Submitted for Degree of Bachelor of Design in Visual Communication

Sixty-Five Years of Political Cartooning in Ireland

By

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Introduction

One reason for choosing to investigate Irish political cartoons is that they are not only a significant part of Irish graphics that have not yet been adequately documented, but are also a significant part of Irish political history. As Ireland is a very political country, as well as one renowned for its sense of humour, Irish political cartooning presented itself as a fascinating subject for investigation. Seeing the prolific output of Ireland's two most prominent contemorary cartoonists, Martyn Turner and Rowel Friers, in the current political climate, aroused interest in the work of their forerunners and their reactions to politics in Ireland earlier this century.

The intention of this study was not to do a fully comprehensive survey of all the political cartoons published here over the past sixty-five years, nor of all the cartoonists. That would have been an unrealistic objective for a thesis of this scale. The aim was, however, to produce a study of those cartoons and cartoonists which were considered, after surveying a wide spectrum of newspapers and periodicals over this period, to be representative. This thesis deals with those which the writer regards as best showing developments and changes in style, technique and approach, concentrating on those which best reflect fluctuating political moods and influences from international cartooning trends.

As the subject of Irish political cartooning is yet to be comprehensively, documented, the research was conducted from primary

sources, which were newspapers, journals and magazines from the National Library in Dublin and the Central Library in Belfast.

This thesis covers the period from 1922 until the present because 1922 (apart from being a turning point in Irish history, just following the signing of the Treaty with Britain) was the year when the popular magazine Dublin Opinion was founded. Dublin Opinion was a milestone in Irish cartooning history because it represented a departure from the traditional nineteenth century pictorial magazines in Ireland, such as Zozimus. It had more of the flavour of Punch or The New Yorker and so demonstrated an increased awareness of this kind of publication on an international level.

This thesis will look principally at the input of Dublin Opinion's founders and major contributors, Arthur Booth and Charles Kelly. It will consider their development, the influences on them, their style and their subsequent influences on later contributors to the magazine.

After the demise of Dublin Opinion in the 1960's, attention will be directed more towards the work of cartoonists in Northern Ireland, for two main reasons. Firstly, the turbulent political climate there was provoking some very vibrant commentary from cartoonists and, significantly, newspapers in the Republic were not fostering cartoonists to any great extent, with the result that many cartoonists either moved away and looked elsewhere for work or simply ceased cartooning.

As well as charting the material produced by Friers, Turner and their colleagues in the North the thesis briefly mentions the underground cartooning of the military and paramilitary whose work, though not significant in terms of the volume of their readership, is interesting in that it represents a unique partisan approach to political cartooning.

From 1976, when Turner moved to the Republic, this study will attempt to show how he brought along with his acute awareness of politics in Ireland (both Northern and Southern) a fresh approach to political cartooning.

The final part of this thesis is an overview, an analysis of political cartooning in Ireland. It will attempt to show trends, favourite and recurring themes, what topics were avoided and where these cartoons lie in an international context.

Chapter One

Dublin Opinion magazine was founded in 1922 by Arthur Booth, Charles Kelly and Tom Collins (who wrote light verse) with the aim of commenting on the issues of the day both in Ireland and internationally. It was not entirely, nor principally a political journal, other topics it covered included art, theatre, society in general, and in particular, anyone who took themselves too seriously. The Irish Times, for instance, was viewed by Dublin Opinion as a pompous and self-important institution and was thus the butt of many jokes.
Dublin Opinion was the major vehicle for political cartoonists in Ireland this century.

Major political issues for comment in early years were the Troubles, the various issues surrounding the signing of the Treaty, Civil War, the devastation of Dublin's city centre, friction between the supporters of Eamon de Valera and Arthur Griffith, various general elections and the formation of new political parties.

Kelly and Collins wrote of their early work:

"... ambushes, landmines, broken bridges, roads and rails made impassable and sniping in the streets... we suppose we were concentrating on what was happenning and commenting upon it with the primal urge to make a joke at all costs. We were running a topical magazine and if those weren't the topics what were?"

Just as important as what was happenning were the people behind the events. They were mostly politicians and civil servants. Booth and Kelly took tremendous delight in deriding politicians, both Government and Opposition from the outset. Irish politicians were obviously the main targets but those from other countries were not ignored. The British, in particular Lloyd-George and Harold Macmillan who had a lot to do with Ireland, were principal targets.

In general the cartoons in Dublin Opinion were of a fairly mild nature, there was nothing too grotesque or excessively savage in them. The main policy of the magazine was to amuse but at the same time to provoke some serious thought.

The cover of each issue said:

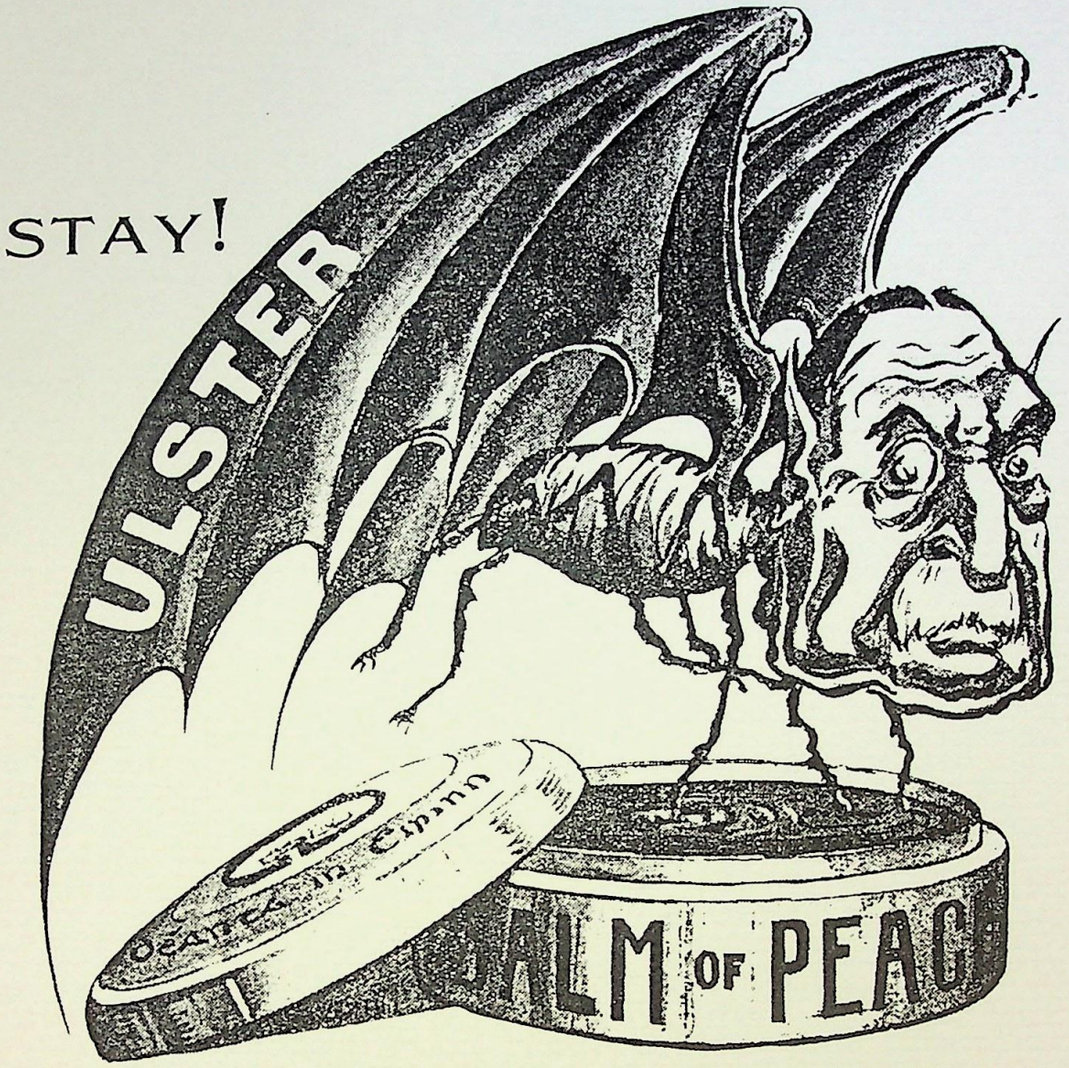
"Oft does the motley of the clown
Hide the scholars cap and gown."

Arthur Booth, the first editor, expressed his aspirations to present in Dublin Opinion "a spirit of friendliness and goodwill" to prevail in the wake of the signing of the Anglo Irish Treaty. His first cover cartoon, entitled "Unity Blend", showed Arthur Griffith and de Valera crouched on the ground smoking long clay pipes in the manner of Indians smoking peace-pipes.

Booth was the driving force behind Dublin Opinion and dominated its first four years of production. He designed the first masthead and each cover as well as controlling the

MAY FLOWERS

fig. 1



ONE FLY IN THE OINTMENT IS ENOUGH.

fig. 2

interior design and layout. He produced many cartoons but his skill lay more in caricature than cartooning.

His choice of subject matter was almost exclusively political and as well as personalities he also caricatured abstract concepts such as "Hope", a young woman, "Peace", a dove, and "Ireland", often as a young woman. These women were always portrayed as weak and defenseless and were shown alternatively being threatened, courted or simply ignored by politicians. (fig.1). He was also fond of using animals for symbolising a variety of concepts. Ireland is pictured in the March 1922 issue as a bone with two dogs, Collins and Craig, snarling at each other over it in a cartoon titled "The Bone of Contention." A cartoon in the July 1923 issue shows Ulster as a "Fly in the Ointment" (fig.2). The fly has the. head of Edward Carson and the ointment is called "Balm of Peace". In March 1923 he symbolises the concept of ruin with four snakes labelled "Civil War", "Taxation", "Propaganda" and "War". The snakes simply shape themselves into the letters "R U I N," and the caption reads:

"Oh for St. Patrick!".

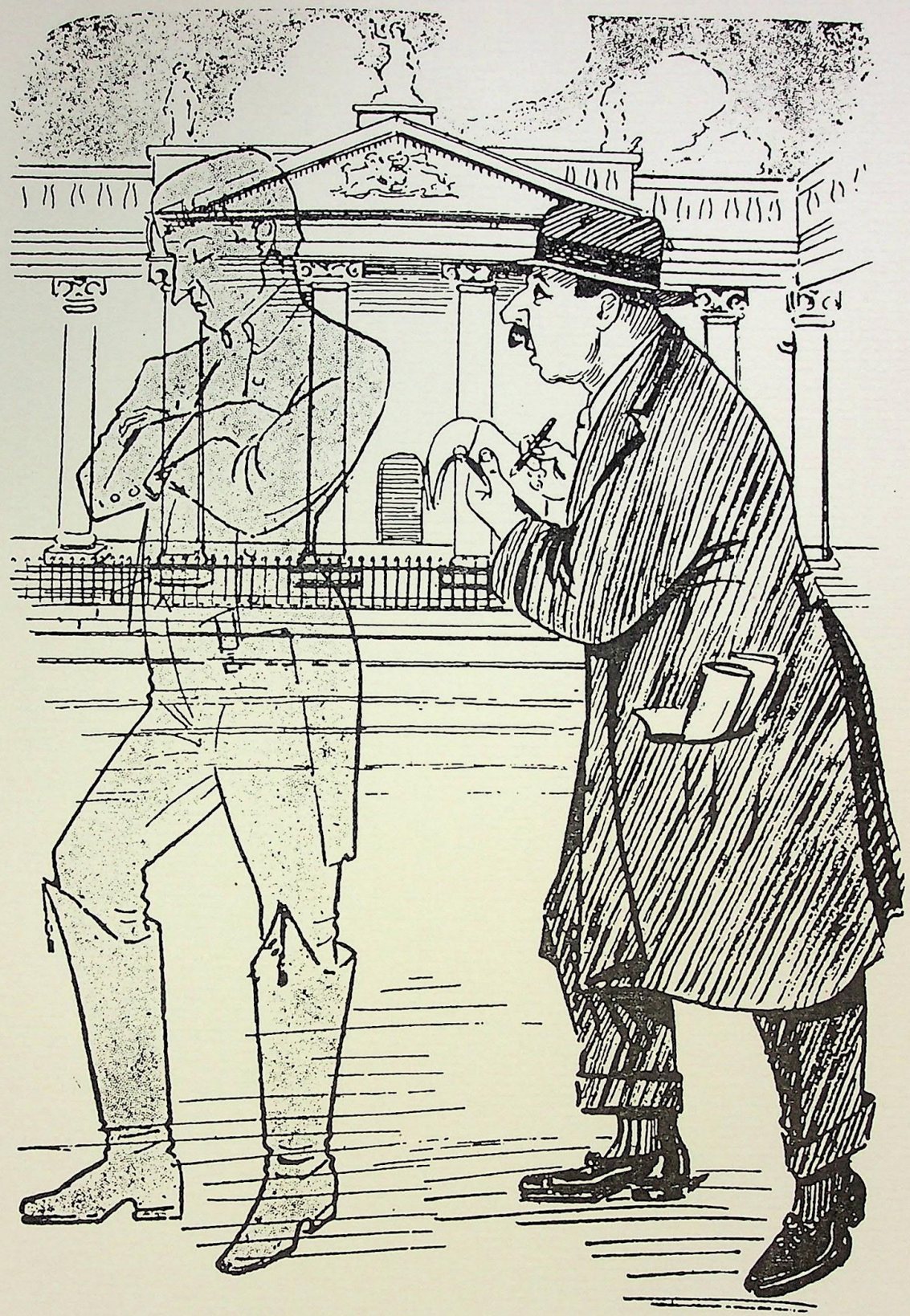
The imagery he used was often quite menacing and always striking. His style was bold, strident and instantly recognisable. He employed strong and thick but nonetheless very fluid lines the weight of which varied with his use of broad sweeping curves and straight lines. His captions generally took the form of a witty title to the drawing and

occasionally a short piece of succinct but considered dialogue from his subjects (fig. 3)

His use of tone was a little uncertain, either when using hatching or a brush technique which he was fond of, he applied tone to drawings rather liberally, tending to simply fill up shapes with it rather than to give them any sense of three-dimensional form or contrast with their background. His figures were rather awkward, usually a little stiff and clumsy and he seems to have had little regard for the internal composition of his drawings and a lack of awareness or interest in the inter-relation of forms to each other. He had a tendancy either to leave his subjects surrounded with unsympathetic areas of white space or to extend the area occupied by his drawings to fill the space allotted to them.

It is difficult to see from exactly where Booth developed his style combining pen and wash. His major contemporary was David Low, whose approach was considerably more subtle than Booth's and he used a quite differnt style of draughtsmanship, mostly employing broad, rapid brush strokes.

Political cartooning was very fertile in Germany, too, at the time when Booth was establishing himself in Ireland. Political cartoonists such as Erich Schilling, Karl Arnold, and George Grosz, were making radical advances in the satirical magazine Simplicissimus , but their drawing style involved a single line technique often in conjunction with broad, flat areas of colour.



NEWSPAPER REPORTER : " And now, Sir, your epitaph ? "
SHADE OF ROBERT EMMET : " NOT YET ! "

fig. 3

In view of his use of symbolism, Booth's style was more akin to the traditional nineteenth century British and American approach to political cartooning.

Towards the end of his spell as editor (he died at the age of thirty-four), the tone of Dublin Opinion acquired a more biting and, at times, a less tolerant edge. His themes remained largely the same, continually showing politicians as fools and con-men, and Ireland and her people in perpetual despair. A later cartoon shows Ireland as the very dejected "Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe" with her children squabbling and fighting around her. It lacked any sense of hope or humour with the caption, "She didn't know what to do". His intolerance and sense of bitterness was most apparent in a number of swipes he made at Britain and, more surprisingly, at the Jews. A few cartoons he produced portrayed Moses as maniacally mean and avaricious.

Sadly, due to his early death, it is impossible to say how Arthur Booth may have developed as a mature cartoonist, but the work that he produced in his short career provided invaluable groundwork for his successors. His tremendous input into the establishment of Dublin Opinion was of major importance in establishing a tradition of political cartooning in twentieth century Ireland.

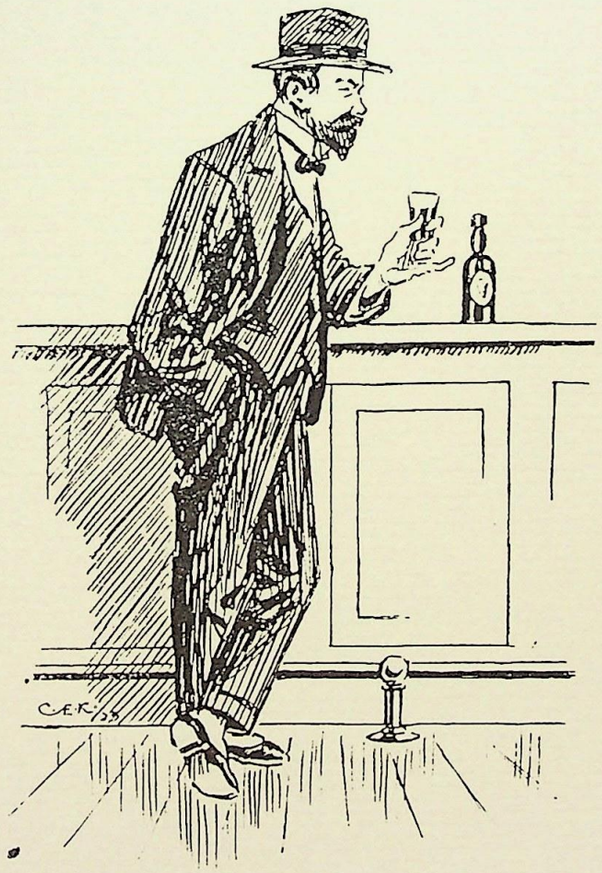
Chapter Two

Charles Kelly was only twenty-one when he helped Arthur Booth to found Dublin Opinion. In his first four years he appears to have been very much overshadowed by Booth, in his ideas as well as his style and approach. As he was learning his trade as he went along, this was perhaps not a bad thing. He had four years in which to get to grips with his profession but without the pressure that Booth had to cope with regarding editorial decisions and the general co-ordination and organisation that is involved with running a magazine.

Following Booth's death, Kelly was able to take over the charge of the design of the magazine and to competently and professionally develop and improve his own cartooning style. This development is very distinct and the tremendous improvement in Kelly's overall approach is quite evident throughout his career. Initially, his style was very naïve and his basic draughtsmanship quite underdeveloped (fig. 4). One of his earliest published cartoons demonstrate his lack of experience or confidence with sketchy, tentative lines which when combined with all the extraneous background detail, provide a rather indistinct overall image. He was overconcious of carefully depicting the setting in which he placed his subjects and he included all kinds irrelavant detail on the surrounding landscape and architecture. His figures were rather stiff and awkward and he obviously had considerable difficulty in handling them. Several figures in the same cartoon would be posed in exactly the same position.

" Are you one of the new Civic Guard ? "
" Yes."
" My house has been broken into. Can you tell me where I'll find a policeman ? "

fig. 4

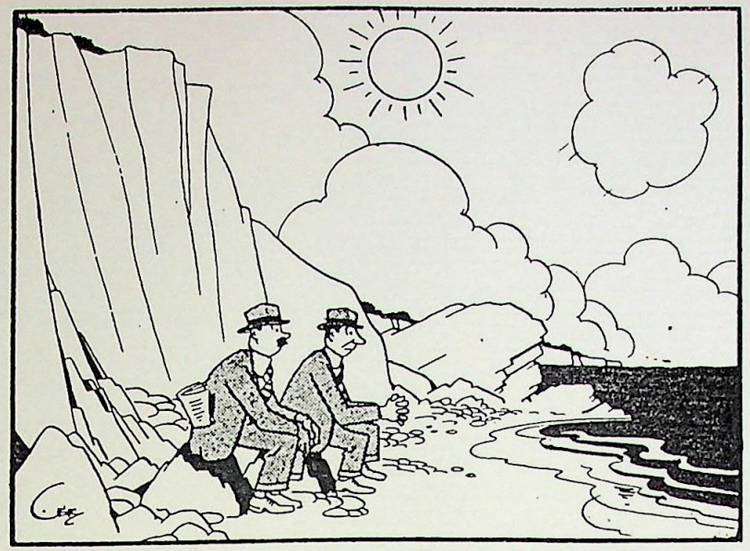


MR. GAVAN DUFFY RALLIES HIS PARTY.
(Mr. Gavan Duffy has stated in the House that he belongs to a party of one.)

fig. 5

These early drawings were not cartoons as such, in the sense that there was no humour in the actual drawing, they were just too strained at this stage. Any humour that came across was entirely in the caption. With experience however, his style rapidly loosened up (fig. 5) and showed a marked improvement in little over a year. His lines displayed a tremendous increase in confidence and he became less interested in accurate depiction of a setting and more interested in providing a humourous image. His love of detail did not however diminish and he simply found an outlet for it through more anecdotal and incidental detail, by depicting events going on, behind and around the main subject. At the same time he moved over to a more simple outline style and used less hatching and shading. He still loved to accurately depict architectural settings but because of his cleaner, clearer drawing style he became more coherent and less cluttered than before (fig. 6)

His sense of composition also improved drastically over the years. He became increasingly aware of relationships between figures and their surroundings, the overall balance within an image and the pattern created by the various elements in a drawing. Simplicity became of primary consideration and his approach to figures and faces evolved in tune with international cartooning in the twentieth century. In particular, humourous exaggerated features, round eyes and childlike proportions which were popularised in the 1900's, initially with the work of artists such as Frederick Opper (fig. 7). This approach basically involved producing "figures of fun", rather than the various malevolent savage characters who popularised past generations of cartoons.



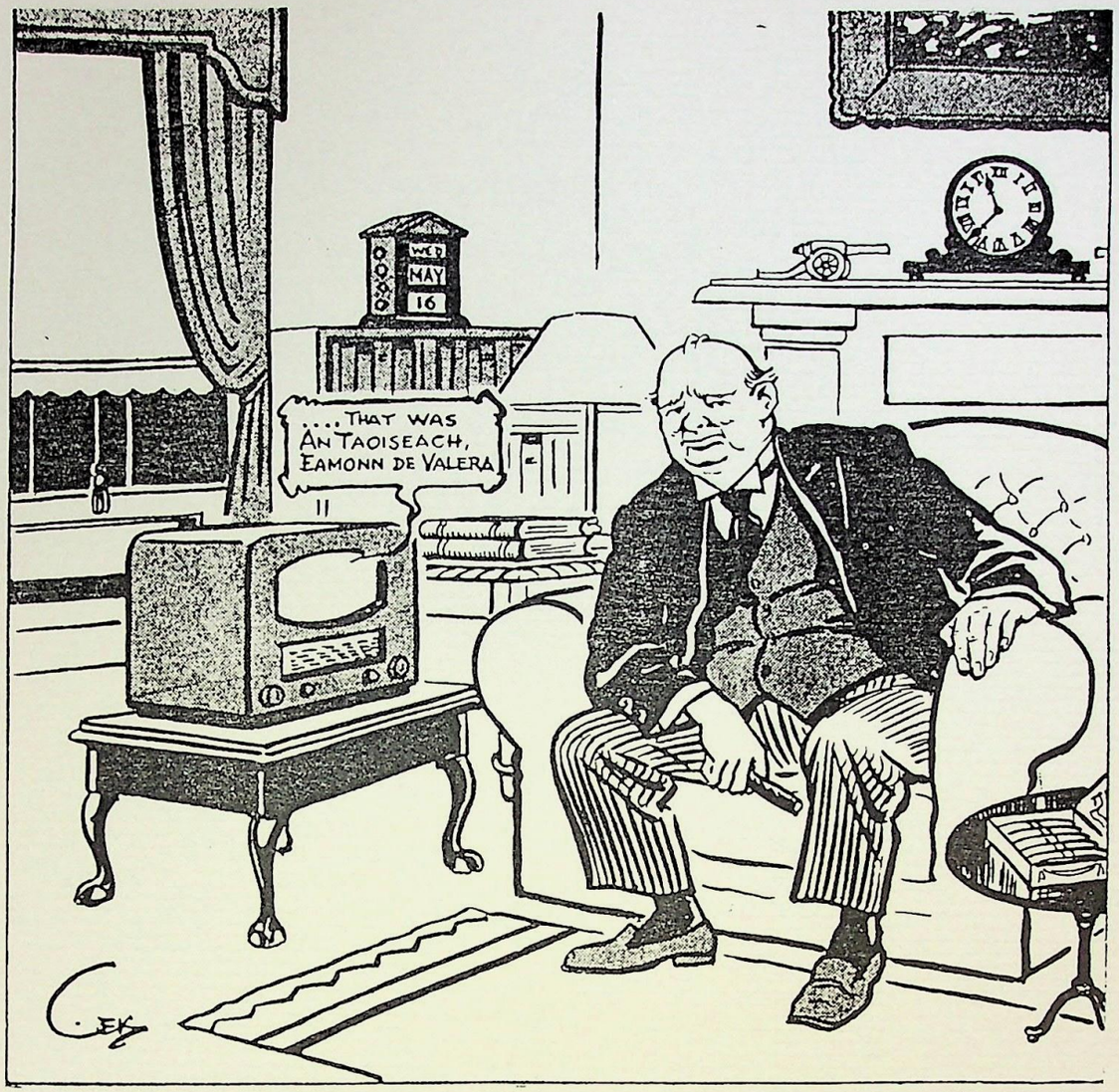
FIRST T.D.: "I'm not enjoyin' the holidays one bit. I can't help thinkin' how easy it would be for the Long Fellow to manufacture something to throw us into a General Election."

fig. 6

fig. 7

There seems to be no specific formula behind Kelly's approach to cartooning. Once he had developed confidence and a mature technique he varied his style and way of working according to the incident or time he was dealing with. His drawing at times demonstrates considerable influence from prevailing international trends and Kelly seems to have enjoyed assimilating these and applying them to his own work.
For example, he displays at various times in the 1940's influence from David Low with his bold, flowing black lines (fig. 8). In the 1950's he periodically adopted the slick approach to drawing, popular in Britain and America at that time, with rapid economic curved and straight lines (fig. 9). In these cartoons, however, the humour is subdued along with Kelly's own personality.

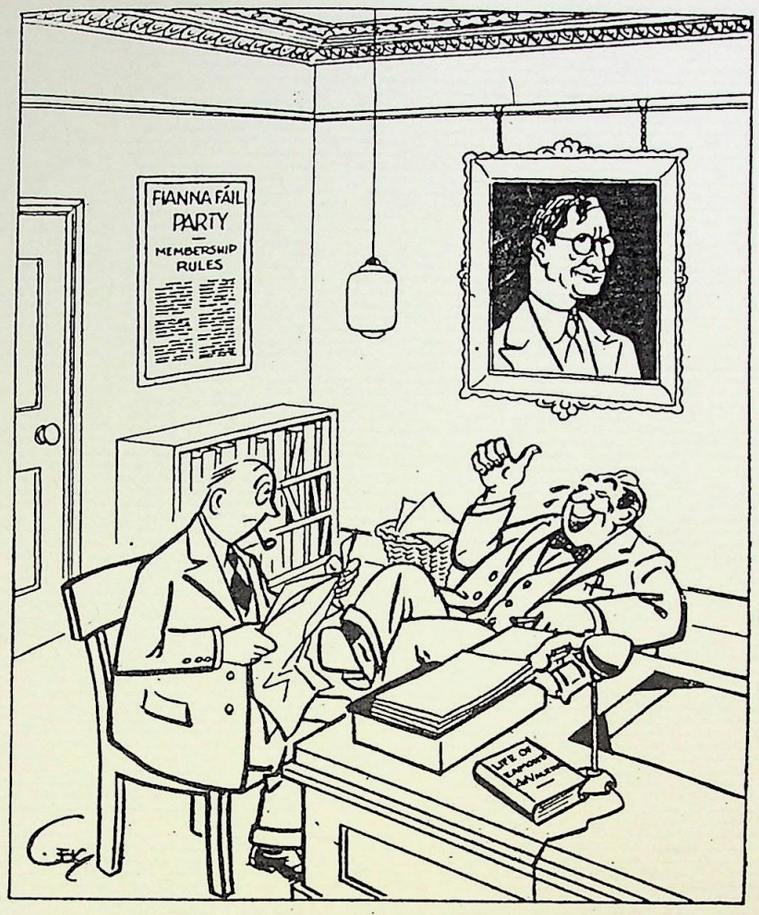
The cartoons, however, which are most representative of Kelly's own mature style, those which best reflect his personal achievements as a political cartoonist and those in which he appears to have the most fun, are those full page (and sometimes double page) drawings with no focal poimt, but lots of activity, lots of detail and lots of people rushing about, which he produced throughout his career from the 1930's onwards (figs.10, 11,12). These cartoons allowed him to play around with what he enjoyed most, in particular people and detail. His sense of humour and delight in drawing are most evident in these cartoons. They are packed with detail, but there is no sense of awkwardness or clutter and they represent Kelly at his most confident. His use of tone was very



June, 1945

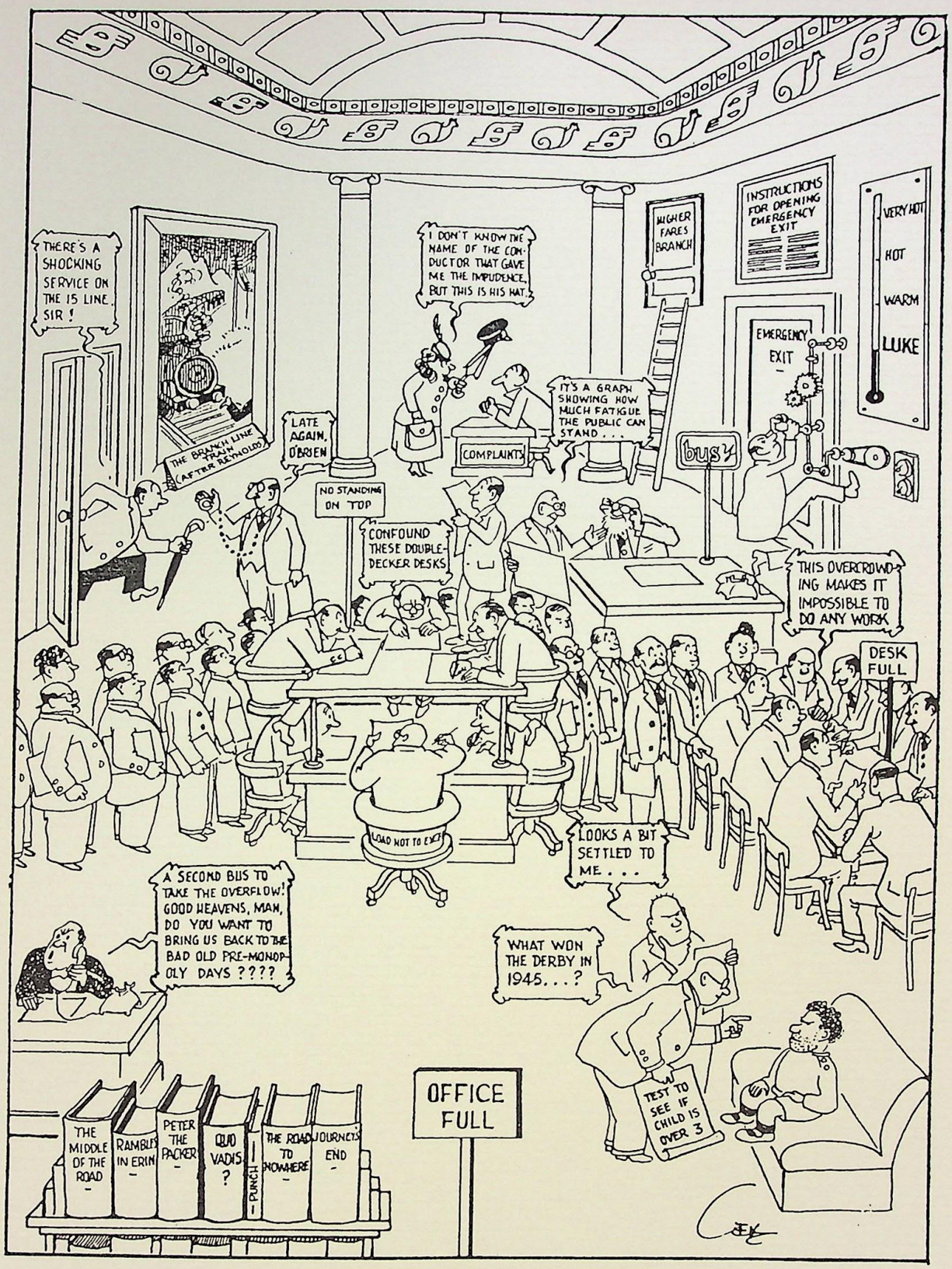
"LISTEN AND LEARN"

fig. 8



Fianna Fail Organiser : " Don't make me laugh ! We'll walk the 1950 *General Election with ' Who'll keep you out of the Atomic War ? ' "*

fig. 9

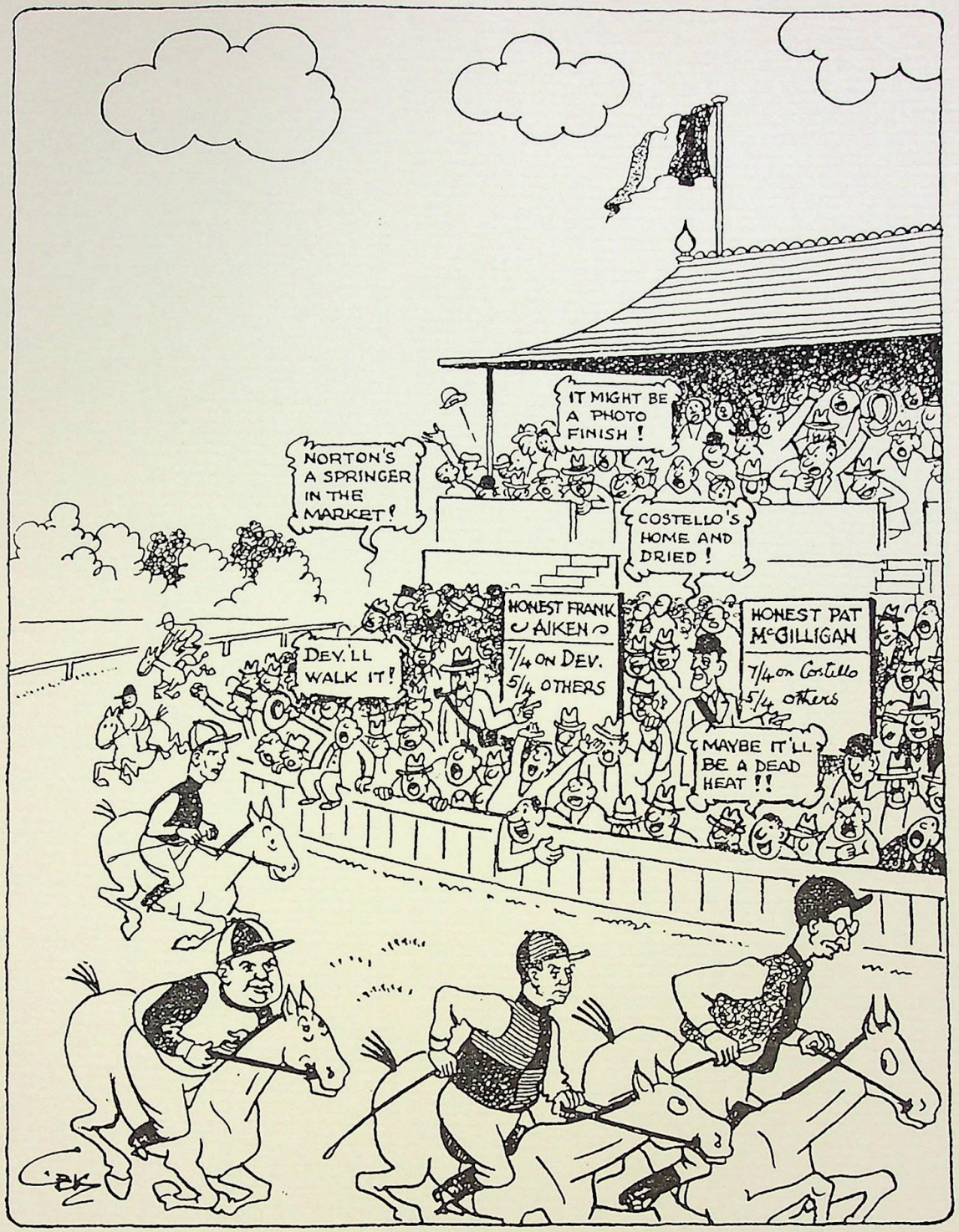


THE OFFICE OF CORAS IOMPAIR EIREANN

fig. 10

THE MINISTER WANTS THE FILE

fig. 11



ELECTION DERBY DAY — JUNE, 1951

fig. 12

thoughtful. He used black, white and one tone of grey in all of his work, not for shaping three-dimensional forms, but purely to create an overall balanced image and dynamic pattern.

The humour in these cartoons was partly in the drawing style itself, in the activity it contained therein and also in the captions - both the titles and the numerous captions within the drawing. This approach is highly reminiscent of the cartoons by the American, John McCutcheon, as published in the Chicago Herald Record in 1900, where he displays the same love of detail and busy activity (fig.13).

Kelly's favourite subjects for lampooning were government offices; their inefficiency and excessive and ridiculous bureaucracy. He also took enormous delight in mocking those who took themselves and their position in society too seriously. His approach was very much in tune with the original intentions of Dublin Opinion, with a fairly gentle, but nonetheless very perceptive humour. Other major themes which recurred in his work were cross-border smuggling, emmigration (a major problem for a succession of Irish Governments) and general changes in Irish society.


STATE HOUSE
SPECTACLE FACTORY
ANTI-IMPERIAL LEAGUE BUILDING
WELCOME TO OUR ROYAL GUEST.
SYMPHONY CONCERT
BACK BAY DEBUTANTES IN PICTURE HATS
READ THE BOSTON RECORD ALL THE LATEST NEWS BY TELEPATHY

fig. 13

Chapter Three

Poliitical cartoons in Ireland throughout the twenties and thirties, as represented by the output of Booth and Kelly, can be said to have followed by and large those trends set by the larger body of cartoonists working in Britain and America. This is true both in terms of style and in terms of the kinds of targets they were commenting upon. Cartoons appearing in Punch and The New Yorker would lampoon government bodies and statesmen in the same way that Kelly and Booth ridiculed such targets in Ireland.

There were distinct differences, however, in their choice of subject matter over certain issues. The Second World War, for instance, was a very major source of inspiration for a great many British cartoonists. In the mid and late thirties David Low and John Heartfield were producing very heavy and penetrating satire. Adolf Hitler alone was the subject of hundreds of caricatures over the war years. Hitler was indeed the subject of a few Irish cartoons - the first one, by Kelly, appeared in November 1933 and was entitled "High Treason in Germany - The Child Who Played the Jews Harp" and depicted Hitler glowering over a small boy, but in general, Irish cartoonists barely mentioned events and personalities involved in the war, other than in a detached or light-hearted way and there are several reasons for this.

Despite the effects of increased costs and shortages, visitors to Ireland during The Emergency (as the Second World War was referred to in Ireland) saw Dublin existing almost as if in isolation surrounded by a changing international scene: meat was still available for those who could afford it and

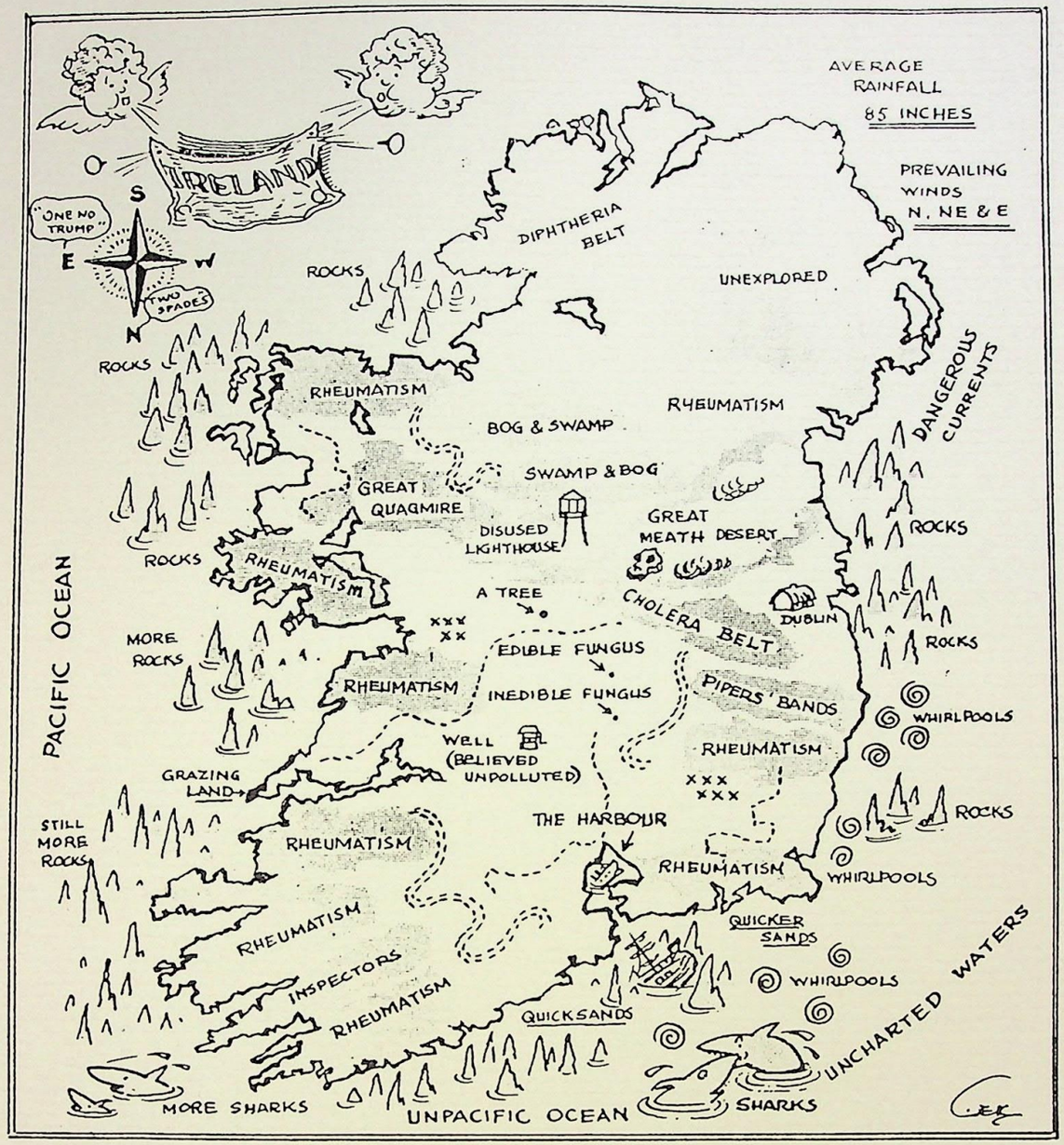
social life continued.

A cartoon by Sean Coughlan (a cartoonist who emerged in the thirties and whose primary influence appears to have been from Charles Kelly) in 1940, which referred to rationing which had not yet affected Ireland, showed three genteel ladies at afternoon tea. Their hostess dangled a sugar lump, attached to a piece of string, over the cup of one of them and asks "How many dips, my dear?".

Peter Kavanagh, brother of the poet Patrick, wrote of The Emergency:

"Dublin almost seemed to have a special duty in a world gone grey and regimented to preserve the gaieties and pleasures that we felt had vanished from everywhere else" (5).

The attitude of the times was to emphasise the goodness of simple things rather than the lack or reduced availability of superfluous luxuries. In fact, a feeling of general well-being prevailed, at least to the extent that Ireland was a lot better off than most of her neighbours and friends. "Cautious Cartography" (fig.14), by Kelly in 1940, reflected these attitudes quite graphically. Although his illustration portrays Ireland as ridden with disease, danger and wreckage, he suggested in the caption that Ireland "still looks more attractive than the rest of Europe". The front cover of The Leader magazine in December 1939, in one of its rare cartoons, showed de Valera and Cosgrave crossing the floor of



(*August*, 1940)

Cautious Cartography

(In the present state of Civilisation.)

FEELING that the present unrest in Europe may have been largely caused by the well intended, but highly mistaken policy pursued by countries of boasting about their natural advantages and attractions, a policy which has had the not unnatural result of exciting the cupidity of other countries, our Grangegorman Cartographer has designed the above map of Ireland, which is calculated to discourage the inhabitants, much less strangers. The trouble is, he feels, that, even as depicted, the country still looks more attractive than the rest of Europe.

Main Goat Tracks = = = = = =
Unreliable Trails - - - - - - - - -
Miasma x x x x x x x x x x x x x
Almost habitable areas ||||||||||||||||||
Scale—60 inches to the mile.

fig. 14

the Dail to shake hands and bury the Civil War hatchet for once and for all. Unity to defend Irish sovereignty for most people helped to dissipate bitterness inherited from the early days of Irish independence, except for the few diehard Republicans in the I.R.A. who tried to make common cause with Germany. The years 1939 to 1945 were experienced as a time when Ireland withdrew to some degree from the reality of contemporary history and more importantly, when her own history and maintenance of her recently won independece were of primary concern.

That is not to say that the war in Europe did not affect Ireland. There was restriction on information, rationing of basic foodstuffs and the economy as a whole entered a period of decline. The many unavailable, imported raw materials reduced industrial potential and so employment in industry declined.

Changes occurring in the 1940's included increased rejection of the rural life, emmigration due primarily to increased mechanisation and the lure of the urban world as seen through magazines and films, and the general belief that a better life was available elsewhere. This led to the increasing rejection of the Irish language (people in rural areas wanted their children to speak English) and the subsequent Gaelic revivalism.

It was issues such as these and others including the formation of the Blue Shirt party, smuggling of cattle and other

commodities across the border and the establishment of the Welfare State, which occupied cartoonists in th thirties and forties. Bill Beckett or "Maskee" (his pseudonym) was a very accomplished cartoonist who began working for Dublin Opinion in the 1930's. His very fine pen line produced amusing little playful figures with enlarged noses and little round eyes that were most characteristic of Punch and The New Yorker cartoons at this time. Political issues were not his primary concern but he did turn out many relevant cartoons throughout his career.

On the subject of the formation of the Blue Shirt Party he drew a sequence of cartoons illustrating how "the bewildering growth of political parties wearing differently coloured shirts may cause the inoffensive citizen to don clothing that will lead him to trouble" (here he showed a frantic street brawl) "such a state might necessitate a startling modification in mens fashions" (men with no shirts).

In his commentary on the Blue Shirt Movement, he dealt only with the antipathy felt for the Movement by Fianna Fail and ignored the details of their manifesto and political objectives. A cartoon by Charles Kelly on the same theme is called "Faux Pas" shows an irate de Valera in a mans outfitters with a salesman suggesting: What about a nice blue shirt, sir ?"

W.H. Conn, who also emerged in the thirties and in fact remained working for Dublin Opinion for longer than anyone other than Charles Kelly, produced many painstakingly detailed and overtly sentimental images in a very dense cross-hatching

tecnique. His favourite topics were landscapes with peasant figures, pretty girls, barefoot children, cows and cottages. His subjects, were again, obviously largely unrelated to politics but during The Emergency he turned out a few melodramatic drawings representing the suffering of Europe under the Nazis. "The World and His Wife" and "The March of Time" from 1940, however, do convey a certain amount of genuine sympathy and feeling.

The World Economic Conference provided a source of various perceptive cartoon comments reflecting the lack of confidence the public had in the ability or commitment of the deligates. In 1933, Conn showed two old men lazing on a park bench one saying to the other "Come on, lets do something, this isn't the Economic Conference." Kelly, on the same theme, drew two top-hatted deligates leaving the conference hall, one asking his colleague what his platitude was on the question of currency.

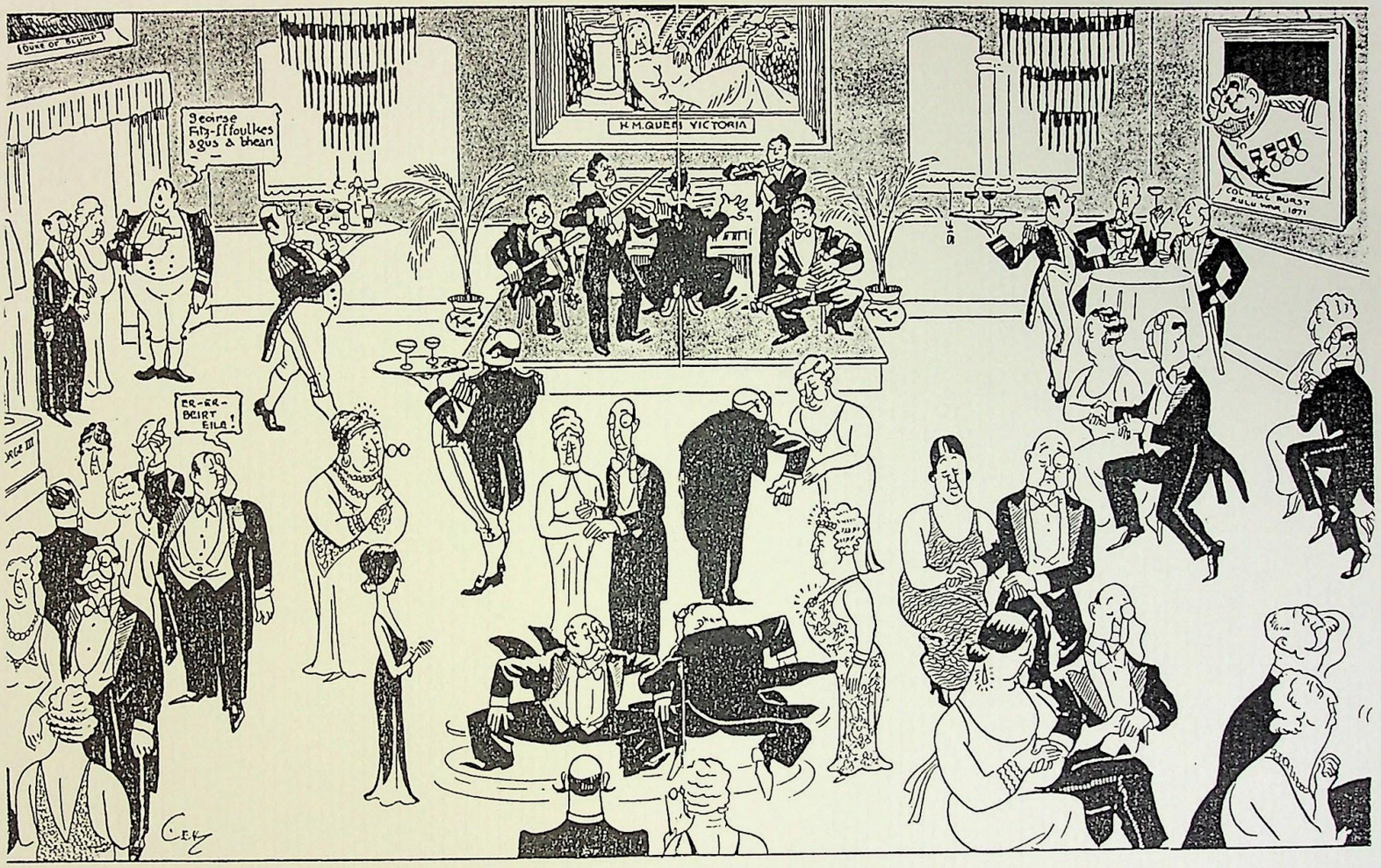
The League of Nations, which Ireland joined in 1923, attracted similar kinds of responses. In April 1934 a cartoon appeared which had the secretary of the League of Nations asking the chairman what to do as three of the interpreters were absent due to illness and he responds by telling him that that session is only about disarmament.

Many cartoons appeared in response to the increase in the number of motor cars on the streets of Dubin: "The times we live in" by Kelly, showed how when a car backfired beside the O'Connell monument, all the figures on it dived for cover.

Another one shows a concerned Garda asking a violently trembling man if he has just received bad news, but the reply is simply that he has just stepped of a bus.

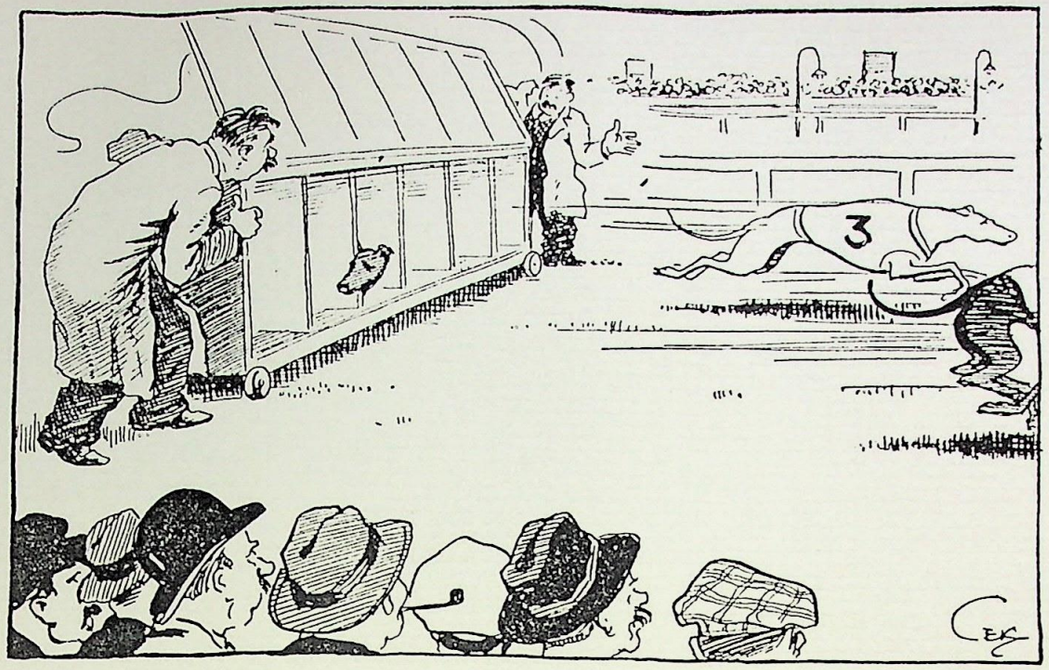
The increase in urbanisation, the decine in interest in the Irish language and the subsequent campaigns for Gaelic revivalism inspired a variety of reactions. Cartoons on these themes include from Kelly in 1940 a suggestion for Gaelicising dog races with Irish wolfhounds racing from round round towers. Round towers were used frequently as a symbol for Gaelicisation. Another example is one showing an imaginary view of de Valera's new housing schemes with row upon row of round towers each with its own front lawn. Taking the Gaelicisation to an extreme, Kelly produced the ridiculous but highly amusing image of a "Ceilidhe in the Kildare Street Club" (fig.15). Numerous cartoons appeared, more specifically on the subject of th Irish language. One example shows two old women, "native speakers", sitting on the grass beside the coast looking out to sea and one expresses her concern that "if something isn't done soon, we'll be losing the language from contact with thim French fish pirates".

The smuggling of cattle and other commodities over the border the eaborate and imaginative schemes and the ingenuity of smugglers was a tremendous source of amusement for years, for anyone not directy affected by it. "Maskee" drew a crowd of women all crossing the border together and all wearing extravagent feathery hats which transported a variety of poultry past the bewildered Customs officer. A cartoon by Charles Kelly, which appeared in 1935 (fig.16), refers to an



CEILIDHE IN THE KILDARE STREET CLUB

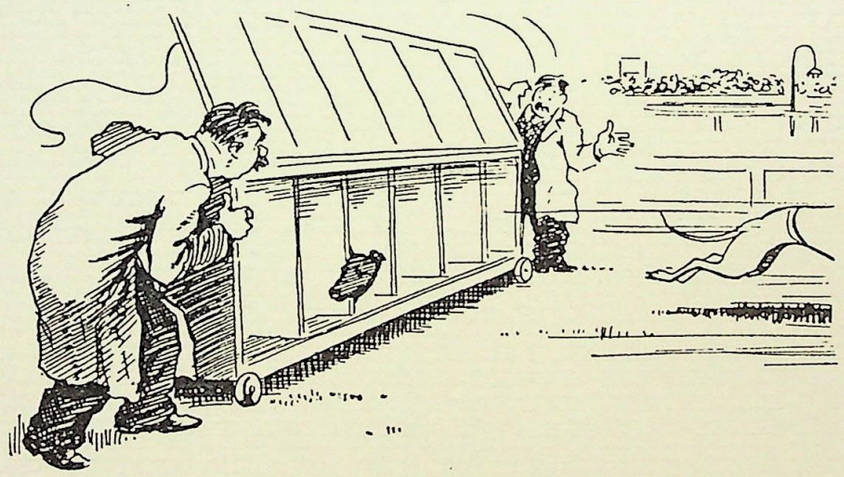
fig. 15



THAT GREYHOUND SMUGGLING.

ATTENDANT (*on Northern Ireland Track*): "He's afraid to come out. I think he's spotted a Customs Officer in the crowd!"

fig. 16



"Hey, you! What do you think this is? An air-raid shelter?"

fig. 17

earlier series showing various methods of getting racing greyhounds across the border. This particular one shows a greyhound at the start of a race, nervous of leaving his box fearing that he has spotted a Customs official in the crowd. The same image was used again in 1945 (fig.17) with a caption relating to air-raids.

Emigration, particularly to America, was another topic which provoked commentary from cartoonists for many years. William St.John Glenn, who had been with Dublin Opinion from its early days, remarked on emigration as early as 1929 with a picture of a young man in the west of Ireland expressing the hope to his wife that "there's truth in the rumour that the country's at last becomimg prosperous. It'll give us a chance to save up for our passage to America".

Although Glenn did produce a number of cartoons relating to social and political issues, the principal topic of his drawings was his view of the frivolous preoccupations of women, most of which had quite inconsequential captions and were principally an excuse for him to draw pretty girls.

The establishment of the Welfare State also demanded a response from cartoonists and was responded to with many witty images. The June 1935 issue of Dublin Opinion published a cartoon which showed a concerned father saying to his daughter "But me dear, can you hope to marry into a well-off family like that? There's four iv them in the house drawing govermint assistance".

Other topics which continually occupied the minds of cartoonists were the poor state of the economy, the general incompetence, laziness and apathy of T.D.'s and other statesmen. One major contributor to Dublin Opinion who produced numerous cartoons on these themes was John O'Dea. He was engaged by Dublin Opinion in the 1940's but his ability as a draughtsman was limited. He drew rounded figures and shapes with strong bold lines and solid areas of black and white but no tone. He created many cartoons of government figures and loved to show them in utterly absurd and totally ridiculous situations. The Dailshoi Ballet (fig.18) is one particularly prime example. In 1956, he presented readers with a game of "Political Snakes and Ladders" and assured them that "anyone can play". This cartoon, which used the format of the snakes and ladders board, showed how progress through life in politics was dictated by a mixture of luck, chance, opportunism and corruption with very little skill or talent associated.

O'Dea found the urbanisation of Ireland and reduced interest in traditional occupations a rich source of material: a seanachee* being ignored by his large family when the T.V. is on (fig.19) is one example and another shows a poster heralding the arrival of an American movie in the Aran Islands with the reassuring message for locals that there would be subtitles in Gaelic (fig.20).

Censorship was another issue which was the subject of much debate in the 1940's and 50's. O'Dea produced a cartoon in 1958 which had two cleaning ladies looking at an off-cut of

* A traditional Irish storyteller.

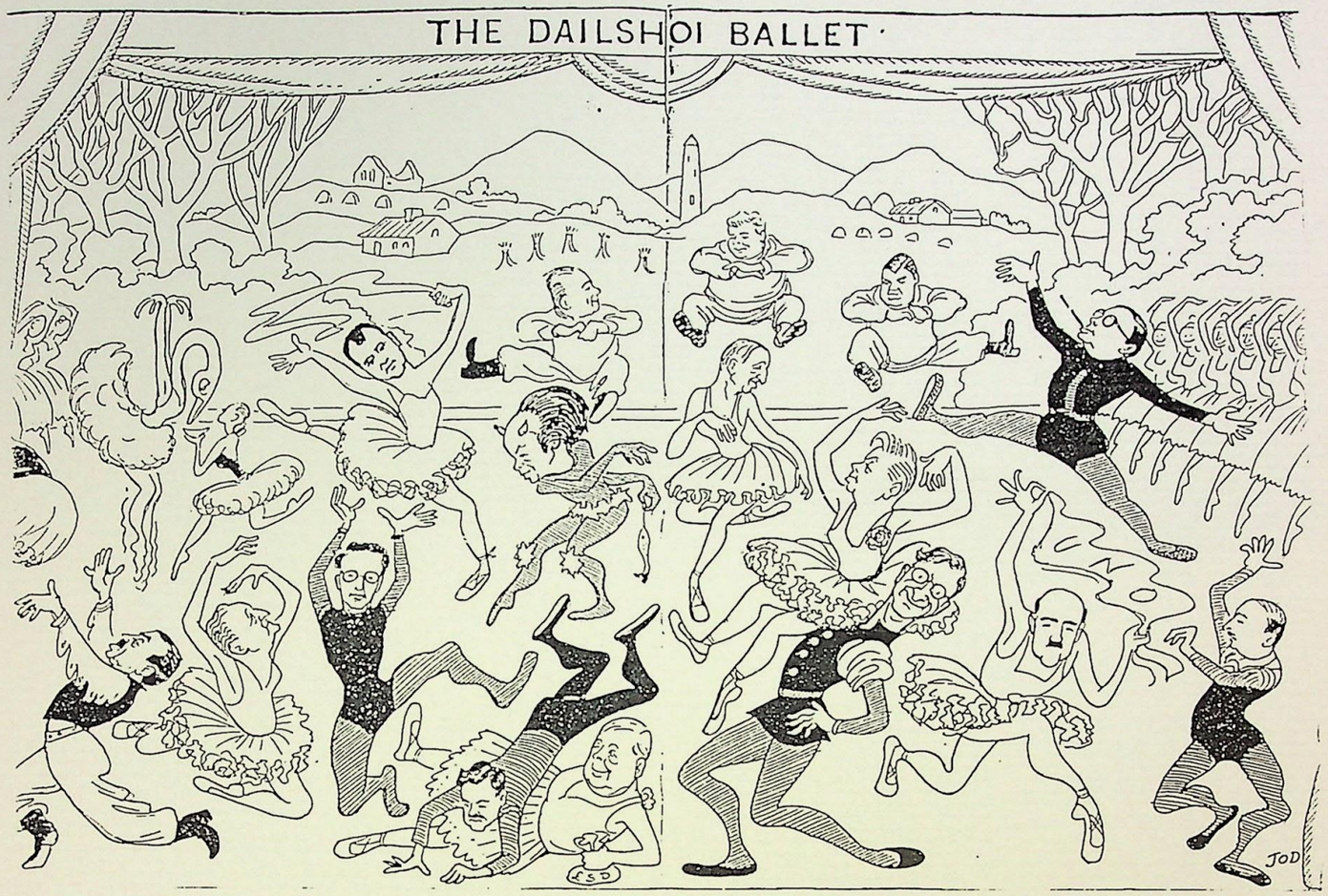
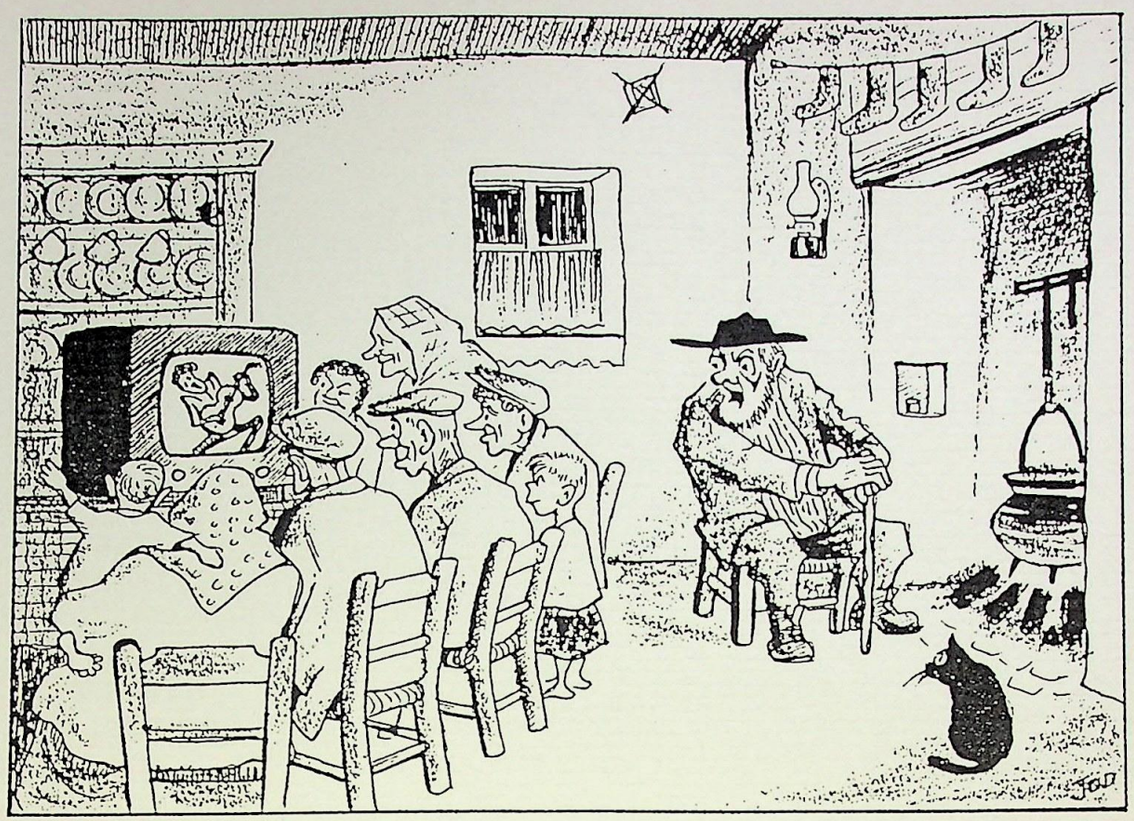


fig. 18



"Bí fear ann fadó agus fadó a bí——*will ye listen to me?*"

fig. 19

fig. 20

film from the Censors waste bin and one remarks to the other "I agree with him - the brazen Hollywood hussy".

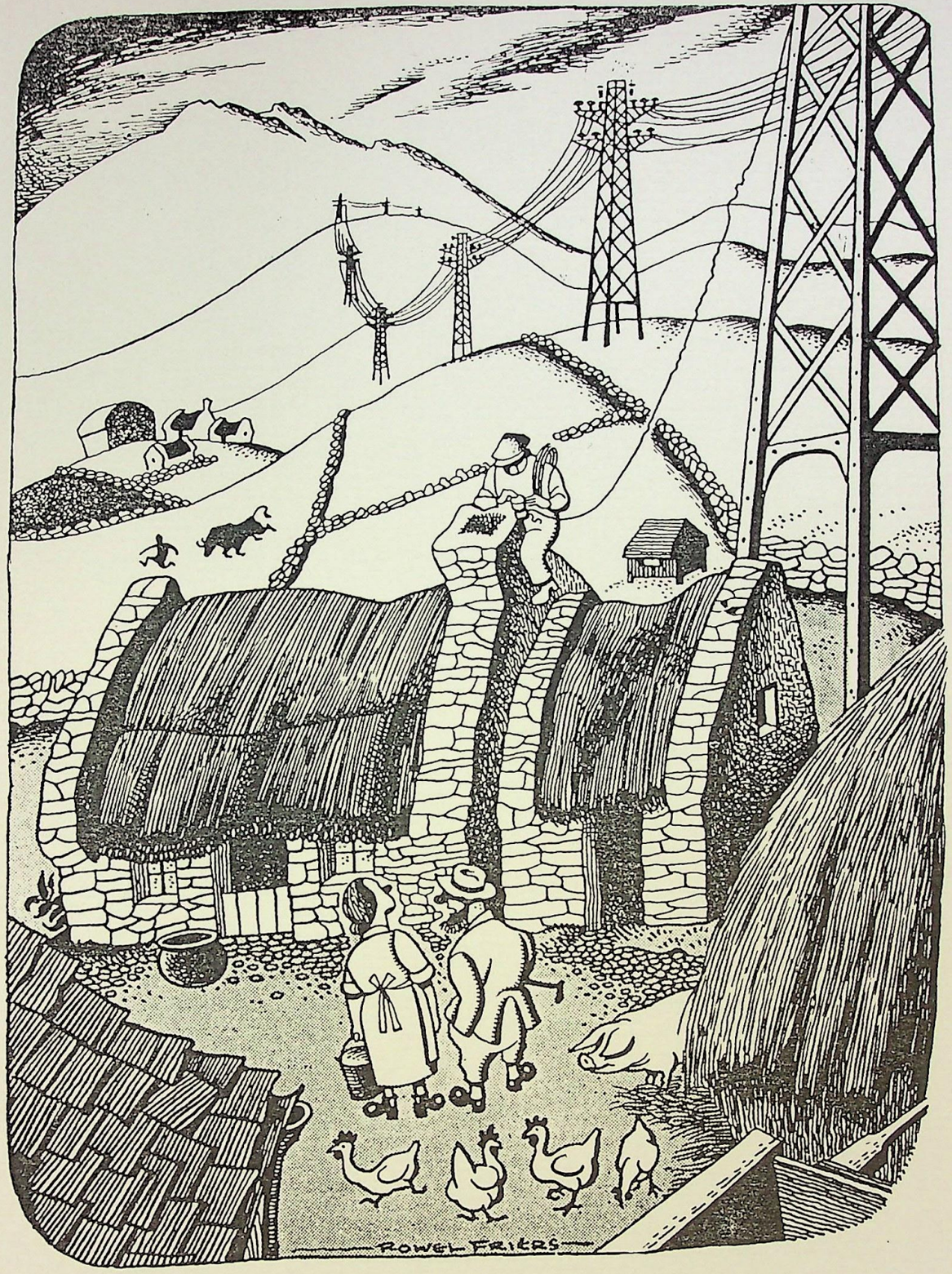
By and large, cartoons published in Ireland during the 1950's had little to distinguish them from those of the 1920's, 30's and 40's. Commentary was mostly on the same kinds of topics: government and civil service inefficiency and the depressed state of the country. The only distinct difference from earlier cartoons was a stylistic one - the slicker approach to drawing of the 1950's in Punch and The New Yorker was being adopted by some of Irelands cartoonists. This slight change and the arival on the scene of one or two new cartoonists, in particular Rowel Friers, helped to modernise the face of Irisn cartooning.

For Ireland, the 1950's was a time of economic hardship and increased emigration. Initially the post-war period had been marked by economic growth resulting from increased spending at home as the austerity of the war years declined, and from a rise in the number of exports to Britain. Schools were built so were houses, roads, airports and harbours but the 1950's were generally felt to reflect a stagnation in Ireland's development that was unacceptable.

In 1958, T.K. Whitaker, the Secretary of the Department of Finance, wrote a report which was to prove a powerful stimulus to new thinking on Ireland's economic future. Whitaker once said that his new outlook had been inspired by the cartoon which appeared on the front cover of September 1957

"Get to work! They're saying I've no future."

fig. 21



" This improvin' of rural life is wonderful. . . . Now, the children 'll be able to study till all hours of the night for the Civil Service."

fig. 22

issue of Dublin Opinion. The cartoon showed Ireland as a downhearted Kathleen ni Houlihan asking a fortune teller if she has a future (fig.21).

Social changes in the 1950's which were in part responsible for the general crisis,were making way for the economic regeneration and the further social and cultural changes of the 1960's and 70's. Society was becoming increasingly urban, modern communications systems were expanding and mass circulation periodicals were reaching a larger proportion of the population, all of which played a major part in brining the Irish people into contact with the social standards of more advanced consumer societies and thus raising their general expectations. A cartoon by Rowel Friers, (fig.22) showing a remote farmhouse being connected to the electricity supply, sums up much of the feeling of Ireland in the 1950's. The caption reads: "This improvin' of rural life is wonderful... now the childen'll be able to study till all hours for the civil service". The 1960's in Ireland were a period of economic revival and renewed vitaliy - traditional Ireland and its ideologies were being pushed aside and left behind. Consumerist values made rapid advances - more people had cars, modern detached houses, foreign holidays, T.V. sets, there were more upmarket restaurants, supermarkets and wine-bars but despite the improvements there was still bad planning, poor housing, severe poverty, drug abuse and vandalism. Much of the ideology that had sustained the Irish independent state was in crisis. The Taoiseach, Mr. Lemass, gave men and women to understand that the best way to serve

the national aim was to work for economic rewnewal. He saw this as the most practical form of nationalism, for it would make the Southern state more attractive to the Northern Unionist population which had good economic reasons for rejecting incorporation into a united Ireland.

Cartoonists, however, were not commenting on ideals such as these. By now cartoons (by Francis Drake) had begun to appear sporadically in The Irish Times and a few also appeared (by Bob Fannin) in Hibernia a current affairs magazine.

Francis Drake in 1965 was caricaturing T.D.'s, giving them grossly distorted and often malevolent faces. He liked to portray them as gangsters, drunks, evil manipulators and deviants.

Fannin's were variable in quality - some of them were quite amateurish - with erratic lines and lots of extraneous detail. Others, however, showed considerable competence with careful composition and flowing lines. The subjects he dealt with were very predictable: mostly routine jibes at T.D.'s, various other statesmen and government bodies.

Other issues of the day which were keeping cartoonists busy, included television (R.T.E. began broadcasting in 1962), supermarkets and the continuing depopulation of Ireland. John O'Dea produced a cartoon showing a nostalgic old man outside his thatched cottage in the West, reminiscing to a neighbour of the days when there were "five-hundred families

in this valley - everyone of them starving".

Evin Nolan, a latecomer to Dublin Opinion provided amusing commentary on space travel. In April 1965 he showed a cleaning woman in one of the Apollo laboratories where close-up photographs of the moon were being examined and remarked upon by scientists. "Of course it's covered in dust" she says" and if it wasn't for me this place would be the same".

The credit squeeze, Irelands' entry into the EEC, ever-increasing taxation, the conservation of Dublin, and the appearance of numerous new characterless office blocks were other topics which stirred reaction from cartoonists. Charles Kelly (who was still working in 1967) drew a view of the newly constructed Liberty Hall with a by-stander commenting that it was "taking liberties with the skyline".

Cartoons of the seventies continued in much the same way. Issues, such as the Campaign for Gaelicization, were once more in the news and in April 1970, Cogan, a new face in Hibernia Magazine, provided one of his action packed cartoons in response. Entitled the "GAA is to extend its social role", it showed a violent dance in progress, with all the participants dressed in various gaelic sports wear with glasses, footballs and bottles flying over-head. A notice on the wall reads "Jigs and reels only".

Dublin Opinion had finally ceased publication in 1967, mainly due to the shortage of competent or experienced cartoonists.

Newspapers were giving them little support or encouragement, and so for most Irish cartoonists in the seventies, payment was low and publication erratic. It is no surprise then that their work varied considerably in quality.

Chapter Four

The most surprising feature of political cartoons at this stage however was the lack of response to the troubles that erupted in the North. The main problem seems to have been their almost total lack of any detailed understanding of the situation. Commentary on Northern politics largely took the form of caricatures. The conflict there did throw up the kind of 'larger than life' figures (such as Bernadette Devlin and Ian Paisley) which are a caricaturists dream. Francis Drake, under his pseudonym ' Littleman ', produced an excellent series of caricatures in his very expressive free drawing style in 1978. Cogan and Jim Fitzpatrick in Hibernia reflected the most common view held by Southerners on Northern Ireland affairs which was that the Republicans could do no wrong. Bernadette Devlin was portrayed almost like a saint (fig.23) in her support for Republican isssues and William Craig the Northern Ireland Minister for Home Affairs was shown as a self-interested bully.

A cartoon by Cogan, in Hibernia, showed Ms. Devlin in confrontation with the Reverend Ian Paisley and presented the image of the Ulster Loyalists as a scowling, menacing crowd of sash wearing agitators. The smiling Republicans on the other hand who include, nuns and priests, are shown idolizing their righteous leader. (fig.24)

From 1975, cartoonists south of the border tended to ignore Nothern Ireland. The entry of the Provisional IRA into the conflict complicated the issue. Support here for the Irish ideal of unification was not yet diminished so to have attacked IRA campaigns may have been seen as sympathizing

BERNADETTE DEVLIN

fig. 23

"Change lieders and we'll fight you all over again."

fig. 24

with the British Government and the Ulster Loyalists but to have attacked Britain too agressively may have been seen as condoning the use of free force (4).

Rowel Friers, the regular Saturday cartoonist with the Belfast Telegraph, is one of Ireland's longest surviving and most popular cartoonists. Several books entirely comprising of his cartoons, as well as several illustrated by him, have a steady market in Northern Ireland. His first published work was for "Pro Tanto Quid" (the Queens University "rag mag") and his first paid work was for the Portsmouth Evening News, Blighty, London Opinion, Men Only and Punch prior to his long association with Dublin Opinion and other papers.

In these early cartoons he demonstrated a highly developed sense of composition and design along with annate fondness for detail. He did not however overburden them with the cumbersome and laboured detail of Charles Kelly's early cartoons. Friers dealt with it in a much more decorative way, creating patterns and decorations from shading, tone and texture.

He also shared Kelly's love for anecdotal detail and produced many cartoons full of energy and action but mostly with no direct reference to anything topical - themes he favoured included cowboys, Mexicans and pirates (fig.25).

His early work for the Belfast Telegraph was more topical but despite including some mild political commentary it was

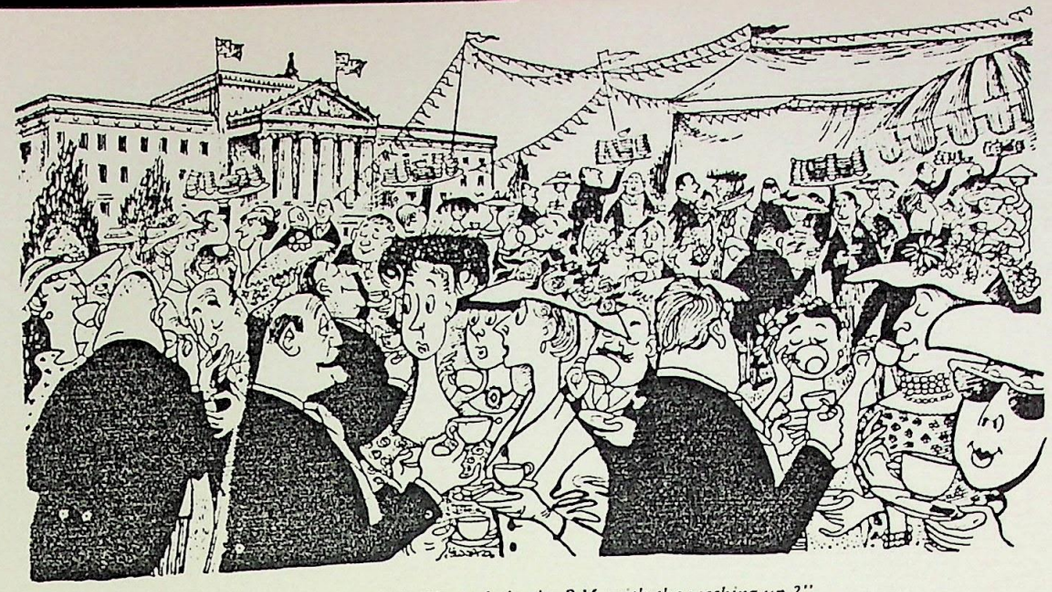

"THEY'LL BE MAD WHEN THEY DISCOVER WE DIDN'T MANAGE TO GET A TURKEY"

Fig. 25

similar in style and approach to his "Dublin Opinion" work. He drew scenes of overcrowded beaches and garden parties, instead of disputes and demonstrations, at Stormont (fig.26).

He was however deeply affected by the crisis in the seventies and this was reflected in his work as the troubles deepened and Northern Ireland became rapidly entrenched in violence and bitter conflict. Initialy he dealt with the situation by choosing aspects and angles that he could treat in his characteristic lighthearted style without tackling politicians or their standpoints directly. "The Song fro Europe" from 1973 (the year Britian and Ireland entered the EEC) shows Northern Ireland polititians squabbling with each other in front of the microphone (fig.27). He also liked to give his characters humourous and uncharactistic dialogue - on the subject of the Olympic Games he drew IRA men reading a newspaper about an RUC crackshot team competing in the games and Friers has one of the terrorists asking the other why they had not thought of sending a team themselves.

He gives the impression through his cartoons of trying desperately to keep a sence of humour about the dire political and social situation in Northern Ireland, but there are inevitably occasions when his anger, frustration and sheer dispair bubble over and then he produces graphic and extremely emotional responses.



"I suppose we should offer to help the P.M. with the washing up ?"

fig. 26

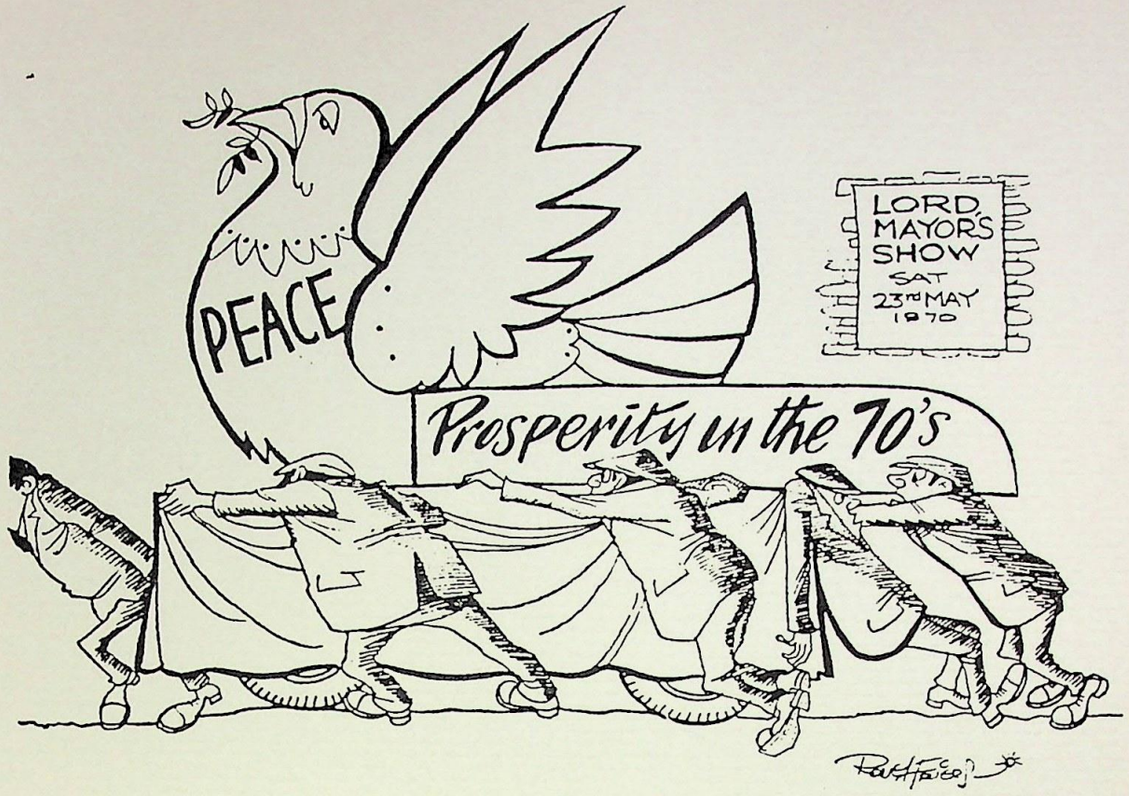
A Song for Europe

fig. 27

His growing sence of bitterness and dispair towards the perpetraters of violence can be traced through his cartoon in the early '70s. For the Lord Mayor's show in 1970 he drew a float featuring a giant dove of peace with the words " Prosperity in the '70's" painted on its platform. The dialogue, from one of the group of men trying to push the float, reads "It should be a winner if we could get it to go". (fig.28)

Later that same year he produced an image of the Red Hand of Ulster (the loyalists's symbol) with its fingers burned and neatly bandaged. Behind this image lie the smoking and smoldering remains of blown up buildings (fig.29). The following year in response to unrelenting vicious terrorisms throughout Northern Ireland "The Red Hands of Ulster" are drawn dripping with blood and wielding sticks of dynamite and hand-guns. The background again is a scene of gross distruction (fig.30).

"The road to La Mon" and "The Return of Frankenstein", following particularly vicious terrorist attacks or ghoulish images using the legendary figures the Grim Reaper and Frankenstein (figs. 31&32). The nature of the imagery that he employed for these cartoons was very crude - the characterization of Frankenstein and the Grim Reaper lack any of the subtlety of his more lighthearted imagery. The drawing is heavy with thick black lines and the entire image area is very densely



"It should be a winner if we can get it to go."

fig. 28

THE RED HAND OF ULSTER

fig. 29.

THE RED HANDS OF ULSTER, 1971

fig. 30

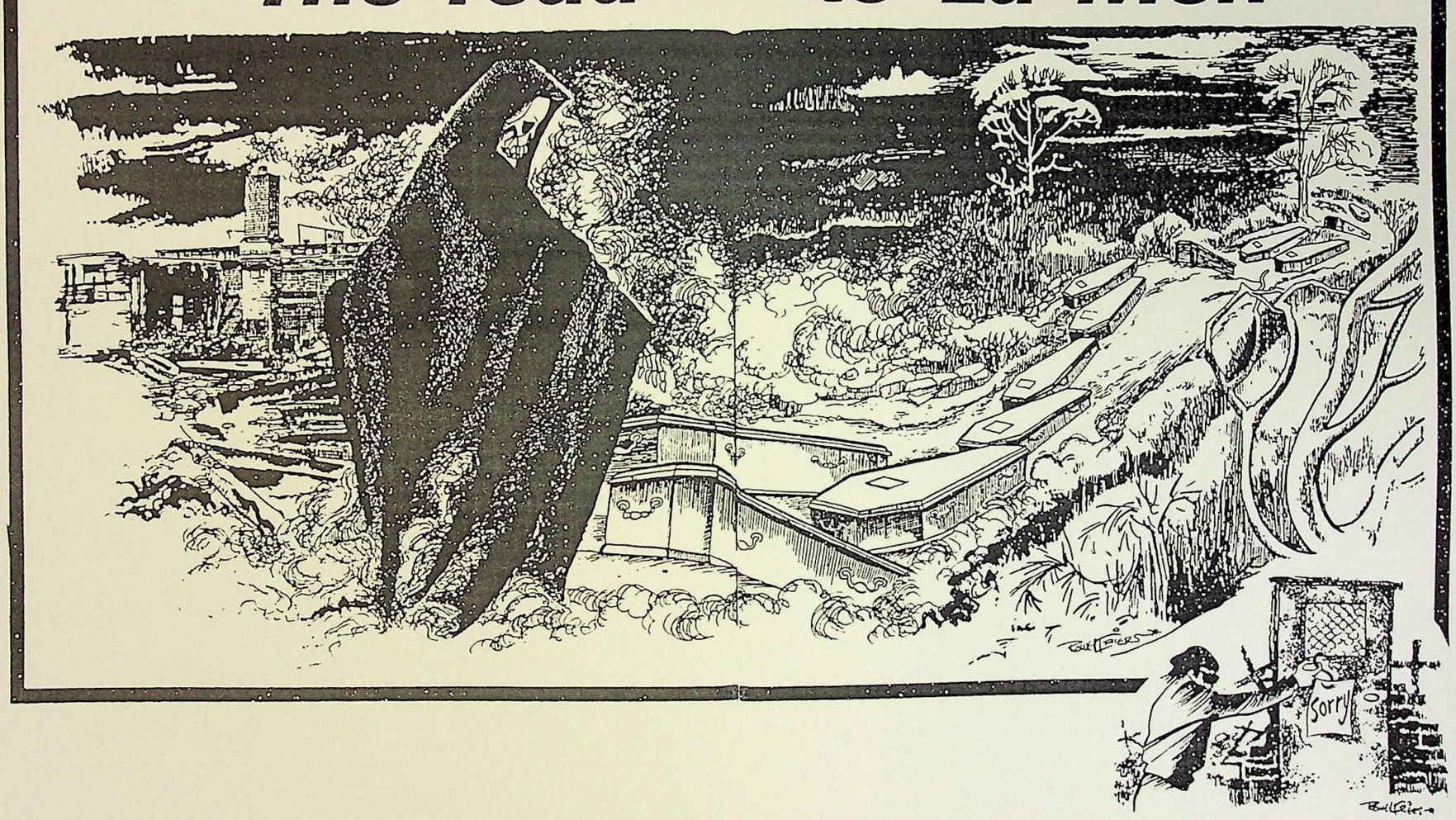


fig. 31

RETURN OF FRANKENSTEIN

fig. 32

packed with black areas of either solid shading, heavy hatching or frenetic scribblings. The message however is blatant and unmistakable and the effect is increased by their stark contrast to his other work. As John McCutcheon wrote in 1950: "It was better to emphasize the sunnier side of life on most days - then,when one had to critize, the cartoon had double effect" (11).

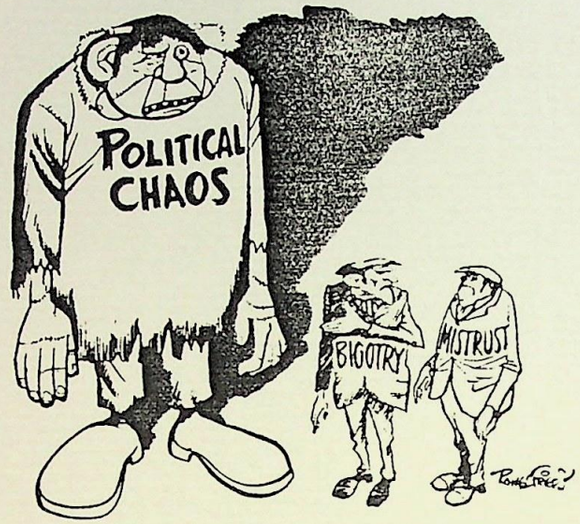
Friers discribed his response to the troubles in the forward to his book On the Border Line (9): "What of the topical cartoonist who finds the country he loves turned into a devils cauldron - a pacifist faced with the vagaries of warring politicians? Keeping cool in Hell is not easy nor is it funny." He refers to the late Bill Beckett ("Maskee") of Dublin Opinion - "Humour is the safety valve of a nation" and says that he "will always try ... to preserve that valve." Indeed whenever he had the opportunity, Friers tried to ease day-to-day frustrations and the overriding feeling of conflict, by laughing at whatever aspect of the Ulster people he could find amusement in. He was continually aware of the absurdities of the Ulster scene and views it with the affection and sympathy of one who not only knows it very well but of one who is very deeply attached to it.

He is one of the few cartoonists to catch successfully the character and accents of the Ulster people. Naturally, this is a reflection of his intimate knowledge of them but nonethe less he has a unique knack of characterization and of

reflecting their dialects, facial expressions and speech habits.

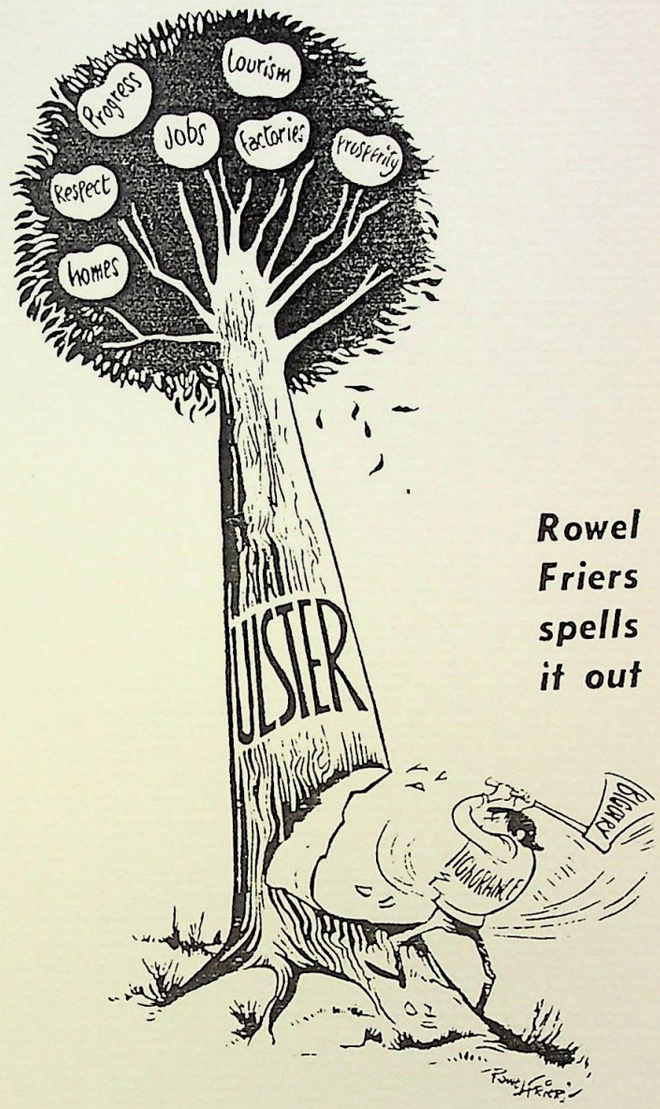
Some of Friers latter cartoons on Northern Ireland attacked the political situation by describing situations in a slightly different way to his earlier approach. He portrayed the bigoted, ignorant side of the Northern Ireland people by drawing more malevolent versions of his architypal Northern Ireland characters as representing the abstract concepts of bigotry, mistrust and ignorance which disrupted normal life and the smooth functioning of the province (fig.33)

Friers treatment of violence and the way in which he handles some very difficult subjects in Northern Ireland, demonstrated his competence on an international level of cartooning. His highly distinctive style had, in fact, gained popularity in a wider sphere from the time of his early days in Dublin Opinion when several of his contributions had to be geared to their syndication in other magazines around the world. He says that his greatest influence is American rather than English and not surprisingly he is a great admirer of the New Yorker school.



"Now we've made it how will we control it?"

fig. 33



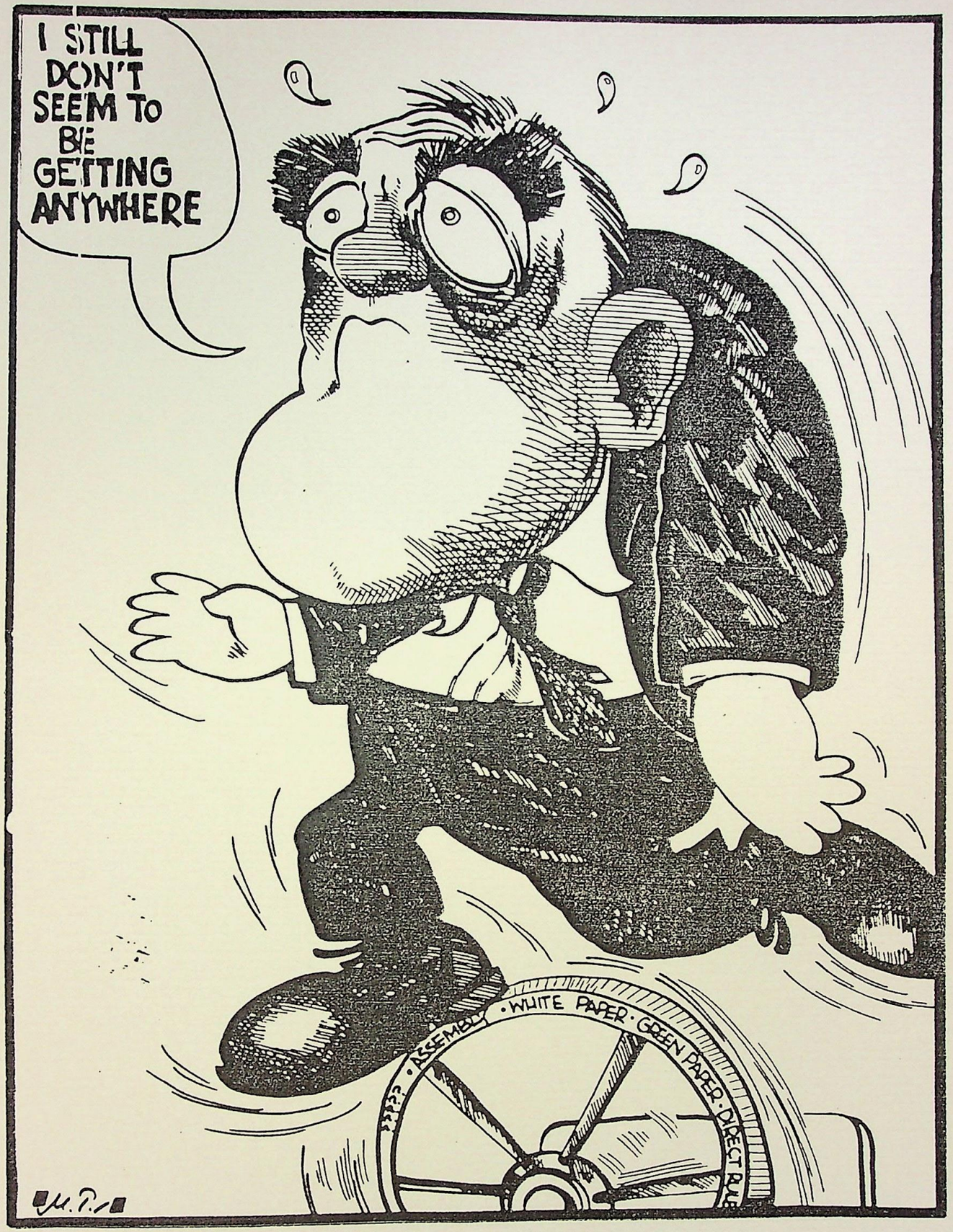
Rowel Friers spells it out

Chapter Five

Rowel Friers' principal contemporary in Northern Ireland was Martyn Turner who was joint editor of the liberal current affairs magazine, Fortnight, from 1970 to 1976. Although his subject matter was largely in common with that of Friers', his approach was quite different. Whereras Friers' demonstrated compassion towards the Ulster people and a highly emotional reaction to violence, Turner was more aware of the details of political activity and he provided a more satirical commentary. Friers' would deal with specific personalities only in a humourous context and would only be openly critical in extreme cases but Turner would deal directly with the extremely complex issues of Northern Ireland politics on a very regular basis. He would constantly be jibing, critizing and provoking in a way that only someone with his high degree of local knowledge could. This continual barrage was aimed in every direction.

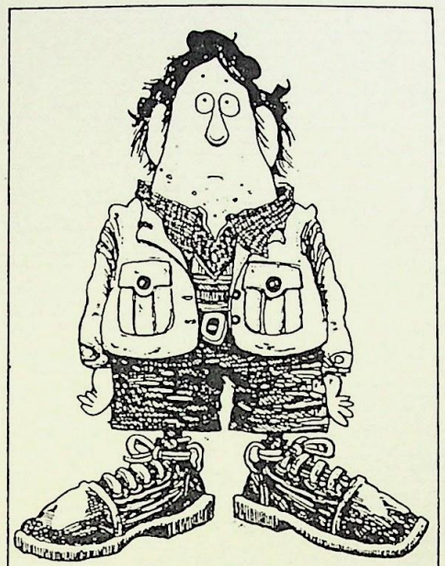
His perception of the Ulster character was also very acute. Friers' was interested in nuances of speech and personality quirks but Turner was much more cynical. He expressed the desparate and often chaotic state of politics in Northern Ireland by showing people in positions of power or those in control of evil forces (such as terrorism) as willing and manipulated fools. For example "Excercises in Democracy" from Fortnight July 1973, shows the then Secretary of State, William Whitelaw, utterly bewildered by all of his attempts to deal with the problem (fig.34) and his portrait of a terrorist shows a bemused and harmless school boy (fig.35).

He showed the humourous side to the Northern Ireland charac-



Exercises in Democracy

fig. 34



PORTRAIT OF A TERRORIST

fig. 35

ter in a different way. He found a good deal of amusement in displaying the similarities between opposing factions and the lack of comprehension that most people in Northern Ireland had for the political situation. His bowler hatted protestant and the fictional paramilitary group the SAINTS (The South Armagh Internecine Terrorist Society) illustrate these ob-observations (figs.36&37)

He demonstrated the dry wit and sometimes the very black humour of the Ulster people through his newspaper vendor who appeared in each issue and always had some view to express regarding the current headlines.(fig.38).

When dealing with violence, the internal differences of Loyalists and Republican paramilitaries,and the army in some instances,were regarded,by Turner,as minute when compared with their common involvement. In a cartoon from July 1972 he showed Hitler giving classes to a variety of Northern Ireland Perpetrators of violence. Hitler's advice to them all is "Always call the game preservation of law and order or protection of peoples rights - then you can get away with murder" (fig.39).

Cartoonists from Britain and the Irish Republic demonstrated their ignorance and naivety in regarding Northern Ireland by portraying violence out of context and creating the resulting impression of unintelligible mayhem. Turner in several instances made the complexity itself a theme, for example, a tatooist trying to find room on a Loyalist's arm for more initials of paramilitary groups (fig.40).

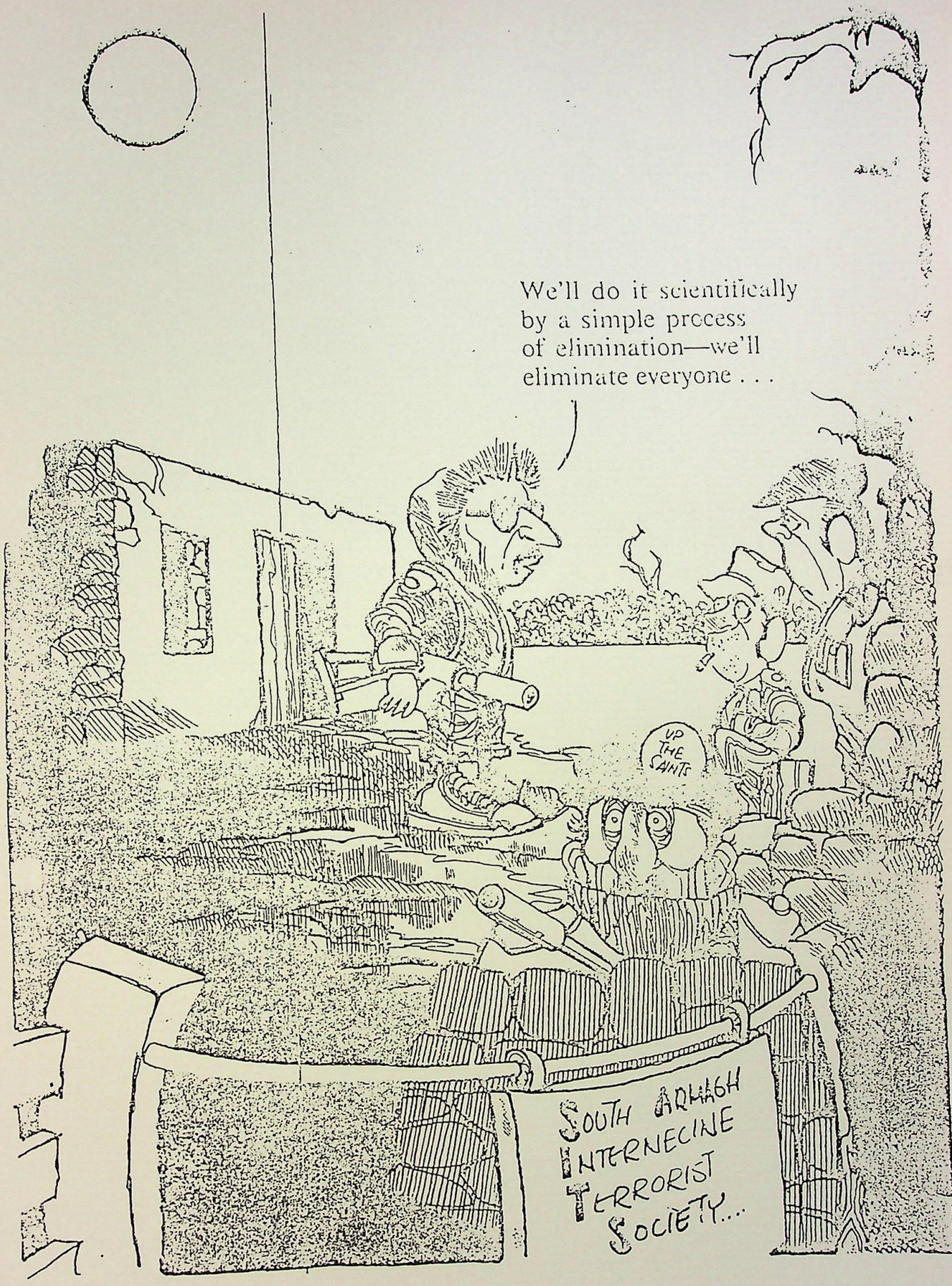

We'll do it scientifically by a simple process of elimination—we'll eliminate everyone . . .
UP THE SAINTS
SOUTH ARMAGH INTERNECINE TERRORIST SOCIETY...

fig. 36

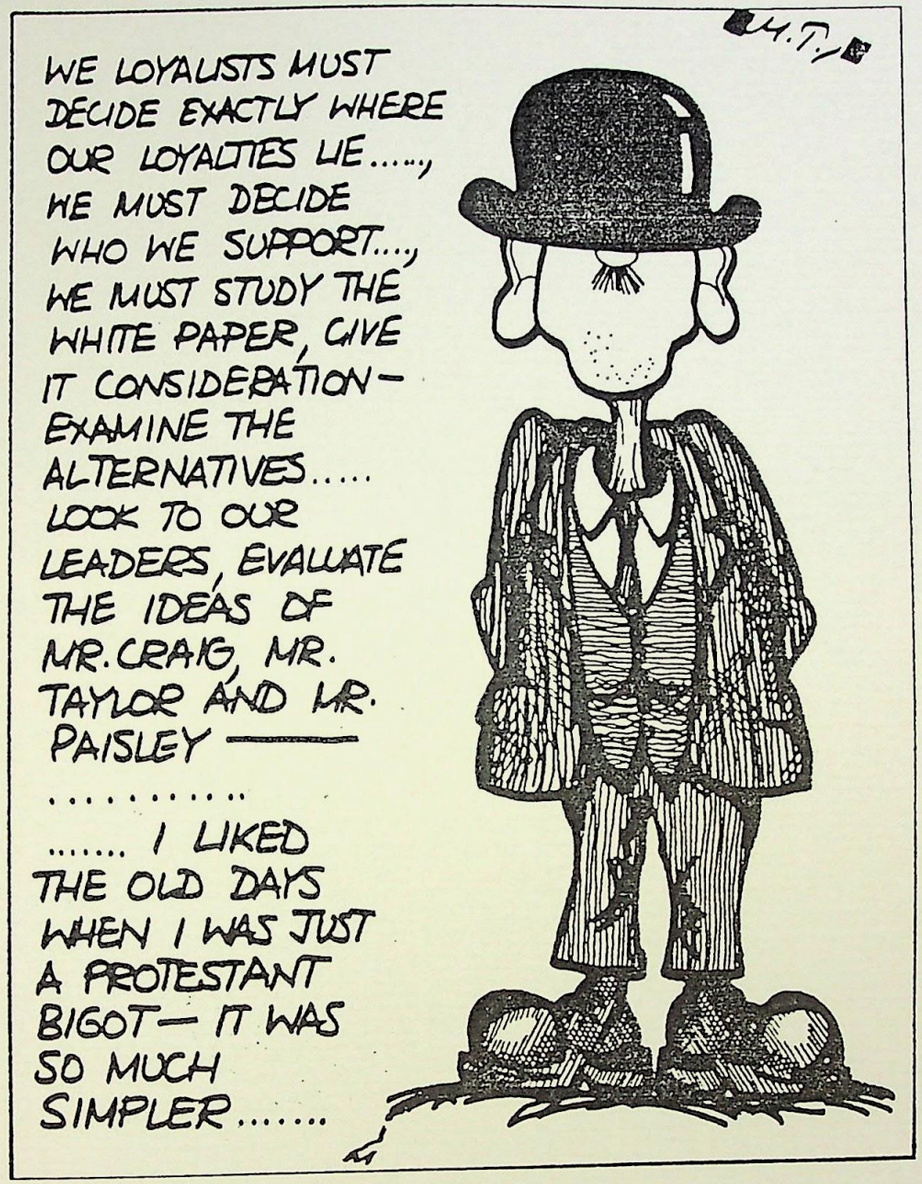
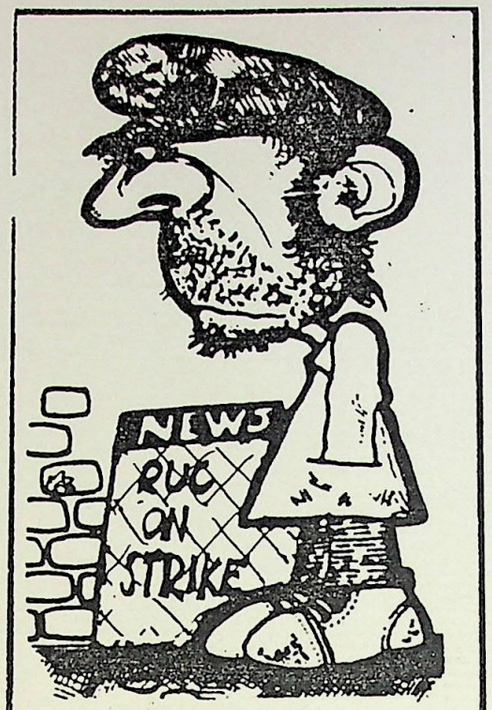
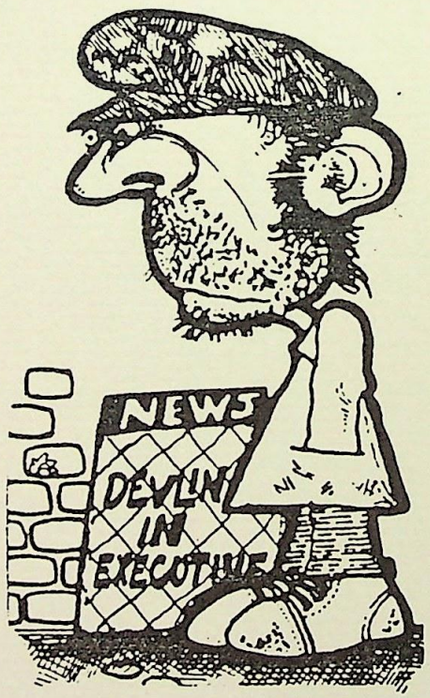

WE LOYALISTS MUST DECIDE EXACTLY WHERE OUR LOYALTIES LIE....., WE MUST DECIDE WHO WE SUPPORT...., WE MUST STUDY THE WHITE PAPER, GIVE IT CONSIDERATION— EXAMINE THE ALTERNATIVES..... LOOK TO OUR LEADERS, EVALUATE THE IDEAS OF MR. CRAIG, MR. TAYLOR AND MR. PAISLEY ——
.....
..... I LIKED THE OLD DAYS WHEN I WAS JUST A PROTESTANT BIGOT— IT WAS SO MUCH SIMPLER.....

fig. 37

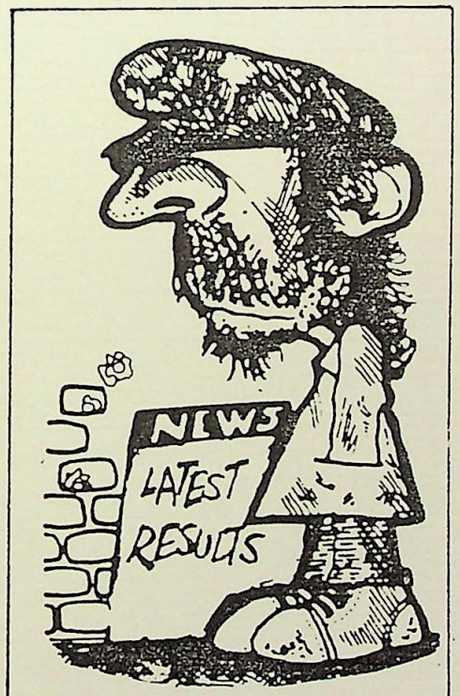


"It would be better if the terrorists went on strike because they didn't want to be in the same court as the police".

" It must be a terrible strain for a Belfast lad to earn money and live in a quiet place"

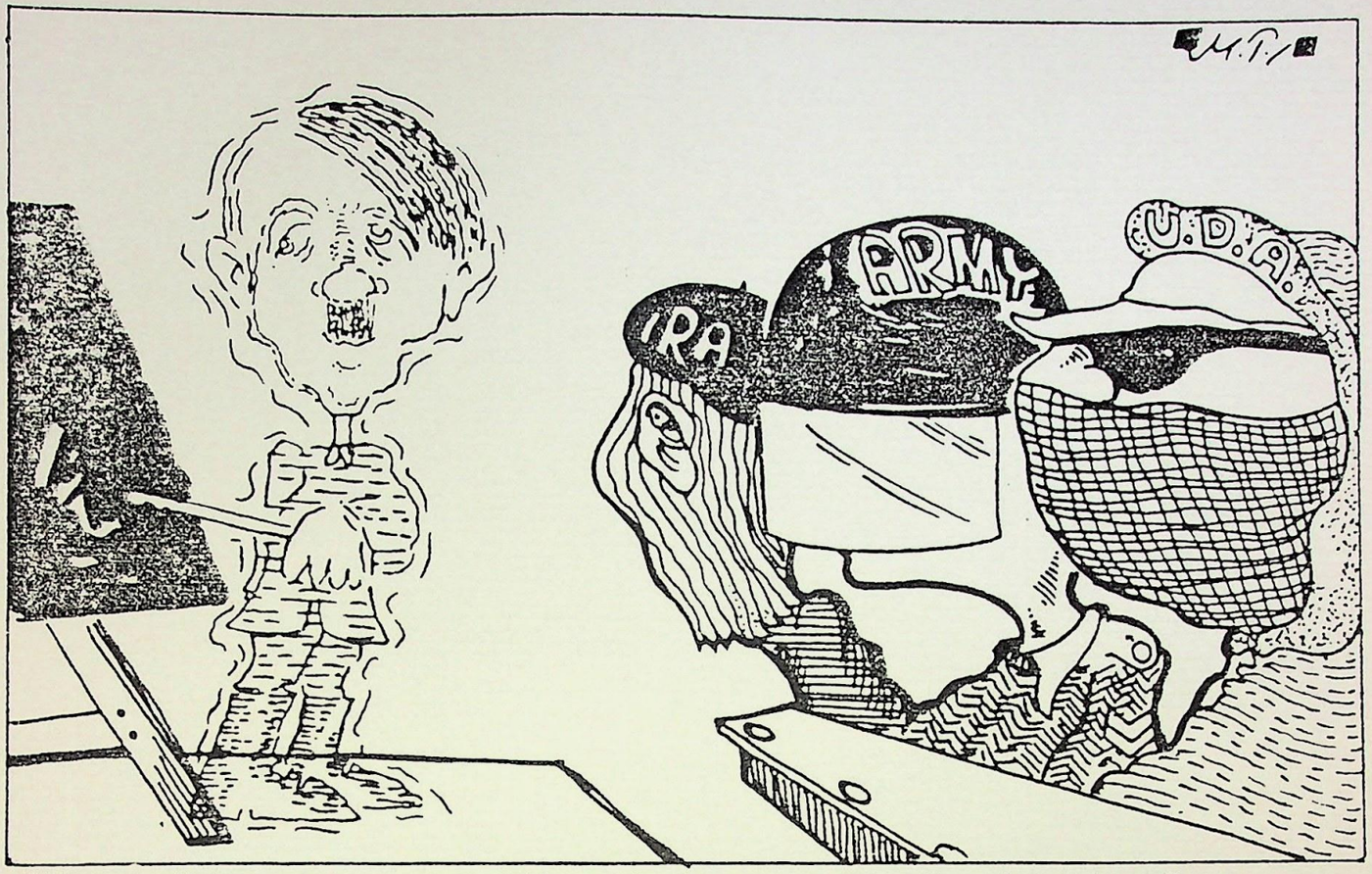


"At last we've got a Minister who'll give us Guinness on the National Health".



" UDA 2 UVF 6
IRA 2 IRSP 2"

fig. 38



"Always call the game preservation of law and order or protection of people's rights - then you can get away with murder"

fig. 39

"LIKE THE REST OF US, YOUNG MAN, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE MUCH MORE OF LOYALIST POLITICS"

fig. 40

Other themes Turner enjoyed working with involved the courts where he developed images of discrimination, bigotry and violence. One example shows a judge glowering down over a worried young defendant and roaring "How dare you, you long-haired Fenian agitator" (fig.41) and another youth wearing the IRA's uniform black beret, defends his rape charge as being a "political" crime (fig.42).

Another Ulster cartoonist who viewed the political scene with the same cynical eye as Turner, was Dobson, also from Fortnight but appearing very irregularly. However he did produce some excellent cartoons. One of his best shows a prisoner inside a cell with the caption "I refuse to recognise the inside of this cell" (fig.43). It refered to the IRA's continual refusal to recognise courts in Northern Ireland.

Turners drawing style demonstrated confidence from an early stage and a particular gift for caricature. He tended in early work to draw enlarged heads and reduced bodies with a great deal of facial detail and acute interest in facial expression.

Some of these cartoons have grossly distorted features such as an image of "John Bull" from 1972 (fig.44). This example is interesting in that it presents John Bull with a grotesquely malformed physique, which is how English cartoonists of Punch in the nineteenth liked to portray Irish men. The approach of expressing extremist views and authoritarian or dogmatic stances through facial features is also very popular with cartoonists such as Grosz in Wiemar Germany.

fig. 41

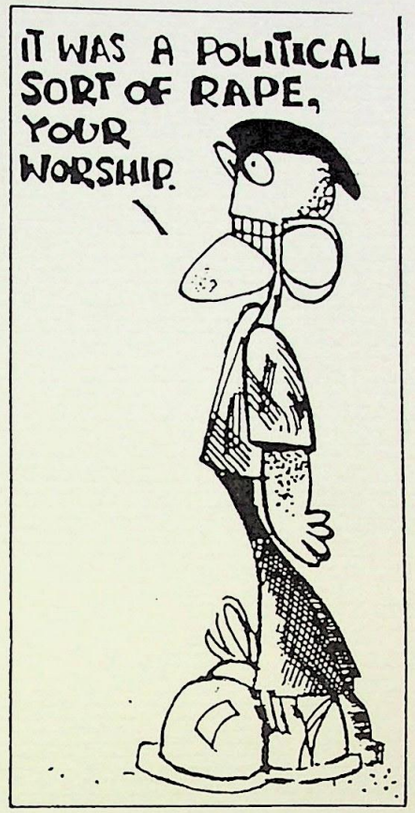


fig. 42

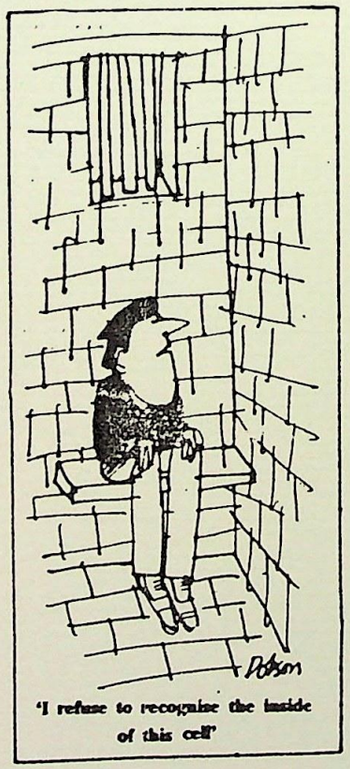
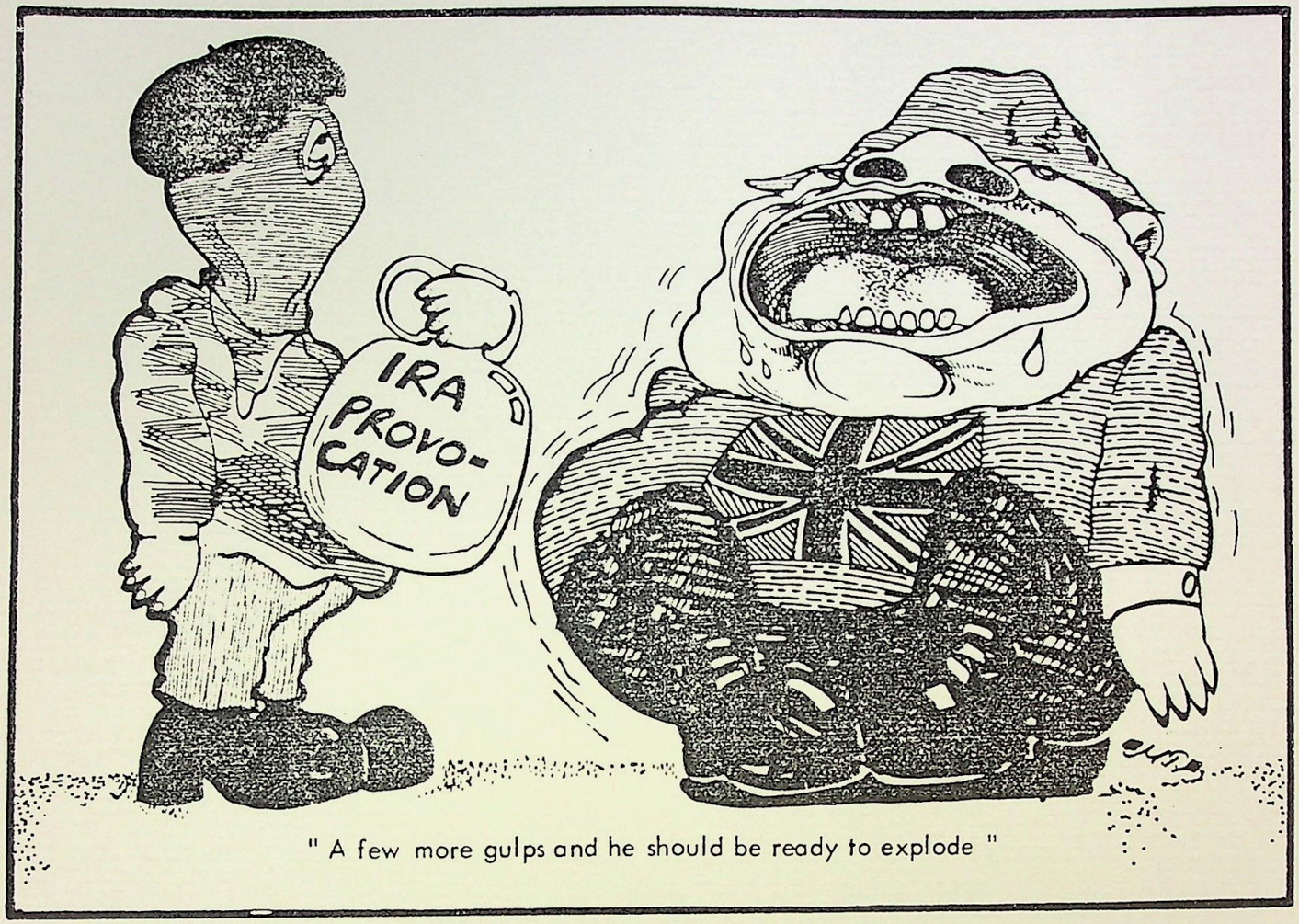


fig. 43



" A few more gulps and he should be ready to explode "

fig. 44

Much later in Fortnight a cartoonist called Kormski produced a savagely satirical cartoon strip called "Dog Collars" which specialised in deriding the opposing factions of the Church (fig.45). The approach here is unusual in the way that he uses the fictional characters of the "Reverend Stanley Foster, a nasty little protestant bigot" to represent the protestant extreme and "Monsignor Louie Brillo", to represent the catholic 'mafioso'. These figures play roles alongside each other, and caricatures of real politicians in ridiculous parodies of real events, for example moving statues from 1985 (fig.46).

The portrayal of the Ulster people and their views in "Dog Collars" is distinct from that of Friers, Turner and Dobson (apart from the unique comic strip form) principally because the humour is derived entirely from the black, monstrous, evil, and ignorant aspects of Northern Ireland politics.

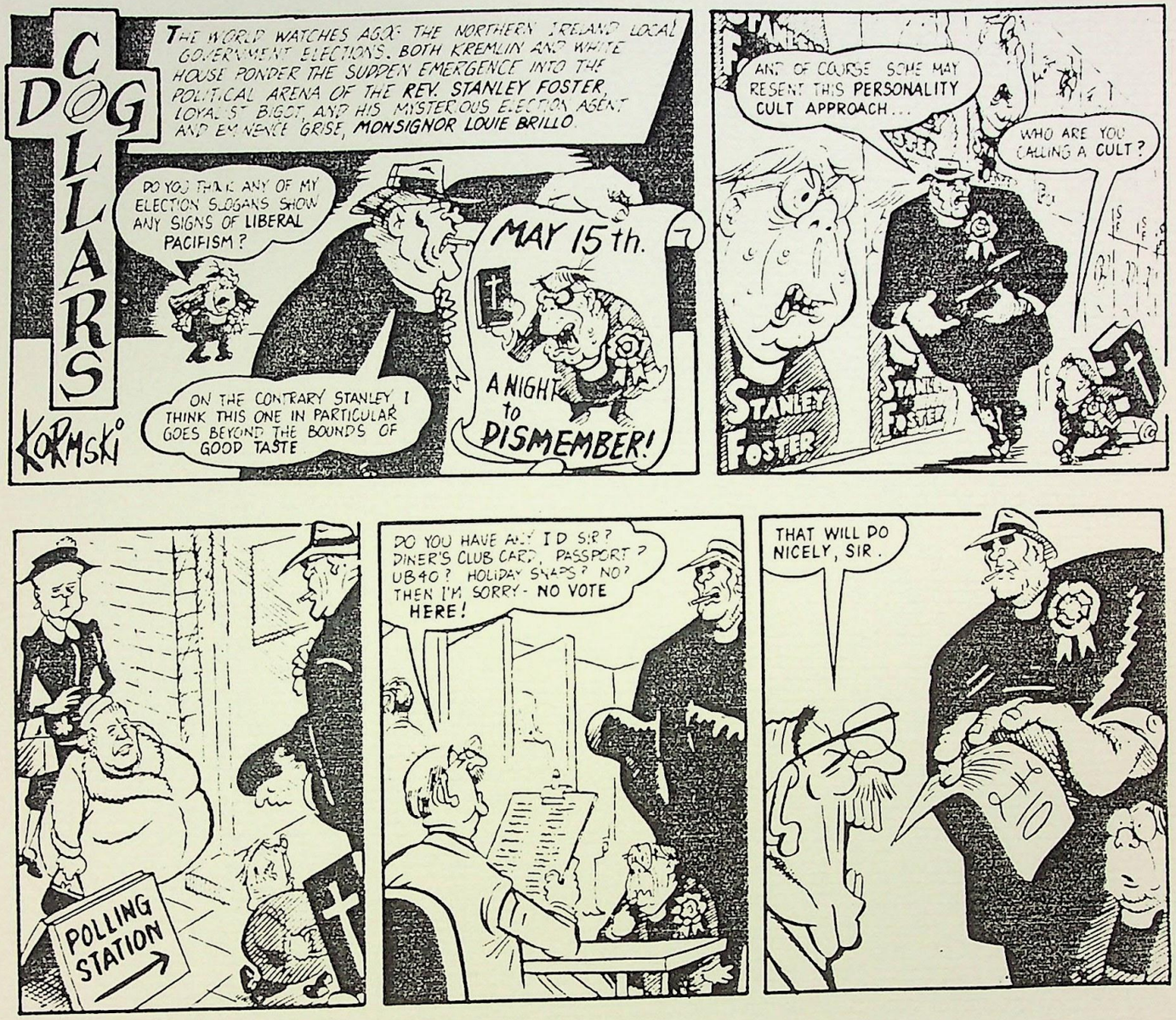

DOG COLLARS
KORMSKI
THE WORLD WATCHES AGOG THE NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS. BOTH KREMLIN AND WHITE HOUSE PONDER THE SUDDEN EMERGENCE INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA OF THE REV. STANLEY FOSTER, LOYALIST BIGOT, AND HIS MYSTERIOUS ELECTION AGENT AND EMINENCE GRISE, MONSIGNOR LOUIE BRILLO.
DO YOU THINK ANY OF MY ELECTION SLOGANS SHOW ANY SIGNS OF LIBERAL PACIFISM?
ON THE CONTRARY STANLEY, I THINK THIS ONE IN PARTICULAR GOES BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF GOOD TASTE
MAY 15th.
A NIGHT to DISMEMBER!
ANT OF COURSE SOME MAY RESENT THIS PERSONALITY CULT APPROACH...
WHO ARE YOU CALLING A CULT?
STANLEY FOSTER
POLLING STATION
DO YOU HAVE ANY I D SIR? DINER'S CLUB CARD, PASSPORT? UB40? HOLIDAY SNAPS? NO? THEN I'M SORRY - NO VOTE HERE!
THAT WILL DO NICELY, SIR.
£10

fig. 45

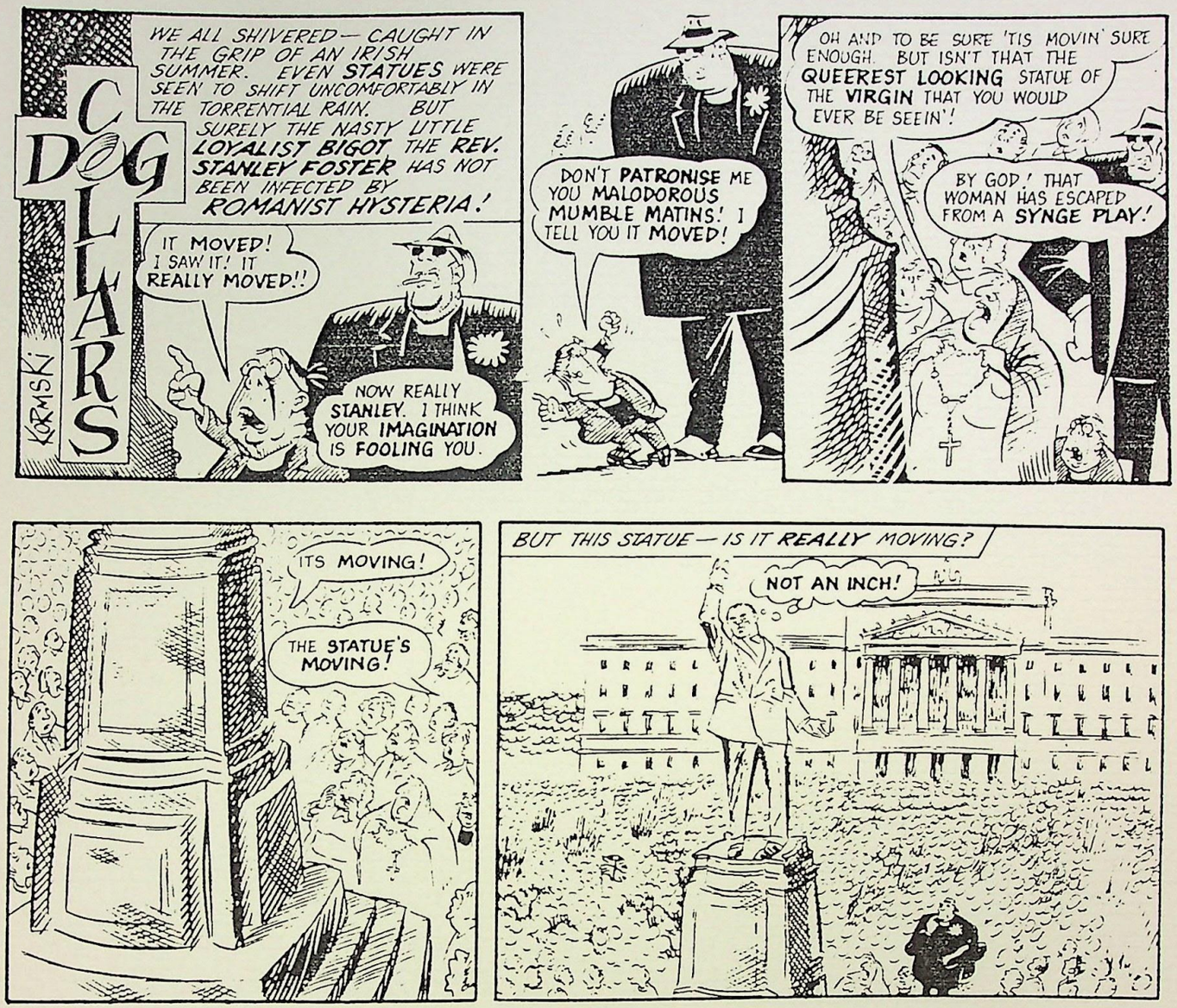

DOG COLLARS
KORMSKI
WE ALL SHIVERED — CAUGHT IN THE GRIP OF AN IRISH SUMMER. EVEN STATUES WERE SEEN TO SHIFT UNCOMFORTABLY IN THE TORRENTIAL RAIN. BUT SURELY THE NASTY LITTLE LOYALIST BIGOT THE REV. STANLEY FOSTER HAS NOT BEEN INFECTED BY ROMANIST HYSTERIA!
IT MOVED! I SAW IT! IT REALLY MOVED!!
NOW REALLY STANLEY. I THINK YOUR IMAGINATION IS FOOLING YOU.
DON'T PATRONISE ME YOU MALODOROUS MUMBLE MATINS! I TELL YOU IT MOVED!
OH AND TO BE SURE 'TIS MOVIN' SURE ENOUGH. BUT ISN'T THAT THE QUEEREST LOOKING STATUE OF THE VIRGIN THAT YOU WOULD EVER BE SEEIN'!
BY GOD! THAT WOMAN HAS ESCAPED FROM A SYNGE PLAY!
ITS MOVING!
THE STATUE'S MOVING!
BUT THIS STATUE — IS IT REALLY MOVING?
NOT AN INCH!

fig. 46

Chapter Six

Cartoon competitions held in the army's newspaper Visor, in Northern Ireland produced more than five hundred cartoons between 1974 and 1975. Many of these deal with themes of army life which could be applied in any army situation but those regarding Northern Ireland show how soldiers have no ideological involvement and how most of them find the situation as incomprehensible and totally confusing as most other people in Britian and the Republic of Ireland. The cartoons provided a means of expressing how they felt about their situation, which wasn't broadcast elsewhere, and a form of relief from the tension of the hostility directed at them.

The "thick Paddy" was inevitably a popular image but not the simian barbarian type. "Seamus" a regular cartoon strip by Carr (fig.47) recounts tales of a terrorist who is portrayed a blundering but likeable buffoon and who frequently outwits the army.

The violence shown in these cartoons is always of the slap stick variety where anyone can be blown to bits and suffer all kinds of physical abuse yet still remain unscathed.

Hardly a word is breathed against the army in the popular press or on tv or radio in Britain - an attitude which probably stems from Britain's traditional respect for its army. These cartoons provide soldiers with a safety valve, a vent for their feelings and a place to mock their position, to say what they feel while simultaneously making a joke about themselves.

fig. 47

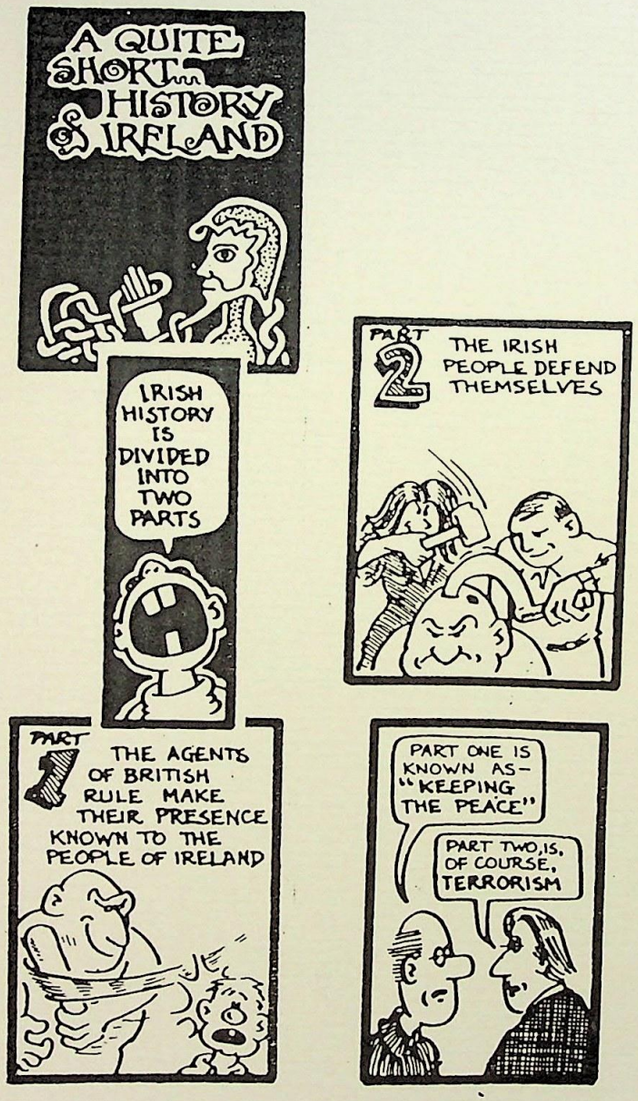


fig. 48

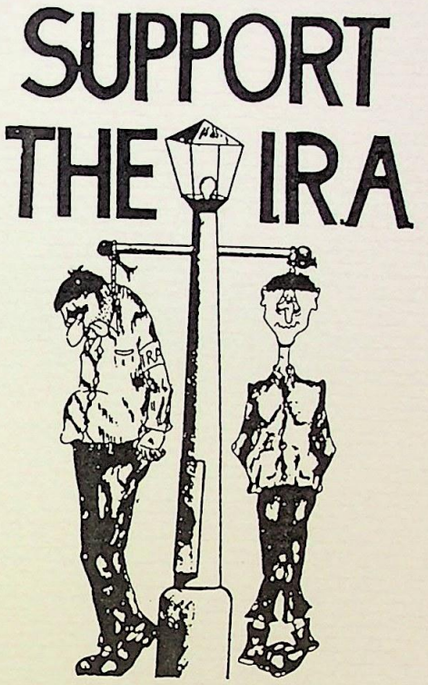


fig.49

fig.50

Several other underground periodicals emerged and disappeared at frequent intervals during the troubles. The best and longest surviving of these are Republican News, an Phoblacht and the United Irishman. Cartoons were very popular in them all, their main function being to boost moral among an already committed readership - a cartoon is a very powerful and succinct means of portraying a propaganda message.

The most significant Republican cartoonist to emerge was Cormac - whose competently and carefully drawn cartoons strip Notes displays all of the major characteristics of Republican cartoons (fig.48). The Republican cartoonists were much more politically aware than those of the army and would show the effects of violence in graphic detail, not with the aim of shocking readers but in an attempt to underline the Provisionals justification for using it. They consequently displayed little in the way of lightheartedness.

The Provisional "soldier" is represented as a clear-eyed visionary never to be fooled by his enemies. The enemies (the British army, Loyalists and the political parties such as the Northern Ireland Labour Party and Alliance who sought cross-sectarian support) were always portrayed as inept and pathetic idiots.

Loyalist paramilitary news sheets were more numerous but less sophisticated and generally shorter than those of the Republicans. Their cartoons were generally not very good. They were crudely drawn and lacked any kind of subtlety. Rather

than developing a style or way of working of their own, they tended to pirate cartoons from English daily papers, and add a caption with a local theme to convert the cartoon characters to suitable Republicans. The only cartoonist of any significance at all to emerge from the Loyalist paramilitary news sheets was "Rab" (fig.49). The main feature of these cartoons was that they were quite single-minded in their targets - almost exclusivey catholics and Republicans. Regarding the British army however, the Loyalists stance was rather ambivalent. This was highlighted in 1972 and 1973 when the U.D.A. came into direct conflict with the army. Being loyal to the British crown and demonstrating continuing and ferocious attachment to Britain, as their primary cause, conflict with the army was an awkward dilemma to handle. Loyalist cartoonist dealt with it by generally expressing sympathy towards the army but making some selective attacks on particular regiments depending on their precise relationship with them at any one time (fig.50).

Chapter Seven

When Martyn Turner moved to The Irish Times in 1976 he became the first cartoonist in Ireland to be employed full-time by a daily newspaper. He broadened his terms of reference to encompass not only local political issues but also European and world affairs. He also became the first cartoonist in the Republic to comment knowledgeably on Northern Ireand affairs.

His basic approach remained the same but his drawing became consideraby more refined and he has tended more recently to pay greater attention to subtle details. Background detail, however, he has kept to a minimum, providing just sufficient detail to describe a setting whenever it is relevant.

Occasionally he includes a little bird, or other small creature, either animal or human, which usually has a little quip to add or a point of view to express relating to the overall message of the cartoon. Turner often makes use of this device to convey more than one point in a cartoon (fig.51).

The facial expressions he gives his characters most often are those of surprise, bewilderment, fear and bemusement. Only occasionally evil and malevolence (fig.52).

His success and high profile at The Irish Times, over the past eleven years, has helped to increase awareness of political cartooning in Ireland.

Rowel Friers continues to produce cartoons for The Irish Times. These accompany the weekly column Northern Notebook, but they

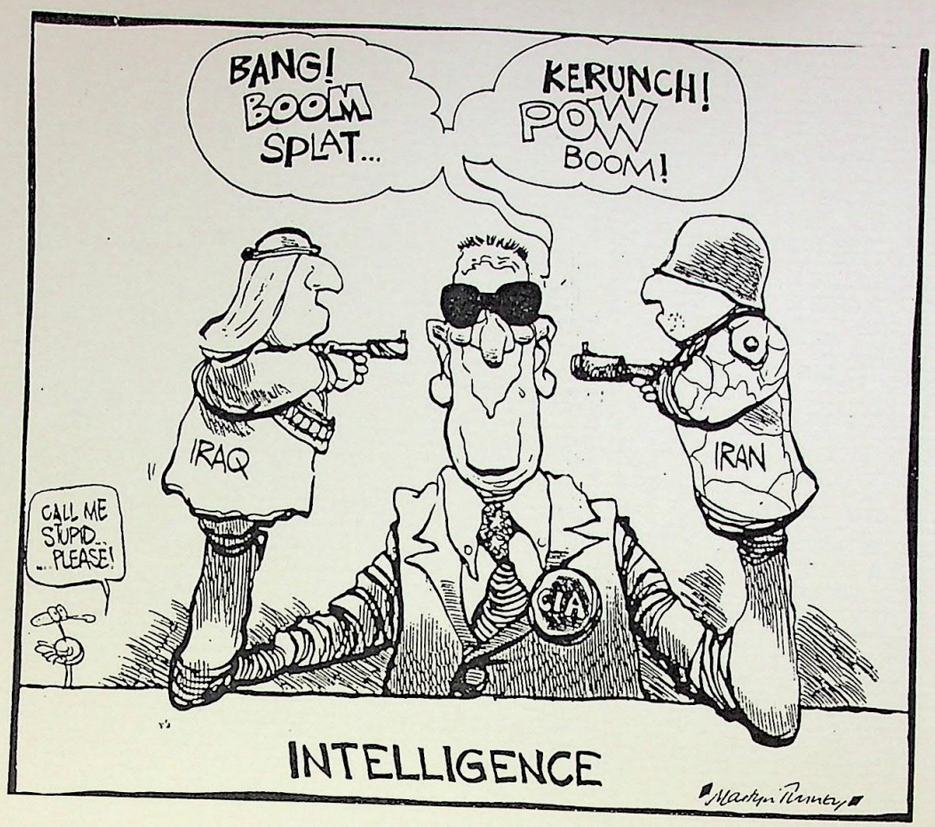

BANG! BOOM SPLAT...
KERUNCH! POW BOOM!
IRAQ
IRAN
CIA
CALL ME STUPID... ...PLEASE!
INTELLIGENCE

fig.51

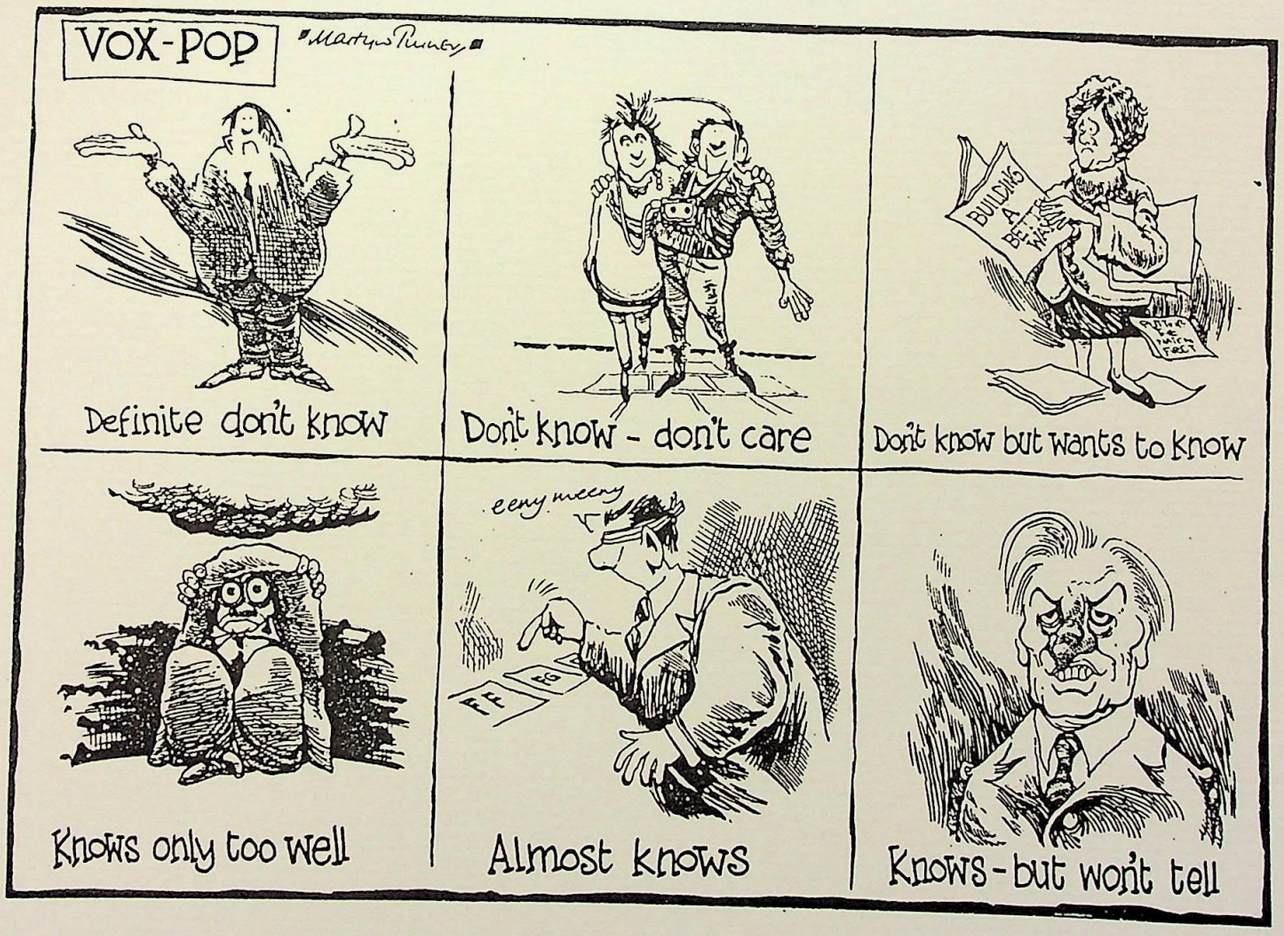

VOX-POP
Definite don't know
Don't know - don't care
BUILDING A BETTER WAR
Don't know but wants to know
Knows only too well
eeny meeny
Almost knows
Knows - but won't tell

fig.52

generally provide more in the way of illustrative relief than political comment (fig.53). Likewise, much of his more recent work for the Belfast Telegraph comments on routine and often inconsequential local issues and takes the form of humourous drawings.

fig.53

Conclusion

Cartoons published in Ireland over the sixty-five years between 1922 and 1987 have little to distinguish them stylistically from the main body of cartooning pubished in Britain and America over the same period. The main factor which separates them is purely the subject matter.

Cartoonists in Ireland tended, until quite recently, to focus their attention much more on local, rather than international, issues (as did the British and the Americans) but simply the fact that issues in Ireland were different to those elsewhere gave them a different flavour. They tended to attack institutions much more readily than personalities, with government and state-controlled bodies as firm favourites.

Personalities were generally just caricatured and often shown in absurd and unlikely situations, rather than directly attacked. Details of political activities and objectives were largely glossed over prior to Martyn Turner.

It is interesting that the Church, an institution that plays a principal rôle in Irish society and indeed in many major political issues, should be the subject of virtually no cartoons throughout the years.

It is even more surprising however, that given Ireland's political history and renowned sense of humour, the newspapers here have given such paltry support to political cartoonists. One reason for this maybe that the cartoon is too efficient and succinct a form of communication. The sense of humour in Ireland tends to be more anecdotal. Irish people like to spin

out yarns and savour funny stories, so cartoons may convey jokes too quickly. This would also explain the tremendous popularity of Kelly's detailed and action packed drawings and Turners cartoons,with their multiple messages which encourage the reader's eye to dwell on the image, gradually absorbing the information it conveys.

Humourous columns such as Cruiskeen Lawn , by Myles na Gopaleen, and Man Bites Dog , by Donal Foley (both from The Irish Times) helped to satiate the Irish newspaper-reader's appetite for humour during the demise of Dublin Opinion.

An overwhelming impression left by all these cartoons is the tremendous pleasure which the Irish take in laughing at themselves.

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