

KIELY WINS MAYORAL ELECTION

IN A MAYORAL election full of drama and unexpected developments, including what amounted to an anti-coalition vote from the Labour members, Cllr. Paddy Kiely (Fianna Fail) became Limerick's first citizen by 12 votes to four for the Fine Gael nominee, Ald. Pat Kennedy.

The crammed attendance at the County Courthouse on Monday night rose as one man—and woman—in spontaneous tribute to the brave, and still seriously injured, Cllr. Vincent Feeney was conveyed into the Courthouse on a stretcher by members of the Knights of Malta to record his vote.

It was one of the most dramatic elections in recent Mayoral history and when the outgoing Mayor rang the bell for the beginning of the business, there was an air of tenseness among the attendance.

Tribute

After the outgoing Mayor's address in which he reviewed the year's events in detail, Senator G. E. Russell paid tribute to the work he had carried out during the past year.

"Nobody has done as much as you have in the past year," he said. "When you read out the events which occurred during that year, it was an indication of how active you really were."

"You did not spare yourself: you gave of your time and ability. In thanking you, we should couple that gratitude with that we owe your good wife."

"Of the many events during the past year, three stand out in the memory of the people of Limerick."

"You fought to keep the status quo and the rights of Shannon Airport: every success that comes in that fight will be as a result of what you in this city have done."

"Another event which stands out is your introduction of a Civics Week, which will remain as one of the most memorable, social and cultural occasions in this city."

Third event

"The third event which will give longest is your effort to bring help and relief to our suffering brethren in the Six Counties."

"It was you, and you alone, as Mayor of Limerick, who personally contacted all the other mayors of the country that the civic head of every town in this State was represented at the funeral of the victims of the Derry Massacre. It was a most impressive gesture of sympathy and solidarity in the hour of trial of those people."

"The £4,000 collection—the biggest ever collection in this city—was a fitting tribute to your work on behalf of those in the North who needed help."

"And finally, we should pay tribute to you for your kindly

thought to bring down some of the people who have suffered so much and bring down those Derry people."

"Those people from Derry left this city in tears, and it is no exaggeration to say that, for they received in this not only hospitality but also a few hours of being away from the anxieties which bedevil their society."

Second year

"Nobody knows what the future holds, but if a poll was held in this city, they would give a second year of office to you."

Alderman Steve Coughlan, T.D., who associated himself with the remarks of Senator Russell, said that while he did not wish to reiterate the events of the past year he must remark that Councillor O'Driscoll had tackled a most onerous job in a courageous way.

He did this in much more diplomatic ways than I did in our time," he remarked.

He wished Councillor Vincent

DECOR

The beautiful floral decor in the Courthouse was arranged by the city gardener, Mr. Willie Lane. It included pelargoniums, geraniums, roses, decorative and hanging pot plants. The colourful effect was in marked contrast to the dark, rainswept city outside.

The attendance included Mr. Bill Jones, a former Mayor of Waterford. He commented that Mayor O'Driscoll should be a proud man at the many genuine tributes which were paid to him from all sides of the Council.

Feeney a speedy recovery, saying that when he was in office as Mayor he never found a more honourable gentleman than Cllr. Feeney.

Councillor J. P. Liddy also paid tribute to Councillor O'Driscoll, "who certainly carried out the duties of the office with great dignity."

"You proved yourself a very worthy Limerickman in every way," he stated and hinting that Fianna Fail had selected a contender for the office, he added: "We wish you a very good rest now that your year of office is at an end."

Moved

Councillor Vincent Feeney, speaking from his stretcher in the heart of the Council Chamber, remarked how deeply moved he was by the reception given to him as he arrived that evening.

He paid a special tribute to the doctors and staff of Barrington's Hospital, saying that what many people saw as "an institution" was really a very fine hospital indeed.

Moving to the question of the election of a Mayor, he said that the selection of the Fianna Fail candidate had been unanimous among the party: he was one of the younger members of



Councillor Patrick Kiely (F.F.), Mayor of Limerick.

the Council, young in years but old in experience, a man who joined the organisation at the age of 16 and who had been 21 years a member.

"Paddy Kiely has the quality of leadership and organising ability and has been secretary of the Dail Comhairle Ceann-tair."

"He has been a member of the executive of Fianna Fail and has been a director of elections, and even our opponents must admit that our election machine is a well-oiled one."

"He has been noted for the brevity of his speeches, and is not gifted with the gift of the gab, like Alderman Coughlan,

Senator Russell or Councillor Liddy.

"But you will agree that anything that Paddy Kiely has contributed has been constructive. I propose him with a feeling of conviction."

Councillor J. P. Liddy, seconding the motion for Councillor Kiely, said that their candidate was only 37 years of age, having replaced the late Tommy Creamer and having served ten years on the Council.

Powers

If he used his powers of organisation he would be a great success. He had entered politics

at the age of 16 and has been immersed in the political life of the party since then.

He would make a big success of the twelve months coming.

Senator Ted Russell, rising to propose a candidate from his party, Fine Gael, said that it gave him great pleasure to put forward the name of Ald. Pat Kennedy as a worthy successor to Mayor O'Driscoll.

Friend and foe would all agree that he was an active, courageous and highly effective Council member, motivated by a genuine desire to help all of his fellow citizens. He was a Limerickman who could be relied on to carry on the great work of Mayor O'Driscoll.

Cllr. Michael Kennedy seconded. He said that he had done trojan work for the people and would carry out his duties with the same dignity as the great man who had gone before him.

Voice from the gallery—"When was a poor man ever Mayor of Limerick."

Ald. Mick Lipper then rose to speak and referred to the occasion as a sad moment. He had proposed the rotation system which now had led to some apparent misunderstandings. He said that it did appear to give small parties an advantage which he had never intended.

Ald. Lipper then dropped his bombshell by stating that this was the year for Fianna Fail and that, in fact, Cllr. Vincent Feeney could have been saved his painful journey as Labour intended to support the Fianna Fail candidate.

Rotation

The Alderman suggested that the rotation system should continue again in the future and he hoped they could return to the dignity of past years.

Ald. Steve Coughlan, outlining Labour's position, said that they did agree to a rotational basis of election and still adhered to it. They had selected Ald. Lipper unanimously as their candidate.

However to show justice and fair play they had since unanimously decided to support Cllr. Kiely. In view of the fact that Fianna Fail had eight Councillors as against Fine Gael's and Labour's four each, and so far the Mayorality representation was Fine Gael (2), Fianna Fail (2) and Labour (1), he felt that on the basis of fair representation it was Fianna Fail's year.

Agreement

"We also hope," he continued, "that in future years a gentleman's agreement will be made for fair representation."

Referring to Cllr. Kiely he said that it was hard to judge any man until he got the chance to show his ability, courage and foresight.

He concluded: "The arrangement was broken and we therefore support the Fianna Fail candidate."

Cllr. Frank Leddin paid tribute to the former Mayor on the dignified manner he had carried out his high office. He welcomed back colleague Vincent Feeney.

The Cllr. stated that the rotational system had been welcomed by the city. He thought the back door meetings had been written off but they had appeared again this year.

Much thought

He said there was one year left and Labour could have claimed it but "we met in no light manner, and decided after much thought to support Cllr. Kiely in view of the number of seats Fianna Fail hold."

The voting resulted: for Cllr. Kiely (12), Cllr. Leddin, Ald. Coughlan, Cllr. Earls, Ald. Lipper, Cllr. Glasgow, Cllr. Liddy, Cllr. Kiely, Cllr. Feilding, Cllr. Bromell, Cllr. Bourke, Cllr. Casey, Cllr. Feeney.

For Ald. Kennedy: Senator Russell, Ald. Kennedy, Cllr. Kennedy, Mayor O'Driscoll.

Mayor O'Driscoll then said that it gave him great pleasure to nominate Cllr. Kiely as Mayor of Limerick. He was a Limerickman whose family had originated in St. Mary's Parish and would make a worthy Mayor of the city.

Responsibility

Mayor Kiely accepting the office, said that he was not unmindful of the great responsibility facing him and would do his best to advance Limerick and all its citizens.

His priorities would be housing, education and industrial promotion, plus the new Town Hall and the extra bridge across the Shannon.

He paid tribute to his predecessor's work for North-South co-operation and thanked God that a truce had been declared which he hoped would eventually lead to a United Ireland.

He intended to act impartially and asked for the help and co-operation of all members.

In a tribute to his opponent, he said: "You are a tremendous worker. Another day, Pat, and you will be wearing the Mayoral chain."

Dealing

Senator Russell offered the new Mayor his whole hearted co-operation and support. He said that once the first citizen is elected, the wheeler dealing is forgotten. "All people will show you kindness and goodwill, especially the less favoured."

The Senator said that he had proposed the order—Labour, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael. There had been no understanding whatsoever for this year, and all three parties had said that they would propose candidates. The Press seemed to know more about what went on behind these closed doors than the participants.

He concluded: "Labour said they were putting up a candidate, then they came down tonight and changed their mind."

Ald. Coughlan told the new Mayor that if he ever wanted a deputy they would be willing to help out.

Senator Russell seemed to be annoyed, he said, but they had faced the situation as men and

LETTER TO BRENDAN CORISH

The following letter has been sent to Mr. Brendan Corish, T.D., Leader of the Labour Party, by Senator G. E. Russell:

Dear Deputy Corish:

No doubt you will have learned that, thanks to the support of the four Labour Councillors, the Fianna Fail candidate, Councillor P. Kiely, was elected Mayor of Limerick at last night's meeting of the City Council.

The alleged reason for this surprise step by the Labour members was, according to Deputy Steve Coughlan, the breaking of the rotational agreement which had stood for the past three years. Beyond saying that Deputy Coughlan's statement is not in accordance with the facts I do not wish to press the point further at this stage.

However, I think you should know that, prior to the Mayoral election, it was unanimously agreed by the four Fine Gael members on the City Council that, in the event of a three-cornered contest in which the Labour candidate, stated earlier by Deputy Coughlan to Ald. Lipper, secured second place by lot or poll then the Fine Gael Councillors would give their FULL support to the Labour candidate in the final poll against the Fianna Fail nominee. THIS FACT WAS KNOWN TO DEPUTY COUGHLAN BEFORE THE MAYORAL ELECTION.

No doubt Deputy Coughlan has his own good reasons for "merging" with Fianna Fail and thereby ruining Ald. Lipper's chance of becoming Mayor of Limerick, but it would seem that these reasons have little to do with the question of rotational agreements.

However, notwithstanding the machinations of Deputy Coughlan, I want to assure you that, in the spirit of your recent statement and Deputy Cosgrave's ready response, the Fine Gael Party in Limerick will continue to work with all genuine Labour members in this area to provide, at the earliest possible date, a viable alternative to the present discredited administration.

Yours sincerely,

TED RUSSELL.

done their duty in an honourable way. They had no apologies to make.

Notable

Cllr. Liddy, congratulating the Mayor, said that he would make a notable first citizen. He paid tribute to the Labour members on the way they had met this case.

Ald. Pat Kennedy said that the new Mayor was a good friend of his and would remain one. It was a great tribute to be elected Mayor of "the fairest city in this country."

He told the new Mayor: "You will have many deputies—Ald. Coughlan included."

An interrupter shouted: "Take your beating."

The Alderman continued: "If things are hidden I will expose them." He welcomed the coming referendum which, he hoped, would give young people the vote at 18.

He promised the Mayor full support and co-operation.

The City Manager also offered the full co-operation of himself, his officials and employees.

Interview

In an interview later, Alderman Pat Kennedy, N.T., gave his views of the election.

"In my opinion, the members of the Labour Party have looked into their own political grave and have fallen in."

"The decision taken by the

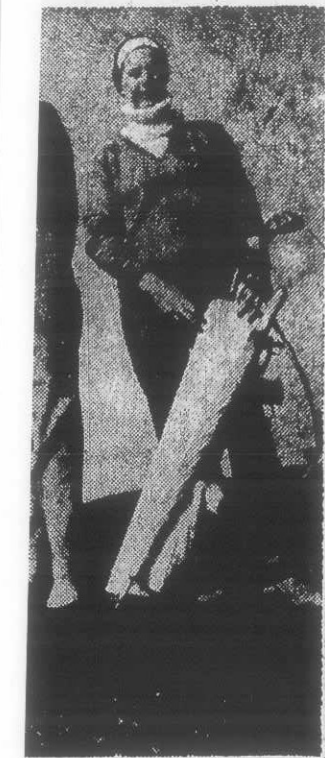
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