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PRICE TWOPENCE

CITY HALL ?

Present building unworthy of Limerick

"I SAW, according to a Press report, that there is a possibility that the Garda Headquarters may be transferred to St. Munchin's College site. It may only be a report, but I have persistently advocated that site as an outstanding site for a City Hall."

This was stated by Ald. G. E. Russell at Monday night's meeting of the City Council when he urged that steps should be taken forthwith to investigate the possibility of building a new hall, in view of the fact that the present building was unworthy of the third city of the Republic.

Ald. Russell said that it would be a great pity if the site was acquired for any other purpose and they should take some preliminary steps in the matter. It was the last outstanding site in the city for a public building and it would be a shame for them to leave it go.

He went on to say that they had approached the County Council some months ago but they had informed the Corporation that they were no longer interested in a joint scheme. They could approach his Lordship the Bishop to see what the present position was. In Dublin the Corporation and County Council seemed to be able to get grants for grandiose buildings and they should try and find out what progress they could make in Limerick.

Councillor J. P. Liddy said that he agreed with Ald. Russell. They would slip up badly if they did not take the site. In fact they should have taken it over before Bord na gCom had gone in there. It was a magnificent building on a magnificent site.

A POSITIVE DISGRACE.

"We have never got to the bottom of the matter," he said, "and it is time we took steps to provide suitable municipal buildings. They are badly needed and it is a positive disgrace bringing people down to this building."

Councillor J. Reidy—I suggest that we refer the matter to the estimates meeting.

The City Manager (Mr. T. F. McDermott) said that the question of the provision of new buildings was considered on a number of occasions by the Council, and while the view had been expressed that new accommodation was necessary, no progress had been made in that direction beyond the discussion stage. There had never been a firm decision.

The Manager said that no grants would be available and the Cor-

poration would have to defray the cost of the new City Hall from their own resources or whatever resources available in the event of their letting portion of the buildings. There was no site vacant at the moment and if the Council so wished he would make inquiries about the site mentioned.

Councillor J. P. Liddy said that they should investigate the possibility of financing the project by borrowing. He understood that there were people who would do so.

City Manager—We have no firm mind as to what our proposals are and it is, therefore, very difficult to discuss with any group that might represent financial interests who would be prepared to undertake the work.

Ald. G. E. Russell recalled that in 1942 the Council unanimously approved of the need for new offices and the need then was nearly as great as it was now. It would become more necessary in the years ahead and he thought that they should be prepared to go on. It would take years to complete the project.

Councillor J. Reidy pointed out that it was the wrong time to consider such a project. They would have to cut their cloth according to measure and look into the entire financial implications of the scheme. The kind of building suggested would cost anything up to £100,000.

Mayor (Councillor F. Glasgow)—My information is that it would cost £600,000.

Councillor Reidy—The annual charges on that amount would send the rates higher than the proposed 64/10. You can all see what is happening all over the country; farmers are parading around the towns and the ratepayers are protesting that they are already overburdened. We are spending beyond our means and it is about time we checked up on ourselves. There are no grants available and

building costs are very high. Mayor—They won't get any cheaper.

Councillor G. B. Dillon said that his idea was to get a Government Department to take an extended lease from us and they would probably go three-quarters of the way in the provision of the building.

Ald. Russell said that he agreed wholeheartedly with Councillor Reidy that every aspect of the question should be examined, but they could not just drift on.

Councillor Reidy—We cannot afford palatial buildings and we should continue here and make ourselves as comfortable as we can. You will not be able to pay for it.

After further discussion Ald. Russell's proposal was agreed to.

Travel agents to visit Shannon

Ten Dutch travel agents, mainly from Amsterdam and the Hague, will arrive in Dublin on Sunday next (March 18) on a five-day tour organised by Bord Falta and Aer Lingus, Irish International Airlines. They will visit Shannon, Clare, Galway, the Midlands, Wicklow and Dublin, and will meet local tourist interests.

After a stop at Dublin Airport on Sunday they will fly on by jet to Shannon, where they will tour the duty-free shops and meet representatives of the Free Airport Development Company. Next morning they will visit Bunnratty Castle and tour local scenic areas before setting off for Galway and Connemara via the Cliffs of Moher.

On Tuesday they will see the cent, which was 3 per cent. more Dublin.

After a tour of Wicklow on Thursday, the agents will have discussions with representatives of Bord Falta, Aer Lingus and other tourist interests.

They will return to Amsterdam on Friday morning.

Big increase in trade of port

Because the trade of Limerick Port was steadily increasing two further pilots would be needed to augment the present personnel, the Acting Harbour Master, Mr. J. O'Sullivan reported to the Limerick Harbour Board on Monday. He reported that 43 vessels, 27 foreign going, had entered the Port during the four-week period since the last meeting and because of that big increase a radical change from the point of view of additional pilotage staff would have to be considered.

The Board decided to refer the matter to the Pilotage Committee.

Criticism of Appointments Commission

A call for a change in the present method of selection of candidates by the Appointments Commission was made at a meeting of the Limerick Harbour Commissioners on Monday.

The Commissioners were considering a letter from the Department of Transport and Power which told them that they had no option but to appoint a Harbour Master for Limerick who had been recommended to them by the Local Appointments Commission and approved by the Minister.

He is Lieut-Commander James J. Whelan, of Cobh, Co. Cork, a former commander of a corvette in the Irish Naval Services.

The Commissioners refuted a suggestion by the Minister of any discrimination against Irish Naval personnel for Harbour posts.

The Chairman of the Commissioners, Mr. M. McGuire, described the Local Appointments Commission as "star chamber" methods. Those commissions did not have to give reasons for their decisions and people were tried in their absence.

Ald. J. Carew said that it was most regrettable that the Minister should have made this appointment when they had a candidate who was doing the job very satisfactorily and who was "born on the Shannon." Any man who was commander of a naval ship is recognised as having a foreign-going masters' certificate, but he claimed that this was only a "paper qualification."

The Commissioners agreed to a suggestion by Ald. G. E. Russell that the Minister be asked to make sure that Lieut-Commander Whelan had the practical knowledge to perform the duties required by the Harbour Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER'S INSTRUCTION NOT FOR PUBLIC

Film ratings