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and SOUTHERN DEMOCRAT

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PENSMAN TAKES YOU behind the SPOTLIGHT

WHITHER IRELAND?

As we find ourselves on the threshold of Christmas and in the last few weeks of the year 1985 we think it is a sad commentary on current affairs that it seems we are all hell bent on crippling the economy of the country. At a time when preparations should be well advanced for the great festive period of Christmas and New Year, it is with a great sense of foreboding that we pose the question, "whither Ireland?"

Yes, indeed, where are we heading? Do we know or do we care? Are we so intent on sectional interests that we are prepared not only to rock the ship but to go so far as to sink it to achieve our own ends?

Last week it was the teachers who shut the schools of the country in the faces of over one million children as they hiked off to Dublin for a further protest march (and a good bit of Christmas shopping thrown in) in pursuit of their "special" 10 per cent pay claim; to-day (Wednesday) it is the junior doctors of the country who take strike action to further their pay and conditions claim; the bus crews in Dublin are in hassle with CIE because of their refusal to operate one-man buses and a strike situation seems to be developing which will leave the weary population there without public transport for Christmas; the ESB workers in Cork city have been on strike for the past 17 weeks, the workers of Cork Corporation have notified their intention to strike in furtherance of their claim for a daily meal allowance stated to be worth about £22 a week; the employees in the public service throughout the country are also threatening strike action if they fail to obtain "their just rights" while a threatened one-man picket almost brought the tottering Irish Steel industry at Haulbowline, Cork, to a standstill last week.

What a litany of "what my country owes me claims." Of course each of the groups concerned articulate the injustices they are suffering because their demands for more of this and less of that are not being responded to as they expect. They feel they are being hard

done by. But it all then comes back to where the money to meet these extra demands is to come from or who is to provide it. That is the crunch. In most cases the cupboard is now bare and there simply is no more money. So what is the solution?

Are we to have more strikes, more shut-downs, more firms putting the shutters up and more workers joining the dole queues? More than 250,000 workers are now without jobs. How much higher is this total to go?

Well indeed, we might ask, whither Ireland?

ESB JUMPED THE GUN

It was planned to perform the official switch-on of the Christmas lights in the streets and on the twin Christmas trees at the Square in Dungarvan at 5.30 p.m. on last Friday evening. The Chairman of the Urban Council, Mr. R. A. Walsh, had been invited by the Dungarvan Retail Traders Association to perform the switch-on but it didn't work out that way.

The lights, in fact, lit up at 5 p.m. and this knocked the glamour out of the entire affair. However, the group which had gathered at Lawlor's Hotel to witness the "official" switch-on, went through the motions as if nothing untoward had happened.

Mr. Mario Flavin, Secretary and PRO of the Traders Association said that they were glad to be once again associated with the Christmas lighting for the town which would cost an estimated £2,000. He expressed their gratitude to the Urban Council for agreeing to take up the tab for the cost of the current used which would approximate to £500 or £600 for the festive period. "This is a very heavy weight off our backs and we are very grateful to the Urban Council for that," he said.

Mr. Flavin also commended the Urban Council, the County Manager, Mr. Dan Hurley, who was unavoidably absent, and the Town Clerk, Mr. Bertie White for having the new car park at Davitt's Quay open for Christmas. This, he added, should prove a great boost for

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DUNGARVAN - U-21 FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS



Dungarvan Under-21 football team who won their first County title in the grade when they scored a comprehensive win over Portlaw in the county final at Cappoquin last Sunday. (Photo: John Kiely)

IDA SMALL INDUSTRY PROJECTS MAKING SOLID PROGRESS

Mr. Frank Burke IDA Regional Manager and Chairman of the South-East Regional Small Industries Board, speaking at the announcement last week by Mr. E. Collins, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Industry, Commerce, Tourism & Energy of recently grant-aided Small Industry Projects for the South-East Region, pointed to the solid progress being

made in the South-East since full regionalisation in January this year. The significance of reaching the regional target of 75 investment

proposals, he said was that it represented a 24% increase on the out-turn for 1984 and it would be the second highest IDA target for investment proposals achieved outside Dublin and would involve approximately 450 job approvals. Of the 67 Investment Proposals which have been approved to November this year, 54 have already commenced production and have given employment to some 150 additional employees. In addition the Small Industry Grant Administration Section will have processed in excess of 300 claims and paid out over £2 million.

ENDING
The Minister Mr. E. Collins said that in Waterford an investment of £654,000 would be made by nine small industries (5 new projects and 4 expansions) which are expected to employ 52 people over

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DUNGARVAN YOUTH CLUB

GRAND FINALE OF "TOPS OF THE AREA" COMPETITION

The second round of the very popular "Tops Of The Area" took place last Thursday night, again before a huge audience at Minnies. While everyone had expected top class entertainment from the groups who had competed the previous week, many considered last week's two shows as being "light-weights." — what a shock was in store for those who ventured out on a cold winter's evening.

First on stage were Dungarvan Youth Club. They were really superb and considering that this group entered only three weeks ago

because another show dropped out their performance was truly amazing. They were followed by the Town Centre who with Children's Estate won the competition last year. This year, however, they were short of last year's cast but nevertheless they thrilled the crowd with a beautiful 45 minutes of variety.

THE MARKING
Adjudicator, Mrs. Nancy Power, then had to make up her mind as to who would be in the 1985 final. As she said herself after "much study" she awarded Dungarvan Youth Club with a grand total of 87 marks; Town Centre 80 marks. Fr. Twomey's 84 marks and The Villas 83 marks. So the way is cleared for a Youth Club v. Fr. Twomey's Residents' Association final to be held at Minnies on this Thursday night.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS
As well as announcing the 1985 Winner our judge will also select the best male, and the best female performers and the best topical song. These will be judged on what we have seen already and not on the final performance. The best topical song has to be between The Villas M. O Faolain and the Youth Club's Thomas Duggan. I will leave that decision to herself.

On the male side we had many outstanding performers, anyone of whom could lift the prize. Peter Hayes (Fr. Twomey's); M. O Faolain (The Villas); Liam Duggan (Town Centre); Kieran Sheehan (Y.C.); Thomas Duggan (Y.C.) and a host of others.

THE FINAL
By the time those notes appear I am confidently expecting that all tickets will be sold so if you have not got a ticket there will be no admission unless tickets which have been bought are returned. We are hoping to have the first show on stage at 8.30 or before so as to allow as much time as possible afterwards for a few dances. My last words before what I believe will be an epic finale is the best of luck to each show, producers, cast and supporters.

"Dungarvan Leader" Christmas Publishing Arrangements

The "Dungarvan Leader" will be published next week as usual on Wednesday, December 18. There will be no publication in the following week, so all advertisements for New Year functions and fixtures would need to be published in next week's issue. Dead-line for advertising copy is Tuesday morning next, December 17.

Our first issue after Christmas will be published, as usual for the week ending Friday, January 3, on the Wednesday and Thursday of that week and all news reports and copy of advertisements for that issue should reach us as early as possible but not later than Tuesday, December 31.

The "Leader" office will close for Christmas holidays on Monday evening, December 23, at 6 p.m. and will reopen at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, December 31.

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