

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1986

WELL KNOWN LIMERICK FACES AT P.D. MEETING

THERE were some unexpected faces to be spotted among the massive attendance at last night's Progressive Democrats meeting in the Limerick Inn, and local legal luminaries were the most prominent.

Solicitor, Steve Coughlan, whose father, Steve Coughlan, Sr., was a Labour Mayor of Limerick and T.D. representing East Limerick, and another well known Labour supporter, Mr. John Hayes, solicitor, were present. Mr. Hayes had intentions of standing for Labour in the June local elections but changed his mind.

There were many young Limerick solicitors at the meeting and they joked that Mr. Michael Murray, State Solicitor, and brother of Fianna Fáil appointed former Attorney General, Mr. John Murray, S.C., was one of the few solicitors not present.

Solicitors Tom O'Donnell and Peter Shee were two more from the legal fraternity present, not surprising when you consider Progressive Democrat leader Desmond O'Malley is a solicitor.

Mr. P. J. Power, a director of Mail Holdings, who own the Crescent and Parkway Shopping Centres, was another face in the crowd.

Auctioneer Brian Nolan was also on hand to witness the historic meeting.

There was a surprisingly large number of Fine Gael people among the 3,000 plus attendance, and many members of Gardai were there in civies.

Deaths

Death notices are on page 11



A section of the large crowd in the Ryan Room, Limerick Inn, give Des O'Malley and his party members a standing ovation as they arrive for the P.D.P. Rally last night.

DOUBLE JOY FOR DESSIE

By CONOR KEANE

DEPUTY Desmond O'Malley opened his heart to the 3,000 plus throng that answered the call to attend the first official Progressive Democrats rally in Limerick last night, and told them he could never have started it all without the support he received in his native Limerick.

It was an emotional night for the 47-year-old Limerick leader of Ireland's newest political party, and when he rose to a thunderous ovation to address the massive turnout at the Limerick Inn, he was secure in the knowledge that his party had just eased ahead of Fine Gael in the latest opinion poll.



A thoughtful Des O'Malley with Deputy Pearse Wyse on the platform at last night's Progressive Democrats Rally at the Limerick Inn.

before he went into the main hall.

Shades

Over 3,000 people coming from all shades of the political spectrum flocked to the Limerick Inn for the rally—there was traffic chaos on the Limerick/Ennis Road prior to the meeting, so great was the crowd.

Over 1,500 people packed the Ryan Room where the rally was held with as many more watching the proceedings in other function rooms via closed circuit tv.

To the chorus of "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow" Deputy O'Malley and his parliamentary cohorts, Deputies Mary Harney, Pearse Wyse and Bobby Molloy, walked onto the specially erected stage in the Ryan Room.

Mrs. Bridget Teefy, chairwoman of the party's interim executive, chaired the meeting and first called on Cllr. John Quinn to speak, followed by Cllr. Peadar Clohessy, Mary Harney and finally the one they all wanted to hear, "Dessie."

Cheering

The clapping and cheering was reminiscent of an Ard Fheis and for Mrs. Mai Spillane, now in her eighties, from Corbally, it must have seemed a long way from the Round Room in Dublin's Mansion House, where she attended the first meeting of Fianna Fáil—she is now in the Progressive Democrats.

Speaking without a script—it appears that his "handlers"

want it that way—Deputy O'Malley paid tribute to those who had supported him in the past.

In jocose form he told the gathering he was glad they had come as they were surely missing the "wedding of the year" on television.

Returning to the matter at hand, he declared: "I could never have got started but for the constant level of dedicated support I have received in East Limerick."

Mr. O'Malley, who had only returned from the United States on Saturday, declared

that the Progressive Democrats would not only have runners in East Limerick in the next general election but in West Limerick—and Clare as well." He also indicated that the party would contest other constituencies in the region.

In an address that lasted for 35 minutes, he held the audience in the palm of his hand.

In his short address, Cllr. John Quinn declared that Cllr. Peadar Clohessy would be the party's second runner in East Limerick.

MOTHER RAPED IN CITY CENTRE

A 34-year-old mother of three was raped by three men in Limerick City on Friday night last and Gardai at Henry Street have appealed for information on the incident. Phone (061) 44222.

The brutal assault took place in Taylor's Lane, off Catherine Street, between 10.30 p.m. on Friday and 12.30 a.m. on Saturday and the victim was from Limerick.

She was raped by each of the three men who ranged in age from 18 to 26 and Gardai, continuing their investigation into the incident, have appealed for information from the public to help track down the attackers.

Following the assault the woman made her way to the Railway Station and took a taxi to Edward Street Garda

Station where she reported the incident.

College Players

The College Players present Brian Friel's "Aristocrats" at the Belltable all this week. Curtain up at 8 p.m. each night.

Cold and dry

It will be cold and mainly dry this Monday, according to the Met. Office in Shannon. However South-Easterly gale force gusts are expected later in the day with temperatures forecast not to go over 7 C. Frost is not forecast. Unsettled weather is predicted from Wednesday to the weekend.



IRISH MADE MONEY SAVERS

FASHION POINT,
Suede wedges, £28.99,
£12.99. Leathers,
£28.99. £14.99



BROGUES, tan, leather
soles. £29.99. £19.99.



TOE-CAPS, Black and
Brown, Leather Uppers,
£19.99. Leather Soles,
£24.99.



LEAVYS

Full range of Runners in stock

Deputy O'Malley told his supporters that the Progressive Democrats had increased their 19 per cent rating in the polls but despite the fact that he knew the figures, he did not release them to the crowd.

It was a night of double celebration for Deputy O'Malley—a year ago he had been unceremoniously flung out of the Fianna Fáil party, now he was returning to his native city to a hero's welcome as leader of a new political party riding the crest of a wave.

Party

Three weeks ago his party held 19 per cent of the first preference votes, according to an opinion poll, and now the respected Irish Times/MRBI poll showed his party a full two percentage points ahead of Fine Gael with 25 per cent of the vote.

According to the poll Fianna Fáil have 42 per cent of the vote, with Labour 4 per cent and the Workers' Party three per cent.

Speaking to journalists before the meeting Mr. O'Malley said that this level of support if maintained would give his party up to 41 seats in a new Dail.

"The level of support underlines the extent of the disillusionment with the existing parties and the awesome challenge facing the Progressive Democrats, a challenge which we are confident we can meet. We called on all those people who want to change Irish politics to participate fully in the party," stated Mr. O'Malley to journalists in a bedroom of the Limerick Inn.