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ESTD. 1855 | No. 36,203 | TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 1990 | 20p. in Northern Ireland (24p. elsewhere)

Haughey and son raise EC flag over Dublin Castle

THE Republic's six-month Presidency of the EC was launched officially yesterday with the ceremonial raising of the European flag at principal civic buildings in 20 cities and towns.

Taoiseach Charles Haughey, together with his son Sean, Lord Mayor of Dublin, performed the flag-raising ceremony at Dublin Castle, watched by government ministers and visiting dignatories.

Describing the flag as "a new sort of emblem," representing "co-operation rather than self assertion," the Republic's premier voiced the hope that the European Flag would be seen as an emblem of hope for all the peoples of the world.

The 12 nations of the EC, he continued, are embarked on the most ambitious experiment in national relationships that have ever been attempted. This experiment "is also the noblest and we are determined to make it the most successful," Mr Haughey declared.

"The old dream of European unity is beginning to be reached through the democratic ways of consent and agreement, and we are historically privileged to be a part of it."

The Taoiseach claimed that the cohesive European Community now being shaped is the greatest force for good that the world has ever known. Europe's message to the peoples of the world "is no longer one of rivalry between nations but of fruitful and harmonious co-operation for the benefit of the people of those nations."

Later, at the Presidency inauguration ceremony in Dublin Castle, once the centre of British rule in Ireland, Mr Haughey talked of his aspirations for the Republic's tenure.

The main issues during the Irish Presidency will be the completion of the EC internal market, economic and monetary union, implementation of the social charter, and the external relations of the community in the light of recent and current events in Eastern Europe.

The Republic's premier also identified the environment as an area where Ireland will make a special effort to formulate a comprehensive and coherent community policy.

Asked whether Dublin's smog problem made the Irish decision to select the environment as an area of particular interest during its Presidential term "embassassing", Mr Haughey said that he believed "a lot of rubbish" was being talked about the city's smog level.

"Smog is as much of a problem in other European cities and it will be tackled during the next six months," he promised. "There will be a 'spring cleaning' at domestic level to mirror community action on the environment."

On the issue of economic and monetary union, the Taoiseach said that he did not believe that the British Prime Minister's reluctance to accept particular aspects of the new proposals would create serious problems, and he pointed out that Britain was not opposed to economic and monetary union, but merely concerned about several of its implications.

During the French Presidency of the Community, considerable progress had been made in the area of tax harmonisation, Mr Haughey continued. However, he acknowledged that considerable problems remained but was heartened by the EC's recognition of Irish difficulties with its proposals for harmonisation and the Community's willingness to take measures to reduce those difficulties.

Preparations for the Irish Presidency began as far back as 1984 when construction began on a new conference centre in Dublin Castle.

The recently renovated Dublin Castle will be the setting for over 50 meetings with the European Council next June, marking the highlight of the Irish Presidency. Italy will take the reins from Ireland on July 1.

The Irish government has not ruled out the possibility of a trip to Moscow by Mr Haughey in his capacity as Europe's preident. The Taoiseach who met President Gorbachev during the latter's official visit to Ireland last year, paid tribute to the Soviet leader yesterday declaring: "He had unleashed a tidal wave which has changed everything."

Today

A new epiphany in the East

The year 1990, and the even more bewitching number of 2,000 looming at the end of the decade tempt the crystal-ball gazers. But Ciaran McKeown argues that prophetic voices in the East have known the direction of history for some time past. See Page Six

New Year Equals Scotland

Yes, for many people the New Year period means an overdose of haggis consumed by skirted males tossing telegraph poles about. Jude Collins takes a jaundiced, but light-hearted look at the combination of Scotland and New Year. See Page Seven.

Celtic's Eighties decline . . .

Celtic fans might be forgiven for imagining that the Eighties were not too bad for the trophy cupboard. But, as Kevin McKenna notes, Celtic have not been beyond the quarter finals of a European championship for more than ten years. See Page Eleven.

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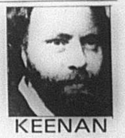

KEENAN DAY 1,360

Boyne battle march fears

By Mary Carolan

ORANGE ORDER plans to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne in Co Louth have led to a split in Fianna Fail and a warning that the event could turn into a bloodbath.

An estimated 30,000 Orangemen are expected to travel to Drogheda for the tercentenary celebration which will see one of the biggest security operations ever mounted in the Republic, costing Southern taxpayers around £2 million.

F[illegible] sources in C[illegible] Louth said last night that [illegible] bloodshed if the march goes ahead and are [illegible] to oppose any state funding for the event.

However, Drogheda Fianna Fail councillor and director of the Boyne Valley Tourism Development Association, Mr Frank Godfrey told The Irish News that the peaceful aims of the organisers would make worthwhile the huge security operation.

And as a showdown looks certain within Fianna Fail at its next South Louth Comhairle Ceanntair on January 8, a senior party source warned: "If an Orange march is allowed to go ahead, we are going to witness the second Battle of the Boyne."

The historic battle is seen by many within the party as an event that "encourages triumphalism and sectarian attitudes."

The issue has already been raised at a meeting of Drogheda Corporation late last year but a decision on the controversy was deferred.

"Unless the Orange Order organised something that promises peace and reconciliation, it most certainly won't get support from the people of this area," Drogheda Fianna Fail councillor and former Lord Mayor of the town Mr Jimmy Mulroy said last night. "People will not support anything political or triumphalist."

Councillor Godfrey is the driving force behind the commemoration activities, which he began planning several years ago, and which now include a number of religious services, exhibitions, barbeques and other events extending over a 14 day period.

Mr Godfrey has met with members of the Orange Order and he claims, contrary to a number of reports, that there are no plans for an Orange Order march near Drogheda in July.

"There will be an open air religious service but any flag-waving or paramilitary trappings are out as far as I am concerned," he declareed.

"The idea behind this is peace and reconciliation. It will give us a golden opportunity to extend the hand of friendship to the other side."

The Louth councillor revealed that he had contacted DUP councillor and former Belfast Lord Mayor, Sammy Wilson, about the celebration and has also been in touch with Rev Ian Paisley's office. Practically every southern and northern politician has also been informed of the commemorative event he said.

"One of the biggest problems will be insurance cover, which for one day alone will cost around £25,000," Mr Godfrey said. "The Orange Order is prepared to pay half the cost but wants us to raise the rest."

Other organisational expenses will increase the costs to the Drogheda organising committee to around £100,000. Mr Godfrey admitted he was "very disappointed" that, to date, his committee had received no financial assistance from government agencies or from Bord Failte.

Fianna Fail sources in Drogheda told the Irish News that they had heard of plans for two Orange marches near Drogheda in July, one on July 1, and the second, and principal, on July 14.

There is particular fear about a march being organised by the Independent Loyal Orange Institution for July 1, the date of the battle according to the old Julian calendar.

Some 500 Orangemen are expected to travel from the North for this event and local people fear the march organisers have not given an undertaking to refrain from a paramilitary display.

On July 14, up to 30,000 members of the Orange Order are expected to assemble for what Rev Ian Paisley has described as a march, but Councillor Frank Godfrey, insists is an open air religious service.

New Year rock around the cot!

— By —
John McGurk

IT was a case of "rock-a-bye your baby with a Van Morrison melody" for the parents of Belfast's first infant of the new decade yesterday.

Little Alicia Catherine McTeggart is "Top of the Pops" with her mum and dad after going into the record books for 1990 at 12.15 a.m.

The golden silence from the 6 lb 14 oz baby's cot was music to the ears of her Fermanagh born mother, Olwen. And then she explained that she had been listening to soothing musical sounds in the labour wards.

The Carrickfergus couple went to see Van 'the Man' Morrison in August. According to Olwen that was when Alicia "first started really kicked!"

And just two weeks before Alicia's new year arrival, her mum defied all those who told her she was mad to go to Morrison's King's Hall concert because she knew that the singer was the supreme object of some 'Baby Love'.

And the Patrick Kavanagh reading mum explained that it had been the Belfast singer she had been listening to in the labour ward just hours before the birth in the City Hospital.

She added: "Alicia has been an angel so far. I hope that she will be as good as this when we get out. She is a wee star already and she is only a day old. I'll tell you, this is the most exciting and eventful New Year I have ever had."

It was nearly 'girls, girls, girls' all the way at the City Hospital's Jubilee Maternity unit. But first among equals two hours 11 minutes after Alicia was 9 lb 14 oz Adrian Cousins, who was born to Ballynahinch woman Mrs Sandra Cousins.

There was a lull for over three hours before the 7 lb 2 oz baby daughter of Glencairn woman Julie McAuley greeted the dawn with a chorus indisputably its own.

Over at the Royal Victoria Hospital, the maternity staff had to cope with a new decade mini baby boom too as three boys and one girl made their debuts on the first day of 1990.

Making up the group of mothers with 'foursight' on New Year's Day was Mrs Barbara Corner who gave birth to 8 lb 4 oz baby son Stephen. According to her, the latest addition to the Dunmurry home she shares with husband Michael and children Daryll, Michelle and David, will be their last.

It was a relatively 'silent night' for the staff at the Mater Hospital on New Year's Day.

• Little Stephen Corner catches up on some beauty sleep just hours after entering the world and delighting proud mother Barbara and husband Michael from Dunmurry. More New Year baby pictures by Brendan Murphy on Page Nine.

Protestant Churches aided Catholic schools

Intervened to stop reduction of grants

By Dr. Eamon Phoenix

A MOVE by the Brooke Government in the 1950s to reduce grants to voluntary (mainly Catholic) schools from the 65 per cent, set in 1947, to 50 per cent was thwarted by the intervention of the Protestant Churches. This historically significant fact is revealed in secret Cabinet files released yesterday in Belfast.

The controversy first surfaced publicly in April 1956, when Mr. Nat Minford, the Unionist MP for Antrim, tabled a motion in the Stormont House of Commons urging that educational grants to voluntary schools should not exceed 50 per cent unless such schools agreed to adopt a 'four and two committed' basis of management.

This provoked a strong statement from Cardinal D'Alton who declared: "The proposal to reduce the grants to our schools is, I believe, being sponsored by a small clique noted for its intolerance where Catholic interests are concerned. If this clique is succsssful . . . it will only serve to confirm the opinion, widely held, that Government policy is being dictated by a body whose chief desire is a resurgence of strife and disorder in this part of Ireland."

At a Cabinet meeting at Stormont on May 22, 1956, Ministers were agreed that overtures should be made to Antrim Unionist Association "to induce Mr. Minford to refrain from moving his motion." Instead, the Government proposed to introduce a motion to the effect that "the present system of Government grants to voluntary schools is not consistent with the principle of no taxation without representation and that further consideration should be given to the terms and conditions upon which grants should be continued, and the amount of such grants."

It was agreed that the Minister of Education (the former Labour politicians, Mr Harry Midgley) should submit recommendations to the House of Commons when the new leaving-age became operative.

Meanwhile, the matter continued to generate heat. At a Catholic carnival in Limavady in June in aid of the local school building fund, leading Catholic laymen including Mr C A Nicholson, QC and Lieutenant Colonel McCausland, attacked the move to reduce voluntary school grants as "nothing less than a calamity to the whole community."

The matter remained unresolved for over a year. In May 1957, however, the Prime Minister, Sir Basil Brooke (later Lord Brookeborough) received a letter from the Board of Education of the Methodist Church attacking the proposal to reduce the 65 per cent grant for voluntary schools to 50 per cent.

The Methodist churchmen, led by Rev Dr Northridge, told Brookeborough: "We are convinced that this would be a retrograde step. It would mainly affect the new intermediate schools. In that case, an extended building programme has been launched on the faith of the State provision of a 65 per cent building grant, and, in our view, it would give rise to serious questioning if, while the scheme is in progress, the scheme were to be materially altered."

They acknowledged that, as a Church, the Methodists had not availed of the building grants being content with the schools provided by the Local Education Authorities. "But, as we all know, a numerically important section of the community will not do so. The agitation about Family Allowances will be remembered and we view with apprehension any renewal of controversy."

Recalling that the largest element in the education budget, the cost of teachers' salaries, was borne by public funds, the concluded bluntly: "To provoke a renewal of controversy over the difference between a 50 per cent and a 65 per cent grant would be most undesirable. It is, we hope, unnecessary, to assure you of our wholehearted sympathy and support for the policy of the Government generally."

In his reply, Prime Minister Brooke, assured the Board that the new Education Minister, Mr Morris May would give careful weight to their representations.

The Methodists' intervention was quickly followed by a remonstrance from the Clerk of Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, V Rev J H R Gibson to the Prime Minister. On the proposal for a reduction in grants to

• To Page Nine.

• The late Lord Brookeborough, then Mr. Basil Brooke, third from left, pictured with the Unionist MPs during the war.

Noriega dilemma persists

PANAMA'S President Endara said yesterday that the Vatican should turn ousted military strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega out onto the street and let American troops capture him.

Noriega, wanted on drug trafficking charges in the US, has been holed up in the Papal Nunciature in Panama City for more than a week since US troops invaded.

President Guillermo Endara has appeared to be at odds with his attorney general, who favours trying Noriega in Panama.

Washington wants him tried in the United States, but the Vatican has refused to hand him over, which has left the Panama City Nunciature surrounded by barbed wire and armoured vehicles, and the United States, the Vatican and Panama engaged in complex negotiations over his fate.

Mr. Endara said yesterday: "We don't ask the Papal Nuncio to hand Noriega over to the United States, we just tell him to put him out of the premises.

"Noriega has no business in the nunciature. He's a common criminal of the worst kind," he added.

Mr. Endara, installed on December 20 as the Americans invaded, said that Panama's justice system is in a shambles and is incapable of trying Noriega at present.

A second Panamanian charged in the same drug indictment as Noriega was flown to Miami on Monday to face trial, a spokeswoman for the US Attorney's office said yesterday.

Havel leads Czechs into decade of hope

NEW Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel yesterday promised that the 1990s would see his country restored to the economic power it once was.

In a ringing New Year's Day speech, he sharply denounced the grim economic and ecological wounds left by 41 years of Communist rule and pledged to lead his country to free elections.

"Our country does not flourish . . . we have the worst environment in Europe," Havel said in a 28 minute speech on Czechoslovak television just three days after he was elected president.

"Out of gifted and sovereign people, the (Communist) regime made us little screws in a monstrously big, rattling and stinking machine. We have become morally sick."

Before World War II, Czechoslovakia was an economic power in Europe, but it slid into stagnation under Communist rule and the nation is also ecologically devastated.

"We have to accept this legacy as something we have inflicted upon ourselves," said Havel, a playwright and former dissident who was a key element in the peaceful revolution that ended Communist control.

He also said there would be a "broad amnesty" of prisoners, the details of which were to be made public later in the day.

Using the colourful language of a playwright, Havel hailed the long strugglers for freedom in the East bloc.

He said: "Rivers of blood have flowed through many East Bloc countries over the past four decades.

"These great sacrifices are a tragic backdrop of the present freedom or gradual [illegible] of nations of the So[illegible] that is a backdrop of our newly gained freedom too."

Looking into the future, he emphasised the need to bring his country to free elections and renew Czechoslovakia's prestige abroad.

"My first task is to use all my authority and influence," so that Czechoslovakia can have "free elections soon and in a dignified way."

Havel travels to both German states today in his first official visit to a foreign country as Czechoslovakia's president and his first trip abroad in two decades.

• Romania began the 1990s still shocked by its bloody revolution and weighed down by a backward economy, but determined to learn democracy.

The new leadership acted to abolish the death penalty, give land back to the peasants, and

• To Page Nine

It's salmon rush day!

— By —
Seamus Kelters

BEGINNER'S luck played a big part in landing the first Irish salmon of the decade, netting a Co. Fermanagh angler £700 in the process.

Mr Dermott McMenamin from Enniskillen took a 10lb 4oz. fish from the Drowes River along the Leitrim/Donegal border yesterday morning before most New Year's Eve revellers had risen from their beds.

The one that didn't get away was caught after 9 a.m. According to the 40-year-old fisherman, who only took up the rod a year ago, yesterday's salmon was the biggest he has ever hooked.

Without a trace of a fishy story last night he told of an epic struggle to land his catch.

Leitrim salmon, it seems, are fond of Fermanagh worms.

"I went to a stretch of the river where I got three fish last year," Mr McMenamin said.

"I caught it on the second cast but it worked its way in under a tree and I couldn't get it out for a full hour."

Once he landed the fish it was a matter of a salmon run to a nearby pub to claim a £200 prize put up by anglers at the Drowes Fishery.

A few miles away a group of Bundoran businessmen were willing to pay handsomely for the first wild salmon of 1990 and added a further £500 to the Enniskillen man's keep net.

And there was good news too for a Fermanagh school. Mr McMenamin confirmed last night that he will be donating £200 of the prize money to Enniskillen Integrated School.

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