number have been at the annual Graduates Ball, arranged and organised each year by existing students.

The students union itself has also been hard at work - a new student shop has opened in the college which is proving very successful and the union executive generally have been working to stabilise the credibility of the union in the eyes of the students and authorities.

The amount of work and effort put in on a part time voluntary basis by the organisers of the Amsterdam trip, the dress dance committee, and the students union executive may not often be appreciated to the extent

that it deserves by those not involved.

This is particularly so for the Cathal Brugha Street students union, all of whom are part time. In most Colleges there is at least a full time President,

which allows a greater flexibility in the type of input required by the part time people. This feature looks at some of the people and work involved in the organisation of the Amsterdam trip 1987.

### *Forming the Committee ..*

Planning first started for the Amsterdam trip last november, when the Students Union organised a committee involving representatives from the union executive, the class reps, and the general student body.

The committee that emerged included Daniel Pedreschi, Carla Cerasi, Oonagh Cremins, Colin Duff and Maura Sweeney.

But what exactly did they have to do? Committee chairman Daniel Cerasi explains.

"Every two years the students of this

College send a delegation to Hotelympia, an international hotel and catering event. It is a huge event. Almost everyone in the college goes. That happens every second year. Every other year, we organise an alternative trip. It could be to Amsterdam, Paris, Edinburgh ... a committee selects possible venues and the students at a general meeting vote on which trip they will go on. The committee then sets about organising the trip itself and arranging sponsorship where

helpful, explains Daniel, as some students might not have been able to afford the individual passport charge or may not have otherwise needed a passport.

The committee also arranged a listing of recommended places to visit in Amsterdam, and also hired two canal boats for sightseeing purposes. But it was not, stress the committee, a regimented trip.

"It's really a break after Christmas for the students" explains committee secretary Carla Cerasi. "Most catering students work over the christmas holidays, and particularly this year when there were more jobs available than students to fill them it meant that virtually every Cathal Brugha Street catering student was working this Christmas. The trip is very useful in that context".

And more students are going on this trip than in previous years. For the last 'alternative' trip there was one coach arranged, with about 45 students going. This year 106 went, and even at that numbers had to be limited. The extra numbers carried with them an increase in the burden of work on the organisers.

"It was very time consuming" says Daniel. "We were first approached by the students union last November. We then had to plan our campaign, get the rest of the committee organised and produce a preliminary report of potential places to visit. That had to be brought before the students and when they decided where to go, we had to make all the practical arrangements for the trip itself".

Carla agrees that it was time consuming. "I'm

not sure that people not involved fully realise the amount of time involved - every lunch hour, almost every evening, a lot of late nights ... but in the end, it was worth doing. And it did take less effort and time than next year's trip will".

Next years trip is to the next Hotelympia. It will probably involve an overall budget of nearer £40,000 than this years £10,000. This year, says Daniel, is really just a warm up for students to get the feel of the whole thing and prepare for next year, when there will be a much larger committee involved and much more to be done.

So will Daniel and Carla be involved again next year?

"Hopefully not" says Carla. "I am studying Tourism and my course is only a one year one, so I should be qualified and working by then". The Tourism course covers public relations, airline regulations, ticketing - everything connected with work in the tourist industry whether you want to end up in an airline, a travel agency or a tourist office. "And we are regularly told by Mr O'Connell, a course lecturer, that everyone on the course has always been successful in finding relevant work".

Daniel will probably be involved again next year, but not as chairman. "I am studying Hotel Management, and will be in my third year next year, so I won't be able to devote as much time as I could this year to the trip. But all of this years committee who are still around will certainly be available for any advice or help we can give to next year's committee, even if we aren't all on it".



Cathal Brugha Street principal Bob Lawlor

## New Selection System for Cathal Brugha Street ?

The City of Dublin VEC is considering a revision of the selection system to deal with courses which have large numbers of applicants and include an interview as part of the selection procedure, Cathal Brugha Street Principal Bob Lawlor told staff and students in the December edition of College Broadsheet, an internal College of Catering news sheet.

The system in use this year caused problems at the start of this academic year, he said. People were called for interview on a Leaving Cert Points basis, and course start-ups were delayed by up to two weeks because of the large amount of interviews involved.

In next month's *FORUM*, we will report on how the Amsterdam trip went; we also look at the work of this year's College of Catering students union executive and dress dance committee. Pictured below are some of the union executive, union secretary Tina Forrester, and students in the College of Catering Common Room.



# JOBS FOR THE BOYS



## A look at the work of the Employment Equality Agency

If you were to select a name at random from the DIT admissions computer in Mount Street, the chances are it would be a male name. With the exception of the teacher training sector, the same situation exists across the board in Irish third level education - Universities, NIHEs, Regional Technical Colleges. More men than women go on to third level education in Ireland.

This imbalance is matched in the area of jobs. In a 1981 survey the only Irish jobs where there were more women than men were textile and clothing, telephone operators, clerks, typists, shop assistants, waitresses, maids, cleaners, hairdressers, teachers and nurses. Less than one in ten company directors or accountants and less than one in four medical practitioners or university lecturers were women. The figures were much worse for professions associated with some DIT courses. In any group of one hundred engineers, surveyors and architects, ninety seven are likely to be men.

It is the responsibility of the Employment

Equality Agency to help ensure that this does not continue to be the case. Since 1977 it has been operating as an independent body promoting equal opportunities between the sexes in the

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**.. in any group of 100 engineers, surveyors and architects, 97 are likely to be men ..**

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workforce. But what exactly do they do? Kevin Foley, Information Officer with the EEA, explains.

"We're here to encourage employers to positively consider girls and women for non-traditional job areas, and vice versa" he says. "Our staff can help employers and Trade Unions to formulate policies and develop programmes to ensure that this happens. We can also act as an advice body for anyone who feels they have been discriminated against in the workplace because of their sex, or anyone who feels they have been discriminated against in a job interview

because of their sex. The law sets down certain individual rights in this area and we help ensure that these rights are upheld."

The EEA brings out a quarterly newsletter, Equality News. The first edition came out last November. It outlined some of the successes of the Agency since its formation. One of these is getting corporate bodies involved actively in the fight for equality in employment. Six organisations - Aer Rianta, AnCO, ESB, IDA, SFADCO and Bank of Ireland - have now got a member of staff working full time on formulating and implementing equal opportunities programmes in their organisations.

"This is a very significant development" says Kevin Foley. "We cannot win the fight for equal opportunities simply by punishing people who deviate from the law. It is vital that employers themselves are involved in the campaign, and that they are taking positive action, as opposed to merely passively supporting the ideal. We would recommend that all unions and management bodies jointly

undertake a review of employment opportunities for women in their organisations".

But what would such a review involve? "There are several stages" explains Kevin Foley. "Firstly, a survey should be undertaken of the composition of the workforce, and an examination should be made of employment practices - formal and informal - in such areas as recruitment, selection tests, promotion, reasons for leaving, job evaluation, collective agreements, childcare facilities and so on. This would help to highlight those areas in the organisation which inhibit women in their career aspirations."

Following this, says Kevin, the information should be thoroughly analysed, and targets and objectives should be set to eliminate any discrimination that exists and to help combine career and family responsibilities for employees. Progress should be monitored regularly at the end of each stage so that, if they are needed, corrective measures can be taken. It is vital, says Kevin, that the issue is approached in a positive and structured manner.

"There is very little point in haphazardly approaching the matter or, worse still,

just accepting the principle of equal opportunities and not doing anything about it" he says. "And it need not necessarily be an altruistic motivation on the part of the management. We have found that the morale and motivation of all employees increases when a company

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**".. there is very little point in haphazardly approaching the issue or, worse still, just accepting the principle of equal opportunities and not doing anything about it.."**

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takes such steps, and overall efficiency and productivity is increased. The overall image of the company is also enhanced, as more and more people generally are becoming aware of the importance of equality of opportunity between the sexes".

And the same issues as apply to employment generally also apply to courses such as those in the DIT Colleges, says Kevin. "We are governed by the Employment Equality act of 1977" he explains. "This act provides for equal access to vocational training. Almost by

definition these courses, being run by the Vocational Education Committee, fall into this category. We would be encouraging the VEC and the College Authorities, just as we encourage AnCO, Cert, and other such bodies, to look critically at what they are doing in terms of actively promoting the principle of equality. They should ask themselves are we doing enough to get the message across that the more traditionally male courses are open to females and vice versa, or are we in fact discouraging young people from doing courses and following career paths which they could be very much suited for".

"Now, we're not saying that Colleges should necessarily set aside a certain percentage of places on courses for girls or anything like that, but what we are saying is positively encourage girls to apply for the courses and then go through the normal procedures of interviews, the normal competitive criteria and select the best persons for the course, but ensure at the initial stage that both males and females are equally encouraged to apply. I would think that the case is as strong for a VEC staff person to be responsible for ensuring that equal opportunities exist in the Colleges as there is for such a person in AnCo, the IDA, Aer Rianta, the ESB or the Bank of Ireland".



At the launch of the EEA newsletter Equality News were (left to right) Mai Monaghan, Vice Chairperson EEA, Kevin Foley, Information Officer, Sylvia Meehan, Chairperson and Margaret Walsh, a member of the EEA board.

# But What does the EEA actually do ...

The Employment Equality Agency was set up under the Employment Equality Act, 1977, to enforce the provisions of the Act, and work towards the elimination of discrimination in employment and the promotion of equal opportunities between the sexes. It has the power to hold formal investigations into cases of discrimination, and to require any person to furnish evidence and attend hearings to give evidence. It can also seek a High Court injunction in respect of persistent discrimination, and bring proceedings against discriminatory advertisements, pressure on persons to discriminate, and a general policy of discrimination.

Discrimination can be direct, as when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the other sex or a different marital status, or indirect, when a person is obliged to do something which is not essential to the job but which a substantially greater proportion of persons of the other sex or of a different marital status can do.

Under the Act, it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against you on grounds of sex or marital status:

- \* in the arrangements made for recruitment, that is, interview criteria, and the instructions given to an employment agency
- \* in the terms of employment
- \* by refusing or deliberately omitting to offer you the job
- \* in the provision of training and work experience
- \* in work counselling
- \* in regrading or the classification of jobs
- \* in the opportunities for promotion
- \* in dismissals, disciplinary measures, redundancies, lay-offs, and short-time working
- \* by having discriminatory rules or instructions.

Employment agencies cannot discriminate in the way they provide their services; trade unions or professional bodies cannot discriminate by refusing to let you join; and advertisements which use descriptions such as "bricklayer" or "salesman" without making it clear in some way that both men and women may apply, will be taken as indicating an intention to discriminate. It is also unlawful to put pressure on another person to discriminate unlawfully.

Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against can take their case to the Employment Equality Agency, who will offer advice on how to proceed.

**"LAST SPRING, IF ANYONE TOLD ME I'D BE FLYING TO NEW YORK AS AN AER LINGUS AIR HOSTESS I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT!"**

**"I THOUGHT YOU'D HAVE TO BE A COMBINATION OF MISS WOULD AND FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE; WHEN REALLY, ALL I HAD TO BE WAS ME!"**

**Aer Lingus**

**ME? FLYING TO NEW YORK AS AN AER LINGUS HOSTESS?**

**ME? FLYING TO NEW YORK AS AN AER LINGUS STEWARD?**

**YES, YOU!**

**Aer Lingus**

The Aer Lingus advertisements of October 1977 and January 1978

## LOOK OUT, ITS THE EEA

### Case Study: the 1977 EEA investigation into Aer Lingus recruitment ads

In 1977 the Employment Equality Agency initiated a formal investigation into the use of recruitment advertisements by Aer Lingus.

They found that advertisements published in the national newspapers on 5th and 9th of October "indicated an intention to discriminate" against men applying for the job of steward. This contravened the principles of the Equality Employment Act, 1977, and on 15th January 1978 Aer Lingus was forced to advertise for "Air hostesses and stewards".

Prior to the investigation Aer Lingus had argued to the agency that it was exempt from the Act because the duties of air hostess involved "personal services". At a meeting on 21st October 1977 between representatives of the company and the chairperson of the Agency, Mrs Sylvia Meehan, who had first drawn attention to the possible illegality of the advertisement, Aer Lingus stated its defence:

- \* the policy to employ girls had been in operation for years

- \* inflight personal services could be done more effectively by women and there was a marked customer preference on the American line
- \* the intake of males would necessitate a re-organisation of the appropriate buildings.

Despite requests from the agency to desist from discriminating, Aer Lingus proceeded with the recruitment of women to the advertised posts. The ensuing investigation resulted in the forced change of policy. On 19th of June 1978 Aer Lingus told the agency that 76 of 1,510 female applicants were offered employment as a result of the January 1978 advertisement. Another advertisement in May resulted in 12 of 1,400 male applicants and 77 of 2,300 female applicants being offered employment with an additional 5 males and 41 females being placed on reserve panels for possible future employment.

Satisfied with the evident changes in policy, the agency concluded the investigation.



## Open FORUM

Mankind today has a standard of living many times higher than pre industrial revolution days. This can in part be attributed to James Watt's steam engine, mechanisation, the petrol engine, the diesel engine and electrification. Up to then, world population was kept in check - the first billion mark was reached in 1810 AD. The second billion was added in one hundred and twenty years, the third billion took thirty more years and the fourth billion a mere fifteen.

With such an increase in world population came a great demand on world natural resources. Great food production and the need to satisfy the desires and wants of man could only be achieved by greater technology and the use of vast amounts of our natural resources. The energy needed to power this industrial orientated productive process was up to recent times in the form of fossil fuels and hydroelectric stations.

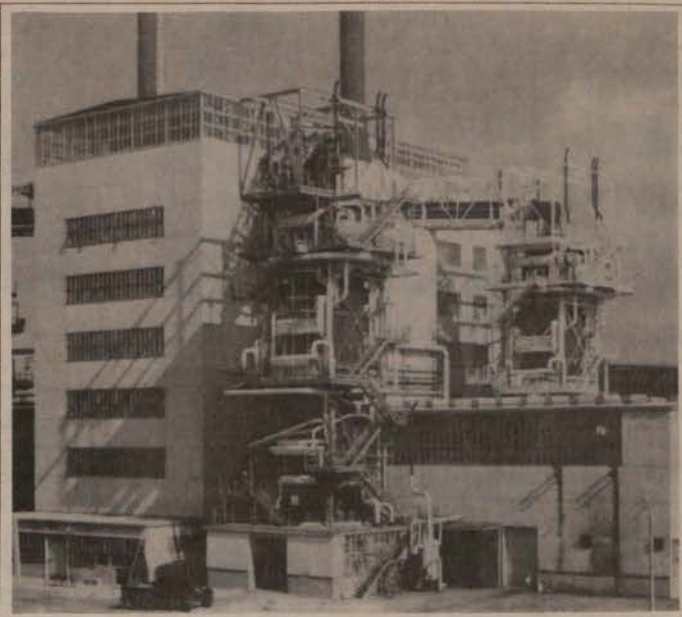
History tells us that this physiocratic cycle was altered when man discovered fire and hence started to use these fossil fuels. The desire for comfort and improving his way of life led man to use fire in his everyday life. Man was making pottery as early as 5000 BC, smelting and casting bronze and using iron as early as 1500 BC. We know this from the artifacts left by the Shang in China and those of ancient Egypt and India.

Certainly iron was being used in Europe from the Halstatt culture in 700 BC and was brought to Britain by the Celts as early as 550 BC. There is evidence of Roman based bloomeries in or on the north east Yorkshire Dales. We know that coke was used in iron making in 1745 AD.

What all of this suggests is that all of the forementioned must of its nature have necessitated the destruction of the forests and the consumption of convenient surface and ore deposits.

It was the beginning of the end of the natural process of deposition, an end to the physiocratic cycle of natural deposition and of a period which had its origins about 350 million years ago.

The real demand for fossil fuel coal started with iron smelting and was dramatically accelerated with the advent of



# THE CASE FOR NUCLEAR REACTORS

By Noel O'Hara

the innovations of man. These man-made inventions created a demand for more steel to build more machines, and for more coal and oil to run these machines.

reasonable limits the extent of these valuable natural deposits within their boundaries. Experts from every discipline - whether for greed, exploitation or conservation - have lent their

**If there is any issue you feel strongly about, and you feel you can put forward a coherent argument supporting your position, put it in writing and send it to Open Forum, FORUM magazine, 41 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1**

The greater the giant 'industry' grew, the greater its appetite to be satisfied.

Common sense tells us that these fossil fuels - coal and oil - are finite commodities. This has in effect aroused concern amongst governments and compelled them for political purposes and their own economic planning and well-being to ascertain within

energy and expertise towards this end.

As a consequence of these endeavours, world reserves of fossil fuels have been assessed and mapped, and reasonably accurately at that. Deep bore holes on land to a depth of 4.8 miles, and in the sea from platforms since it was made possible in the 1940s, have helped us assess world coal reserves at 7 billion tonnes, and

world crude oil reserves have thus far been assessed at 750 million barrels.

We now know that the world consumes eleven thousand million tonnes of coal equivalent per annum, and that the energy mix is made up as follows -

Petroleum 45%, coal 31%, natural gas 22%, hydro nuclear 2%. The consumption is distributed between manufacturing (50%), transport (30%) and domestic (20%). World coal consumption is then approximately 3.5 thousand million tonnes per annum.

With the structure and behaviour of our world population, taking into account contraceptives, modern attitudes, the nuclear family and world governments positive action, the population will continue to increase and will double within the next forty years. The estimated life of our coal reserves are reduced to one thousand years - this is provided the energy mix remains unchanged. With crude oil reserves set at 750 million barrels and world annual consumption presently running at 20.5 thousand million barrels per annum, and with world population increasing to double over the forty year span, there is only a twenty year supply at best.

This could of course be extended with conservation, and with bringing in production all the known non-commercial wells which have been capped over the last four decades. We could of course follow the South African SASL and distil our shale - this is sensible but uneconomical unless you have plenty of indigenous fuel for the process.

One must remember that the use of oil in the production of energy has only surpassed coal since 1967, and that this in part is because oil is easier to handle (ie less labour intensive) and because we were able to exploit the black gold at ridiculously low prices from a Middle East third world mentality - a condition which cannot long continue.

The deposits of oil and coal follow the same geological locations, hence in most cases the countries with coal also have oil. The distribution is widespread so the industrial West were exploiting the Middle East while leaving their own known and anticipated reserves untapped.

This was recognised and the

cartel was founded some 22 years ago. The price of oil went up 2500%, shattering the industrial world's economies and causing a massive transition of wealth from West to Middle East, with all its unpalatable consequences.

The world's oil supply and distribution is controlled by the 13 member national cartel and eight large corporations with five of these being USA based. These corporations and cartels are influenced by politics, costs, royalties, transport and investment risks. remember it costs up to \$25 million to drill one well on the continental shelf, and the prospect of sudden nationalisation is always a problem for independent investors.

**Natural Gas deposits** are nearly always located where there is oil, although there are gas fields independently located such a complex network to industry and domestic consumers. The known capacity of, for example, Kinsale is 1.3 trillion cubic feet, giving a life span prediction in the 20-30 year range.

**Hydroelectric schemes** contribute less than 2% of the world energy needs and are dependent on a considerable balance of nature's resources all in the right place - the correct topography, the right form of bedrock, the correct elevation, a suitable catchment area and a proper or adequate rainfall with due consideration for evaporation, ecology and displacement. The hydroelectric system can then never be seen as a serious substitute for either oil or coal.

**Wind Power** is conditional: it relies upon an element over which we have no control. There have been serious attempts to develop and commercially exploit this potential. In the USA, using the choicest topographical sites, the results are such to be insignificant. At best they are suited to the horticultural industry where small and infrequent energy bursts can be used to advantage.

**Solar Power** for the same

general reasons is a non-starter when we are concerned with the need for a significant energy contributor. It is eminently suited to the individual consumer for heating domestic water requirements.

**Wave Power** is a much more interesting prospect, but the engineering requirements to overcome and withstand the cruel sea and the hostile storms which bring the mighty ships to humble wrecks could be

the European Atomic Energy Community - Britain, USA, USSR and Japan all working towards the development and construction of a fusion reactor. The temperature required to fuse deuterium and tritium is about 100 million degrees celcius. One can see the magnitude of this undertaking and the task in hand - the realisation of which seems to be somewhat in the distant future.

**Nuclear Fission** is the

**1 lb of coal produces 1 kilowatt hour of electricity. 1 lb of oil produces 1.5 kilowatt hours of electricity. 1 lb of uranium can produce 200 kilowatt years of electricity ...**

envisaged as an almost impossible task. Harnessing the tide is a more realistic approach, especially where there is a fiord coast and a sufficient draught such as Ireland's south-west coast at Kerry, by bulkheading the orifice and installing the generators to be propelled on the outgoing or low tide period. Once again this would not be a realistic contributor to the supply of the quantity of power to be considered as a significant substitute for either coal or oil.

contributor of a small but nonetheless significant part of the industrial world's energy needs. There are at present about 177 nuclear power stations in the Western world and 11 of these are located in Britain. Nuclear power stations around the world can produce 145,408 kilowatts, and up to the present time have accumulated over 1000 reactor operating years of experience. About 300 of these reactor operating years have been in

**.. a large nuclear powered generating station produces less than one tonne of high level radioactive waste per year. A similar coal fired station produces 500,000 tonnes of ash, and discharges 80,000 tonnes of sulphur dioxide and 6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere ..**

We could sum up by saying that no matter how inflated one's imagination or optimism is, Wind, Wave, Solar or Tide can never be considered as the significant contributor of energy at the right time and in the quantity required by industrial society, and the foreseeable future for these forms can never be seen as anything more than a hope.

**Nuclear fusion** research has been going on worldwide for more than 25 years under the aegis of

Britain, and electricity from British nuclear power stations first came on grid in 1956.

The Sizewell Reactor in South-East England has produced over 50 billion units of electricity, and holds the world's record for reliability. One of its reactors ran continuously at full power from August 24 1975 for 653 days. Britain in 1980 was producing 12% of her electricity needs from nuclear power stations, and this percentage grows each year.

A test of economic efficiency of nuclear power generated electricity was carried out in 1980-1981 by the GEGB at the Hinkley Point AGR in the Bristol Channel, and the results showed a cost of 1.45 pence per kilowatt hour. A similar test was carried out on the conventional coal burning electricity generating station at Drax 1, and the cost per kilowatt hour was 1.87 pence. Nuclear power generated electricity is then 22.5% cheaper than the conventional coal fired generated electricity, and both of these methods are more economical than the oil fueled electricity generating stations.

This is reasonable obvious when one considers that 1 lb of coal produces 1 kilowatt hour of electricity, 1 lb of oil produces 1.5 kilowatt hours, and 1 lb of uranium can produce 200 kilowatt years of electricity. The uranium potential using the FBR reactor and fueled by plutonium can give a million to one return while the present day reactors using only the uranium 235 give a yield of 20,00 to one return when enriched to 3%. The cost quoted for nuclear power generated electricity includes provision for the reprocessing of fuel, vitrification, the storage of high level radioactive wastes and for the ultimate decommissioning of the station.

It must be borne in mind that a large nuclear powered generating station produces less than one tonne of high level radioactive waste per year. A similar coal fired station produces 500,000 tonnes of ash, and discharges 80,000 tonnes of sulphur dioxide plus 6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

A nuclear powered generating station does contaminate the environment to a degree but it is less than that emitted by some of the coal fired generating stations. Both of the preceeding types of generating station are negligible when compared to natural background radiation. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd process 11,000 tonnes of uranium, 25,000 tonnes of uranium hexafluoride and 20,000 tonnes of radiated fuel each year.

We must now obviously be clear that the only fuels worth consideration to sustain man's industrial and civilised world are coal, uranium, oil bearing shales and extending the life span of the present oil reserves for those purposes for which there are no suitable replacements.

Oil by-products for use in the

pharmaceutical industry and to meet peak energy requirements and some forms of transport are irreplaceable. Taking all factors thus far considered, and observing today's position with oil surpluses because of a slump in demand and the substitution effect by the use of coal etc, we must now be surely aware that when the corporations and the cartel have had time to reorganise their investments and get their economies in order they are going to control their output of oil, and the stranglehold of these powerful giants will then be felt in a way never before known or understood. The price of oil will sky-rocket because in the short term we will not be able or willing to make the necessary investments for short term change.

This leaves us with only two realistic options - coal and nuclear fission.

Coal is a proven conventional reasonable plentiful fuel, moderately priced and well dispersed throughout the globe. Most countries have wisely reverted to the use of coal or are in the process of doing so. Any sudden surge in demand will create bottlenecks and the law of demand and supply will of necessity increase the price. Governments who hitherto raised a big part of their exchequer requirements through oil and oil products will be tempted to levy the shortfall on coal, thus increasing the price to the consumer.

Because coal is bulky in nature and is thus a labour intensive commodity from mining to transport to its end in the furnace it gives society a number of plusses as well as minuses. Being labour intensive it creates many new jobs, but it also pollutes the environment and causes incalculable health problems. These health problems do not necessarily manifest themselves in the short term but do nonetheless cause life spans to be shortened and increase the number of deaths due to industrial accidents.

More importantly, as far as our discussion goes, it will lower our coal reserve time to about 500 years or a great deal less when one considers the population explosion which might leave Thomas Malthus scratching his head. We might, of course, find a way and a planet to which to transfer earth's growing population in the future and let it serve us as the Americas did.

The problems of nuclear fission as understood are the

convince by demonstration. Most modern societies have done this and certainly the industrial west, with the exception of just a few who have always been over-cautious in all risk ventures, and the record of the past twenty years is the proof.

Nuclear fission is here to stay and its development will continue. We have presently in operation the PWR, the AGR, the HWR and the FBR - all presently in use in varying scales both of

and our charge.

The plant at Sellafield by 1990 will be producing a product which will solidify the waste into glass blocks; this will of course make their management much easier and safer. In this glass form it might well be possible to store these radioactive wastes in deep disused and exhausted mines, and where the long and short term transitional effects can be gauged and recorded.

This approach may well allay the fears of those who are opposed to the present deep-sea burial which is some hundred miles south of Ireland and west of Spain in the Atlantic Ocean. Looking today at the modern mighty sea-going craft, the giant jumbo and the spacecraft we must surely consider their humble origins and the doubts and fears which very often occurred during their development when lives were lost proving their safety and benefit to the satisfaction of society.

**.. looking today at the modern mighty seagoing craft, the giant jumbo and the spacecraft, we must surely consider their humble origins and the doubts and fears which very often occurred during their development when lives were lost proving their safety and benefit to the satisfaction of society ..**

fear of catastrophe and the thought of sudden extinction. This indeed is a real and genuine concern for a society who have been made aware of the terrible holocaust of the past caused by atomic radiation. The disaster of Three Mile Island and more recently the Chernobyl meltdown have certainly not helped allay these fears.

But advances in medicine have helped to allay the inherent fears of plague and black death, tuberculosis and a host of other communicable diseases. No doubt in time, with high standards of safety and the proven ability to avoid panic when there are leaks at a nuclear plant, people as a whole will develop that confidence which will not oppose this necessary modern technological advance.

Ignorance is the real problem; people are always afraid of that which they don't understand. The answer is to educate and

size and number, and all of these have different degrees of benefit to man and varying degrees of safety.

We have over the past twenty years developed a comprehensive knowledge of nuclear engineering technology for handling radioactive substances and devices for use from mining uranium to milling the yellowcake through refining and reactor generators to their safe disposal, and with ongoing research these will no doubt improve.

There will always be human error and the problems which necessarily follow; however, these are early days and the accidents which have occurred have been contained. There is most certainly a real need for watchdogs to ensure the highest margin of safety attainable and to protect the environmental conditions which are our right

We are, it seems, a risk oriented society and we are quite willing and happy to live with these risks, only because they are remote. We know we can rely on the built-in safety factors and the high degree of moral responsibility inherent and inculcated into those employed in the various disciplines.

I do believe that society has been exposed to atomic fission and are sufficiently familiar with nuclear radiation to be able to make a value judgement. To forge ahead with this relatively new found technology, for the betterment of both mankind now and future generations, or to die of exhaustion from a lack of natural resources and/or economic strangulation by those corporations and cartels who exercise control over man's destiny are the two choices open to us. Given the facts, coupled with sufficient knowledge and common sense, man is quite capable of making the correct choice.

**FORUM Magazine accepts contributions from anybody to Open Forum. The only constraints are availability of space and the laws governing libel, sub judice etc. If you intend to contribute a lengthy piece to Open Forum, it would be advisable to contact the editor first. FORUM Magazine also welcomes letters to the editor, on any subject. If you are writing, please include name, home address or college attended, and name and year of course studied. Names and addresses will not be published if requested. The address to write to is FORUM Magazine, 41 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1.**



Jimmy Kane, Shop Manager Bolton Street Student Shop

## O'ROURKE SUPPORTS STUDENT DEMANDS

The DIT Students Union shops are still in danger of closure, with the City of Dublin VEC to discuss the matter at its next meeting. A motion to the meeting from Aidan Kerins will be requesting that the existing services offered by the student shops will be allowed to continue in future years.

The Students Unions have been told that in moves to new extensions in Kevin Street and Bolton Street, the range of goods offered through the student shops will be restricted to stationery only - a move that would in effect close the shops and make the staff redundant, as well as halving club and society budgets. And in the College of Marketing and Design, the very existence of the student shop there has been questioned by College authorities.

"I'm sure most of the students are aware at this stage of the campaign to save the shops" says Aidan. "The level of support has been astounding in some of the colleges, with canteen boycotts in Kevin Street and Bolton

Street and planned actions in the Colleges of Marketing and Design and Catering."

At a meeting before Christmas with Mary O'Rourke, Fianna Fail spokesperson on education, Aidan Kerins reiterated the demands of the students.

"Mary was very supportive of our position" he says. "She quoted the

### AN UPDATE ON THE DIT SHOPS CAMPAIGN

example of Athlone Regional Technical College, which is run by the VEC of which she is chairperson. In that College, not only are there pool and video games for the students to use, but there is also a student run shop providing tea, coffee and cut price stationery to the Union's members. She saw no reason why this should not also be the case in the DIT".

At a packed meeting in Bolton Street last week, students unanimously decided to embark on a de-canvassing campaign against any member of the CDVEC who is running in the General Election and who does not support the shops issue. Coach loads of students will follow the candidate's canvassers from door to door, explaining to the voters the candidates position on the threatened redundancies of the Union staff. The students also re-iterated their decision from last December to hold a two day all out strike in the college if the VEC does not recognise the Union's right to trade.

"Several VEC members have been supportive on the issue" says Aidan Kerins. "Tomas McGiolla, Paddy Donegan, Michael O'Halloran and Sean Lyons have already pledged support. We have also recieved some support from the Fianna Fail members and nominees on the Committee, but as far as we are concerned the issue will not be settled until the Committee accept our motion at its next meeting".

# Beverley Hills Jones and the Temple of Poltergeist meet Starsky and Hutch on a bad day starring Eddie Murphy ...

The Golden Child. Whoever wrote this obviously spends half of each day watching reruns of Poltergeist, Time Bandits, Ghost Busters and Indiana Jones, and the other half watching American TV detective programmes. The result is a mixture that doesn't really work. Getting frightened by spooky things that jump out of nowhere and evil villains that try to make

children eat blood just isn't on when you've got Eddie Murphy laughing away in the background. And the detective scenes sort of lose their impact when the good guy figures out whodunnit and tracks him down, only to have the bad guy turn into a winged demon and fly away into the sunset. Still, if you suspend your normal belief mechanisms a little (well, okay, a lot), you'll

probably enjoy parts of it. Beverley Hills Cop or Trading Places it most definitely isn't, but Eddie Murphy is still on form, and there are some amusing scenes as he tries to come to terms with the nonsense surrounding him. He realises that he is the "chosen one" and his destiny is to save the world. To do this he must free the Golden Child of the title from the nasty kidnappers who have

made a pact with the devil. And he has to do all of this without saying 'fuck you man' or 'shut the fuck up' since this is his first foray into movies for the under twelves. To see whether or not he does it (all right then, to see how he does it) you'll have to cough up your three punts fifty and buy your popcorn, or get an adult to bring you.

## The Wit & Wisdom ...

If you're stuck inside and can't go out you could do worse than spend an evening browsing through the assorted Wit and Wisdom of Quentin Crisp, published by Arena Books and at £3.07 costing less than the price of watching a film.

Never Keep up with the Joneses, starts Quentin; drag them down to your level. Its cheaper. He continues for over 130 pages to

capture the essence of wit and cynicism covering politics - 'the art of making the inevitable appear to be a matter of wise human choice', artists - 'a group of hooligans who cannot live within his income of praise, pornography - 'a successful attempt to sell sex for more than it is worth; just three samples at random from a book that you will not put down once you start.

## Next at the Gate ..

Gate Theatre: Uncle Vanya After the highly successful production of Alan Ayckbourn's comedy, 'Season's Greetings', the Gate's next venture is Paul Unwin's production of Anton Chekov's 'Uncle Vanya'. It opens on Tuesday 17th February. It is Paul Unwin's first time directing in Dublin. He has previously directed for the Glasgow Citizen's and the Bristol

Old Vic where he has been the associate director for the past two years. He co-created and wrote the recent series 'Casualty' for BBC TV and is currently engaged in writing the second series.

T.P. McKenna is back to take the title role of Uncle Vanya. The cast also includes Anna Manahan, Bosco Hogan and Frank McDonald.



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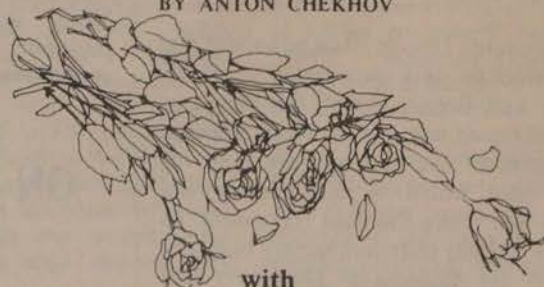
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**UNCLE VANYA**  
BY ANTON CHEKHOV



with  
**T. P. McKenna Alan Stanford**  
**Dearbhla Molloy Olwen Fouere**  
**Bosco Hogan Seamus Forde**  
**Anna Manahan Pamela Mant**  
**Frank McDonald**

Directed by Paul Unwin  
Set Designed by Sally Crabb  
Costumes Designed by Nigel Boyd  
Lighting Designed by Trevor Dawson

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With Carolyn O'Doherty

# Day of the Dead Boring ..

Day of the Dead.

This is really unbelievable, they certainly don't make films like they used to. I won't sleep for weeks after this lot. Why don't I get to review nice pictures like "Peggy Sue got Married"? Maybe next month. Meanwhile....

As 'Day of the Dead' opens, the 'walking dead' have taken over the world (Yawn, what an original plot!) Some scientists (Gosh, what a surprise, scientists eh?) and other riff-raff have gathered in an underground missile silo to

discuss how to domesticate the walking dead or else get them back to their respective graves. Anyway after much to-ing and fro-ing, they have a big battle, the result of which is the darkest day of horror the world has ever known.

I had never heard of any of these actors but maybe they used false names, I would have if I had appeared in this picture. It is currently showing at the Carlton cinema. See it quick, because with any luck, it won't run for long.



Sid Vicious (Gary Oldman) and Nancy Spungen (Chloe Webb) wonder what they're doing on the same page as Freddy's Revenge and Day of the Dead

# Sid and Nancy ..

Sid and Nancy.

This is the penultimate love story. Ali Magraw and Ryan O'Neal are way out o' style! Nobody could have written anything more melodramatic than the real lives and deaths of Sid Vicious and Nancy Spungen. It is a story of sex and drugs, fame and despair, love and murder.

In 1977 Sid Vicious was the new bass player in the Sex Pistols, Malcolm McLaren's latest toy. Nancy Spungen was a groupie fom Philadelphia newly arrived in London. When Sid and Nancy met, they fell in love.

In 1978, Nancy's body was found in the Chelsea Hotel, New York. Sid was arrested and charged with her murder. He died of a drug overdose before he could be brought to trial.

Writer/Director Alan Cox treats

this story with tenderness and respect, and quotes Luis Bunuel, saying "Perhaps a truly passionate love, a sublime love that has reached a certain peak of intensity, is simply incompatible with life itself. Perhaps it is too great, too powerful. Perhaps it can exist only in death."

The film does romanticise Sid and Nancy, but it does not glorify them. There was, in fact, judging

by the film, nothing glorious about them. There is a sceptical affection and wry sympathy for social outcasts and misfits, and a cynical humour running through the film. The spirit of the punk era is sarcastically and sometimes savagely portrayed through humour and music. This is a nostalgic and tragic yet enjoyable film. Highly recommended.



The possession of Jesse Walsh by his fingernails, begins - its another nightmare on Elm Street

# Freddie's Back ...

Freddy's Revenge (Nightmare, Part 2).

Yes, Freddy's nails still need clipping in this sequel to "Nightmare on Elm Street".

This time Freddy Krueger's spirit runs rampant and takes possession of the new kid in town, Jesse Walsh. Strange happenings occur; Jesse has recurring nightmares, electric appliances burst into flames, their budgie has an anxiety attack and turns into a roman candle. Then, Freddy spills blood with a vengeance; the budgies of Elm Street can breathe again, it's Jesse's friends and neighbours who fall foul of Freddy's indomitable fingernails. But love wins in the end....or does it?

This isn't as gory as the first one: it goes for the 'aaaah' rather than the 'yeeuch' most of the time, but some of

the nightmare sequences are much more vivid than the original and it's still for the iron-stomached as far as I'm concerned.

This film has a promising cast. Mark Patten who plays Jesse, had his film debut playing James Dean in Robert Altman's cult movie, "Come back to the Five 'N' Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean." He should have gone back and stayed there, because making this film was a complete waste of his time and talent. But he's a lovely actor and hopefully he'll recover from this slight bout of insanity and land another worthwhile role soon. Also in this film is Hope Lange, playing Jesse's mother. She had her very first role playing opposite Don Murray and Marilyn Monroe in the film "Bus Stop." Interesting that!

## LATE NEWS

# USI Officer Arrested On Assault Charge

## Court appearance next Wednesday February 11

USI Education Officer Peter Graves, formerly President of the Students Union in the College of Marketing and Design, has been arrested on charges of assaulting a member of staff in the Department of Education and is to appear in court next Wednesday, February 11 to answer the charges.

Mr Graves was arrested on Thursday Feb 5 following an occupation in the Department of Education where USI members were protesting about "the lack of equal access to education and the

apparent disinterest of the politicians to education in the run-up to a general election".

The arrest was followed by a quickly arranged demonstration which attracted up to 2,000 students, from Dublin Colleges where general meetings were being held at the time.

USI Officer Paddy McPolland, who addressed the protest rally, said that it was insidious that assault charges and section 30 of the offences against the state act were being used against what

were peaceful demonstrations by students of solidarity with those who cannot gain access to third level education.

He said that he had been arrested twice in the last two days under section 30, which he said was "normally reserved by the state for use against those who they consider to be subversive elements".

USI expressed themselves delighted with the size of the protest rally, and have called on students to repeat this support next Wednesday at the court case.



Derry City supporters take over Dalymount Park for the recent FAI Cup game against Shelbourne

## *In next months FORUM ...*

Next months FORUM will include a feature on the Derry City phenomenon, which has seen up to ten thousand supporters travel from Derry every second Sunday to watch League of Ireland matches, which are often attended (Without Derry involvement) by less than 500 people. Taking into account the relative size of the cities, it is the equivalent of up to 200,000 Dubliners travelling to a gaelic football match. Also, a feature on the DIT and the VEC, local news and current affairs, reviews and previews, Open Forum, and Letters to the Editor. Please write and let us know what you think of the magazine - the address is 41 Mountjoy Square Dublin 1, or phone us at 363044.

# STUDENTS HAVE MORE SENSE THAN MONEY

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# GREAT STUDENTS OF OUR TIME

By Arthur Matthews

**HARD DRINKIN'**

# DAN

**The Pints Man!**



IT'S SEVEN O'CLOCK, AND DAN HEADS STRAIGHT FOR THE LOCAL...



SIX HUNDRED AND THIRTY TWO PINTS OF GUINNESS PLEASE EAMONN!

5 MINUTES LATER...



THAT WAS GRAND! HERE STICK ON ANOTHER SIX HUNDRED WHEN YOU'RE READY THERE..

HERE'S DAN'S FRIEND LARRY.



YA MISSED A GREAT PARTY LAST NIGHT, DAN.



TWO LADS AT IT HAD SO MUCH TO DRINK THAT THEY DIED, AND I HAD TWICE AS MUCH DRINK AS THEM AND I WASN'T EVEN PISSED!



I WAS AT A PARTY LAST WEEK AND I HAD SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND PINTS TO DRINK AND THEN I DROVE HOME AND THERE WASN'T A BOTHER ON ME!



I WAS AT A PARTY THERE A FEW MONTHS AGO AND I HAD SO MUCH TO DRINK THAT I VUKED UP MY LIVER AND MY ISBLADER EXPLODED. IT WAS GREAT!



I WENT TO A PARTY IN RATHMINES A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO AND I WOKE UP THE NEXT MORNING IN BRAZIL!



WELL LARRY WHAT WILL I GET YOU?



COULD I HAVE A HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN TRIPLE VODKAS, FOUR THOUSAND RUM AND BLACKS, SIXTY-SEVEN MALIBUS, NINE HUNDRED SOUTHERN COMFORTS AND A PINT OF CARLSBERG WITH LIME PLEASE EAMONN.



DAMN IT! HE'S DROUGHT ME ONE RUM AND BLACK TOO MANY! WILL YOU HAVE IT DAN?



NO THANKS. I'M STRICTLY A PINTS MAN!

ARTHUR MATTHEWS



*"I only came in for a coffee"*



# STUDENTS UNION SHOPS

from coffee to kitchen sinks