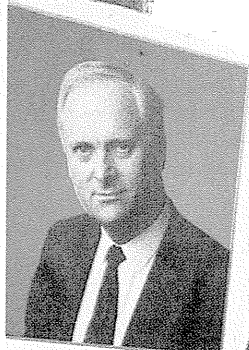


HOW IRELAND VOTED 1992

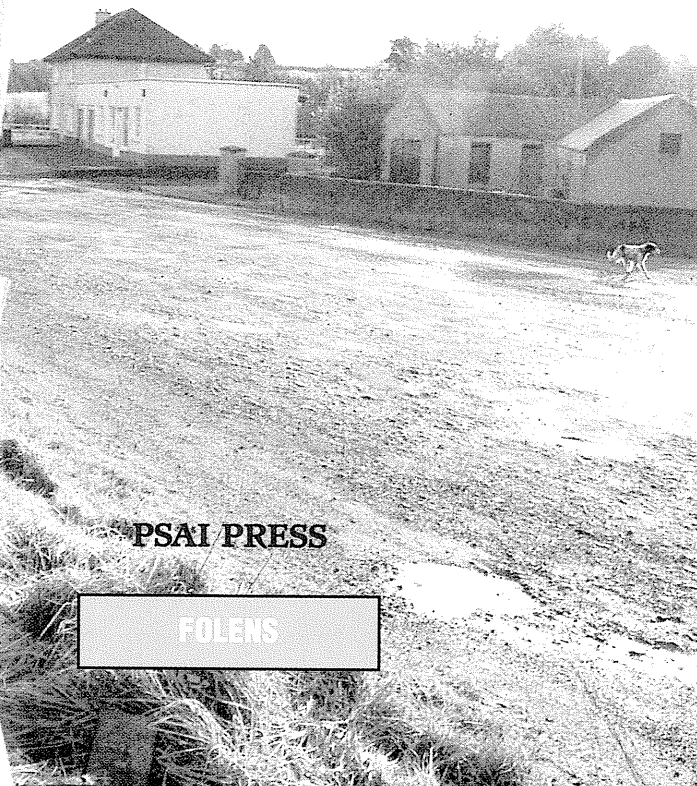
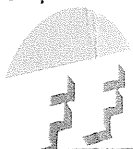
Edited by

MICHAEL GALLAGHER
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PSAI PRESS

FOLENS

How Ireland Voted 1992

Edited by

Michael Gallagher and Michael Laver

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1. The Road to the General Election

Brian Girvin

In July 1989, a somewhat chastened Charles Haughey announced the formation of a new government after difficult negotiations with the Progressive Democrats (PDs). It is unlikely that Haughey then conceived what awaited him over the following three years. His hold on the office of Taoiseach was probably weaker than at any time during his career. The election he had called in June in the hope of achieving an overall majority of seats had left his party in a weaker position strategically than at the dissolution of the Dáil.¹ A coalition with the PDs was the only way in which a further election, and his likely removal as leader, could be avoided. The new government, based on the support of the 77 Fianna Fáil TDs and the six PD deputies, entered office on 12 July. The PDs received two cabinet posts (which were taken by Desmond O'Malley and Bobby Molloy) and one Minister of State (Mary Harney). These appointments caused some concern within Fianna Fáil, which was exacerbated later in the year when it became clear that Haughey had agreed to appoint three PDs to the Seanad as his nominees.²

THE COALITION GOVERNMENT CONSOLIDATES ITSELF

Despite the obvious tension between the two governing parties, the government's first 18 months worked smoothly. The original discomfort on the part of Fianna Fáil was dissipated by the prospect of four years in government and by general public approval of the government itself, since the decision to opt for a coalition appeared to be validated by an improvement in the opinion poll ratings. The February 1990 budget was favourably received—62 per cent believed it was good for the country—and, in the same poll, 54 per cent expressed satisfaction with the government.

Notwithstanding this positive view, at a Fianna Fáil meeting in Kanturk, County Cork in February, Albert Reynolds referred to the coalition as a "temporary little arrangement". In doing so he was reflecting grassroots concern within the party at Haughey's deal with the PDs, and preparing the ground for his own challenge at the next leadership election. Yet the opinion polls in the course of 1990 did not sustain the belief, articulated by Reynolds, that the electorate would flock back to Fianna Fáil once short-term problems had been dealt with. While there was considerable approval for government policy and for the continuation of the coalition, support for Fianna Fáil remained flat. In the February 1990 poll Haughey's satisfaction rating stood at 56 per cent, and this was to increase to 61 per cent in May, yet the respective figures for the party were 42 per cent and 43 per cent. There was no evidence at this stage that the electorate's approval for the government, and for Haughey as Taoiseach, was going to be translated into support for Fianna Fáil. If, as Reynolds hinted, coalition was only a temporary expedient for Fianna Fáil, neither he nor those who shared his view could be confident of an overall majority on the basis of the figures avail-

able in 1990. Moreover, even some of the support for the government was conditional. While overall economic strategy was endorsed in 1990, a massive 80 per cent in the February poll considered that the government had not done enough to solve problems in the health services, and a motion of no confidence in the Minister for Health was narrowly defeated only after the independent deputy Tom Foxxe switched his vote.

It was economic policy that sustained the government at this time. The foundations for economic growth had been established during the second half of the 1980s. In particular, the minority Fianna Fáil government had pursued a strategy which sought to enhance international competitiveness, reduce taxation and reduce public expenditure while at the same time structuring policy in a consensual fashion. Macro-economic policy had received the support of Fine Gael and the PDs. This policy was continued under the new coalition government. The PDs were more concerned with the blunt instrument of tax reduction and controlling public expenditure, while Fianna Fáil continued to elaborate a macro-economic strategy in broadly corporatist fashion. In an influential study, the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) noted that, despite unemployment, the overall performance of the economy was impressive. This was attributed in part to the corporatist Programme for National Recovery, which sustained a policy of low inflation and an export-led growth policy.³ Haughey was particularly anxious to continue cooperation with the trade unions and the business community. Though differences existed between the corporate partners, a new agreement, The Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP), was agreed in January 1991. The PESP proved to be an inclusive programme, which the unions in particular believed could underwrite growth and development. Its weakness was that it depended heavily on the role of Charles Haughey who, as on other occasions, intervened to secure the arrangements. The January 1991 budget followed the agreement and was in part based on it. This proved to be the high point for the government: 60 per cent recorded satisfaction with it, while 56 per cent were satisfied with Haughey and 52 per cent with O'Malley.

THE IMPACT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 1990

If economic policy ran smoothly, 1991 proved to be a most difficult year for the government, and for Mr Haughey in particular. Some of the tensions within the government and within Fianna Fáil were highlighted during the November 1990 presidential election campaign. After Brian Lenihan, the party's candidate, denied allegations that he had attempted to influence President Hillery in 1982, Haughey had dismissed him from the government under pressure from the PDs. These events and the very successful campaign waged by Mary Robinson secured her the presidency. This setback for Fianna Fáil was compounded by Pádraig Flynn's refusal to switch his cabinet portfolio in the following February, further heightening tension within the party and the government. In a number of ways Charles Haughey was closing off his options rapidly in the course of 1991. He was progressively alienating various blocs within the party, both those on the right associated with Flynn and the centrists grouped around Lenihan and his sister Mary O'Rourke. Furthermore, he was now being criticised by deputies within the party who had secured him the leadership and who had hitherto

been strong supporters of his. While most of this criticism remained muted, it was becoming clear that a number of rural and western deputies were unhappy with the Haughey leadership by the middle of 1991. What was missing was the occasion to confront him or to offer a strong candidate as a replacement. Any challenge to Haughey had to confront three obstacles: the loyalty of the party to its leader, the failure of all previous attempts to oust him, and the reluctance of the party to be seen to rend itself apart by removing a leader in unprecedented fashion. One should also note that the obvious contenders did not have overwhelming support within the party for any such move.

There was a real problem, however. Many backbenchers and some ministers believed that Haughey would do anything to remain in power. This was the explanation given for the extraordinary influence that O'Malley seemed to wield over Haughey. It was the PDs who insisted on the dismissal of Lenihan, and it is arguable that the establishment of the tribunal of inquiry into the beef industry, chaired by Mr Justice Hamilton, would not have occurred if they had not been in government. Nor was this the only political or financial scandal to affect the government. At the end of August newspapers reported certain irregularities relating to the takeover of Sugar Distributors by Irish Sugar prior to the formation of Greencore. Shortly after this, other damaging claims were made public. What virtually all these issues had in common was a connection with Charles Haughey, either direct or indirect. Various claims were made at the time concerning his relationship with the individuals involved in the affairs. Although Haughey denied any impropriety on his part, he was placed on the defensive.

The presidential election also created difficulties for Fine Gael. Alan Dukes, who had succeeded Garret FitzGerald as leader in 1987, proved to be an unpopular leader. In contrast to his predecessor, he was unable to contain the opposition of the conservative wing of the party, which had strengthened its hold on the party by 1990. In addition, Dukes seemed unable to generate enthusiastic support from the liberal wing of the party, further weakening his position. Moreover, he also appears to have neglected the organisational aspects of leadership, downgrading party headquarters and frequently alienating supporters by his aloofness. He badly misjudged the mood of the party and the electorate during the run-up to the presidential election by nominating Austin Currie as Fine Gael's candidate. Currie's campaign was disastrous, publicly exposing the divisions within the party and highlighting the weak hold which the party had on a section of its electorate. Currie's poor showing further eroded Dukes's position, and shortly after the election it became clear that he had lost the confidence of a significant section of the parliamentary party. At first, Dukes believed he could counter the threat, but he quickly recognised that his support had narrowed and he resigned on 13 November 1990. The dominance of the right was secured by the unopposed election on 20 November of John Bruton, who moved the party away from the explicit reformist/liberal agenda which had characterised the leadership of FitzGerald and Dukes. This did not help the party; Bruton's approval ratings as leader showed no significant improvement over those of Dukes, and support for the party did not rise. The presidential election highlighted weaknesses in Fine Gael which were only indirectly associated with leadership and which were not resolved by the change.

9. See Michael Holmes, "The Maastricht Treaty referendum of June 1992", *Irish Political Studies* 8 (1993), pp. 105-10.
10. Fine Gael, *Let Us Bring Out the Best in the Country: Fine Gael Priorities for Government 1992-1997* (Fine Gael Manifesto, 1992).
11. Progressive Democrats, *Getting the Nation Working* (Progressive Democrat Manifesto, 1992).
12. Fianna Fáil, *The Six-Point Plan for National Progress* (Fianna Fáil Manifesto, 1992); see also *Fianna Fáil is Good For Dublin*.
13. The Labour Party, *Making Ireland Work: A Two-Part Programme To Put Justice into Economics ... & Trust into Politics* (The Labour Party Manifesto, 1992).
14. *Irish Times*, 27 October 1992.
15. Democratic Left, *A Programme for Change and Progress* (Democratic Left Manifesto, 1992).
16. The Workers' Party, *Election '92: The Party You Can Trust* (The Workers' Party Manifesto, 1992). See also report of news conference in *Irish Times*, 12 November 1992.
17. Green Party, *Green Perspective '92* (The Green Party manifesto, 1992).
18. This paragraph is based on a reading of speeches during the campaign by the leaders of the four main political parties.
19. Reported in *Irish Times*, 17 November 1992.
20. Lansdowne Market Research, "Eleventh hour opinion poll", *Sunday Press*, 22 November 1992.

2. Campaign Strategies

David M. Farrell*

Four of the last five elections have been sudden and unexpected. This has presented a number of challenges to the parties and their strategists, notably how to prepare a professional marketing strategy at short notice and how to finance expensive marketing techniques on such a regular basis. A recent survey of election campaigning in a number of countries has revealed that strategists like to take a long-term view in their planning and preparations for campaigns.¹ Over the past decade, Ireland competes probably only with Denmark, Greece and Portugal in terms of the frequency of campaigns. The comparative survey also demonstrates how expensive campaigning has become. But whereas parties in most countries enjoy access to generous state funding to help finance organisational and/or campaign costs, Irish parties do not.² So how have the Irish parties managed in these circumstances of regular elections and financial constraints? Some answers are provided in this chapter. The 1992 campaign is examined in three parts: the parties' rushed preparations; the policies and themes raised during the campaign; party finance and expenditure.

CAMPAIGN PREPARATION AND ORGANISATION

Fianna Fáil

Like all the other parties, Fianna Fáil did not expect the election until 1993. As a result, very limited preparations were made, and when speculation of an imminent election mounted, the planning for it had to be "concertina-ed".³ In any event, due to the fact that Fianna Fáil was in government, and in the context of a debate over who was responsible for forcing the election, the party did not want to be seen preparing for a campaign. Another constraint faced by the party was inexperience. Not only had the leader changed since 1989, but there had been a complete clean sweep at most levels of the organisation. For many of the key strategists this was their first election in such positions.

Campaign preparations started only about two months before the election. A series of weekly meetings were held by an ad hoc committee which looked into the "basic nitty-gritty" of campaign preparations. Once the election was called this committee was to meet each morning at party headquarters in Mount Street. The party's advertising agency, Saatchi and Saatchi, was selected a week before the election was called. This agency had been used by Fianna Fáil ever since it took over control of the party's former agency, O'Kennedy-Brindley, in the late 1980s. However, in 1990 the principal Saatchi's contact, Martin Larkin, had left to set up his own agency, Irish International Advertising Agency. Initially Fianna Fáil followed him. But, in the general spirit of organisational reform within the party in the lead-up to the expected 1993 election, it was decided to review the advertising contract and interested agencies were invited to make submissions. Of the six which did, Saatchi's was chosen, for a number of reasons, for the most part relating to its large size, its proven international expertise in

election campaigning, and in particular because it had a unit specialising in electioneering, Saatchi and Saatchi Government Communications Worldwide.⁴ The agency provided a campaign specialist, Stephen Hilton, who formerly had worked for the British Conservative party. He was based at Fianna Fáil headquarters for the duration of the campaign. As in earlier elections, Carr Communications Ltd was also used by Fianna Fáil. Its principal role was to produce the party's election broadcasts.⁵ The first one was described by Fianna Fáil strategists as "rubbishy", consistent with the incoherence of the party's campaign at the outset. Later broadcasts, which were produced by both Carr's and Saatchi's, were more focused: one on Dublin and another presenting a "doomsday scenario" (described by one Fianna Fáil strategist as "Saatchi and Saatchi campaigning at its most effective"). Carr's was also involved in preparing the party's spokespersons for television appearances.

Two years before the election a special constituencies and organisation committee was set up, chaired by Bertie Ahern. Its main role was to identify marginal constituencies. By the time the election was called the party had isolated the following constituencies as potential losses: Cork North-Central, Dublin Central, Dublin North-West, Dublin South-Central, Dun Laoghaire, Mayo East, Mayo West, Tipperary North and Waterford. (According to one strategist, "within a week the whole of Dublin became a marginal!") Constituencies where the party felt it might make gains included Clare, Cork North-West, Cork South-West, Dublin North, Dublin South-East, Dublin South-West, Limerick East, Westmeath and Wexford. In the selection process, among the constituencies requiring Fianna Fáil's *ard comhairle* to add candidates were Carlow-Kilkenny, Clare, Cork North-West, Cork South-Central, Dublin North-East, Dublin South-Central, Dublin South-East, Dublin West, Kerry North and Longford-Roscommon.⁶

The Fianna Fáil campaign was directed throughout by two committees. At 7.30 each morning there was a strategy meeting at party headquarters. Among those attending were the party leader, the director (Michael Woods) and deputy directors of elections (David Andrews and Séamus Brennan—both prominent Dublin TDs), the general secretary (Pat Farrell), the press officer (Niamh O'Connor), the national organiser (Seán Sherwin), and assistant national organiser (Noel Whelan), Frank Dunlop (who stepped in once Tom Savage of Carr's fell ill), representatives from Saatchi's, and others depending on need and availability. In the evenings, to round off the day, there was a meeting of the communications committee. Considered in retrospect as largely a "waste of time", its membership included Farrell, O'Connor, Dunlop, Martin Mackin (a research officer), Steve Hilton of Saatchi's, and a representative of the volunteer group.

Fianna Fáil staffing during the campaign consisted of some 20 or so people, among them the press officer and two assistants, two individuals involved in research and information, a financial controller, the national organiser and the assistant national organiser, and individuals responsible for posterage, Taoiseach's tour and so on. As always, there was also a team of volunteers based in the back of Mount Street whose responsibilities included liaising with the constituency directors of elections, dealing with queries from the public and script writing.

Campaign literature was much as in earlier elections. Apart from leader posters, and stencils and artwork for material produced by the constituency organisations, headquarters provided the constituencies with five main sets of leaflets throughout the campaign: two issue leaflets (social welfare and taxation) and three leaflets attacking Labour and the record of the last Fine Gael-Labour coalition.⁷ Much of this material was replicated in the party's newspaper advertisements.

As always, the principal form of campaign feedback came from the constituency directors of elections who were telephoned each night.⁸ There was also some focus group research, arranged by Saatchi's using Lansdowne Market Research Ltd: two in Dublin (the crucial battleground), and one in Carlow.⁹ Among the main findings were that nobody was interested in manifestos—they were seen as irrelevant. More particularly, it was clear that the electorate was not all that interested in specific campaign issues. The focus groups revealed that leadership image did matter, and that "the one person they were all running with was Dick Spring". Furthermore, Fianna Fáil, under Reynolds, had "a negative leadership image". In short, "in this election it wasn't policies that would matter, it was perception".

Having a new leader presented a particular problem to Fianna Fáil strategists, particularly to those who had been involved in campaigns under Haughey. Reynolds was an unknown quantity. What were his preferences? Would he like to go on a major campaign tour? As one Fianna Fáil strategist put it, "you missed the type of PJ" who would know the mind of the leader. Unlike P. J. Mara, the new government press secretary, Seán Duignan, did not want to be involved in the details of campaigning; he preferred to be Reynolds's "ear", accompanying him on his national tour.

Fine Gael

Prior to the election Fine Gael had engaged in a certain amount of long-term planning, relating to the production of party policy, the determination of marginal constituencies and the search for new candidates. As part of a reorganisation drive under a new leader, Fine Gael carried out some focus group research in the first half of 1991 (it is not clear which company was used for this). Among the findings were that there was a high level of boredom about politics, and a high degree of cynicism among voters. Particular attention was paid to getting the views of the discussants about John Bruton. What was most striking here was the low level of recognition he enjoyed: "Is John Bruton the Fine Gael fellow?"; "a big farmer from County Meath?". Attention was paid to Bruton's image. Like British prime minister John Major, he was found to suffer from "a greyness in style". Furthermore, Bruton's "tone" was said to be "too unsympathetic, too rational and probably too rigorous". Linked to the problem with Bruton's image was a perceived problem with the image of the party, particularly in relation to how Fine Gael compared with Fianna Fáil. The latter had an "emotional" appeal to voters; by contrast, Fine Gael had a "rational appeal", making it somewhat less attractive to the growing market of floating voters. It was proposed to deal with the problem of Fine Gael party image by relaunching the party with new logo, colours, policies, and spokespersons.¹⁰ To deal with leader image problems Bruton was advised to get a style consultant and to have some further media training.¹¹

27. This same phrase was used by two separate strategists, suggesting it was a line which had been sold to the party by Saatchi's.
28. See "Fianna Fáil dismisses latest poll", *Irish Press*, 20 November 1992; "Reynolds says support rising for Fianna Fáil", *Irish Times*, 23 November 1992. There was even reference to an internal poll by Lansdowne Market Research taken on 18 November with a sample of 1,053 adults at 75 locations. See Ken Whelan, "Albert slates FG/Labour in final message", *Irish Press*, 25 November 1992. Fianna Fáil strategists readily admitted after the election that there were no tracking polls.
29. Jack Jones, "Outcome of Election Accurately Predicted", *Irish Times*, 28 November 1992.
30. See in particular the tear-stricken press interview of Reynolds' wife: Anne Cadwalader, "My anguish: Kathleen's tears over savaging of Taoiseach", *Irish Press*, 16 November 1992. In preparation for his election interview with RTE's *This Week*, Reynolds was briefed to raise the theme "This is not the Albert I know".
31. A similar strategy had been adopted in 1982.
32. On his tour, Reynolds was accompanied by six Rover jeeps painted in party colours; see Tim Ryan, "Fianna Fáil takes high road in jeeps", *Irish Press*, 9 November 1992.
33. According to one strategist an added advantage of keeping Reynolds busy on the road was that he had a reduced involvement in campaign decision-making! "We could get on with running the campaign".
34. See Farrell, "Campaign Strategies".
35. This discussion is based on articles in the *Irish Times* on the following dates in 1992: 27 June, 3 July, 7 August, 16 and 17 September, 28 October. Records on the party accounts are available in Farrell, "Ireland". Note that the following totals are of contributions to the party organisations. The amount given to individual politicians cannot be quantified. Furthermore, the figures record only corporate contributions from the agricultural sector.
36. *Irish Times*, 12 December 1992.
37. These estimates are from various articles in the *Irish Times* over the past 12 months.
38. As listed in *Irish Political Studies* 7 (1992), p. 163.
39. Fine Gael has provided the following breakdowns of its expenditure: advertising (including election broadcasts and cinema spots) 76.5 per cent; literature (including artwork for the leader posters, some Dublin posters, and leaflets in the marginals) 12 per cent; administration 5.5 per cent; leader's tour 4 per cent; research 2 per cent. The advertising expenditure has been further broken down in the following proportions: press and cinema advertisements 50 per cent; media production 38 per cent; posters and literature 10 per cent; referendum broadcasts 2 per cent.
40. See Geraldine Kennedy, "Fianna Fáil's debt rises to highest level of £3m", *Irish Times*, 4 February 1993.
41. Like all estimates, these ASI figures cannot be treated as definitive. In some cases the party strategists have disputed their accuracy. It is interesting to note, however, that the Wilson Hartnell advertising agency has produced an estimate of total party expenditure on advertising in national newspapers which is very similar to the ASI estimate. Wilson Hartnell's estimate is £370,000; ASI's is £345,000.
42. An "impact analysis" by ASI reveals that in 1992 twice as many advertisements were placed in regional newspapers as in national newspapers.
43. There is a very large literature on media coverage of US elections. For a good recent example, see L. Sigelman and D. Bullock, "Candidates, issues, horse races, and hoopla: presidential campaign coverage, 1888-1988", *American Politics Quarterly* 19:1, 1991, pp. 5-32.
44. The trends are consistent with a content analysis I have made of 1973 and 1989 campaign coverage by the *Irish Independent*. Game coverage in 1973 was 15.97 per cent; in 1989 it was 42.25 per cent. Substance coverage in 1973 was 79.45 per cent; this dropped in 1989 to 56.19 per cent.
45. Brian Trench, "Virtual reality: media coverage of political opinion polls", paper given to a conference on Media and Opinion Polls, Dublin City University, 21 April 1993. In another paper at the same conference, John Horgan ("Predictions") reported on an analysis of newspaper election predictions (also included in my category of "winning/losing"). His findings, that the newspapers are more inclined to hedge their bets, confirm the growing dominance of opinion poll stories as an alternative way of predicting. As Horgan puts it, "the black art of making predictions is a dying art".

3. On the Campaign Trail

Dr Jim McDaid (Fianna Fáil, Donegal North-East)

Jim McDaid, a medical doctor based in Letterkenny, was elected to the Dáil in 1989, on his first candidacy for any public body. He was at the centre of national political attention in November 1991, when his initial nomination by the Taoiseach to the position of Minister for Defence was vetoed by the Progressive Democrats, and, after a sometimes heated debate in the Dáil, Dr McDaid then asked that his nomination be withdrawn.

The seriousness with which Donegal people take their politics is legendary. It has been so since the foundation of the state. This has been particularly the case in Donegal North-East, probably because of its close proximity to a border which had the effect of locking into the new Irish Free State a large number of people who would have regarded themselves as Unionist at the time. It is not surprising that what came to be known as civil war politics became the norm for at least the first couple of decades. For a substantial majority the name De Valera was something to be revered and it was quite common in the Thirties for schoolboys to reflect their parents' views by having pitched battles in the playground between Fianna Fáil and the "Blueshirts". However, when the school bell rang the aggression would cease and they would all troop happily together back into the classroom. It was just a game but, like religion, both sides proudly proclaimed their political birthrights, even at that tender age.

The score-sheet of FF 2, FG 1, was happily maintained until the 1973 election, by which time Fianna Fáil had been rent asunder by the dismissal of the formidable Neil Blaney. Always a good organiser, he set up Independent Fianna Fáil by using precisely the same type of units he had been used to in Fianna Fáil, i.e. Cumann, Comhairle Ceanntair and Comhairle Dáil Ceanntair. The party had been split in virtually every parish in the constituency and this made for some very bitter clashes. It was like a mini-version of the Civil War. Thankfully this bitterness waned over the years and normal good humour began to prevail again. It is difficult to define any great difference in policy between the two sides apart from Blaney's tendency to identify himself as leaning more towards Provisional Sinn Féin policy as far as North-South relations are concerned. Even then there are some who would contend that many of his faithful supporters have stuck with him on a personal basis rather than for his views on the North. Since 1927, with one exception, the Blaneys, father and son, had held a Fianna Fáil seat from their heartland of the Fanad Peninsula in the Milford Electoral Area. The second seat always went to the Inishowen peninsula in the north of the county. Wedged between the two was Letterkenny which, in spite of its comparatively large population, could never quite manage to acquire a deputy of any colour. It came closest in 1977 when the then Senator Bernard McGlinchey lost by a couple of hundred votes to his Inishowen colleague, Hugh Conaghan, who was to hold a seat for 12 years.

strong and well-known running mate in Inishowen, Councillor McGuinness. Harte dropped 1,500 votes here. In addition, on this occasion, there was a Protestant candidate, Councillor Jim Devenney, on his door-step in Raphoe. Traditionally the bulk of the Protestant vote has gone to Fine Gael. Devenney polled 2,082 and 60 per cent of his transferable votes went back to Harte. However, even though Harte was eventually elected with 250 over the quota the gradual erosion of Fine Gael support continues. One wonders what the situation would be in the absence of a deputy who had had more than 30 years' experience in the Dáil.

My own vote showed an increase of 1,374, fairly evenly spread throughout the constituency but most notably in the Milford area. My colleague, Hugh Conaghan, came fourth and must have been very disappointed with his 4,833 first preferences. He wasn't helped by the presence of four other candidates in his area, including a "Pro-Life" activist. The dispute at the convention may also have been a factor.

Labour's commendable 3,538 poses an interesting challenge to all sides. Their perceived performance in government will undoubtedly have an influence at the end of the day. The popularity of the Labour party at national level certainly had its supportive effect in several rural areas this time. Whether this is merely a temporary phenomenon or not remains to be seen. An interesting statistic in Donegal NE was the destination of Labour transfers. On the seventh count, when Maloney was eliminated, 75 per cent of his votes were transferable and, of these, 50.2 per cent went to Fianna Fáil, 31.1 per cent to Fine Gael and 18.6 per cent to Blaney. No Fianna Fáil candidate was eliminated so we had no way of knowing what that party would have transferred to Labour. I will leave it to the academics to analyse what the effect would be in future if a transfer pattern were to emerge between Fianna Fáil and Labour similar to that enjoyed by Labour and Fine Gael for many years. Will Fine Gael dislodge Fianna Fáil as the "common enemy" in the eyes of Labour supporters?

Being a racing fan I enjoy the unpredictability of politics. As in racing I would be rash indeed to forecast, with any degree of political certainty, what lies in store for Donegal North-East. In 1987 Neil Blaney comfortably headed the poll. In 1989 Paddy Harte had the honour and in 1992 it was my turn. As I observe the growing volatility of the electorate I shall resolve to count my blessings while I may.

In summary, what issues did I encounter on the door-steps? First of all it should be said that the "Right to Life" referendum was only mentioned by less than 5 per cent of people canvassed. By far the most important issue was unemployment, followed by local matters like schools and roads and, in the rural areas, the state of agriculture. Very rarely was I drawn into such profound issues as macro-economics, the national debt, foreign policy or European Community affairs. Invariably I was met with problems as they affected the family concerned and so, in that respect, it was no different to my regular clinics. A welcome distraction from it all was the mere mention of Donegal's famous victory in the All-Ireland. The thought of it was enough to make most people forget their worries, if only for a little while. Our expensive party advertisements in the national press did not seem to be worth a single vote in Donegal. I trust that next time this lesson will have been learnt.

The fact is that there are 41 separate elections held simultaneously and success in any of them depends largely on the local organisation and the candidates

themselves. If ever a transfer market develops for Directors of Elections I want to make it clear that Bernard McGlinchey is not for sale at any price. His organisation was quite superb and I only discovered afterwards that he had instructed all canvassers that they were not to convey any negative reactions to the candidates. He would deal with this aspect of things himself. He saw to it that, as far as possible, we were to be shielded from anything that might affect our morale. Furthermore, in spite of any crisis or tension that arose, he generated endless good humour and a spirit of camaraderie and always he would shower praise for a job well done. Someone in Mount Street commented to me afterwards that "in spite of all the problems, they certainly had a sense of humour in the Donegal headquarters". There is the old phrase "Ladies first" but I decided to leave them until last ... for greater effect. I can truthfully say that but for the women I would not have succeeded. The role they played in the campaign was vital. Because of their number I hope they will forgive me if I only mention the two closest to me ... my wife Marguerite who scarcely rested through the whole election and my daughter Nicola who came from London to help. My son Jason was allowed home from boarding school to join her. Not only did the women take on the men's jobs but they also did what men are hopeless at ... providing nourishment for all of us. To any aspiring TD I would say—first of all you must seek help from the women. *Mná na hEireann* are a formidable force indeed. Thank goodness a sizeable proportion of them are Fianna Fáil supporters.

Finally I would echo Charlie McCreevy's words in the 1989 version of this book. To my party leaders I would say ... please, please never again put us in the position of being blamed for a premature election if at all possible!

Madeleine Taylor-Quinn (Fine Gael, Clare)

Madeleine Taylor-Quinn was first elected to the Dáil in 1981. She lost her seat at the February 1982 election, but regained it in November 1982 and held it at both the 1987 and 1989 elections. Coming into the 1992 election, she was a member of the Fine Gael front bench, but it was widely recognised that Fine Gael would have a difficult task in holding both of its seats in the four-seat Clare constituency. In the event, she lost her Dáil seat but she was subsequently elected to the Seanad.

The dissolution of the 26th Dáil was not a surprise. For weeks in advance it was becoming increasingly clear that the rift between the Fianna Fail/PD Coalition partners was widening and that both parties were not going to stand back from their respective positions. On the previous Sunday night the Taoiseach was in Clare as guest speaker at the Annual Conference. We had a conversation about the political situation and it was apparent to me that he and his party were definitely not going to withdraw or apologise for implying that the PD Minister, Des O'Malley, was dishonest.

From then it was clearly evident to me that we would have an election declared before the end of the week. On Thursday the Dáil was dissolved and I immediately returned home to Clare—my constituency.

In the 1989 general election Fine Gael did outstandingly well, securing the first and second seats in Clare much against the odds. However, we never underestimated the marginal factor for the second seat in Clare and facing into the 1992 election we recognised that Clare was a marginal constituency despite our previous good showing. At the start of the campaign I recognised that I would have a strong fight on my hands to retain the second seat because of the floating vote factor in the constituency, my geographical location, declining population and high emigration. However, I believed that with a strong campaign we could manage to secure our second seat.

Prior to the election declaration we had appointed our Director of Elections and had put the machinery for the campaign in place. Our Selection Convention was held on Friday night and Donal Carey and myself were unanimously selected as candidates to contest the Clare constituency for the Fine Gael Party. We had a well-attended convention with party activists from all corners of the constituency present. All appeared anxious to get up and out and do the necessary work that an election entails. A determined confident atmosphere was in evidence at the convention.

Our Director of Elections was in a position to advise the organisation of the strategy for the campaign at the convention and everybody returned to their polling areas knowing the job that was ahead of them, and expected from them.

The Constituency was not divided territorially although Donal Carey and I both agreed with the Director of Elections to operate home base areas which were the areas immediately surrounding our residences and that was the only area closed to each of us. Canvassing commenced at 10 on Saturday morning and continued each day right up to the eve of the election. We concentrated on a heavy door to door canvass throughout the constituency and also addressed some after-Mass meetings and did some walkabouts in shopping centres.

The members of the Fine Gael party organisation in the constituency responded very positively and very willingly during the course of the entire campaign across the county and came out in large numbers to canvass their areas. Members of my immediate family and friends were extremely helpful travelling to areas far from their homes to assist in the canvass.

The 1992 election campaign was the shortest campaign I had ever fought—20 days. Due to this there was great pressure to try and canvass all of the county. Normally I found the door to door canvass very effective but on this occasion there was not as much time to spend with potential voters as there had been in other campaigns. Each day as the campaign progressed, needless to say the pace and pressure also increased. Overall it was quite an enjoyable campaign and there were many memorable encounters and incidents which I think might be more suitable to relate in a biography!

In a marginal constituency I believe that it is difficult to assess which of the campaign techniques is most effective. Obviously meeting people on a one to one basis is important, but it is physically impossible to meet and converse with over 10,000 people in just 20 days.

In the month leading up to the election I was very conscious and aware of a deep public cynicism and anger with the government and the status quo. National scandal after scandal, coupled with high unemployment, emigration and a decrease in services deeply annoyed the public at large. "A plague on all your houses" attitude existed along with an underlying feeling of revolt. I believed

that the combination of ingredients was dangerous and that huge changes could occur nationally.

Additional to the foregoing serious concerns about the future and status of the hospital services in Clare, Shannon Airport and lack of job opportunities locally strongly surfaced in the course of the campaign.

Contact with party head office in Dublin was mainly through our Director of Elections, and she was in regular contact with the National Director conveying to him the attitude and concerns of the electorate on the ground in Clare. On one occasion I also contacted the head office to convey my view on certain aspects of the campaign.

The outcome of the election in Clare was largely decided by a strong mood for change on the ground. Voters believed that the only way to improve the existing political situation was to bring about complete change. As the campaign progressed our party and the party leadership came in for increased criticism with the tag regularly being levelled of "you are all the same".

At this point it was difficult to reason with people that we were very different and distinct because the perception was now abroad that the Labour leadership stood for change and opportunity. The swing that was occurring nationally was, at this point, occurring also in the Clare constituency and in the final analysis the outcome in Clare was substantially decided by national political factors.

Political lessons are learned in the course of every campaign but the strategy for future campaigns can only be decided closer to an election, taking into account the then political situation. As yet I have not had an opportunity to assess what should be done differently at the next election. Suffice it to say that more political lessons were learned in the course of the Senate election.

I believe that the combination of experience and information gathered during the course of both elections can be put to useful advantage for the Fine Gael party in the next election.

Dr Moosajee Bhamjee (Labour, Clare)

Dr Moosajee Bhamjee's success in winning a seat in Clare was one of the least widely predicted successes of the 1992 election, as he had never before stood for election to any public body. He was born in South Africa and has lived in Ireland since the 1960s. He is a consultant psychiatrist, based at Our Lady's Hospital in Ennis.

Clare had not put forward a Labour Party candidate in a general election for a number of years—the last successful Labour candidate, in fact, was Paddy Hogan in the 1950s. After he died the party was in the doldrums until the late 1980s. Since then Michael Corley polled very well in the County Council election and Tom O'Shaughnessy succeeded in securing a seat as a Shannon Town Commissioner. The Labour vote was mainly confined to urban areas, such as Ennis, Shannon and Kilrush. Even though most of the workers in these areas were trade unionised they still tended to follow the traditional style of voting, i.e. "my

the canvassers met after the first night on the road—"Well, Moosa, is it going to be the Front Bench or the Back Bench, it's in the bag".

The campaign was an eye-opener. The days of the "slap on the back" and the "shake hands" and "I can rely on you Paddy" are gone. Votes are no longer there for the taking. They have to be earned. Voters expect to be taken seriously, they want to be listened to, they want honesty. People are interested in issues. They are asking questions and expect to be answered. They want commitments in terms of health funding, privatisation, Aer Lingus, Shannon Airport etc. and won't be fobbed off. The days of the "safe seat" are numbered, and politicians will finally become accountable to their constituents.

Martin Cullen (Progressive Democrats, Waterford)

Martin Cullen was first elected to the Dáil in 1987 as one of the 14 Progressive Democrats' TDs, but he lost his seat in 1989 when the party's vote declined. Between 1987 and 1989 he was PD spokesperson on Tourism, Transport and Marine Matters. He was a member of the Seanad between 1989 and 1992.

"Waterford Crystal candidate withdrawn from General Election race", screamed the Waterford Local Radio news headlines on the closing day for nominations. The Waterford Crystal workers who were fighting cutbacks had decided at a meeting a week earlier to run their own candidate in order to highlight their plight, but today they had decided to withdraw, as Walter Cullen, the ATGWU Branch Secretary, said that by running a candidate they might take from their supporters but, more importantly, it might increase Martin Cullen's chance of being elected and they did not want me elected.

Was I going to have to carry this cross for the rest of my days? Before the 1989 general election the workers were threatening a strike and I, during a radio interview, begged them not to go on strike and to return to the negotiation table. There was an immediate outburst and an organised anti-Cullen campaign was mounted which contributed to my losing the seat I had won in 1987.

After a quick chat with Ben Gavin, my Director of Elections and Tice McNamara, PRO, it was decided to leave well enough alone and not to react to this statement. There was, in our minds, no need to start the row all over again. Let us concentrate on our campaign—Give Waterford back its voice—Vote No 1 Cullen.

A lot had happened since the defeat in 1989. My immediate reaction then was one of devastation but I thought, don't give up. I can do it again. I was appointed to Seanad Éireann after the election and used this as a platform to regain the Dáil seat. The first job was to generate the interest within the party, all of whom were shocked by the defeat. We went in search of new blood and found it. We started working in 1989/90 to regain the seat. The first hurdle to be overcome was the local election of 1991. We secured two seats on Waterford Corporation, were beaten on the last count for a third and I was beaten by a mere 42 votes for a seat on Waterford County Council. That was disappointing because I had hoped to broaden my base by being on the County Council, but despite a very good campaign it was not there. Local elections are really about local personali-

ties, it's nearly about the fellow down the road. One lesson I did learn was that I was getting second preference votes from nearly every sector, which augured well for the general election.

On Waterford Corporation the Progressive Democrats entered into an agreement with Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and an independent, assuring me of the mayoralty in 93/94. This would certainly be a help, but would the "temporary little arrangement" last until then? Hopefully it would, but nonetheless there was a lot to be done.

We had immediate impact on the Corporation with the passing of the "Cullen Estimate" in December 1991 which as an alternative estimate abolished water rates once and for all. Others had danced around the issue for years but here we were, just six months on the corporation and we had done it.

In the event of an early election the party decided to hold selection conventions throughout the country in February/March 1992. I was selected unopposed at a very well attended convention in mid February. Now the campaign was really beginning. The next few months were very busy.

In May we hosted the National Conference in Waterford. Being the first political party to hold such an event in the city there was, needless to say, a great buzz and excitement around the town and it showed the city that the Progressive Democrats did care about Waterford. The Conference was a tremendous success with an opinion poll taken the following week showing the party nationally at 9 per cent—the highest for a long time.

The local organiser of the Conference was Ben Gavin, a sales executive with a local shipping company who had previous experience of organising conferences with Junior Chamber and other groups. Ben's organisational abilities shone in the set-up and running of the Conference. Ben put a team around himself who worked very well with him and who enjoyed working together. The team was a good mix of new and old, of city and county.

This was to be my winning team. Shortly after the conference I asked Ben to be my Director of Elections. Every day it felt nearer to a general election. Reynolds and O'Malley were not getting on and it became increasingly more difficult for the Progressive Democrats to stay in government with Fianna Fáil.

The Maastricht campaign in June gave the team a trial run at a general election campaign. Sites for posters were identified, canvass plans were tried, problem areas became obvious—it was a good dry run now with this behind us and everything in place, it was just a matter of waiting for the off.

"Lost in 1989 a fighter for Waterford—Give Waterford back its voice—Vote No 1 Martin Cullen" was just one of the small advertisements we ran during the local election campaign. This one was in the lost and found column. There were others in the motoring, planning and several other columns. We ran a different type of campaign using simple thought-provoking ads rather than the traditional half-page crammed with waffle.

The quality of the Progressive Democrats' material was certainly first class and gave a good impression to the electorate. All the posters, canvass cards etc were designed and printed centrally so that there was a uniformity about the quality of the material used.

When the bubble eventually burst, even though we had made great preparations, there was still a great degree of confusion. While we had all wished and hoped the day would come, when it did come we were shocked, in that here it

Liz McManus (Democratic Left, Wicklow)

Liz McManus was elected to Wicklow County Council in 1985, representing the Workers' Party, and was re-elected in 1991. The 1992 election was her first Dáil campaign. She is a qualified architect, a journalist and a writer.

My campaign began three and a half years before the November 1992 election. At the time I was selected as a candidate for the then Wicklow Constituency. Already a member of Wicklow County Council and Bray Urban District Council for a number of years I had good local experience and a grounding in public representation which was invaluable. Generally the move into national politics was seen as a natural progression—an important point in a constituency where candidates had been parachuted in and had created a certain amount of ill-will. Although it was my first time to stand, my husband John McManus had stood in five general elections so there was a bedrock of approximately 3,500 votes to build on.

During the three and a half years I acted as a county-wide politician, running advice clinics on a par with a TD and as the only Party County Councillor it was logical for me to cover the entire constituency although the strain on finances and time was considerable. I was blessed by having a part-time voluntary secretary who has now gained paid employment as my Dáil Secretary. Without her commitment I doubt if I could have got elected. The other crucial people in the campaign were my Director of Elections (John McManus) and the Party Organiser (Colm Kirwan) along with a highly committed Party organisation which, while largely based in North Wicklow, extended to other areas.

I felt from the start that I had a good chance of being elected. As time went on the odds looked even better. The constituency became a five-seater and included part of East Kildare. Since I had been closely involved in the Mary Robinson campaign I took comfort from the high vote in County Wicklow for her. Working with women both inside and outside the Party made me aware that her success gave a huge boost to women's confidence in the idea of women's participation in political life.

The constituency is very large. The Party electoral committee which had met on a monthly basis for over a year prior to the election decided on a strategy that concentrated most attention on North Wicklow and the urban areas elsewhere in the country. With small financial resources we decided to canvass those key areas and depend on postering and the postal leaflet for the other areas. Our aim was to ensure that the candidate reached as many people as possible. Once the constituency was redrawn to include East Kildare I visited the towns in Kildare and carried out a door-to-door canvass. I also carried out a door-to-door canvass in the town of Arklow.

Once the election was called our organisation was put in place immediately—directors of postering, canvassing, finance etc. We held a convention in Bray which was largely a rally for members and supporters with a good, upbeat style. The other major parties had difficulties—Fine Gael was badly split over the nomination of their candidate, and the rival campaign of breakaway Fianna Fáil candidate Johnny Fox did damage to Fianna Fáil. The Labour Party had no second candidate. There was an additional element in that I was the only woman with a chance of winning a seat. Only three candidates out of 19 were women, a point not lost on the electorate.

I spent every day of the election campaign canvassing morning, afternoon and night. No after-Mass meetings were held—they offend as much as they attract and a presence in shopping areas is much more useful.

In this campaign the anger people felt against the FF/PD Government was very evident. People broke down in tears. I met wonderful support—the campaign was magic from beginning to end despite the fact that we had no money and the weather was grim. The Party workers made up for the shortcomings with masses of energy. We also had a great advertising team—Graphiconies—who worked closely with us and produced simple, inexpensive but very dramatic posters and a great ad for the local media. The Party Head Office ran a few press conferences and used the candidate for election broadcasts. We liaised closely with Head Office but took responsibility for our own campaign. The Party produced the postal manifesto and the canvassing leaflet with input from the constituency and we organised our local leaflets.

The local leaflets were directed at specific geographic areas and were specifically related to local issues and areas where I had been active. The fact that I had been running advice clinics throughout the county as a result of a decision to see myself as a county-wide public representative meant that people were accustomed to seeing me in their locality and had come to identify me with their issues. Being a rural county the local connection was immensely valuable.

The other aspect of the campaign which led to our success was my identification as a woman who had been involved in issues relating specifically to women.

The campaign itself I believe was decisive in that it showed that we could run a good professional campaign and that it wasn't simply a matter of a small-scale patchy campaign but a well put together professional style one. People nowadays are much more conscious of the image projected by a candidate, particularly through television, and our aim was to ensure that we presented the best image possible in order to convince people that we had a possibility of winning.

The difficulties experienced by such a large rural constituency, particularly with its spread into East Kildare, are ones that we found impossible to surmount. Sending out a postal manifesto meant that at least we got to every voter but clearly the returns in votes showed that where I was actively involved at local level and had a chance to meet people on the doorsteps during the campaign my votes were maximised. The constituency was a complex one because of the inclusion of East Kildare and understandably many people felt that East Kildare was getting a bad deal. The voters were inclined to vote local but the extent of the number twos to me once they had done so was a surprise.

The canvass that we carried out and our experience of organising election campaigns in the past meant that we were able to estimate within 40 votes the number of first preferences I would get and we were confident that we would win a seat. However, we were surprised at the number of high preferences we got and an indication of the broad extent of the appeal of our campaign was that we were able to get second preferences from every political party and from the independents, which ensured a comfortable win.

One lesson I learned from the campaign is that it is vital to keep in contact with people on the ground. The response that the people gave me was a very personal one and I am conscious that once elected that connection should not be broken. There is a huge local identification with the candidate, particularly in a rural constituency like Wicklow, and even in more urban parts of the county

there is an identification that shouldn't be underestimated. In relation to the next election campaign the problem that we are going to have, and is one that we have always had, relates to funding. It is impossible to compete with the large parties when they are receiving such massive amounts of money while we are dependent on drumming up whatever support we can get from our members locally. We didn't get any election funding from our Head Office and we are still battling on with the debt that we have inherited from this campaign.

The other lesson is that preparing the groundwork makes a huge difference when it comes to a campaign itself but there is no substitute for the long haul between elections, and having as much material prepared as possible, at least in theory, makes a tremendous difference when an election is actually called. Both organisationally and in relation to literature the planning and preparation is the key to success and many of the deficiencies of poor funding can be made up with thought and imagination.

The aftermath of the campaign is as important as the build up to it and we need to make sure that all the information that is gathered in from the count and from the actual canvass is assessed and analysed properly. At the end of the day the commitment and energy of our workers was so impressive that I feel the only real lesson that we need to learn is that coming up to an election the primary need is for money, money, money. The other area that needs to be 100 per cent is the area of media skills. Nowadays television is having such an impact on politics that ensuring that the candidate is well equipped to deal with the media, and in particular television, is of crucial importance. The public have the opportunity of assessing very closely the performance of their candidate but this is through the lens of a television camera very often and creates its own demands which are relatively new and require a lot of analysis to see the difference that this makes to one's political campaign.

Darina Costello (Independent Pro-life Candidate, Galway West)

Darina Costello had not stood at any election prior to the election in 1992. She is a single mother and an honours BA graduate of UCG (1989), in the subjects English and Italian. She has worked for two years in a Milan-based telecommunications company Italtel, teaching business English. At present, she works in the home, taking care of her 15-month-old son. She is also the PRO of "Galway for Life", an organisation whose objective is to focus primarily on all life-related issues in Galway City and county.

Robert Louis Stevenson once said "politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is necessary". And this is quite true for my part, as I was new to this politics game, a neophyte entering the premises of the great party machines. But although I had no previous experience in the field, I have always had an avid interest in political goings on, and have always been outspoken on matters where I feel justice is not being done.

I became involved, when on returning from Italy, I met up with some pro-life workers, who, after the Supreme Court decision in the "X" case in March 1992, were campaigning against Maastricht. I threw myself into working for the pro-

life cause over the following months, and then when news of a general election broke, we decided to pool our own candidate. In doing this, we could ensure more coverage for the referenda; and secondly, many people who felt they could not vote because of the moral dilemma involved, i.e. a little abortion or a lot of abortion, could now do so. Out of three nominees at the convention on Friday, 9 November, I was the "lucky one" selected by the various pro-life groups in Galway. Fourteen candidates altogether went to the starting line in Galway West: Fianna Fáil ran three candidates, Fine Gael 2, Labour, PDs, Democratic Left and Sinn Féin ran one each, followed by 5 independent candidates.

My conviction to the plight of the unborn child stems from my own crisis pregnancy in a foreign country where abortion is legal and readily available, and the extreme pressure upon me to have an abortion. In those desperate days of sheer panic and despair, I knew what it was like to be afraid and vulnerable and utterly dependent on friends' advice. And as I listened to one after the other of them telling me to abort, including the gynaecologist, whose "compassionate" response was "termination is best for you", I said to myself "wait a minute, I need to hear an Irish response to this problem". I phoned Cura, and from their first words over the thousands of miles, I knew that I could cope. I packed my bags and I came home. My experience made me scared for so many other girls who are made victims by fear and lack of support, and who are led to believe that the child is merely a clump of cells. The pride which I felt for the way my country respected life was now being undermined so as to "bring Ireland into step with Europe" at the cost of something so much more precious.

So it was with such a portfolio that I presented myself for the press conference the following morning, alongside my campaign advisor, Joan Hawkins and campaign manager Martin Gleeson. Much to the reporters' surprise, I wasn't just looking for a protest vote, I wasn't only "pro-life", but had policies on other issues as well, from job creation to women's rights, from development of the West, to one close to all Galwegians' hearts, i.e. the dreaded service charges!

Afterwards, it was down to the photographers for my poster and election photo, promised to be ready on the Monday. So now the question was, how can a newcomer to the political arena, this TD in embryo (pardon the play on words) expose herself to the public so as to become a force to be reckoned with? When you are a candidate belonging to a party, you will have a manifesto handed to you by the think-tank of the party, and once learnt by heart, it is the candidate's duty to shout it from the roof tops.

Not so for the struggling independent whose lack of finance greatly hinders any real competition with the party machines. Or such was my thought at the outset. As the days rolled on, the funds rolled in, and we were continually amazed at the level of support and generosity we received. We set up office on the third floor of an office building in the city centre, and we got down to work on the campaign strategy; even though, being a realist, I knew I had a much better chance of running a mile in less than four minutes than of having the distinction of placing the letters TD after my name (at least not first time in the race).

Publicity proved not to be much of a problem after all. The fact that a young single mother was running for election on such a controversial thing as the pro-life platform aroused a lot of interest from the foreign media. Alan Murdoch interviewed me for the London *Independent*, and I did an article with the Dutch correspondent for the UK, Cees Van Zweeden. Sky News asked me to do an inter-

view, as did BBC Radio, BBC Television, CNN and NBC. I was invited to speak on many radio programmes and I did party political broadcasts on RTE television and Raidió na Gaeltachta, on behalf of the pro-life candidates in Ireland. The whole world was (and still is) on tenterhooks to see the outcome of the Irish abortion question.

On the day of the NBC report, I had a prior appointment to visit the mart in Athenry, so they suggested they would follow me out and do the interview there. One unfortunate farmer came up to me afterwards and told me he'd had his eye on a certain bullock for months, but when he looked again, the bullock had been in the ring, been sold, and been taken out again; thanks to our dramatic whirlwind of handshaking, cameramen in tow, we greatly distracted the poor men from their business. Following that, the NBC producer, being wonderfully American, wanted the interview outside in the wily wind, with me standing in front of a huge enclosure of cattle, to convey a sense of Ireland, I suppose. And as I stood up to my ankles in mud, competing to be heard over the bovine orchestra, I was secretly praying that my relatives in New York would be watching a different channel that night!

Usually candidates look forward to the "sideshows" of visiting a coffee morning or dropping into a fashion show, but for me the door-to-door canvass was what I enjoyed most. It was my opportunity to meet the electorate face to face, explain my policies and answer questions, and of course it gave them the opportunity to assess me. One thing that came across loud and clear from the canvass and that was the utter confusion as regards the three abortion referenda. Many vowed that they wouldn't be voting at all because they hadn't an idea what they were voting for. And this was confirmed in the number of spoiled votes, that amounted to 8,731 in Galway, and 81,835 throughout Ireland. I managed to cover Galway city and the large towns in the county, but to cover it all in the length of time we had would have been physically impossible. In areas where I wasn't known, a lot of traditional party supporters who would have voted three "No"s in the referenda, still voted for their party candidate they considered to be the most pro-life. Being my first time running I made mistakes, but most important is that I've learnt from them, and the experience was of invaluable worth to me.

The day of reckoning finally arrived, and I lasted until the second last count, getting 1,308 first preferences, with transfers bringing me up to 1,683. So I ended up top of the independent candidates, with almost half as many votes as Fintan Coogan, a professional politician and former TD. Galway is mainly supportive of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael and the city is one of Labour and the PDs' strongholds, and I knew I was up against some very high calibre candidates. But I feel it was a very credible performance for somebody who was totally unknown three weeks previous to the elections.

Would I run again? All I know is that as long as there exists a silent victim, in any way or form, I cannot stay silent. To quote Aristotle, "Man is by nature a political animal", so yes; b'fheidir go mbeidh lá eile ag an bpaorach!

4. The Election of the 27th Dáil

Michael Gallagher

The results of the 1992 election of the 27th Dáil¹ reaffirmed the message that Irish elections are becoming less predictable affairs. After the election of 1987 had delivered a major jolt to the party system, with a high degree of volatility and an unusually fragmented Dáil, the 1989 results had seemed to mark some "settling down", with the established parties regaining some of the ground they had lost. The 1992 results, though, confirmed that the gyroscope has not ceased whirling, as the two main parties hit their lowest points for decades and Labour scaled unprecedented heights.

CANDIDATES AND VOTES

The election attracted a record 481 candidates (excluding the outgoing Ceann Comhairle, who was returned automatically), who were not discouraged by the increase in the size of the deposit from £100, the figure at which it had stood for 70 years, to £300. The new Electoral Act made it slightly easier to save a deposit: whereas previously the requirement had been that a candidate's vote total needed to exceed a third of the quota at some stage of the count, the threshold that had to be exceeded was now reduced to a quarter of the quota.² The change proved academic for most of the no-hopers; the great majority of candidates who cannot reach a third of the quota cannot reach a quarter of the quota either (147 candidates polled fewer than 1,000 first preferences), and the number of lost deposits, 189, was also an all-time record.

A candidate's vote is strongly related to factors such as party and elective status (see Table 4.1). In his study of the fortunes of candidates at seven general elections from 1948 to 1982, Michael Marsh found that being a Fianna Fáil candidate was associated with winning more first preferences than being a candidate of any other party or being an independent, and that being an incumbent TD also boosted one's vote total.³ In 1992, as Table 4.1 shows, the first of these relationships did not hold true, because the surge in Labour support, combined with that party's relatively small number of candidates, meant that each Labour candidate won on average over 2,000 votes more than the average Fianna Fáil candidate. In addition, a higher proportion of Labour nominees got elected, and a smaller proportion of them lost their deposits, than of any other party's nominees. Half of Democratic Left's candidates saved their deposits, but the great majority of smaller parties' candidates were never to see their £300 again after they had handed it to the returning officer. Twenty-five "pro-life" candidates have been identified, and they fared poorly; on average each won fewer than 1,000 first preferences, and only one (Dr Miriam Hogan in Carlow-Kilkenny) saved her deposit.

Candidates' fortunes were also strongly related to their elective status. Ministers won more votes than other TDs, TDs won more votes than senators, and so on. Over three-quarters of all outgoing TDs who stood in 1992 were re-elected and

Table 4.1: Fate of candidates at 1992 election

	Number	Average vote	% elected	% losing deposit
All	481	3,586	34.3	39.3
<u>Party</u>				
Fianna Fáil	122	5,530	55.7	4.9
Fine Gael	91	4,639	49.5	7.7
Labour	42	7,929	78.6	4.8
Progressive Democrats	20	4,039	50.0	10.0
Democratic Left	20	2,397	20.0	50.0
Green Party	19	1,269	5.3	78.9
Workers' Party	18	641	0	88.9
Sinn Féin	41	678	0	97.6
Pro-life candidates	25	901	0	96.0
Other	83	968	4.8	80.7
<u>Elective status</u>				
Cabinet minister	12	9,265	100.0	0
Junior minister	14	7,849	92.9	0
Non-ministerial TD	128	6,272	75.8	0
Senator	29	4,812	44.8	3.4
County councillor	125	3,222	19.2	27.2
None	173	918	3.5	89.0
Male	392	3,817	37.0	36.0
Female	89	2,569	22.5	53.9

Note: "County councillor" refers to those candidates who in November 1992 were members of a county or county borough council but not of the Oireachtas.

none lost his or her deposit, but those who were not already TDs found the odds stacked against them. Fewer than half of senators were elected (although membership of the Seanad is clearly an asset worth possessing if one wants to enter the Dáil), only a fifth of councillors won a seat, and almost nine in every ten of those who did not belong to any elected body lost their deposits.

Marsh found that, when all other factors were controlled for, male candidates fared better than women. In 1992, as Table 4.1 shows, men candidates won on average over 1,200 more votes than women candidates, and were more likely to be elected and less likely to lose their deposits. However, to assert that men candidates are more popular than women candidates with the electorate would require both a more sophisticated analysis and much more data. Confining ourselves to the 1992 election, we find that the relationship generally survives separate controls for party and for elective status. In other words, Fianna Fáil male candidates (with an average vote of 5,700) did better than Fianna Fáil women (average vote 3,973), Fine Gael men did better than Fine Gael women, and so on. Likewise, outgoing male TDs fared better than outgoing female TDs, outgoing male senators fared better than outgoing female senators, and so on (an exception to the general rule is that female councillors on average won nearly 800 votes more than male councillors). A simultaneous control for both party and elective status produces a less clear-cut picture: thus, for example, among outgoing Fianna Fáil ministers men did better than women (8,618 votes compared with 7,120), but among other Fianna Fáil TDs women fared better than men (6,508 votes compared with 5,717 for men). Unfortunately, the number of women in any one category be-

comes too small for reliable analysis when both controls are applied. Employing multiple regression, a technique designed to assess the separate effects of a number of factors, suggests that gender was not a significant determinant of the vote when the other factors in Table 4.1 are taken into account.

About half of the candidates, 235 in all, had also stood in the 1989 general election. On average, each of these candidates fared worse than in 1989, winning 214 fewer first preferences, which might be taken as evidence supporting the view that there was a general, if vague, desire for "change". The 154 outgoing TDs who stood again each won, on average, 515 fewer first preferences than in 1989, another indication that voters were expressing a weariness with the same old faces. Outgoing ministers fared a little better than they had in 1989 (on average, they gained 464 votes) but other TDs each lost 714 votes on average. Across the parties, the 26 Labour candidates who stood in both 1989 and 1992 reaped the benefit of the Labour surge, each adding, on average, a massive 4,104 first preferences to his or her 1989 figure, but candidates of all the other parties dropped votes: the average candidate of Fianna Fáil fell back by 501 first preferences, of Fine Gael by 1,058, of the PDs by 90 and of Democratic Left by 1,714. Women candidates returning to the fray found a warmer welcome than men; in both Fine Gael and the PDs, as well as Labour, women did better in 1992 than they had in 1989, whereas among men only Labour candidates improved on their 1989 performance.

The 165 elected TDs won 67.7 per cent of the votes cast—to put this another way, almost two-thirds of voters saw their first choice candidate elected. Voter satisfaction, measured in this way, varied with district magnitude (the number of TDs per constituency); the figures were 65.3 per cent in 3-seaters, 65.9 per cent in 4-seaters and 70.6 per cent in 5-seaters. The great majority of voters (86.7 per cent) ended up being represented by at least one TD of the party to which they gave their first preference vote; this applied to 85.7 per cent of voters in 3-seaters, to 84.9 per cent in 4-seaters and to 88.7 per cent in 5-seaters.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

Despite the simultaneous attraction of three referendums (see chapter 7), electors came out to vote in even lower numbers than in 1989. Valid votes were cast by only 67.5 per cent of the electorate, the lowest turnout since June 1927. The drop cannot be attributed to confusion caused by the plethora of ballot papers with which voters were confronted, since the number of spoiled votes at the general election was only slightly up on 1989. On the basis of these figures, it does seem that disenchantment and indifference is growing, and the 832,000 non-voters outnumber those who voted for any single party. Turnout rose slightly in Dublin but fell in the other three Euro-constituencies (see Table 4.2); the biggest increase was in Dublin South (+4.4 per cent), while the largest decreases were in Mayo West (-5.9 per cent) and Cork North-West (-4.6 per cent). However, turnout was still lower in Dublin than elsewhere, with Dublin South-East, as usual, recording the lowest figure (57.9 per cent). The highest turnout was in Tipperary North, with Cork North-West second, and again this continues a pattern that goes back decades. However, a sign of the changed times is that even the figure for Tipper-

3. Michael Marsh, "Electoral evaluations of candidates in Irish general elections 1948-1982", *Irish Political Studies* 2 (1987), pp. 65-76.
4. Of course, measuring volatility is complicated by the fact that the composition of the electorate changed since 1989; some people have moved out, others have moved in, some have died, young voters have come onto the register, and some constituency boundaries have been changed. Moreover, there may have been a good deal of vote-switching that cancels itself out and hence does not show up in the overall results. However, we are in no position to assess the degree of turnover in the electorate, and neither can we measure hidden cross-currents in voting behaviour, so the figure of 9.5 per cent in this case represents the best (and a standard) estimate of inter-election volatility.
5. The figure referred to is Pearson's coefficient (r). A value of zero would denote that the two factors were not related at all; a value of 1 would denote that the two match perfectly. A problem in comparing the results in 1989 with those in 1992 on a constituency-by-constituency basis is that because of the redrawing of constituency boundaries, not all the cases are identical. However, in only one instance was the redistricting so major as to produce entirely non-comparable cases: this was the change from the two 1989 constituencies of Longford-Westmeath and Roscommon to the two 1992 constituencies of Longford-Roscommon and Westmeath. For the purposes of producing the correlations reported in this chapter, these two constituencies have been merged into one Longford-Roscommon-Westmeath area, so 40 cases are available for analysis.
6. The list of marginals is given in Michael Gallagher, "The election results and the new Dáil" in Michael Gallagher and Richard Sinnott (eds), *How Ireland Voted 1989* (Galway: Centre for the Study of Irish Elections and PSIA Press, 1990), pp. 90-1.
7. This contrasts with the party's own assessment that it could have won only five extra seats by running additional candidates; see note 14 to chapter 2, p. 37 above.
8. Michael Gallagher, *The Irish Labour Party in Transition 1957-82* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), p. 102.
9. See in particular the graph in John Coakley, "Minor parties in Irish political life, 1922-1989", *Economic and Social Review* 21:3 (1990), p. 293.
10. "Why Fianna Fáil should never lose power", *Sunday Press*, 29 November 1992, p. 15.
11. The phenomenon of non-monotonicity, much discussed by social choice theorists, may also have raised its head in this constituency. Non-monotonicity occurs in those rare cases where a candidate would have fared better with less support. In Dublin North-East, the issue arises because of the position after the eleventh count, when Cosgrave (Fine Gael) had 6,028 votes, Broughan (Labour) had 5,184 and McCartan (Democratic Left) had 5,160. McCartan was eliminated, and his transfers took Broughan above Cosgrave and into a seat. However, Cosgrave might well have been elected if 25 of his votes had been cast instead for McCartan. This would have left McCartan ahead of Broughan after the eleventh count, resulting in the elimination of Broughan rather than McCartan, and if the lower preferences on Broughan's ballot papers were in line with the national pattern, as shown in Table 4.8, Cosgrave would have retained his seat. By coincidence, the same constituency produced a case of non-monotonicity in 1987, also involving Pat McCartan. I am grateful to Brendan Kennelly (UCG) for bringing this case to my attention.
12. Details of the 1991 local elections, and of subsequent departures and cooptions, can be found in Seán Donnelly's comprehensive *Poll Position: an analysis of the 1991 local elections* (Rathcoole, Co Dublin: Seán Donnelly, 1992).
13. Rona Fitzgerald, "The 1991 local elections in the Republic of Ireland", *Irish Political Studies* 7 (1992), pp. 99-104.
14. The sources for the new TDs are mainly contemporary newspapers. Full-time politicians are classified according to their previous occupation, and deputies with more than one job are classified according to their main one. The classification scheme used is as follows. Under "commercial" are included business people, mainly small businessmen such as shopkeepers, publicans, auctioneers, contractors and so on. "Lower professionals" are mainly schoolteachers, while "higher professionals" include doctors, lawyers, lecturers, architects, accountants and economists.
15. The "swing" used in Tables 4.15 and 4.16 refers to the number of votes that would have needed to switch between the parties, using best estimates of the way in which any undistributed votes or surpluses would have transferred. See also the Appendix to this chapter for a fuller discussion of the methodology used in calculating marginality.

5. Women in the Election

Frances Gardiner

A consistent feature of both Dáil and Seanad is the underrepresentation of women. The world of formal politics in Ireland, as elsewhere, has traditionally been a male domain, with female visibility decreasing as the power of political office increases. This gendered pyramid of power is replicated in the hierarchy of government, civil service, as well as political parties and their national executives. Despite being active in the national independence struggle and the suffrage movement and obtaining the vote relatively early in the century, Irish women gradually faded from political life after the foundation of the state in 1922. Women's domestic role was singled out as their most important contribution to the building of the new state and eventually became, via social custom and legislation, constitutionally guaranteed in the 1937 constitution. In 1973, there were fewer women in the Dáil than in 1923. By 1992, there had only been 44 different women deputies over the 70 years since the foundation of the state.¹

If the Irish general election of November 1992 can be described as a political earthquake, then women were at its epicentre. A record 20 women were elected to the Dáil, with the added distinction of a woman becoming the nation's electoral poll topper. Journalists resorted to superlatives to describe the phenomenon. Across the board, parties reported the "female factor" as critical in the balance of power. A senior Fianna Fáil member was reported as saying that "this election has marked a watershed" and "whether the traditionalists like it or not, the simple fact is women are emerging as the key element in the political landscape".² How did this happen? Was it part of a grand strategy by the parties to elect more women? And what issues galvanised the electorate to return 20 women to the Dáil, having elected only 13 in 1989 and only 11 per cent women in the 1991 local elections? In this chapter I briefly outline women's political record in the 1980s and 1990s; the selection of women candidates; their electoral performance; and party strategies for women. Gender differences in opinion among the electorate are reviewed and the backgrounds of women deputies discussed.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PROGRESS 1980-92

Irish women's political remobilisation occurred with the second wave of the women's movement in the 1970s. Since then, much legislation had entered the statute books, in response to the recommendations of the First Commission on the Status of Women, and on foot of European Community directives following Ireland's accession in 1973. The Employment Equality Agency was set up in 1977, and consultative status accorded shortly later to the Council for the Status of Women, an umbrella group for women's organisations.

The early 1980s brought an upsurge of women candidates and deputies. The increase in Dáil seats in 1981 widened access for aspiring politicians. At the same time, a new type of feminist candidate without political kinship networks pioneered a novel pathway to parliament via leadership in the women's move-

Table 5.12: Gender composition of government after 1992 election

	Total ministers	Male ministers	Men as % total ministers	Male ministers as % male TDs	Female ministers	Women as % total ministers	Female ministers as % female TDs
Cabinet ministers	15	13	87	9	2	13	10
Junior ministers	15	12	80	8	3	20	15
Total	30	25	83	17	5	17	25

Source: *Supplement to Administration Yearbook and Diary 1993* (Dublin: Institute for Public Administration, 1993).

all, 25 per cent of women in the Dáil attained government status compared with 17 per cent of men.

The figures in Table 5.12 serve to highlight the fact that the main impediments to women playing a more active role in politics have to do with getting elected to the Dáil in the first place, rather than with what happens after women have become TDs. Unless the main parties nominate more women to contest elections, the Oireachtas will remain a national parliament where women are more the exception than the rule. Of the main parties, Fianna Fáil, commanding the largest share of the national vote, holds the greatest opportunities for the election of women. Having taken the initiative in 1977 to promote women, Fianna Fáil subsequently was overtaken by Fine Gael in this respect during the 1980s. From the evidence of this election, the Labour Party may be set to repeat this pattern in the 1990s. If the other main parties neglect a female electorate which has traditionally given them huge numbers of votes, they may well be overlooking a major asset in any future plans to regain their former support bases.

NOTES

1. See Michael Gallagher, "The election results and the new Dáil" in Michael Gallagher and Richard Sinnott (eds), *How Ireland Voted 1989* (Galway: Centre for the Study of Irish Elections and PSAl Press), p. 87.
2. *Cork Examiner*, 27 November 1992.
3. Sources for this table are: Vincent Browne (ed.), *The Magill Guide to Election '82* (Dublin: Magill Publications, 1982); Vincent Browne (ed.), *The Magill Book of Irish Politics* (Dublin: Magill Publications, 1983); Ted Nealon and Séamus Brennan, *Nealon's Guide to the 22nd Dáil and Seanad* (Dublin: Platform Press, 1981); Ted Nealon, *Nealon's Guide to the 25th Dáil and Seanad* (Dublin: Platform Press, 1987); Ted Nealon, *Nealon's Guide to the 26th Dáil and Seanad* (Dublin: Platform Press, 1989).
4. See Frances Gardiner, "The Presidential election 1990—a feminist triumph?", Paper presented to the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, University of Essex, 1991.
5. Sources: RTE Election 92; *Election Results and Transfer of Votes in the General Election for the Twenty-Seventh Dáil* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1993).
6. Brian Farrell, "The mass media and the 1977 campaign", in Howard Penniman (ed.), *Ireland at the Polls* (Washington DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1978), pp. 116-17.
7. *Irish Times*, 13 November 1992.

6. The Voters: Stability and Change

Michael Marsh and Richard Sinnott

Change was much talked about during the 1992 general election campaign. It was more than just another campaign slogan; politicians, their script writers and their advertising strategists all seemed intent on maximising the number of times the word could be inserted in each sound bite and each advertisement. And change was not just something that was talked about—it was something that actually happened. This is true in the obvious sense of the formation of an unprecedented coalition between Fianna Fáil and Labour after the election. It is true also in the sense that the shifts in voting patterns marked a significant turnaround in party fortunes.

Fianna Fáil's vote declined to a level not experienced since before the party first wielded governmental power sixty years previously. Over the last few years many have read the writing on the wall as saying that Fianna Fáil could never again dominate the party system as it had in the past. Others, including Albert Reynolds (if one is to judge by the nature of his appeal in the contest to succeed Charles Haughey), saw the possibility that Fianna Fáil could claw its way back to single party majority status. The 1992 result is consistent with the former view but the extent of the party's decline came as a shock even to the pessimists.

The outcome for Labour was equally dramatic. The party's rise has been long awaited but previous omens had turned out to be false. A recent discussion of the left's weakness identified a number of signs favourable to Labour in contemporary social trends and political events.¹ In addition, a poll after the last election found that over 20 per cent of voters admitted there was a strong likelihood that they might vote Labour in the future.² Having potential is one thing, realising it is another, and even the party itself was surprised by the size of its increase in support. The extent of change is underlined by the fact that support for the two "civil war" parties declined simultaneously, neither benefiting from the other's misfortune.

Our purpose is to analyse the nature of these changes by looking at the responses of individual voters, as captured in public opinion polls, and by seeking to identify the timing and the sources of change in voting behaviour. This should enable us to understand better the reasons for the rise of Labour and the decline of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. It should also help us to assess the extent to which developments in the 1992 election mark a new pattern of party competition or merely intensify a volatility which can be expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

We begin with a consideration of trends between 1989 and 1992, including an assessment of the impact of the Robinson presidential election victory and of the circumstances surrounding the dissolution of the 26th Dáil. Once called, however, elections take on a life of their own. We examine the issue perceptions of the voters, their preferences regarding leadership and shape of government and the political attitudes associated with the voting choices made.

In any election or set of elections the behaviour of the voters may or may not add up to a coherent pattern of political division and conflict. The dominant pattern in Europe has tended to be that of class, and so political analysts tend to focus on the class basis of political divisions. This issue has been much debated in Ireland, and in the concluding section we relate the role of social class in Irish politics to the wider question of change and ask whether the changes seen in 1992 reflect new political divisions on a range of potential cleavages—class, gender, generation or the urban-rural divide.

GOVERNMENT POPULARITY AND PARTY SUPPORT 1989-92

Figure 6.1 traces public support for the outgoing government over the lifetime of the Fianna Fáil-Progressive Democrat coalition. The period divides neatly into three. The first period runs from the 1989 Dáil election to the November 1990 presidential election, marked by the sacking of Brian Lenihan and the triumph of Mary Robinson. The second period takes us from this to the resignation of Mr Haughey and his replacement by Albert Reynolds at the end of January 1992. The third period runs from that point up to the November 1992 election.

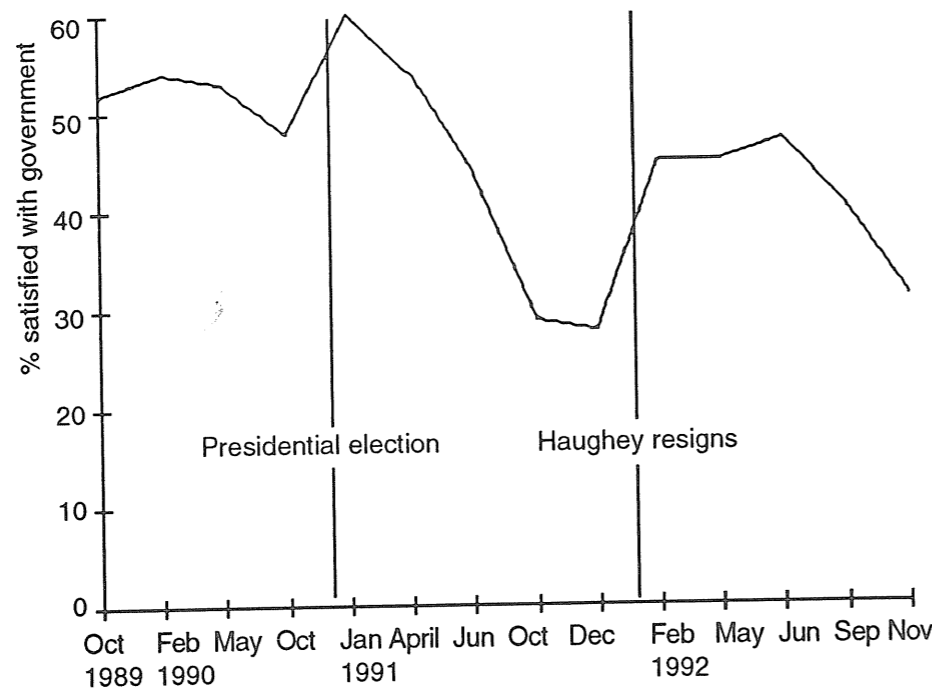


Figure 6.1: Government popularity, October 1989-November 1992

Governing parties going into an election take their record and their rating along with them. The striking thing about the popularity of the outgoing government is that it was so volatile. In contrast to the 1987-89 government, which always had a popularity deficit (disapproval always outweighed approval),

the Fianna Fáil-PD coalition began in credit. In its first year or so the government gained popularity, reaching close to 60 per cent approval at the start of 1991. A dramatic decline through 1991 saw its approval rating fall below 30 per cent by late in the year. The replacement of Haughey by Reynolds retrieved about half of what had been lost but, under Albert Reynolds, government popularity never rose above the mid-forties. Some slippage was evident in September (when approval fell seven points to 40 per cent) and, by November, the government was much less popular than the Fianna Fáil minority government had been on the eve of the 1989 election. Fewer than one third of all voters approved and more than twice as many disapproved.

When we look at levels of support for individual parties we see that, when the government as a whole was popular, Fianna Fáil ratings were very high (Figure 6.2). The first period is one of considerable success for Fianna Fáil, mostly at Fine Gael's expense. The party ran above 50 per cent through several polls. Fine Gael was in decline, with Labour merely holding steady. The big drop in Fianna Fáil's popularity occurred in early 1991 and, over the course of the year, the party lost around 10 per cent in the polls or one in five of its supporters. Reynolds's promise to open the windows of government seemed to restore Fianna Fáil's popularity. Support for Fianna Fáil rose immediately but it remained fragile and by autumn it was falling again. With the calling of the election it fell much more sharply and reached the low levels of some 12 months earlier.

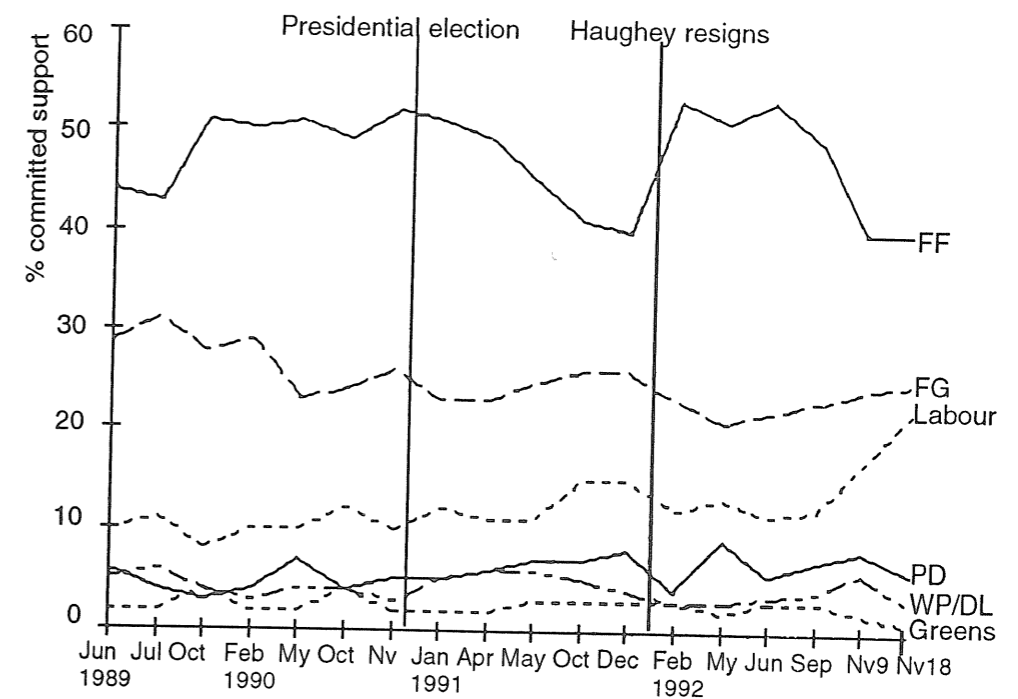


Figure 6.2: Party support 1989-92

The decline in Fianna Fáil support through 1991 was not reflected in gains for any other single party. Fine Gael, Labour and the PDs all seemed to reap some

- figure and the 20 percent policy figure are consistent with previous trends. See Richard Sinnott, *Irish Voters Decide: Voting Behaviour in Elections and Referendums, 1918-92* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, forthcoming, 1994).
9. Question: "Here are some issues which people have identified as being important in the current Election Campaign [SHOW CARD]. From your personal point of view, which one of these issues will most influence you in deciding how you will vote?"
 10. MRBI/*Irish Times* poll, February 1992.
 11. See the discussion of the impact of candidate factors in Michael Marsh, "Electoral evaluations of candidates in Irish general elections 1948-82", *Irish Political Studies* 2 (1987), pp. 65-76.
 12. Mair, "Explaining the absence of class politics in Ireland".
 13. Estimates of the size of each of the three groups can however be derived from the referendum results themselves—see R. Sinnott, B. M. Walsh and B. J. Whelan, "Voting patterns in the Irish abortion referendums of 1992", Department of Politics Working Papers, No. 1/93, University College Dublin, 1993. Moreover, a post-referendum poll (IMS Dec 4) proved to be reasonably accurate in measuring reported vote on the substantive issue. It also showed that of those who voted No on the substantive issue, half did so because the amendment was too liberal and half because it was too conservative (see discussion in chapter 7 below). This is consistent with the disaggregation of the No vote on this issue by Sinnott, Walsh and Whelan.
 14. Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh, "The 1990 presidential election: implications for the future", pp. 62-81 in Ronald J. Hill and Michael Marsh (eds), *Modern Irish Democracy* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993).
 15. Assessment of these data is complicated by the problem of deciding the direction of any causal link. This problem bedevils almost all the analysis here, but is a particular problem with party and leader evaluations, given the weight placed on party leaders by the media. Whilst the common assumption is that people will transfer approval from a leader to a party—thus voting for a party whose leader is liked—it is possible that partisans profess approval of their party's leader out of a sense of loyalty, or to maintain a consistency in their views.
 16. For a similar conclusion, see Sinnott, Walsh and Whelan, "Voting patterns".
 17. See John Whyte, "Ireland: politics without social bases", pp. 619-51 in Richard Rose (ed.), *Electoral behavior: a comparative handbook* (New York: Free Press, 1974); Michael Laver, Richard Sinnott, and Michael Marsh, "Patterns of party support", in Michael Laver, Peter Mair and Richard Sinnott (eds), *How Ireland Voted 1987* (Swords: Poolbeg Press and PSAI Press, 1987); Michael Marsh, "Ireland", in Mark N. Franklin, Thomas T. Mackie, and Henry Valen (eds), *Electoral Change: responses to evolving social and attitudinal structures in western countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Sinnott, *Irish Voters Decide*.
 18. In this and subsequent tables, social groups are defined in terms of the categories used by market researchers when they conduct public opinion polls. Essentially, the AB group represents professional and managerial non-manual workers, the C1 group those in routine non-manual occupations, the C2 group skilled manual workers, the DE group unskilled manual workers and unemployed or other economically inactive workers. The F1 group represents farmers farming over 50 acres and the F2 group represents farmers farming 50 acres or less.
 19. This analysis is subject to some of the qualifications noted above in the discussion of the liberal-conservative contrasts between consistent party supporters and those who switched parties. For figures on voter retention from 1969 to 1992, see Sinnott, *Irish Voters Decide*.
 20. A similar contrast is evident at the aggregate or constituency level. By far the most powerful predictor of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael support as against support for Labour or the combined left was the number of farmers in a constituency. See Richard Sinnott, B. J. Whelan, and J. P. McBride, "Ecological correlates of party support and referendum voting", *Department of Politics Working Papers*, No. 2/93, University College Dublin, 1993, and Sinnott, *Irish Voters Decide*.
 21. C. van der Eijk, M. N. Franklin, and Henry Valen, 1992, "Cleavages, conflict resolution and democracy", in Franklin, Mackie and Valen (eds), *Electoral Change*, pp. 406-531.

7. The Abortion Referendums

Brendan Kennelly and Eilís Ward

The sequence of events that culminated in three referendums to amend the constitution being held on the same day as the general election could not possibly have been foreseen at the start of 1992. These proposed amendments dealt with, first, the issue of abortion; second, the right to travel outside the state; and, third, the right of people to obtain information. This chapter will outline the background to these referendums, describe how the campaign unfolded and discuss the results. We shall also try to explain how and why people voted the way they did, looking at both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary politics, including the role of the Catholic church. We shall argue that the referendums, and especially the debate that preceded them, indicated a shift in Irish society towards a more liberal position on abortion.

BACKGROUND

The three referendums concerned proposed amendments to Article 40.3.3 of the Irish constitution, which was introduced in 1983 with the aim of protecting the right to life of the unborn child having "due regard to the equal right to life of the mother" (the full text is given on p. 119 below). After a bitter and divisive debate, the amendment was approved by a clear 2-to-1 majority.¹ Since abortion has been illegal in Ireland since 1867, the 1983 amendment did not change the laws regarding the availability of abortion in Ireland, but it was used to prohibit the distribution of information relating to abortion. While abortion remained unavailable in the country, many Irish girls and women continued to travel to Britain to have abortions there. Although precise numbers are not available, it was generally accepted in the early 1990s that at least 4,000 Irish women travelled to Britain each year to have their pregnancies terminated. Despite this, abortion was not a major political issue at the beginning of 1992.

In February 1992, the Attorney General of Ireland sought an injunction against a 14-year-old alleged rape victim who wished to travel to Britain to obtain an abortion. The girl and her family had notified the Gardaí of their intention to obtain an abortion as they thought that the Gardaí might use DNA results from the foetus to secure a conviction against the alleged rapist. When informed of the girl's intentions the Attorney General sought an injunction against her travelling on the grounds that she was planning to obtain an abortion in Britain. He claimed that it was his duty under the constitution to seek such an injunction since Article 40.3.3 claimed to protect the right to life of the unborn child. An injunction was granted in the High Court even though the lawyers for the girl had argued that she was suicidal. The family appealed to the Supreme Court. In an historic decision (referred to for obvious reasons as the "X" case), the Supreme Court decided by a 4-1 majority to lift the injunction against the girl. The Court found that the clause in Article 40.3.3 relating to the "due regard to the equal right to life of the mother" meant that a suicidal woman did have a right to an

abortion. The Court did not give a conclusive ruling on whether women who were not suicidal had a right to travel abroad to obtain an abortion. However, in their *obiter dicta*, three of the five judges held that the right to travel was subordinate to the right to life of the unborn child.

The Supreme Court's decision to lift the injunction against the girl was greeted with widespread relief. From a legal point of view, however, it left many questions unanswered and it was clear that resolving these problems would require further amendments to the constitution (which would necessitate referendums), or legislation, or both. In particular, four questions arose which were to provide the basis for the referendums in November and the involvement of pro-choice and anti-abortion groups in the Maastricht referendum on European Union. Could Irish women who were not suicidal be prevented from travelling abroad on the basis that they might have an abortion while abroad? Secondly, if abortion were to be available in certain circumstances in Ireland, how could this be reconciled with earlier Supreme Court decisions which banned the distribution of information about abortion? Thirdly, if abortion were to be available when there was a "real and substantial risk to the life of the mother", who would determine when such a risk existed? In particular, who would determine whether a pregnant woman was suicidal? Finally, since the Irish government had obtained a special protocol in the Maastricht Treaty relating to the application of Article 40.3.3 in Ireland, how would the Supreme Court decision affect the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in Ireland? As important as these legal and constitutional questions was the fact that the "X" case led to a great deal of questioning within Ireland on how the constitutional ban on abortion could be reconciled with the fact that many Irish women had continued to make their own private choices on this question by travelling to Britain to terminate unwanted pregnancies.

Even while the Supreme Court was making its decision on the "X" case, both pro-choice and anti-abortion groups began to mobilise. The Repeal the Eighth Amendment Campaign (REAC)² was launched in February 1992. While the campaign was national in its impact, it was mainly centred in Dublin, Galway and Cork, where organisations were established. Much of the impetus for the campaign came from individuals involved in the Anti-Amendment Campaign of 1983, but it also attracted members of political parties and other campaigning groups. The group therefore emerged with substantial experience under its collective belt in terms of organisation, strategy and media management. On 8 March, following a national conference of REAC, a separate group, the Women's Coalition, was formed. This group's founders argued that a women-only campaign was needed, both to counteract the more chauvinistic elements of the hard left within the REAC and to allow women a separate space to tackle what was felt to be an issue deeply relevant to women. Both REAC and the Women's Coalition were in favour of legislation to implement the Supreme Court decision in the "X" case.

The anti-abortion movement was also quick to respond to the Supreme Court decision. Many of the individuals and groups who had played a prominent role in the 1983 campaign criticised the Supreme Court decision. They argued that the Supreme Court had completely misinterpreted the intention of the 1983 amendment and claimed that the decision meant that Ireland now had, in effect, the most liberal abortion laws in Europe. These groups demanded a new anti-abortion referendum that would overturn the Supreme Court decision. The anti-abortion groups entered the fray with ten years' experience of campaigning be-

hind them. Initially, the most prominent among them was the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC), which, along with the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign, had been instrumental in the insertion of Article 40.3.3 into the constitution in 1983. Other smaller groups included Life Ireland (an organisation established to provide alternatives to abortion), Family Solidarity (a group which had played an important role in defeating the referendum to remove the constitutional ban on divorce in 1986) and Youth Defence (a group which attracted considerable notoriety during the year because of its direct tactics). Eventually, an umbrella group, the Pro-Life Campaign (PLC), was established and this group led the anti-abortion movement for the coming months.

While the number of people actually involved in campaigning on the abortion issue remained relatively small, the debate attracted enormous interest from the public. This was reflected in the amount of coverage in the print media and on radio and television, and in the numerous talk-shows on national and local radio which allowed many listeners an opportunity to air their views on the issue. For many, there were fears that the divisiveness of 1983 would recur.

THE MAASTRICHT PROTOCOL

The first question that the government chose to address was whether to amend Protocol 17 of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. This protocol stated that "nothing in the Treaty on European Union ... shall affect the application in Ireland of Article 40.3.3 of the Constitution of Ireland".³ The protocol was originally intended to ensure that the anti-abortion article in the Irish constitution would be copper-fastened against any rulings based on European Community law. In the light of the "X" case, both pro-choice and anti-abortion groups adopted positions on the Maastricht Protocol. The pro-choice groups argued that the protocol had to be removed as it allocated women a secondary role in Irish society—removing from them the right of appeal to Community law in relation to matters of abortion. The anti-abortion groups demanded that a referendum to overturn the Supreme Court decision be held *before* any referendum on the Maastricht Treaty on the grounds that the Maastricht Protocol would copper-fasten Article 40.3.3 which the Supreme Court had interpreted as permitting abortion.

The government first tried to have the protocol amended or deleted. This attempt was thwarted by other EC governments, because of fears that any reopening of the treaty could lead to demands for changes from other governments. Instead, the government secured from the governments of the other EC member states a "Solemn Declaration", which stated that the signatories to the Maastricht Treaty had never intended Protocol 17 to be used to interfere with the freedom to travel or to obtain information and that they would be favourably disposed to amending it if Article 40.3.3 itself was amended. There was widespread confusion and debate in Ireland about the legal standing and implications of the Protocol and the Solemn Declaration.

Having secured the Solemn Declaration, the government announced that the Maastricht referendum would be held on 18 June. The leaders of the four main parties issued a joint statement pledging that referendums to secure the rights to travel and information would be held later in the year. The government also established a special sub-committee charged with developing a strategy on the

Table 7.3: Attitudes towards abortion proposal by demographic group, in percentages

	(1) Yes to travel	(2) Yes to information	(3) Yes to abor- tion wording	(4) Yes to abor- tion wording	(5) Had voted Yes on abortion
National	63	71	48	33	25
Dublin	73	76	50	34	30
Rest of Leinster	57	69	46	35	20
Munster	63	72	54	31	25
Connacht-Ulster	56	62	42	33	23
Urban	70	76	50	35	27
Rural	54	64	47	30	22
Aged:					
18-24	69	77	56	43	25
25-34	70	79	52	42	29
35-49	72	81	51	33	25
50-64	53	59	41	23	26
65+	44	50	41	20	16
Non-manual	75	78	47	35	25
Manual	61	70	51	35	33
Large farmer	45	59	39	24	19
Small farmer	45	52	46	20	24
Male	66	71	49	38	26
Female	60	71	48	28	24
FF	61	70	50	34	34
FG	58	68	44	28	23
Labour	81	85	50	42	30
PD	79	82	56	30	13
Other	72	75	58	34	23
DK/Won't Vote	49	56	41	26	--

Sources: (1) and (2) MRBI/4090 (9 November) and MRBI/4091 (18 November); (3) MRBI/4090 (9 November); (4) MRBI/4091 (18 November); (5) IMS (4 December)

The attitudes of sub-groups on the abortion issue are presented in the last three columns of Table 7.3. It is interesting to note that the fall in support for the abortion wording during the campaign was spread across all groups. In the second poll the strongest support for the abortion wording came from people aged under 34 (42 per cent) and from Labour supporters (42 per cent), whilst the weakest support came from those aged over 50 (about 22 per cent) and from Fine Gael supporters (28 per cent). There was a dramatic fall in the support for the abortion issue among Fianna Fáil supporters (50 per cent to 34 per cent) indicating that, with respect to the abortion issue at least, neither Labour nor Fianna Fáil candidates were making a serious effort to ensure that their supporters voted the way the party platforms were advocating. The third column contains the results of an IMS poll conducted on 4 December, which asked people a question about how they had voted on the abortion issue. The pattern of voting revealed by this question is broadly consistent with that suggested by the pre-election polls.

The most interesting question about the vote on the abortion issue, clearly, is: why did people vote the way they did? As we have seen, there were at least

three reasons why various people opposed the government's wording: because it allowed too much abortion, because it allowed too little abortion, or because people were unwilling to introduce a wording whose implications were unclear. It is clear that the "no" vote consisted of elements of all three positions. What is more difficult to discern is the composition of the "no" vote, especially its distribution between pro-choice and anti-abortion supporters. The first MRBI poll on 9 November asked a question on personal attitudes about the availability of abortion in addition to the question on how people intended to vote on the abortion issue. Jack Jones of the MRBI cross-analysed these responses and found that the poll indicated a great deal of inconsistency among the electorate between their personal views on abortion and their voting intentions on the abortion referendum.¹⁰ For example, over half of the people who felt that abortion should be available either to anybody who wanted it, or in cases where there was a serious risk of suicide, were planning to vote "yes" even though a "yes" vote would have explicitly ruled out suicide as a reason for obtaining an abortion. There seemed to be less confusion on the anti-abortion side as a majority of people who held the anti-abortion position were planning to vote "no".

Table 7.4: Reasons for voting "No" on the abortion amendment

Group	Felt it would not rule out abortion	Felt it would not protect the rights of the mother
National	48	48
Dublin	38	59
Rest of Leinster	51	42
Munster	43	53
Connacht-Ulster	64	35
Urban	46	50
Rural	50	46
Aged:		
18-24	35	63
25-34	38	57
35-49	47	50
50-64	55	42
65+	61	32
Non-manual	42	55
Manual	46	49
Large Farmer	51	44
Small Farmer	56	42
Male	43	54
Female	52	43
FF	56	40
FG	46	50
Labour	39	57
PD	45	55
Other	50	50

Source: IMS, 4 December 1992.

The best evidence on why people voted the way they did comes from an IMS poll, conducted after the referendums, which asked people why they had voted against the abortion wording. The results of this poll are contained in Table 7.4. The striking feature is that the percentage who voted against because the amendment did not rule out abortion is exactly the same as the percentage who voted against because they felt that the amendment would not protect the rights of the mother. This poll indicates that men are more likely than women to have voted "no" for liberal reasons. People aged over 50 and people living in Connacht-Ulster were more likely to have voted "no" because they felt that the abortion amendment would not rule out abortion. People who claimed they had voted for Labour were more likely to have voted "no" for liberal reasons while the opposite was true of Fianna Fáil supporters.

The IMS poll enables us to suggest estimates of the voting patterns in the referendums, which are presented in Table 7.5. The most liberal group of voters, about a third of all voters, includes people who have a pro-choice position on the availability of abortion and people who were primarily concerned with possible threats to the health of women. The most conservative group, also about a third, voted "no" on all three issues, and were joined in their opposition to the travel and information proposals by a smaller group (around 5 per cent on the travel question and 7 per cent on information), who voted "yes-no-no". This position might be held by people who accepted the government's assurances that the proposed amendment was the strongest anti-abortion amendment that could be found—or who, while sharing the outlook of the "fundamentalist" conservatives, believed it unlikely that a wording more to their liking would ever be put to a referendum—but felt that access to information on abortion, and the right to travel for an abortion, should be restricted. The remaining group of voters, around 30 per cent, adopted a centrist position, voting "yes-yes-yes".

Table 7.5: Voting patterns at the 1992 referendums

Proposal	Liberals	Centrists	"Realistic" conservatives	"Fundamentalist" conservatives
Abortion issue	No	Yes	Yes	No
Travel	Yes	Yes	No	No
Information	Yes	Yes	No	No
Estimated % of voters	33	29	6	32

The results of the IMS poll indicate that much of the confusion that was evident at the time of the first MRBI poll had disappeared during the campaign. This suggests that the increase in the "no" vote in the three referendums during the last week of the campaign was caused by a number of factors. On the one hand, people who were concerned that the proposed wording would not protect the rights of the mother came round to the view that they should vote "no" on the abortion issue. On the other, the anti-abortion groups, who had convinced a majority of their supporters to vote "no" on the abortion issue at an early stage of the campaign, succeeded in persuading many of them that they should also vote "no" on travel and information. In addition, the intervention of Archbishop Connell and some other bishops increased the number of people who voted "no" on

the abortion issue because the proposed constitutional amendment did not rule out all "direct" abortions.

DISCUSSION

Several points can be made in relation to the November referendums. In the context of a ten-year debate on abortion, the 1992 experience indicates that Irish society has shifted towards a more liberal position on abortion. This is evident from the content of the debates that occurred during the year, from the pre-referendum polls and, to a lesser extent, from the referendum results. For instance, the number of women who spoke openly of their abortion experience on national radio was remarkable. At the level of discourse, the pro-choice position, which had received almost no attention in 1983, was widely articulated. The change was mediated to a great extent by the impact of the "X" case on the national psyche. The extent to which many politicians who had fully supported the 1983 referendum spoke out for the availability of abortion in certain circumstances less than a decade later could be seen as something of a departure in Irish politics. On the other hand, anti-abortion groups could be encouraged by the fact that in a low-key campaign 38 and 40 per cent of the electorate voted against travel and information respectively even though all the political parties supported these referendums.

Given that the "yes" votes on travel and information in effect changed the law to what it was before 1983, it is interesting to compare the debates in 1983 and 1992. The campaign in 1983 was conducted mainly in terms of making a gesture towards safeguarding the laws against abortion in Ireland—the possibility that the amendment would be used to restrict women's rights to travel and information was not widely considered. The results on the travel and information issues indicate that a majority of Irish people were not prepared to have these rights restricted. In addition, the debate in 1983 was conducted primarily in abstract terms. The "X" case forced Irish people to confront the issue of abortion in a way that was much more personal and immediate than 1983.

The 1992 campaign also marked a change in the relationship between, and the roles played by, the Catholic church and the Fianna Fáil party. A pattern of disengagement from state affairs has been evident in the church's behaviour for some time, and it could be said that the 1992 referendums marked a further step in the de-institutionalisation of church-state relations. The Taoiseach's rebuttal of the bishops' statement, and the nature of the final position adopted by the church, suggest a role no more important than that of any other interest group in Irish society. Put simply, the church did not claim any special privilege in relation to policy formation and it was not given any. This does not necessarily translate into an increasingly liberal church, but, rather, indicates a shift on its part away from theocratic impulses to latent pluralism. The change may have been derivative more of an increasingly pluralist society which has been seeking a separation of church and state than of any internal departures within the hierarchy itself.

The transition of church-state relations is bound up with movements within the Fianna Fáil party. The referendums represented a change in the dynamic of the party's relationship with what could be described as the "politics of moral-

2. The insertion of Article 40.3.3 in 1983 had been the eighth amendment to the constitution.
3. See Emily O'Reilly, *Masterminds of the Right* (Dublin: Attic Press, 1992), pp. 138-40, for the background to the insertion of this Protocol.
4. *Dáil Debates*, 432: 959, 13 October 1992.
5. See Brian Girvin, "Social change and moral politics: the Irish constitutional referendum 1983", *Political Studies* 34:1 (1986), pp. 61-81.
6. *Irish Times*, 6 November 1992.
7. Richard Sinnott and Brendan J. Whelan, "Neither the conservatives nor the liberals can claim victory", *Irish Times*, 7 December 1992, p. 6.
8. Sinnott and Whelan, "Neither the conservatives nor the liberals can claim victory".
9. Sinnott and Whelan, "Neither the conservatives nor the liberals can claim victory".
10. *Irish Times*, 13 November 1992.
11. R. Darcy and Michael Laver, "Referendum dynamics and the Irish divorce amendment", *Public Opinion Quarterly* 54:1 (1990), pp. 1-20.
12. Darcy and Laver. "Referendum dynamics and the Irish divorce amendment", p. 17.
13. See Madeleine Reid, "Abortion law in Ireland after the Maastricht referendum", pp. 25-39 in Smyth (ed.), *The Abortion Papers* for a discussion of the legal issues involved.
14. O'Reilly, *Masterminds of the Right*.
15. Some individuals who were prominent in the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign in 1983 urged people to vote "yes", either because they accepted the government's argument that the wording would not allow abortion or because they felt that this was the best wording they could obtain.

8. The Seanad Elections

John Coakley

In general, elections to second chambers of parliament attract little public attention. There are several reasons for this. First, the political importance of the second chamber may be clearly subordinate to that of the first chamber; this is the case in Ireland and in certain other countries that follow the Westminster constitutional model. Second, the selection of the second chamber may involve the public scarcely at all. It may be based predominantly on indirect election, for example by local councillors as in Ireland and France, on nomination as in Canada, or on the hereditary principle as in the United Kingdom. Countries such as Italy, the United States and Australia, where the senates are directly elected by the people, are very much the exception. Third, in most cases there is no single "election day" on which, in circumstances of high political excitement, the composition of the whole second chamber is determined. Thus, in Canada and the United Kingdom renewal of the second chamber is gradual; in Australia and the United States only a portion of the senate is elected at the direct elections; and in other countries, including Ireland, the process of selecting a senate is one that extends over several stages.

The timetable of the most recent election to Seanad Éireann illustrates the degree to which the process is drawn out over several weeks. The constitution specifies that "a general election for Seanad Éireann shall take place not later than ninety days after a dissolution of Dáil Éireann" (Article 18.8). This election, however, affects only 49 of the Seanad's 60 members: six elected by the country's two long-established universities and 43 elected from five so-called vocational panels, described below. The schedule set for the most recent election was thus determined by the date of the dissolution of the Dáil, which took place on 5 November 1992. The panels of candidates were duly completed and were published on 8 January 1993 and ballot papers for these and for the two university constituencies were distributed later in January, with the requirement in each case that they be sent back to the returning officers by mail.¹ The counting of votes began on 1 February and concluded three days later. Finally, the remaining 11 senators were nominated by the Taoiseach on 10 February, more than three months after the dissolution of the Dáil.

This chapter will give an overview of the 1993 Seanad elections, looking in turn at its three main components: the vocational panels, the university constituencies and the Taoiseach's nominees. Earlier studies of Irish senate elections have looked in some detail at aspects that change relatively little over time.² In the present chapter, discussion of these aspects will be bypassed and the focus will instead be on the 1993 elections in historical perspective.

THE PANEL ELECTIONS

Since they account for 72 per cent of the Seanad's membership, the 43 "panel" members make up its most important component. It was the original intention of

the 1937 constitution that these members would represent so-called "vocational" interests. This approach derived from Catholic social teaching, and more specifically from the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pope Pius XI (1931). This had stressed, as an alternative to class conflict, an institutionalisation of sectoral divisions based essentially on groupings of occupations and of other major social interests. As the encyclical put it:³

True and genuine social order demands that the various members of a society be joined together by some firm bond. Such a bond of union is provided both by the production of goods or the rendering of services in which employers and employees of one and the same vocational group collaborate; and by the common good which all such groups should unite to promote, each in its own sphere, with friendly harmony.

Experimentation with vocational representation at the time that the constitution was drawn up was most developed in Italy and Portugal, but the 1937 constitution was rather half-hearted in following the lead of these countries. It identified five groups of "interests and services" that were to be represented in the second chamber, each by a minimum of five and a maximum of 11 senators: (1) national language and culture, literature, art, education and other professional interests; (2) agriculture and allied interests, and fisheries; (3) organised and unorganised labour; (4) industry and commerce, including banking, finance, accountancy, engineering and architecture, and (5) public administration and social services, including voluntary social activities. However, the constitution merely stipulated that those elected under these headings were to have "knowledge and practical experience" of the sector with which they were associated; it was silent on the manner of election, which was left to ordinary legislation.

The Seanad Electoral (Panel Members) Act, 1937, which sought to give flesh to these provisions, introduced some features that have persisted to the present. First, it fixed the number of members allocated to each panel at the figure reported in Table 8.6. Second, it provided for an extremely complicated system of candidate nomination that distinguished between (1) a subpanel of candidates proposed by special "nominating bodies" authorised to put forward names and (2) a subpanel of candidates proposed by parliamentarians. Third, it provided for an electorate to consist of a mixture of parliamentarians and local councillors. Early difficulties with the implementation of the act led to minor changes in the system of nomination and to major changes in the system of election; most of these were given effect by the Seanad Electoral (Panel Members) Act, 1947.

The biggest problem with the original system of election was that the electoral quota (the number of votes needed for election) was so low that it encouraged electoral abuses and there were allegations of bribery and vote-buying.⁴ All 43 panel seats were to be filled as if they were part of a single constituency, and the electorate was relatively low (it consisted of newly-elected members of the Dáil and seven representatives from each county and county borough council). In the first Seanad election in 1938, for instance, the electorate came to 354 persons, of whom 330 voted.⁵ This meant that the electoral quota amounted to a little over eight votes. The 1947 act provided, however, for five separate elections, one for each panel, and extended the electorate to include all members of county and county borough councils, as well as outgoing senators. In the 1993 election this amounted to 965 electors, of whom 961 voted, and the lowest quotas (on the 11-

member Agricultural and Labour panels) amounted to the equivalent of 80 votes. Although, as before 1947, ballot papers are forwarded to electors and returned by them by registered mail, the opportunities for corrupt practices have been greatly reduced, but not altogether eliminated, by this means.

Panels and subpanels

The first stage in the 1993 election consisted of the completion of the panels of candidates. The election law specifies that a minimum number of candidates must be nominated to each of the two subpanels into which each panel is divided: a "Nominating Bodies" subpanel and an "Oireachtas" subpanel.

The list of bodies authorised by the Seanad Returning Officer (the Clerk of the Seanad) to make nominations is published each March, and the nominating bodies eligible to propose candidates for the 1993 election showed little change from previous years.⁶ The numbers of nominating bodies and of candidates that they nominated are listed in Table 8.1. On three panels, each body was entitled to make a single nomination. On the Cultural and Educational panel, all but nine

Table 8.1: Nominations by panel and subpanel, 1993

Panel	Nominating Bodies Subpanel		Oireachtas Subpanel	Total candidates
	No. of Bodies	No. of Candidates	No. of candidates	
Culture and Education	27	18	5	23
Agriculture	10	17	9	26
Labour	2	14	11	25
Industry and Commerce	35	19	8	27
Administrative	9	9	8	17
Total	83	77	41	118

of the 27 bodies did so. The bodies themselves spanned a wide range, including, for example, the Irish Georgian Society, the Irish Dental Association and the Gaelic League. The position was similar on the Industrial and Commercial panel, where 19 of the 35 bodies nominated a candidate. The bodies spanned a similarly wide range, including the Confederation of Irish Industry, the Irish Hotels Federation and the Irish Road Haulage Association. On the Administrative panel, all nine bodies (which included ones as diverse as the Irish County Councils General Council, the Central Remedial Clinic and the Irish Kidney Association) put forward candidates. On the Agricultural panel the number of bodies was also small (ten), but as the number of senators to be elected was larger each was entitled to two nominations; all bodies except the Royal Dublin Society exercised this right, though one nominated a single candidate only. Finally, on the Labour panel there were only two bodies, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Irish Conference of Professional and Service Associations; each was entitled to make seven nominations, and did so.

The remaining candidates, for the Oireachtas subpanels, were nominated by Dáil deputies and senators, each of whom was entitled to take part in a single

9. The Formation of the Partnership Government

Brian Farrell

In a particular sense the 1992 election was a watershed in Irish government formation: for the first time, a major party in power continued in office after a general election but with a new coalition partner. In other ways, the governmental outcome confirmed a trend that had been evident for some time. Since 1973, there has been a change in the partisan composition of government after every general election. Since 1977, there has not been a majority single party government. Since 1981 every government formation (except 1987) has required negotiation after polling was completed and that negotiation has become progressively more problematic. With the exception of the very short lived Haughey administration of 1982 (sustained in office by independent deputy Gregory and the Workers' Party) and the minority Haughey administration 1987-89 (essentially maintained in office by a broad consensus on fiscal and economic policy with the main opposition parties), coalition has been the normal form of government since 1981. All of this is in marked contrast to Irish government formation in earlier years.

THE END OF THE ESTABLISHED TRADITION OF GOVERNMENT FORMATION

Despite the troubled circumstances of its birth in a civil war, the Irish political system quickly settled into an extraordinarily stable pattern of government formations. Thus, Cumann na nGael (subsequently Fine Gael) was continuously in office 1922-32; Fianna Fáil had two periods of 16 continuous years in power, 1932-48 and 1957-73; with the solitary exception of 1948 (when all Dáil parties and independents combined to oust Fianna Fáil) the electorate was offered a clearly identified alternative of either Fianna Fáil or a Fine Gael-Labour coalition at each election in this postwar period.

There were some obvious reasons for this stability, not least the small number of effective parties. Despite the adoption of PR-STV, which seemed designed to foster fragmentation and extreme multi-partyism, Kevin O'Higgins's prophecy that the Dáil would be composed of small groups and that there would be no large parties was not fulfilled.¹ The Treaty split produced two major catchall parties; Labour was the only other party to maintain more than a decade of continuous parliamentary representation. Typically, elections produced clearcut results. Usually a single party (since 1932 always Fianna Fáil) secured sufficient support to form a government, although it should be noted that these were frequently minority governments. Alternatively, Fine Gael and Labour combined, either before or after the election, to form a coalition, occasionally with the support of others. Nevertheless, Ireland was slow to move away from the norm of single party government. Partly this was a function of the continuing influence of British norms on Irish political culture. Partly it was a function of the success and dominance of Fianna Fáil, as well as its tendency to identify itself as a "national movement" rather than a partisan organisation. Even the parties that

helped to form coalitions were extremely reluctant to adopt the term "coalition". The earliest combinations in 1948 and 1954 called themselves "Inter-Party governments"; the next Fine Gael-Labour group deliberately adopted the term "national coalition"; even the most recent Fianna Fáil-Labour coalition in 1993, at the insistence of the Labour party, prefers the term "partnership government".

One effect of this reluctance to recognise coalition as a fully legitimate and normal form of government was to confirm the conventions and practices of the British single party model of cabinet in its original early twentieth century form. Thus the leader of the largest party was always Taoiseach (prime minister)—with the exception of the two Inter-Party governments when the Fine Gael party leader took another portfolio.² In all these coalitions, the leader of the next largest party was rewarded with the largely honorary post of Tánaiste (deputy prime minister). After some initial hiccoughs, the full conventions of collective cabinet responsibility, confidentiality and solidarity were maintained. Ministers from different parties had little difficulty bonding together; shared membership of the exclusive cabinet club seemed quickly to replace party as a basic identification. There was no development of an extensive committee system to diffuse decision making and offer other arenas for interparty disputes and cabals. In interviews with ministers (including the Taoisigh) of these earlier coalitions of 1948, 1954, 1973, the point was repeatedly made, without prompting, that there were no internal interparty tensions of any consequence between members. John A. Costello asserted flatly that neither of his cabinets ever divided on party lines; a number of ministers in the Cosgrave government commented on the extent to which divisions on controversial issues cut across party lines. While some of this evidence might be regarded as nostalgic afterglow, contemporary indications suggest it is fundamentally accurate.

In this respect, perhaps, these earlier coalition governments, like their single party counterparts, illustrate other features of the Irish system that affected government formation. Three specific features might be mentioned: the entrenched nature of the senior elite; the lack of ideological differentiation; executive domination of the Dáil.

Recent developments have effected important changes in each of these established features of the Irish political system. Instead of three effective political parties in the Dáil, there are now five. Partly as a result, there is a more evident ideological span that imposes strains on the two major catchall parties. It may well be that one of these parties will have to move away from the centre towards one or other end of the spectrum in order to establish its position more clearly in the electoral market and secure effective transfers. What is certainly evident from the formation of the 1993 government is the extent to which the Labour negotiators were conscious of the need to stake a claim on the left and the willingness of Fianna Fáil to offer a coalition package with a policy emphasis significantly different from that of its deal with the PDs in 1989.

NEGOTIATING THE PARTNERSHIP GOVERNMENT, 1992-93³

Superficially, the choice after the 1992 election initially appeared limited. Reynolds had again sought an overall majority for Fianna Fáil. It had been denied. Given his record, and the virtual impossibility of Fianna Fáil agreeing to

10. Fianna Fáil, Labour and the Irish Party System

Peter Mair

WAS 1992 EXCEPTIONAL?

Dramatic shifts in the electoral balance seem to cry out for equally dramatic labels. Hence this was, by all accounts, an "earthquake" election, a "cataclysmic" election, a "watershed" election. It was said that the civil war moulds had eventually been broken, that anachronisms had been swept away, and that Irish politics had finally entered the modern age.

Notwithstanding some of the hyperbole surrounding the 1992 Irish election result, however, we can as the dust settles still make out the familiar figure of Fianna Fáil, yet again in office and yet again enjoying its status as the biggest single party in the state. Fine Gael is still discernible, retaining its somewhat battered position as the second biggest party. And, for all the doubling of the Labour vote, we still see the party in its familiar third-placed position. Support for all three "traditional" parties together accounted for some 83 per cent of the vote, which is actually ten per cent more than at the beginning of the postwar period, in 1948.

Moreover, when we look at the vote which does not go to these three parties, we have to search quite hard to find anything of substance. The combined vote of the Workers' Party and the Democratic Left, which before their split had sought to break traditional moulds by means of a challenge from the left, reached only 3.5 per cent, the worst result for this party since November 1982. The Progressive Democrats, who had mounted a similar challenge from the right, polled just 4.7 per cent, their worst result ever and less than half of what they won on their first electoral outing in 1987. The Greens, apparent harbingers of "new politics" throughout western Europe, remained stuck at less than two per cent.

Even Labour's undoubted success should not be exaggerated. To be sure, the party's share of the vote was well in excess of that reached at any time since the exceptional "pact election" of 1922. It was double that achieved in 1989 and more than three times the level of support reached in 1987. This was clearly an unprecedented success. At the same time, at 22.8 per cent, the total vote for left wing parties in Ireland (Labour, the Workers' Party and the Democratic Left combined) remains substantially below that of the combined left in almost every other European country.

Between 1945 and 1990, for example, across the 199 elections which took place in 17 different western European countries (excluding Ireland), the left in these various countries failed on only seven occasions to record a better result than this new Irish total. Six of these cases were in Greece during the fragile democratic period between 1950 and 1964, when the various parties of the left managed to win an average of just less than 12 per cent of the vote. The only remaining occasion was in Switzerland, in 1987, when the various left-wing parties finally slipped below 20 per cent. Indeed, across western Europe as a whole in the 1980s, average support for the left exceeded 30 per cent, well above the

new Irish figure. It even reached levels of 50 per cent or more in countries such as Spain (51.1 per cent), Sweden (50.1 per cent) and the now transformed Greece (55.5 per cent). Labour may well have doubled its vote in Ireland in 1992, but support for the Irish left as a whole remains close to the bottom of the western European league. That said, it is now higher than in Switzerland.

How volatile was the electorate in 1992?

Despite popular perceptions of a great electoral upheaval, 1992 was also not the most volatile of Irish post-war elections. Net swings between the various parties were actually greater in 1948, when there was a surge of support for the short-lived Clann na Poblachta. The flow of votes between parties was also greater in 1951, when voters once again returned in large numbers to the traditional parties. And it was greater in 1987, when the Progressive Democrats recorded their first and best result. Nor was the overall swing in 1992 very dramatic by comparative standards. Of the 213 elections held in western Europe between 1945 and 1990 (including those in Ireland), almost one in four (23 per cent) experienced levels of voter volatility equal to or greater than that recorded in Ireland in 1992.

The measure of electoral volatility used here is a simple index which adds up the net percentage gains of all winning parties from one election to the next. This gives an index of electoral instability (total net volatility) running from zero, when all parties poll exactly the same share of the vote from one election to the next, to 100, when all existing parties lose all their votes and are replaced by new parties.¹ In Ireland in 1992, for example, total net volatility was just 12.2 per cent, which is equivalent to the combined gains of Labour (+9.8), Sinn Féin (+0.2) and the various independent candidates (+2.2). It is also, of course, equal to the combined losses of Fianna Fáil (-5.0), Fine Gael (-4.8), the Progressive Democrats (-0.8), the Workers' Party and Democratic Left (-1.5), and the Greens (-0.1). More generally, and taking all elections since 1945, the average level of volatility from one election to the next in postwar Ireland has been 8.7 per cent, as against a slightly higher figure of 9.4 per cent for all 213 elections in western Europe between 1945 and 1990 (see the first column of Table 10.1).

This is not, of course, the whole story. In other respects, Ireland's 1992 election can indeed be singled out as marking an exceptional change. More precisely, while the overall shift in votes was not exceptionally high by postwar standards, the manner in which these votes shifted was quite unprecedented, with an overall swing between left and right of some 8.3 per cent. This figure is calculated in a manner similar to that for total net volatility. Rather than summing the net gains of all winning parties, the parties are aggregated into a "left" block (Labour, the Workers' Party and the Democratic Left), and a "non-left" block (all other parties and independents). This new index then measures the overall net gain (or loss) of each block.² Between 1989 and 1992, for example, support for the left increased from 14.5 per cent to 22.8 per cent, making this index of left-right volatility 8.3 per cent. As noted, this is substantially higher than that reached at any other postwar Irish election, being almost double the next highest figure of 4.5 per cent, which was reached in 1989 (see Table 10.1, column 2).

Indeed it is worth emphasising that there has been a steady increase in the share of the vote shifting between left and right throughout the 1980s (sometimes favouring the right, most recently favouring the left). This shift increased

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HOW IRELAND VOTED 1992

Irish voters gave the traditional parties a short sharp shock in 1992. Both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael lost votes, sinking to historic depths of popular support. In contrast Labour, building on Mary Robinson's success in the Presidential election, scaled historic heights. Yet, despite much talk of a "Rainbow Coalition" of Fianna Fáil's main opponents, Fianna Fáil managed to stay in government, with Labour as its new coalition partner.

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