



The Shannon stop-over: Bishop attacks Kemmy

DESPITE the fact that Transport Minister Maire Geoghegan Quinn, in October, 1992, endorsed the Shannon Airport stop-over, eight months later the decision was reversed by the Government and flights were allowed go direct to Dublin.

It was strongly felt that if the stop-over status was lifted it would be disastrous for the airport and Mid-West. Since 1987, when the lifting of the status quo was strongly sought by the Fly Dublin Direct group, and a changed status hinted at by Transport Minister Séamus Brennan, a huge campaign was

mounted for the retention of the stopover with SIGNAL, representing 8,000 airport workers, and Status, founded by Tony Killeen T.D., to the forefront.

Tom Browne reported that when the Fine Gael motion for retention of the stopover was defeated in the Dáil, office girls wept in the airport. "A black day, the blackest day ever for Shannon" was the general feeling.

Deputy Jim Kemmy, Labour, who took part in the protest march against changes in the airport status, voted with the Government for the fly direct and he and the other Limerick Deputies (Willie O'Dea and

Gerry Collins also voted with the Government) were heavily criticised by Bishop Jeremiah Newman. "They are now crying crocodile tears," he added.

The bishop had been previously taken to task by Deputy Kemmy for his non-action in the Barrington's closure.

"We in rural Ireland have put up with enough and we will not accept metropolitan domination," the bishop said.

In protest against the Government decision, which was carried by an 80-52 majority, Deputy Síle de Valera, who was in the U.S.A., resigned from the Fianna Fáil Parliamentary party, and her

constituency colleague, Tony Killeen, who voted for the Fine Gael motion, did likewise. (In Ms de Valera's case, it was the first time any Irish parliamentarian submitted a resignation by fax.)

Dr. Newman praised the Clare Deputies for their stand and added that the entire episode showed the folly of over-reliance on the promises of politicians. "The biggest mistake made was when the pro-Shannon lobby let down their guard after hearing from the then Minister for Transport that the status of Shannon was being copperfastened."

Page Two Comment on the *Leader* said: "The Government

say this is just a modification, not the elimination of the airport's transatlantic status. This is like the hangman claiming that the rope was just to modify the victim's neck."

It was predicted that the hundreds of jobs in the hotel industry would be lost with the serious effect on tourism in the area.

"This decision will turn Shannon into a regional airport," declared SIGNAL'S Joe Buckley. "They have thrown Shannon to the wolves."

It was stated the Status Committee had not admitted defeat and were determined to continue the campaign.

Sport—one of the very best decades

MILLENNIUM BRIEFS . . .

Bishop and O'Sullivan

IN March, 1984, Bishop Jeremiah Newman wrote to Mayor Jan O'Sullivan following the refusal to allow her read a lesson at the Civic Mass in St. John's Cathedral. "No slight was intended to her or the office," he said.

Stevie dies

STEVE Coughlan, described as a controversial, outspoken and colourful character, died in December, 1994. There were many tributes paid nationwide to the former Mayor and Labour TD.

tears to the eyes of Princess Diana. The occasion was the Warchild Organisation's Concert for Bosnia in Modena in Italy in July 1995. The famous tenor, Pavarotti, joined Dolores in the second verse of the "Ave."

Heat Wave

THE last major heat-wave of the millennium took place in 1995 and the forecast for August 5th was 32°C. Pubs, with cool beers and cider being the big attraction, and ice-cream vendors, were cleaning up and sea-side resorts were reported to be packed out. Reports

1990's was a decade of great sporting achievement in Limerick, particularly in rugby, when Limerick clubs

traditional mascot, a goat, had many adventures before he finally got his charge into the grounds.

These included having to hail a coal lorry to get the mascot

achievement, which will take some beating in the century ahead.

There was talks of a repeat of the famous 1978 All-Blacks defeat when Munster, in the European Cup, travelled to meet hot favourites Saracens in

nightmare" wrote John O'Shaughnessy after the All-Ireland. With just five minutes to go at Croke Park, Limerick supporters were massing to greet what would be a famous win.

and hopes were high that the ghosts of '94 would be exorcised. But defeat was their bitter lot again with the Limerick forwards, especially in the second half, failing to click. In contrast