

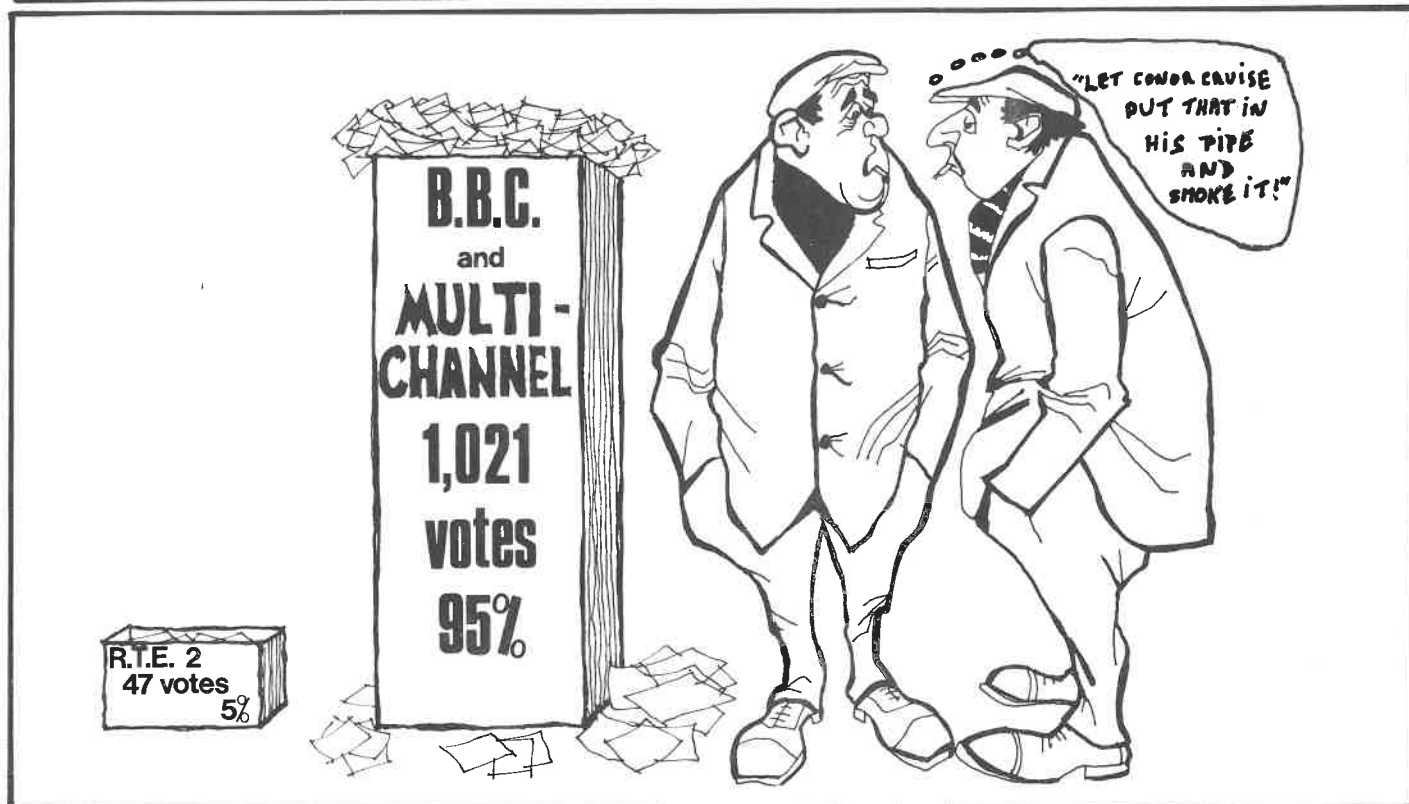
Southill Star

Has Limerick then so barren grown/Of manhood's spirit,
blood and bone? — Michael Hogan

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AUGUST, 1976.



95% VOTE FOR B.B.C.

MASSIVE NO TO R.T.E. 2

The people of Southill want B.B.C. television — and they want it immediately. This demand was decisively made in the Second Television Channel Opinion Survey carried out by members of the Southill Workers' Council over the past month. And the people want B.B.C. 1 as the first step towards full multi-channel viewing.

Two straightforward questions were posed. Southill people were asked to indicate a direct preference for R.T.E.2 or B.B.C.1 and to state if they regarded their choice as merely the first stage to multi-channel television. All of the 1,200 houses in the area were visited by the survey team.

Some 95% of the voters, representing 1,021 houses, voted in favour of B.B.C.1 as their choice of second channel viewing. Only a tiny total of 5%, representing 47 houses, voted in favour of R.T.E.2. The remaining non-voters are made up of people who were not at home when the survey team called and by those with undecided opinions.

The members of the Southill Workers' Council received a warm welcome as they went from house to house conducting the poll. Most people expressed dissatisfaction at the present manner in which R.T.E. is run and saw no reason why multi-channel viewing should be denied to Limerick. The credibility of the recent R.T.E. survey in which fifteen Limerick people were allegedly interviewed — was also called into question.

During the survey, tenants raised a whole range of social and housing problems with members of the Southill Workers'

Council. Many of the complaints have already been dealt with and many more are being investigated. A number of people signified their intentions of ventilating their grievances in the "Southill Star".

Now that the survey has established the wishes of the Southill people on the matter of the second channel, the "Star" can press ahead with its campaign with the full backing of almost all of the area's adult community. As the next phase of this campaign, copies of the survey's finding will be sent to Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, the Minister for Post and Telegraphs, and to R.T.E. After this the Southill Workers' Council will organise a special press conference to allow public scrutiny of the results of the poll. Noel Browne chairman of the Limerick Multi-channel Committee and Councillor Jim Kemmy have already accepted invitations to speak at this meeting.

The inability of R.T.E. to run one channel efficiently — not to even think of two — was widely commented on. (R.T.E.'s loss of £350,000 last year as shown in its 1975 annual report, and the forthcoming increases in licence fees are further proof of this fact).

The people of Southill have given a clear lead to other communities in Limerick and other single-channel cities. Let us hope that this lead will now be supported and emulated. We say that people in Limerick and in other single-channel areas must be given a television choice. The "Star" will continue to be the voice of the vast majority of Southill people who are demanding that this choice be immediately provided.

THE NEXT LOCAL ELECTIONS

SEAN GRIFFIN.

Although they are some time away yet, the next Local Elections should be intriguing, especially in Ward 3, where some strange candidates will be in the field. At present the people in the Ward are represented by Coughlan, Bourke, Leddin, and Broderick. Coughlan and Leddin purport to represent "Labour", Bourke, Fianna Fail and Broderick "represents" Pa Kennedy of Fine Gael.

Only two of these so-called representatives actually live in the Ward. Leddin and Bourke, both live in "private" houses on the Roxboro Road. Coughlan lives in Wellington Tce., near O'Connell Ave. Broderick's "official" address is the C.B.S. school on the Roxboro Road. It's better one supposes than having "no fixed abode", but only just. There is some confusion as to exactly where Broderick lives.

In the last elections Southill had two of its residents as candidates, Tom Allen of Keyes Park and Paddy O'Donovan of O'Malley Park. Allen also claimed to represent "Labour", but in fact, was there but "by the grace of Coughlan". Allen is, according to himself, a "human dynamo", but to the politically aware he is an opportunist.

Allen is also P.R.O. for the Southill Community Council, a position he uses well to promote himself. When Allen was first foisted on the people of Southill by Coughlan, he created a mild sensation by getting 500 first preference votes; a fact which did not endear him to his sponsor. His performance has also caused his "friendship" with the "Messiah" to cool almost to freezing point.

During his political "friendship" with Coughlan, Allen was given the task of forming a branch of the "Labour Party" in Southill. This he duly did gathering around him, his wife and a few close friends. He was instructed by Coughlan to make sure that none of the 'radicals' living in Southill were allowed to become members. At a meeting of the Sean Dunne Branch of the Labour Party (this branch is made up entirely of Coughlan's friends in the Janesboro area), Coughlan announced the formation of the Southill Branch. To his utter amazement this proposal was opposed by Willie Boland, a Transport Union Officer. Willie rightly pointed out that Coughlan had opposed the setting up of this branch on two occasions previously. Coughlan retorted that "is was then

being formed by 'Reds and radicals'".

The only identifiable members of the Southill branch are Allen and his wife. Allen is not dismayed at the way his 'friendship' with Coughlan has deteriorated, neither is he worried about the Labour Branch. His main worry now is holding on to his position as P.R.O. for the Community Council and therefore keeping control of the "Community Observer". The "Observer" is Allen's principal means of projecting himself. Almost all the articles in the paper are accredited to him. He has also made inroads into the "Limerick Leader" and "Weekly Echo". Seldom does any edition of these papers appear without a photo or a statement from Allen.

Anyone totally committed to glorifying himself is bound to make mistakes and Allen is no exception. Recently he made the mistake of "scabbing" the Binmens' Strike, when he persuaded the Christian Brothers to allow about two dozen kids away from school to clean up what Allen described as "an eyesore". When Allen realised his blunder he became conveniently missing. When the exodus to the Longpavement was to take place, Allen failed to turn up and so left the kids to face the disgruntled binmen.

Coughlan has, of course, become aware of Allen's newfound independence and has begun a campaign to disown him. This campaign is at present a low-keyed one but then the local elections are far away yet. And Coughlan will need someone to look after his Southill interests in a general election, and who better than the "human dynamo" himself.

The people of Southill will have to be made aware of these opportunists. The "Southill Star" has a real role to play in this work, no matter who it hurts.

Paddy O'Donovan is really a nonentity now; he has faded almost into oblivion; rejoined his old party Fianna Fail, and received due compensation from Jack Bourke-Managership of the non-union cinema twins at Movieland. The 501 first preference votes received by O'Donovan are floating now, as are quite a number of Allen's votes. A good working class candidate, living in Southill could easily win a seat at the next Local Elections. It is the job of the Southill Workers' Council to produce such a candidate.

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the other side of

LIVE NOW — PAY LATER!

WITH THE summer lull now in its final month and most of us preoccupied with thoughts of how we are going to repay our Credit-Union-financed holiday and still "put a bit aside for Christmas", the threatened rent increases and the inevitable eviction orders which will follow seem to be far from our minds.

But let us spare a thought for those in our community who can hardly afford their weekly rent, never mind a holiday away from home. Take the case of the deserted wife in Kincora Park, or, to be more precise, the deserted mother of five children. This lady's back gate rattled and rotted off its hinges, not through lack of maintenance on her part or through vandalism, but as a direct result of Corporation incompetence in sanctioning the type of wood used in the making of the gate in the first place.

This struggling mother of five children whose complaints to the Corporation went unheeded and who became weary of wandering horses and stray dogs making a veritable moonscape out of her back garden, decided to withhold her rent as a protest.

Instant results! No, not a new gate. An eviction order! Readily granted, as usual, by Justice de Burca. But then of course Mr. de Burca is only enforcing the law of the land as laid down by Dail Eireann. If these laws amount to social injustice (which in a so-called Christian community they certainly do), what are the four legislators for the Limerick region doing about it? The short and obvious answer is — NOTHING! Even though the present Government grabbed, and clings to, power only with the support of a so-called "Labour" Party.

Incidentally, the woman in question is in receipt of £29 deserted wives' pension — and one bottle of free milk per day. Her children are aged from four to fourteen. The lady also tells us that she applied to St. Vincent de Paul's for help but was turned down because her children were enjoying the "luxury" of a T.V. set in the house. (So, even Steve Coughlan's much vaunted private-charity "Socialism" seems to be rather too selectively elusive at times).

But of course we should not be too surprised by this type of situation. It is an all too common occurrence in this part of Limerick. We had one of the most unusual eviction orders granted to the Corporation not so long ago when a tenant in O'Malley Park owed the Town Hall the paltry sum of £4.04. An equal sum in costs was also granted against that particular tenant. If there was any real justice about it is de Burca and the City Manager who would be charged!

Wouldn't you think that Stevie Coughlan would have a quiet word in de Burca's ear sometime about the plight of some of his constituents — especially as they voted him in on a "Socialist" ticket? There would certainly be no lack of

... the bill

by JACK CANTILLON

opportunity for such cosy chats. They are occasionally to be seen drinking together during late-night sessions at the Officers' Mess in Sarsfield Barracks and during the fun and games at annual dinners of the Limerick Licensed Vintners' Association.

THE MECHANICS OF LIBERATION

I recently witnessed a very interesting and illuminating sight. A special meeting was convened at the Mechanics' Institute to discuss "Women and Socialism". One of the "revolutionary" organisers of the meeting, who claims to be an "International Socialist", arrived at the venue at 7.50 p.m. and proceeded in to the meeting, leaving his wife outside in the car.

During the next three hours he took part in a very heavy debate on the liberation of women. He returned to a very bored wife at 10.50 p.m. and got into the car to drive her home.

As the sergeant-major would say to the new recruit: "Don't do as I do — do as I say! Women's Lib how are you!

THE BRIDGE BELOW THE TOWN

BY JIM PHELAN

We'll build a bridge below the town,
We want you all to know,
But we don't know where the money will be found.
So if you want to tell us,
Well you know we can be found
Sitting in the City Hall below the town.
For bridges are so costly,
And you know they must be sound,
But money for it is surely out of bounds.
So we'll have to get Madame Leisa
Just to wave a magic wand,
And put another bridge below the town.
Then the Councillors they hurried
To a tent in Arthur's Quay,
But nowhere was the lady to be found.
They said that she had flown away
To seek another promised land
So they couldn't have their bridge below the town.

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The Bus Service

BY SEAN WATERS

Reaction to our July article "On (and Off!) the Buses" has, so far, been very good. One definite complaint has clearly emerged. This concerns the 11 o'clock service to O'Malley Park on Sunday nights. On Sunday, July 12th, the 11 p.m. service to O'Malley Park was unable to cater for all the intending passengers and about twenty people were left standing on the pavement when the single-deck bus left. This bus has a seating capacity of 45 but there were up to 65 people on the bus. The people left behind were forced to make their own way home, the majority by "shank's mare".

On the following Sunday, July 19th, people were waiting in the rain for the same 11 o'clock service from as early as 10.40 p.m. There was no supervision of the route; again the bus left with people packed into it like sardines and once again over twenty people were forced to walk all the way to Southill in the pouring rain. On Monday, July 20th, C.I.E. was questioned about the matter — not for the first time. The predictable answer given by C.I.E. was that the company was "looking into the matter".

There is no need for a prolonged investigation of the matter. The solution to the problem is simple. Just put a double-deck bus on the route and nobody will be left behind; C.I.E. will have more satisfied customers and take in more revenue in the process. The extra money taken in would represent a sizable sum over a twelve months' period and the bigger bus would put an end to the annoyance and discomfort being suffered by Southill people.

The trade unions concerned have a definite responsibility in this matter. These unions must ensure that their members are not forced to continue to break the law by allowing overcrowding on the buses. Should a serious accident occur in these circumstances, just who is going to be held responsible?

ONLY A RUMOUR

There is no truth in the rumour that the P.R.O. of the Southill Community Council has resigned and that he has been replaced by Dr. Jeremiah Newman, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick.

Tony Connolly's

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THE GREAT PAIN ROBBERY

IT HAS come to the attention of the "Southill Star" that there is a certain elderly widow in Limerick whose extraordinary financial generosity has been ruthlessly taken advantage of in recent times in the most unexpected quarters. And we as a community newspaper feel that we ought to pass the information on to our readers.

During the past couple of years this good woman has handed over the sum of £50 to the Redemptorist Fathers for no specific purpose. This lady is not wealthy and the money was drawn from her savings and the Redemptorists accepted it. She gave another lump sum of £50 to the Jesuits for no specified cause, and they accepted it. The Franciscans too got a bulging envelope containing £50. The secular priests of St. Joseph's Church were not left out; they benefited to the tune of £100.

Another £50 was donated to the Salesian Fathers and handed to a Father Butler. This time the purpose was specified. Intriguingly enough, it was for "Gregorian Masses". £50 more went to the Apostolic Society.

But the most interesting — and disturbing — cash handout of all went to the Dominican Priory in Glentworth St. The very substantial sum of £100 was handed over by this old lady — for a Mass! The money was eagerly accepted by a Dominican monk who signed the receipt, "E.P." The Dominicans, it should be noted, like the Franciscans, are required to take a vow of poverty — but £100 buys a hell of a lot of sandals!

Now it might be argued that this frail old woman is entitled to do what she likes with her own money. But then that is rather like saying that if you see a young child playing with a cut-throat razor you should turn your back and let him "do his own thing". Or that if a blind man hands you a five pound note in mistake for a pound you should pocket the other four pounds.

Why should a priest (particularly a monk with a vow of poverty) accept £100 from an old woman to say prayers for the soul of her dead husband? The normal donation is only £1. If this money was subsequently spent, as it probably was, on petrol for one of those shiny new cars nowadays to be seen outside the Dominican Priory, how does this help the soul of the good lady's departed husband? You can't drive that car along to Purgatory and throw a rope ladder over the wall. And you certainly can't bribe THOSE guards!

The Catechism tells us that Purgatory is a place where we are required to be cleansed by the pain of fire (at a lower temperature than Hell) before we can be deemed fit to enter into the sight of God for all eternity. It also tells us that the prayers of those left behind can help to earn the unfortunate sufferer an earlier release than he or she might otherwise get. But it is always possible that Purgatory, like Limbo, could find itself abolished by the Catholic Church one of these days!

But again the question must be asked: Why the sum of £100? It is said that God's house "has many mansions". Does the same apply to Purgatory? Is there some special geographical compartment in Purgatory where the "Exit Visa" costs more than it does elsewhere? Who decides the culpability of a particular soul and the price of its freedom? Perhaps the Dominicans would be kind enough to explain the answers, in simple language, to the lady in question.

In the meantime let us hope that the next time this good-living, honourable and lonely old woman walks into the Dominican Priory and hands over £100 for a Mass, that Father "E.P." will promptly hand the money back and say the Mass anyway. But perhaps that is expecting too much, even from an Order sworn to vows of poverty.