

dark.

After 25 years of turbulent politics, the setting for his proclamation of departure was a humble — and humid — one. Dozens of journalists and cameramen rushed in from the torrential rain to a sparse little room at the back of the Progressive Democrats HQ in South Frederick Street to formally hear the news that had broken just before noon.

Mr O'Malley, flanked on his left by his wife, Pat, and on his right by Bobby Molloy, scanned the soggy crowd from under a cynical brow. "The Irish prefer a funeral to a christening," he contended. The wit was nippy in spite of the day that was in it.

Indeed, it was a bit like a funeral but few had anticipated a wake just yet as the exuberant orange suit of Mairin Quill testified; but the passing of the leadership left a

## Dessie O'Malley's resignation

number of his TDs positively ashen-faced.

If most of his party was shocked at the loss, they were dry-eyed because PDs don't wail and rant in moments of passion, not publicly at any rate. They are more stoic and stiff upper-lipped than that. So, the mood was somber in spite of the parboiled atmosphere in the thronged room as Des O'Malley read his message of resignation with a decisive, practised air, as if he had already said it over and over in his head.

He had gone to East Limerick on Monday night to tell PD councillors and workers on his old political homeground that he was

credulity greeted the very notion that their guide and virtuoso proposed to be an ordinary backbencher.

But, in true Irish fashion, of course, his leadership was not cold when the question was being asked: "Who will step into his shoes?" One of the two contenders — Pat Cox — was attending a conference in Vienna; the other, Mary Harney, was there and, according to one who knows about these matters, "all her body language indicated she is for the big job".

Maybe so. But, as she said herself, the impact of Des O'Malley's resignation has not sunk in just yet. A leading actor of Irish politics had walked off the stage before the final curtain, before the plot had fully unfolded, and certainly before most of the other players realised what was happening.

## Achievements praised by Maginnis and Alderdice

From Suzanne Breen, in Belfast

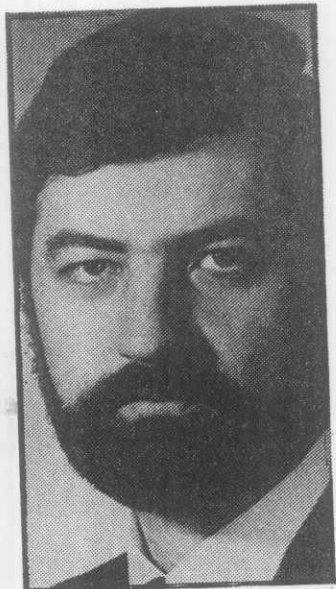
THE Ulster Unionist MP for Fermanagh/South Tyrone, Mr Ken Maginnis, yesterday paid tribute to Mr O'Malley for his "very impressive and measured tone" during the 1992 political talks. "If his views had been reflected throughout the entire Dublin delegation, there is no doubt that greater progress would have been made," Mr Maginnis said.

He regretted that Mr O'Malley had chosen this particular time to resign, although one could understand that, after 20 years in the front line, "he feels that he should give way to new blood". The PD leader's desire for "reconciliation and understanding beyond ancient prejudices" had been appreciated in the unionist community, Mr Maginnis said.

He hoped that the people of Northern Ireland would "continue to see and hear from Des O'Malley in politics for some time to come".

The leader of the Alliance Party, Dr John Alderdice, also paid tribute to Mr O'Malley, describing him as a man of "extraordinary ability, energy and commitment", who had had a "remarkable impact" on politics in the Republic since the 1970s.

"If any one individual can be said to be responsible for triggering the modernisation of Irish politics, it is Des O'Malley," Dr Alderdice said. "He has persuaded people to look again at the Constitution of the Republic, to look again at their attitudes to



**Dr John Alderdice:** described Mr O'Malley as having extraordinary ability, energy and commitment.

Northern Ireland, and to look again at the needs of the environment, the economy, and particularly human rights.

"His ability to analyse and respond to political situations has the respect of all politicians in these islands and beyond. Even in his departure from the front line of politics, he is unusual in that he is able to do it at a time of his own choosing, typical Des, still in control of the situation."

## Party in Limerick already knew

From Arthur Quinlan, in Limerick

ALTHOUGH Desmond O'Malley's official announcement of his retirement came as a bombshell to the people of Limerick, it was already known to 20 members of the party in the city, who were sworn to secrecy.

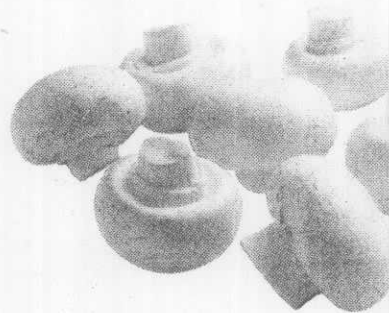
Mr Tim O'Malley, leader of PDs in Limerick County Council, told *The Irish Times* he had received a telephone call from Mr O'Malley, his second cousin, on Monday morning, requesting that he call a meeting of the eight PD city and county councillors and officer board members, at the party's headquarters in Cecil Street "to hear a matter of importance concerning the party".

The meeting was also attended by the PD leader's wife, Pat, and two sons, Desmond (20), who is in the auctioneering business in Dublin, and Eoin (19), a second-year student at University of Limerick. Mr O'Malley told the meeting he owed it to the organisation in Limerick to inform them before making the official announcement to the Oireachtas.

According to Mr Tim O'Malley, the party leader said he had "been in the eye of a storm since 1968 without a single year of rest". This had taken its toll in time and he had seen too many other leaders go at a time which was not of their choosing. He said Mr Des O'Malley had decided that the time was just right, with no request or pressure on him to move on.

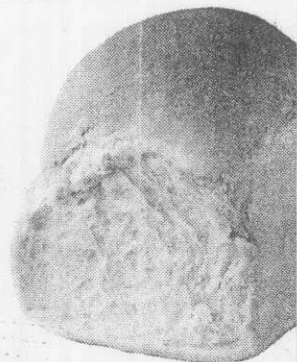
For that reason, he would be in a position, unlike so many other leaders in the past, to help his successors. He told the meeting he intended staying on and contesting the next election.

# Bonelo And we



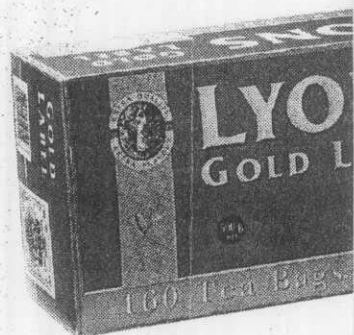
**MUSHROOMS** Irish were £1.49 per lb/

Our mushrooms are picked and to our stores fresh each morn



**BAKERS' Kitchen Batch Loaves Small**

We'll slice your bread fresh from the Bakers' Kit



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12 Superclub bonus points. Lo shamrocks on shelf to help you id



## O'MALLEY RESIGNATION

## Reynolds commends political career of 'great courage'



Mr Des O'Malley, during the press conference yesterday at which he announced his resignation.  
Photograph: Matt Kavanagh

## A leading actor of Irish politics walks off the stage

INTO the west he went and, after long walks in the rustic calm, Des O'Malley returned home from his summer holidays with a resolute mind. It's hellishly hard to keep a secret in Leinster House but his resignation yesterday as leader of the biggest little party in the Dail really did go off like a rocket in the

**Maol Muire Tynan** was at the Progressive Democrats HQ to hear the news of

about to vacate the leadership. The rest of the PD clan — with the exception of a small number of confidants who were aware of his plan — were told in the 24 hours before the formal announcement. Shy whispers last week suggested that Mr O'Malley was about to quit his leadership but nobody would stand up the next day.

THE TAOISEACH, Mr Reynolds, said that, as a young minister, Mr O'Malley had shown "great courage in confronting dangerous situations".

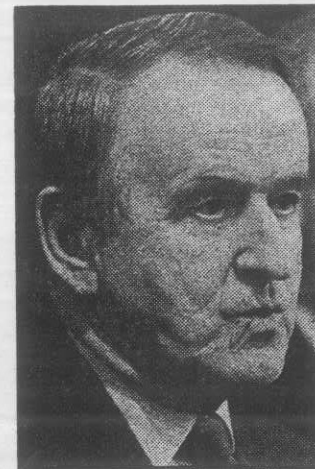
He had made "an important contribution as Minister for Industry and Commerce in a number of administrations, and he undoubtedly enjoyed the respect of industry", Mr Reynolds added.

"Notwithstanding political differences, I am glad to acknowledge that, as leader of the Progressive Democrats, he has played a significant and constructive part in our democratic life over the past eight years and that much of significant and lasting value was accomplished in the FF/PD government between 1989 and 1992."

Mr Reynolds paid tribute to Mr O'Malley's long and distinguished public service, particularly during his periods as a minister since 1970, and to his loyal and devoted wife, Pat. He wished them both well.

The Fine Gael leader, Mr John Bruton, said that he was "shocked and saddened" by Mr O'Malley's resignation. He had made a major contribution to Irish politics. As Minister for Justice in the 1970s, and in his departure from Fianna Fail, he had shown courage and honesty. "He is very easy to deal with, because he is absolutely straightforward", Mr Bruton said.

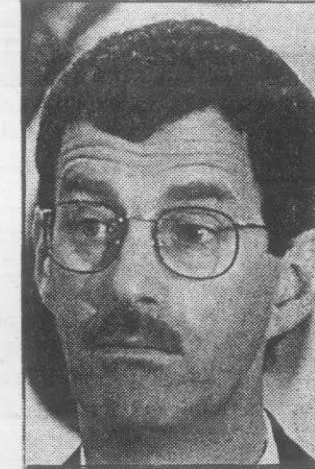
The co-founder of the Progressive Democrats and TD for Galway West, Mr Bobby Molloy, said that Mr O'Malley had been under no pressure to go. Whoever was chosen to succeed him would strengthen the party in those areas where it was established and generate further growth in



**Mr Reynolds:** importance of ministerial contributions emphasised.



**Mr Bruton:** paid tribute to Mr O'Malley's courage and honesty.



**Mr Spring:** contribution to shaping political agenda praised.

other areas. Mr O'Malley had to take his personal wellbeing into account. He had been "totally immersed" in the task of leading the party and had made a contribution exceeding that of any other politician.

"We respect his decision. If he considers the right thing is to stand down, we respect that", said Mr Molloy.

The former Tanaiste, Mr John Wilson, who was in Cabinet with Mr O'Malley during the Fianna Fail-PD coalition, said that the Government had worked in harmony, particularly on financial and fiscal policy. Mr O'Malley had been an "intelligent, industrious, hard-working and committed Minister".

His departure from Fianna Fail, however, had been a "fatal

mistake", said Mr Wilson. "If he thought the party needed reform, he should have stayed within and reformed from within. That [leaving] was a major political error." He said that many people had been surprised and hurt by his decision to set up a new party.

The Tanaiste and Labour Party leader, Mr Spring, said that there were many areas on which he disagreed with Mr O'Malley profoundly, but he had always respected his ability and integrity.

"His decision to found the Progressive Democrats, after he was expelled from Fianna Fail, has made a considerable mark on Irish politics and has contributed to the shaping of the political agenda in Ireland. In whatever he chooses to do now, I wish him

success on a personal basis, and I trust that the Dail will have the benefit of his experience for many years to come", said Mr Spring.

The Democratic Left leader, Mr Proinsias De Rossa, wished Mr O'Malley well and said that, while they had disagreed on many issues, he had always respected his integrity and the tenacity with which he argued his case. "I particularly respect the courageous and conciliatory stand he has taken on Northern Ireland", he said, adding that Mr O'Malley had been a "formidable figure" in Irish politics.

The Fine Gael MEP for Munster, Mr John Cusnahan, said that Mr O'Malley's "genuine and sincere interest" in the problems of Northern Ireland had to be ac-

knowledgeed. He had had a long and distinguished political career, with courage and integrity being consistent features of all his contributions to political life.

Mr Pat Cox, TD and MEP for Munster, said that he had been surprised to learn that Mr O'Malley's was resigning. Mr Cox, who is expected to contest the leadership of the Progressive Democrats, was in Vienna yesterday to make a presentation to the EC-Austria Joint Parliamentary Committee when he was informed of Mr O'Malley's decision by telephone.

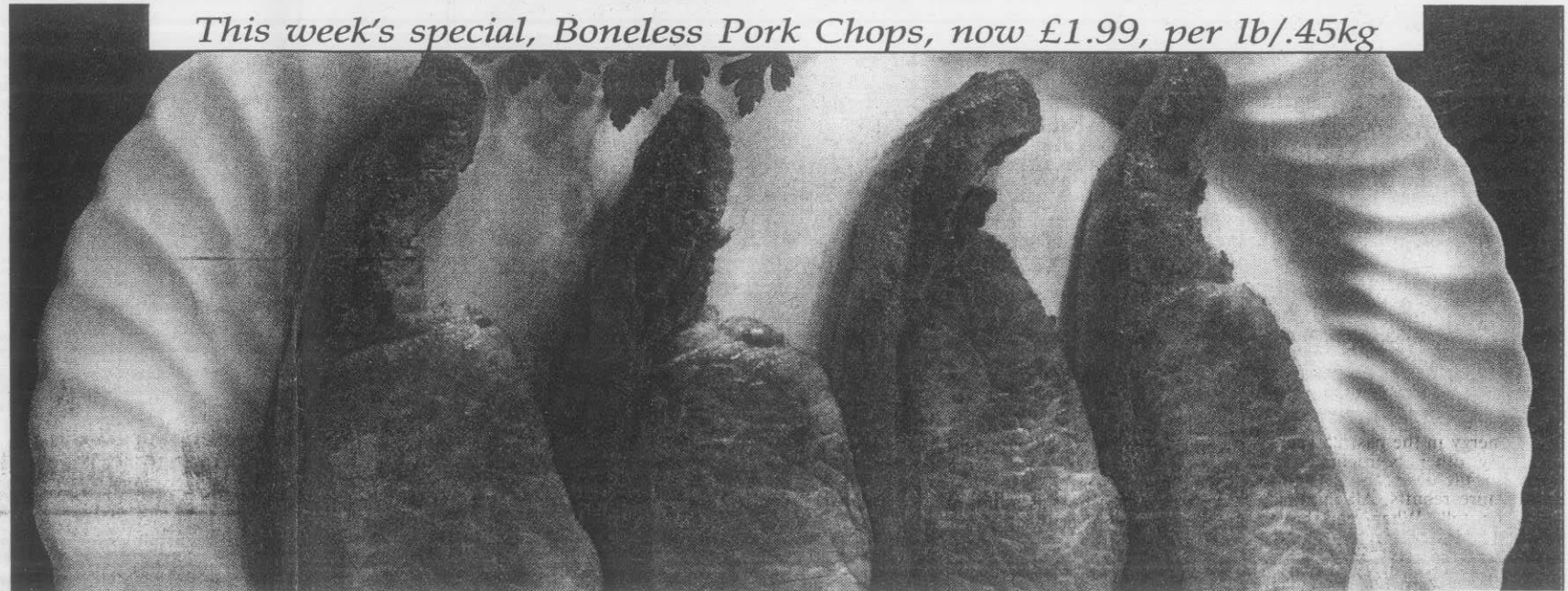
"He explained the context of his decision, and I fully respect this", said Mr Cox. "The manner in which he chose to relinquish the post of party leader was as decisive as his method of dealing with many issues during his career."

The former Taoiseach, Mr Jack Lynch, said that Mr O'Malley had been "one of the most able politicians who ever entered Dail Eireann". The State was indebted to him for his great contribution to public life.

The Shannon workers' lobby, SIGNAL, said that it and its allies in the campaign for Shannon's status would be "eternally indebted" to Mr O'Malley for his efforts on their behalf. Now freed of the constraints of leadership, it was to be hoped that he would turn the full force of his energies to Shannon Airport and its vital importance to the future of the west of Ireland.

**More home news on page 21**

*This week's special, Boneless Pork Chops, now £1.99, per lb/.45kg*





## O'MALLEY RESIGNATION

## The best Taoiseach that we never had

**D**ES O'MALLEY has contributed more than most during the past 20 years to the modernisation of Irish politics. He has earned the title suggested last night by a shrewd judge of public affairs: "The best Taoiseach we never had."

The man who made the judgment is neither a member of the Progressive Democrats nor one of O'Malley's admirers; and he makes no bones about some of the PD leader's spikier characteristics, like his refusal to forgive or forget.

But this strategist from across the floor is prepared to acknowledge the pivotal role that O'Malley played when the pattern of 60 years was finally shattered and the two-and-a-half party system collapsed.

Those who like to talk of what might have been, including some in Fianna Fail, will agree with his assessment and ask yet again *what* might have been if O'Malley and Charles Haughey, whose parties formed a government in 1989, had been able to share power in a single party 10 years earlier.

The speculation is pointless. O'Malley chose not to serve on Haughey's terms; and Haughey demanded personal loyalty to the leader as to the party. Neither trusted the other and the break seemed inevitable long before it came — ironically, leaving them free to serve together in separate parties when the time and circumstance were right and they were beyond forgiving and forgetting.

By then, the changes that are O'Malley's major political achievement were under way. The two-and-a-half party system had long kept Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour in the cramped style to which they'd become accustomed. With the sudden appearance of the Progressive Democrats, the system's assumptions — in particular, the notion that the Civil War was the real dividing-line in Irish politics — began to wither.

Other parties which promised change had come and gone. Clann na Poblachta, Clann na Talmhan, the Centrists and the Farmers' Party briefly flourished and, apart from the memory of Noel Browne's cour-

age, vanished without trace. (Sinn Féin-the Workers' Party in the 1980s was on the way to becoming the Workers' Party and Democratic Left.)

**T**HE NEW challenge was more enduring. It also came from a surprising point on the political compass and from an unpredictable source: not some fiery campaigner on the left but a seasoned politician who had served with the mohair-suited men of Fianna Fail; someone who had once said that Ireland should be one because God had made it so.

**Dick Walsh, Political Editor, assesses the personal qualities of Des O'Malley's leadership**



In the 1940s, many left Fianna Fail to join Clann na Poblachta because of dissatisfaction with its failure to live up to republican ambitions. Now they left, perhaps because of disagreements rooted in the leadership struggles of the previous 20 years, but essentially because of the party's refusal to modernise.

And on this occasion Fine Gael, too, suffered losses both of membership and support. If Fianna Fail had refused to modernise, Fine Gael had made the effort, with its constitutional crusade, and failed in the attempt.

O'Malley's leadership had an air of novelty. He had not been groomed for politics, although his father, Desmond, and his uncles, Donogh and Mickey, had been active in the party. Donogh's sudden death in 1968 caused the opening which he was to fill in Limerick.

But he was plunged almost immediately into the turbulence created by the arms crisis. Jack Lynch, who has never ceased to express admiration for his ability, made him Minister for Justice at a time when many an older deputy would have foregone the promotion.

Few now remember the minister who spent his days and nights under constant protection and was subject to as much hostility from inside the party as he was to pressure from outside. The experience gave him a steely edge which he was to lose only when the internal battles eventually led to his expulsion and he was free to proclaim how much his views had changed in 15 years.

What had wrought the change that was to lead him from the safe haven of Fianna Fail to the more adventurous paths of classic European liberalism? He once claimed to have been a keen reader of the *New Statesman* in his days in UCD. And there is in the O'Malley family a strain of intellectual radicalism unusual among the upper-middle citizens of Limerick.

People who know him well do not underestimate the influence exerted by his wife, Pat McAleer, and their children; nor the appetite for reading, listening and debating which has been evident in his political contributions — in particular, the sense of engagement on questions of standards, social issues and the role of the state.

He has been an unusually energetic minister and party leader, if not in the beginning the most attractive. He is as stubborn as he ever was — and as apt to draw attention to the blunders of others. Should he decide to write, as he can, his memoirs should be worth reading.

## Passing the torch or a case of burn-out?

Mr O'Malley's tumultuous years in Irish politics are reviewed by **Joe Carroll, Parliamentary Correspondent**

AFTER 25 years in political life, Des O'Malley has decided that the time has come to step aside for the "next political generation to take over the helm". He is only 54, so is it a case of political "burn-out" disguised as a plan to ensure that the Progressive Democrats can "double" its strength under a younger leader?

There is no doubt that Mr O'Malley has burned up more political energy in the past 25 years than any other politician currently in the Dail and has endured more rebuffs. All this has taken its toll. When you have been a Minister for Justice at 31 and served in ministerial posts for almost 12 years, the prospect

that "Ireland is one Ireland, one nation, one country because God made it one".

He also criticised the Fine Gael-Labour legislation to amend anti-contraceptive laws and declared that it was their duty as legislators "to deter fornication, to promote public morality and to prevent public immorality". But he is best remembered during this period for his sustained assault on the proposals of the then Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr Justin Keating, to compensate the mining company, Bula, in its dispute with Tara Mines — an episode which would be disinterred by political opponents in more recent times to embarrass him.

With the return of Fianna Fail to power in 1977, Mr O'Malley was to take on the Industry and Commerce portfolio which, with various titles, he was to hold for several periods totalling eight years until he resigned from office almost a year ago.

As a Minister he was admired for his energy but criticised for a lack of judgment, most notoriously when he took on the oil

## A MAN OF POLITICS AND POWER



The leader: Mr O'Malley at the end of a party presidential address in 1989 and Mr Pat Cox.



## Quotes from a 25-year political career

In your issue of 20th inst, your political correspondent implied that I might be retiring from politics. I wish to state clearly I have no such intention. (*Irish Times*, January 30th, 1969)

The glibness with which some of them (Fine Gael-Labour coalition) talk of a new Constitution makes many people suspicious that such a move would only be a device to achieve a situation where the right of the whole Irish people to determine their destiny together would be swept away. (Speech in Virginia, Co Cavan, January 1974).

We're going to have to face the fact that we cannot allow a situation on this island in which private morality would be allowed to influence public legislation to the extent that people would take it for granted



There is no doubt that Mr O'Malley has burned up more political energy in the past 25 years than any other politician currently in the Dail and has endured more rebuffs. All this has taken its toll. When you have been a Minister for Justice at 31 and served in ministerial posts for almost 12 years, the prospect of indefinite opposition is bound to pall when you reach your mid-50s and there is still time for the pursuit of more rewarding interests.

The O'Malley career since that first by-election in Limerick East following the death of his famous uncle, Donogh, has never lacked excitement and controversy. At the time of his selection to contest that election instead of Hilda O'Malley, Donogh's widow, all the newspapers could say of him was that he was a local solicitor, well known in Limerick drama circles, winner of a gold medal for debating in UCD and a director of Limerick greyhound track.

A year later, after the 1969 general election, the Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, appointed the young TD his parliamentary secretary and chief whip. This began a warm, supportive relationship which has grown throughout the political ups and downs of the O'Malley career.

The promotion to Minister for Justice following the sacking of senior ministers in the 1970 arms crisis was the start of a traumatic period for Mr O'Malley, his wife Pat and young family, as they were regarded as under constant threat from the subversive organisations he was cracking down on, and even at one stage threatening with internment.

His Forcible Entry Bill against occupations of threatened buildings drew down student wrath in the form of eggs when he tried to address a Fianna Fail meeting in UCD. The lawyers' bodies reacted critically to his proposal to merge the two branches.

The period was also marked by clashes with the press, an antagonism which was usually mutual and punctuated by profiles describing the young Minister as "brash", "abrasive", "arrogant" and the like.

In opposition from 1973, Mr O'Malley took stances on Northern Ireland and contraception which he would find embarrassing today. Thus, in a speech in Virginia, Co Cavan, he criticised aspects of the Sunningdale power-sharing agreement and asserted

Commerce portions which, under various titles, he was to hold for several periods totalling eight years until he resigned from office almost a year ago.

As a Minister he was admired for his energy but criticised for a lack of judgment, most notoriously when he took on the oil companies over a price increase and had to back down when the resultant petrol shortage caused chaos.

But the feuding inside Fianna Fail which followed the resignation of his mentor, Jack Lynch, at the end of 1979, inevitably involved Mr O'Malley, who found himself confronting Charles Haughey over the leadership on three separate occasions in the early 1980s.

Back in opposition from 1983, the relationship with Mr Haughey worsened as Mr O'Malley's views on Northern Ireland and issues such as contraception moved him away from Fianna Fail mainstream thinking. The Fianna Fail whip was removed from him in May 1984 when he disagreed with Mr Haughey on party policy on Northern Ireland following the publication of the New Ireland Forum report.

Mr O'Malley was expelled from the party the following February after his speech on the Coalition's amendment to the Haughey Family Planning Act, which Fianna Fail was opposing. In a widely praised speech he pointed out the implications of the debate for North-South relations and for a genuine republicanism, ending with the ringing declaration: "I stand by the Republic and accordingly I will not oppose this Bill."

His expulsion led him to consider the setting up of a new party and, strongly encouraged by Mary Harney, who followed him out of Fianna Fail, the Progressive Democrats was launched a few days before Christmas in December 1985. It took like wildfire and in the next election in 1987 won 14 seats and played a prominent role in opposition alongside a weakened Fine Gael and Labour.

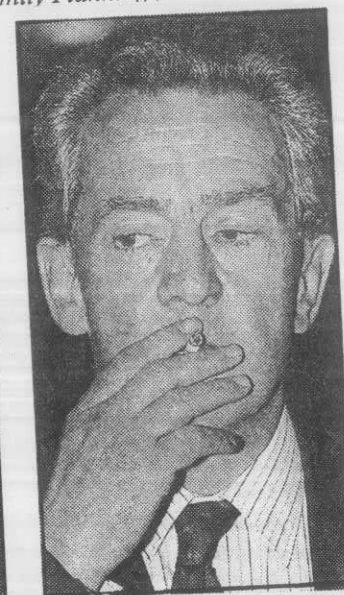
The coalition with Fianna Fail after the June 1989 election brought Mr O'Malley into a power-sharing arrangement with Mr Haughey that would have been regarded as unthinkable before the election. While the two former rivals established a good working relationship, issues which were to prove deeply divisive dogged the coalition.



**The Fianna Fail man:** with members of the Fianna Fail Front Bench in 1983 (from left standing) Mr Terry Leyden, Mr Michael Woods, Mr Albert Reynolds and Mr Michael O'Kennedy (seated from left) Mr Bertie Ahern, Mr Gene Fitzgerald and Mr John Wilson (and right) **I stand by the Republic:** leaving the Dail before the vote on the Family Planning (Amendment) Bill in 1985.



**Minister for Justice:** presenting commemorative Garda medal in 1972 to Ned Garvey who later became Garda Commissioner. **Smokescreen:** timeout for a cigarette ... **A word in your ear:** with Mr Sylvester Barrett and Mr Brian Lenihan.



**With the then Taoiseach, Mr Haughey, in 1991 when Minister for Industry and Commerce in Government Buildings.**



allowed to influence public legislation to the extent that people would take it for granted. (Kylemore Abbey, January 1985).

I am certain of one thing: we will never see a 32-county Republic on this island unless we establish a 26-county Republic. (Dail speech February 20th, 1985).

For the past year I have been struck by the strength of feeling throughout the country in favour of breaking the moulds of Irish politics and giving the Irish voters a new and real alternative. (Launch of Progressive Democrats, December 21st, 1985).

Where would European politics stand if the arguments made by Deputy Haughey against coalition were to hold sway? (Dail debate, July 3rd, 1989).

A new political era is in sight. (Dail speech as PDs started negotiations on coalition with Fianna Fail, July 6th, 1989).

For a time it appeared as if the Progressive Democrats would be confined to being a kind of policy research unit for government, as more and more of our policy ideas were taken up. (PD conference May 12th, 1990).

Founded nearly eight years ago, we have proven to be Ireland's change-makers and the party of the future — forward-looking, agenda-setting and, yes, mould-breaking. (Announcing stepping down from leadership, October 5th, 1993).



**comhairle chontae  
aicha cliath**

## DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL TEMPORARY DISRUPTION OF WATER SUPPLY

Due to essential maintenance work, large areas of Lucan, Palmerstown and Clondalkin and parts of Ballyfermot will have reduced pressure or no water for certain periods of the day during **Wednesday, October 6th. and Thursday, October 7th., 1993.**

**DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGRETS ANY INCONVENIENCE CAUSED.**

Tankers will be available in the worst effected areas.

## SIPTU CABIN CREW NOTICE

SIPTU CIVIL AVIATION BRANCH

A General Meeting of Aer Lingus Cabin Crew will take place in the Dublin Airport Hotel tomorrow evening, the 7th. of October, at 7.30pm (sharp) to consider recent developments. All Cabin Crew members are requested to attend.

Paul O'Sullivan,  
Branch Secretary.

K.M. Leahy,  
Cttee. Chairperson.