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**Civil Service
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Campaign**

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Department of Social Welfare used in Fine Gael campaign



Gemma Hussey, Minister for Social Welfare

In an unprecedented break with tradition the resources of the Department of Social Welfare have been used to boost the electoral chances of Fine Gael and the Minister for Social Welfare Gemma Hussey TD. Literature printed and distributed by the Department is being used widely by Fine Gael canvassers in the Minister's Wicklow constituency. The Department of Social Welfare has also lent its name to a misleading leaflet carrying a party political broadcast and announcing the extension of social welfare benefits which it has no authority to implement.

The leaflet printed by the Department on Wednesday, January 21 — the day after the Labour Party withdrew from Government — announces the extension of dental and optical benefits to spouses of insured workers from July next.

Headed "A message from Gemma Hussey TD, Minister for Social Welfare", it quotes the Minister as follows: "This was the Fine Gael Party's commitment to spouses of insured workers. I am delighted to fulfil that commitment as Minister for Social Welfare". The message is untrue. The extension of dental and optical benefits requires enabling legislation to be passed by the Oireachtas and this process has not even begun yet. The extension of benefits referred to is, at this stage, a party political election promise and nothing more.

A spokesman for the Department of Social Welfare confirmed that the leaflet was printed by that Department. When asked if there was any precedent for a government department advertising a "scheme" before the legislative process had been gone through, he could not quote any. Neither could he give any precedent for any government department putting out a party political message. The normal civil service procedure is that government departments give out information on such schemes only after they have been passed by the legislature. This, according to a senior civil servant, is because government departments cannot stand over party political promises.

The electioneering exercise has caused quite

a degree of confusion in the Department of Social Welfare. The Department spokesman says that there is nothing conditional about the scheme, as it has all-party support and will be introduced regardless of what government is returned. This, he said, was the basis on which the Department considered that it was quite in order to advertise the scheme.

The Department of Social Welfare leaflet invites enquiries for further information. A number of enquiries all brought the information that the extension of dental and optical benefits would apply "only if the Government was brought back in". This directly contradicts both the Department's official spokesman and the Minister's statement quoted below.

"This was the Fine Gael Party's commitment to spouses of insured workers. I am delighted to fulfil that commitment as Minister for Social Welfare"
- Gemma Hussey T.D.

"At no stage do I seek support for Fine Gael"

A MESSAGE FROM GEMMA HUSSEY T.D.
MINISTER FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR HOMEMAKERS

IS YOUR SPOUSE ENTITLED TO DENTAL & OPTICAL BENEFITS
FROM SOCIAL WELFARE ?

NOW, YOU WILL QUALIFY TOO

The Government has decided to extend the social welfare treatment benefits scheme. From July next, you can qualify for these benefits on the basis of your spouse's PRSI.

"This was the Fine Gael Party's commitment to spouses of insured workers. I am delighted to fulfil that commitment as Minister for Social Welfare"
- Gemma Hussey T.D.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS ?

The main benefits available are Dental and Optical benefits.

Dental Benefit: Fillings, scaling and extractions are FREE. Part of the cost of other treatments will be paid.

Optical Benefit: The sight test is FREE and so too are glasses of a particular type. If you choose more expensive glasses, part of the cost will be paid.

For more information contact: Department of Social Welfare, Information Section, Aras Mhic Dhiarmáda, Dublin 1. Telephone: 01 - 786466

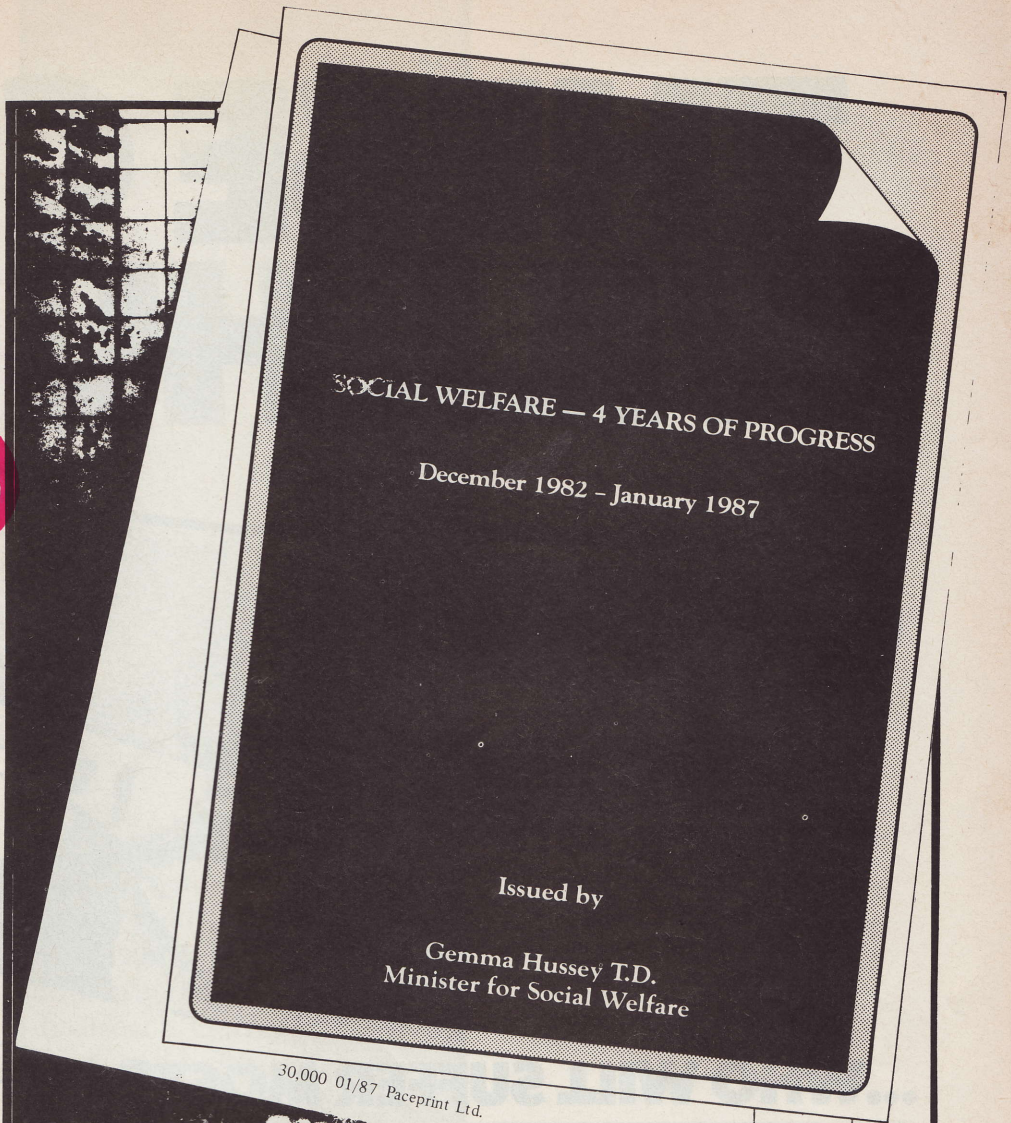
The leaflet

A spokesman for Fianna Fáil said that they had had no formal communication with either the Department of Social Welfare or with Fine Gael concerning the Fine Gael promise to extend dental and optical benefits.

Minister Hussey defended the publication and distribution of the leaflet by her Department. She said it was customary for the Department to issue details of any new schemes that will benefit Social Welfare. She said that the money had already been allocated for the extension of optical and dental benefits and that the Opposition has committed itself to do the same. "It is perfectly natural and correct therefore that the Department of Social Welfare would inform the public of any benefits that they may be entitled to. I have ensured this would be the case by having made numerous press statements on the extension of the scheme, and by having a simple one sheet leaflet printed outlining the basic facts and advising people to seek further information from the Department. At no stage do I seek support for Fine Gael or ask for Number One votes for myself", she said. "Fine Gael does not consider that this is an election leaflet. It is quite correct and proper that the Press and Information services of the Department of Social Welfare would handle media and public queries in relation to this scheme which has been approved by the Government."

The Minister showed us a selection of leaflets and publications issued by her Department and commented: "The only difference is that these are more attractively designed, as opposed to the simple one page sheet prepared for this scheme (the proposed extension of dental and optical benefits)." There are, however, other very obvious differences. All of the other publications give information on existing schemes or benefits available, while none of them make any reference to a political party or to any promises made by that party.

REPORT BY TOM CULLEN



Back of booklet showing 30,000 print run January 1987

The progress report

Another Department of Social Welfare publication is being used widely by Fine Gael canvassers in Wicklow. This is a 16-page booklet entitled "Social Welfare — 4 Years of Progress", of which 30,000 copies were printed last month. The booklet, with an introduction by the Minister for Social Welfare, Gemma Hussey, very strongly emphasises the more positive aspects of developments in Social Welfare since December 1982.

Minister Hussey said it was "perfectly acceptable" that she should issue a "summary" record of "Four years of progress", as her Department had been publishing annual reports for some years now. She continued: "Department publications are usually printed in quantities of 130,000 to 250,000... I had 30,000 copies of the progress report printed at a cost of £3,000. This is in contrast to the previous, and rather cumbersome report of over 40 A4 pages (magazine size) produced by the Department last year involving considerable man-hours and greater expense".

Minister Hussey's "Progress Report" does greatly contrast with that produced by her

predecessor Barry Desmond last February. Mr Desmond's "rather cumbersome" report was printed in considerably smaller numbers, carried a detailed analysis of developments in Social Welfare (whether positive or negative from the recipients' viewpoint) and was obviously aimed at those with a specialised interest in that area, rather than the general public. Minister Hussey's letter-box size publication contains less than 2,000 words virtually all of which emphasise increases in payments to social welfare recipients.

It has, according to the Minister "proved to be a useful resource for on the ground workers and members of the media". "I am at a loss to see how this therefore can be called an election document", she added. *New Hibernia* has established that the booklet is being used by Fine Gael canvassers and has been available from Fine Gael election offices in Wicklow.

An Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald was asked if he wishes to comment on the production or electioneering use of either the Department of Social Welfare leaflet on dental and optical benefits or the booklet "Social Welfare — 4 years of progress". He declined to do so.

The Battle for Dublin South-East

Traditionally a Fianna Fáil stronghold, Dublin South-East is also the constituency of the present Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald. Will the electorate reflect the general anti-Government feeling, or will the Progressive Democrats make inroads with their Party Chairman. We assess the candidates in this important constituency.

ONE of the hardest battles likely to be fought in the forthcoming general election will be in the constituency of Dublin South-East. Tough for several reasons. For a start all of the political parties, Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil, the Progressive Democrats, the Labour Party, The Workers Party, Sinn Féin and even the Green alliance will be fighting it out for the four seats available. Added to this is the fact that all the sitting TDs for the area, Garret FitzGerald, Joe Doyle, Ruairi Quinn and Gerry Brady will all be running again. The Progressive Democrats will be fighting tooth and nail to have their party Chairman, Michael McDowell elected and the Workers Party and Labour will obviously have daggers drawn for each other once again. In many ways it is the complete constituency, representative of everything this election is being fought on.

The constituency itself spans a wide area of Dublin, South of the Liffey taking in areas like Sandymount, Ranelagh, Rathmines, Ballsbridge and Trinity College. Traditionally a high percentage of voters actually turn up on

polling days and in the last general election Fine Gael received 47.4% of the first preference votes, Fine Fáil 31%, Labour 14.8% and the Workers Party 4.6%. The November election of 1982 saw Fianna Fáil lose one of their seats to Joe Doyle. This time however, Fianna Fáil have put together a formidable team in the form of Gerry Brady, Michael Donnelly, Mary McAleese and Eoin Ryan Jnr.

This time out Fine Gael and Labour have it all to do. Fine Gael are sticking to Joe Doyle and Garret FitzGerald with the addition of a person they are calling the new "whizz-kid" of Fine Gael, Willie Egan, who tied with Garret FitzGerald at the Fine Gael selection convention. In fact most people in Fine Gael had tipped Alexis FitzGerald to secure the nomination.

REPORT BY JOHN MCGEE

The decision of the Labour Party to run only one candidate, Ruairi Quinn, could prove disastrous for them. The party's share of the national vote is at an all time low and this became all the more evident in the local elections of 1985 when they received a meagre 7.5% of the vote. Participation in the Coalition Government has taken its toll, with a tendency on behalf of the voter to submerge their identity with that of Fine Gael. Added to this is the fact that the Workers Party have been making significant inroads in areas that have been Labour strongholds in the past. In Dublin South-East the threat to the Labour Party manifests itself in two forms — the Progressive Democrats and the Workers Party. The Workers Party are instructing their voters not to give Labour any votes. If this is the case there is every reason to believe that Ruairi Quinn will have the toughest fight in Dublin South-East.

All in all there will be over thirteen candidates contesting the election in Dublin South-East with the possibility of more being added as the time draws nearer.



Garret FitzGerald, Fine Gael.

The candidates are:

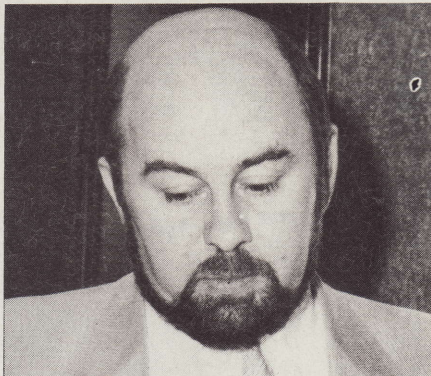
Garret FitzGerald: Undoubtedly one of Fine Gael's greatest electoral assets. Under FitzGerald, Fine Gael have won more seats than ever before. As Taoiseach, however, he has presided over a country where the total national debt stands at £24.3 billion (148% of GNP) and the number of unemployed stands at 250,178. FitzGerald's biggest personal asset going into the election is not that he is leader of Fine Gael, but rather his personal charisma. Despite the fact that the outgoing Coalition government was possibly one of the worst in the history of the State, FitzGerald looks certain to hold on to his seat. He was first elected to the Dáil in 1969 and all subsequent elections thereafter.



Joe Doyle, Fine Gael.

Joe Doyle: A former church sacristan and for the past three years he has sided with the Fine Gael backbencher Alice Glenn on the issues of divorce and abortion. He caused a bit of embarrassment to his constituency colleague and party leader, when in 1983 he voted for the Fianna Fáil wording on the abortion amendment. On the issue of divorce he was even more vociferous. His primary

concern is crime and he was a strong supporter of the Criminal Justice Bill as it was making its way through the Dáil. He was disappointed when the constituency of Dublin South-East voted overwhelmingly for divorce in the last referendum. Of the two Fine Gael seats, his looks like going.



Ruairi Quinn, Labour.

Ruairi Quinn: Labour have decided to only run one candidate in this constituency. Quinn is fairly popular, particularly in and around his home territory of Sandymount. In the 1982 General Election, Fine Gael set out to take his seat from him by advising their voters not to give any second preference vote to him. The man largely responsible for this strategy was Michael McDowell. It was hoped that Alexis FitzGerald would take Quinn's seat but the plan went wrong and Quinn retained it. Quinn is at home when dealing with housing and urban renewal issues. He was never very happy with a Coalition Government, but once given certain tasks he executes them singlemindedly. He spoke out strongly against the anti-abortion amendment though he himself was against abortion. He also spoke out against the anti-divorce lobby in the last referendum. As a Minister for Labour, Quinn's record is less impressive with unemployment reaching an all time high. Quinn will have a problem keeping his seat.



Gerry Brady, Fianna Fáil.

Gerry Brady: Probably had one of the shortest Ministerial careers ever. From October 1982 to November 1982. Then he was Minister for Education in the short-lived

Fianna Fáil government. No sooner had he announced the introduction of charges for the use of school buses when a General Election was called. He is Fianna Fáil's Spokesman for the National Environment and was particularly outspoken around the time of the Sellafeld leakages. He initiated the Litter Act and has frequently called for the introduction of smoke-free zones in the Dublin area. He backed Michael O'Kennedy to succeed Charles Haughey in one of the infamous attempts to oust Haughey in 1983 and when the party leader was compiling his front bench in 1983, Brady asked specifically not to be included in it. He is a fairly popular candidate in this constituency. Brady is the son of a former TD and Lord Mayor P.A. Brady. He practices as an Ophthalmic Optician in the heart of Dublin South East, Camden Street. He should hold on to his seat.



Michael McDowell, Progressive Democrats.

Michael McDowell: If in 1982 anybody had said that Michael McDowell would be seeking election in a party headed by Dessie O'Malley in the next General Election, they would have been laughed at. Before joining the Progressive Democrats as their party Chairman, McDowell had impeccable Fine Gael credentials. He was Chairman of Fine Gael in Garret FitzGerald's own constituency. In fact he founded the Palmerston branch of Fine Gael and in 1977 he was FitzGerald's director of elections. IN 1979 he was added to the Fine Gael ticket but failed to get elected getting a credible 1,271 first preference votes. In 1981 he was director of elections for Fine Gael in Dublin South East as well as the two General Elections in 1982.

McDowell was against Fine Gael joining Labour in a coalition and from then on it was more or less downhill in the popularity polls in Fine Gael headquarters for him. Over the past few months the PD handlers have been busy building up his public image, something he did not have when he was a back-room boy. McDowell is a successful barrister and has acted as counsel for people as diverse as Malcolm McArthur and the British National Union of Mineworkers. He also acted for the state against Nicky Kelly and in another case for the State against Geraldine Kennedy, a candidate for the Progressive Democrats in the Dun Laoghaire constituency. McDowell could very well be the surprise candidate in this constituency.



Willie Egan, Fine Gael.

Willie Egan: Already being hailed as the 'wonderboy' of Fine Gael. In the Fine Gael selection convention he tied 54-54 with Garret FitzGerald pushing Joe Doyle into third position and pushing the tipped Alexis FitzGerald out of the race altogether. Egan joined Fine Gael in 1980 and since then his rise through the party ranks has been nothing short of meteoric. He topped the poll at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis last year when he ran for one of the 12 positions on the National Executive representing the Dublin Euro constituency. He is a partner in the Ormond Quay law firm Egan and Muldowney where the silent partner is none other than Deputy Liam Cosgrave Jnr. Although the Fine Gael rank and file reckon he is no outsider, it is very unlikely that 'wonderboy' Willie will win a seat.



Mary McAleese, Fianna Fáil.

Mary McAleese: The darling of the Fianna Fáil party. An extremely articulate and convincing character, something that is sadly lacking in other people in Fianna Fáil. She first made her mark when she made her submission to the New Ireland Forum on behalf of the bishops.

Since then she has in many ways been the unofficial spokesperson for Fianna Fáil on issues affecting the 'moral majority'. In short she is socially conservative and radically nationalist. She has a great admiration for her party leader and it is no secret that he sees in her the makings of an excellent Fianna Fáil die hard. McAleese was imposed on this constituency by the powers that be and this time out it looks like she will return to her home in Meath somewhat disappointed. She is currently Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology in Trinity College.

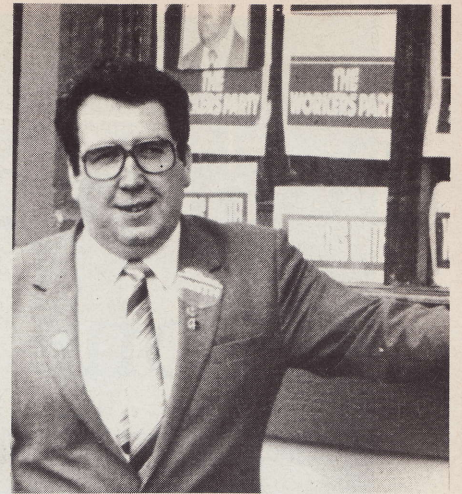


Michael Donnelly, Fianna Fáil.

Michael Donnelly: A former Senator and at present a Councillor on Dublin Corporation. He is Chairman of the Corporation's Finance Committee. Donnelly also served as a member of Fianna Fáil's National Executive from 1970 to 1978. He first stood for election in Dublin South-East back in 1969. He polled 2,500 first preference votes in what was then a three seat constituency which saw the election of Garret FitzGerald, Noel Browne and Sean Moore. Donnelly's electioneering began back in 1985 when he was re-elected to the City Council. Since then he has been very active at constituency level holding weekly clinics. He is a well known supporter of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC). He recently announced that he would campaign for funds to be given to the Olympia Theatre from the National Lottery. He works as a chartered accountant for Oliver Freaney and Co. in Ballsbridge. He should take the second Fianna Fáil seat.

Eoin Ryan Jnr: Following in his father's footsteps (and his father before him), Eoin Ryan could be the third generation of that family to enter the Dáil on the Fianna Fáil ticket. Ryan was elected to the Pembroke Ward in the 1985 local elections. His father, Eoin Snr, was largely associated with an anti-Haughy faction in recent years but now that most of them have gone to other parties or elevated to higher echelons, the Ryans will have to decide pretty soon whether or not they are going to tow the line. There were rumours several months ago that both father and son would join the PDs but nothing came of them. The young Eoin is a very capable councillor although many doubt his capabilities as a TD. He runs a successful restaurant, The Runnerbean, in Dublin's Nassau Street and once said in a radio interview that he represented the small businessman in Irish politics. Not politically mature enough and it is very unlikely that he will win a seat.

Tom Crilly: Also representing the Workers Party. Contested the local elections in 1985 unsuccessfully but did help increase their vote. Crilly is a telephone technician. No chance.



Andy Smith, Workers Party.

Andy Smith: One of two Workers Party candidates standing in this constituency. Andy is a councillor on Dublin Corporation having been elected in 1985. He has also contested several other elections in this area, all unsuccessfully. He is an unemployed docker and lives in the Pearse Street area.



Aengus O'Snodaigh, Sinn Féin.

Aengus O'Snodaigh: Sinn Féin are being very optimistic, to say the least, by running a candidate in Dublin South East. At 22 Aengus is probably the youngest candidate in the country. As a student at UCD he was actively involved in numerous campaigns for a reduction in fees. He is an unemployed teacher from Sandymount. No chance.

Maire Mullarney: The Dublin-based journalist and writer will be carrying the flag of the Green Alliance. Although the Greens have polled well on the Continent the only successful in-road they have made in Ireland was the election of Marcus Coughlin in the local elections in Kerry. No chance.

It is generally accepted that in this election, more so than any other one, nothing can be taken for granted. Fianna Fáil have come out consistently on top in the numerous opinion polls that have been carried out over the past two to three years and the PDs have remained fairly consistent in their share of the popularity stakes. However, elections are not won on opinion poll results alone. For the vast majority of voters it will be like picking Scylla instead of Charybdis.