

50 job cuts looming as Krupps face the crunch

By AIDAN CORR

KRUPS Engineering Ltd., the Roxboro Road manufacturers of domestic appliances, could be facing their biggest challenge since the originally German-owned company first set up in the city close on 30 years ago.

Now part of the giant French-based Moulinex group, the Limerick staff of 600 have been told that a saving of £1.5m must be made in the next financial year if the factory, which once employed 1,300 people, is to survive.

Personnel manager Michael Rooney told the Limerick Leader that an over-capacity situation within Moulinex was resulting in a review of their 21 units worldwide, and as a mem-

ber of this group, Krups had been requested to take the necessary steps to avoid more drastic action.

"We informed the staff and their trade unions last Monday that there is a likelihood that we will require between 30 to 50 redundancies between now and the end of our financial year in March," said Mr Rooney, who added that there was a distinct danger that one or even more of the 21 units within the group would close.

"We are still in discussions with our French colleagues, who have made this directive, and even though we in the Limerick plant may be forced to make unpleasant and unpopular decisions in the near future, we are determined to ensure that Krups factory survives this threat," said the personnel manager.

Because of previous owner-

ship conditions, Moulinex has suffered from a complicated shareholding strategy which restricted a clear decision-making process—and now that this has been overcome through a recent takeover, the company has set about the restructuring of its operations worldwide.

At present the Limerick plant is experiencing its busiest time of the year as Moulinex prepare for what is traditionally the peak sales Christmas period, but the staff, many of whom are members of SIPTU and the TEEU, could face a difficult time before a new year dawns.

With more than half of the Moulinex plants situated in France, it is hoped that one of the nine remaining factories throughout the world will not be sacrificed in the restructuring programme by the parent body.