



Garda probe woman's claim of Dublin abortion

GARDAI are investigating claims by a woman that she had an abortion carried out at a Dublin-based clinic.

The woman alleges the abortion was carried out two years ago with her consent but led to medical complications.

Sources last night confirmed to the *Irish Independent* that a complaint had been made to gardai and said an investigation was already under way.

A senior member of staff at the clinic where the operation was alleg-

edly carried out, has already been questioned by gardai and a file is expected to be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

It is understood the woman claims she went to the clinic in 1995 where she alleges she was offered a choice of referral to an abortion clinic in the UK or an abortion in Dublin.

She claimed the £120 operation went ahead in the Dublin clinic with her consent but caused further medical problems.

She attended another doctor because of these additional problems

By **ELISH O'REGAN**
and **KEVIN MACDERMOT**

and it is understood the second physician has made a statement to the gardai, claiming the operation was carried out in a manner which damaged her health.

When interviewed, staff at the clinic told investigating gardai they could not remember the name of the patient claiming to have been operated on.

Legal advice was sought by the

senior employee involved and the matter is now believed to be in the hands of the clinic's solicitors.

The allegations come in a week when new figures showed the number of women travelling to the UK for abortions is continuing to rise.

Over two and a half thousand women had abortions in British clinics during the first six months of 1996 according to the latest figures.

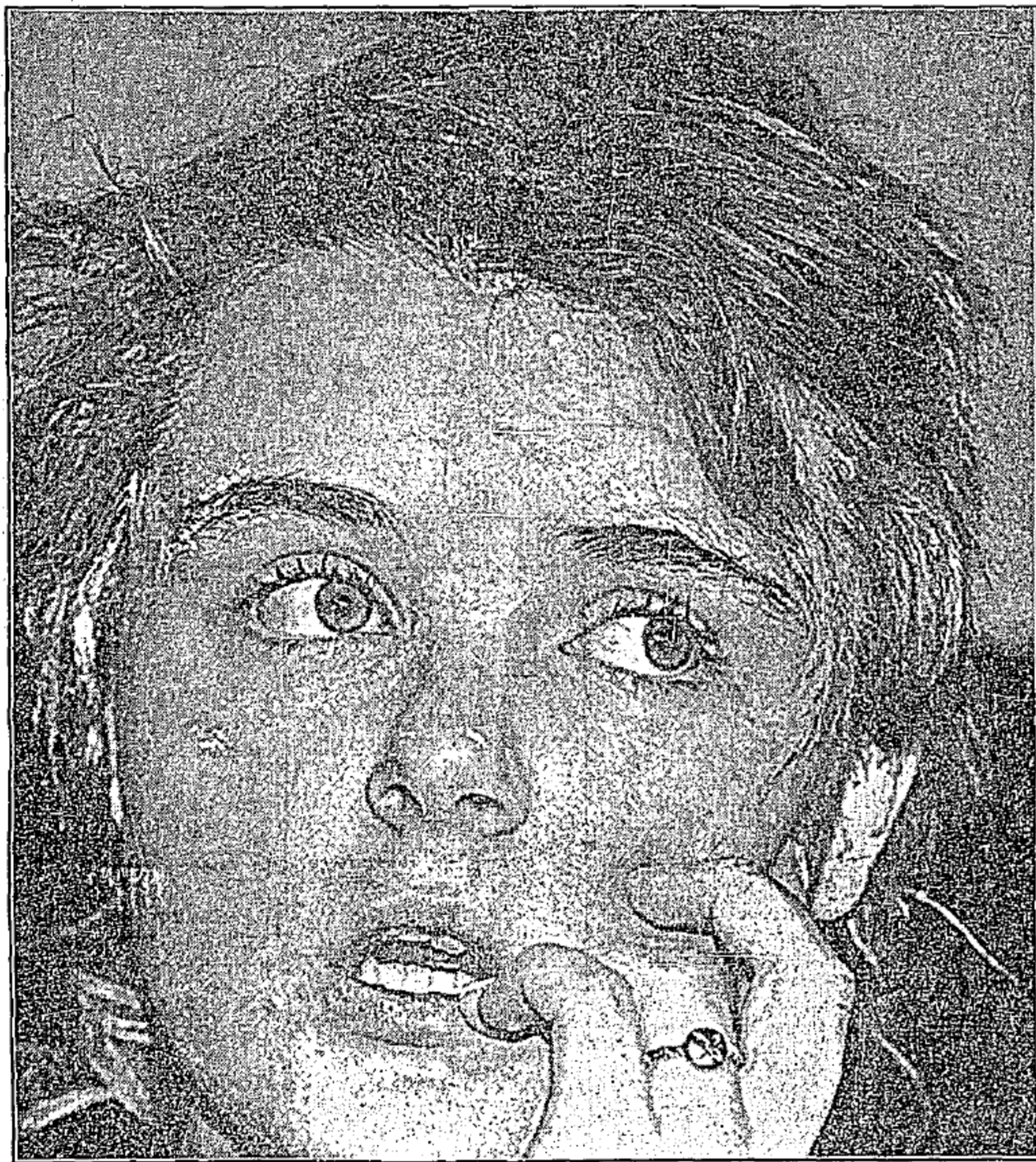
Following the highly controversial X-case the Supreme Court here found that an abortion is legal in certain limited circumstances, if there is a

danger to the life of the mother.

Health Minister Michael Noonan also introduced legislation effective from late 1995 which allowed for women in crisis pregnancies to receive non-directive counselling on all options open to them, including abortion.

The Minister also made it legal for these women to be given the names and addresses of abortion clinics abroad and gave the green light for advertisements from agencies such as the Marie Stopes clinic to appear in newspapers and magazines.

And the IRA calls this justice . . .



● Face of fear . . . 16-year-old Judith Boylan from Armagh recovering yesterday after being attacked by two men claiming to be from the IRA. They beat her, cut her hair and then poured paint over her head. Report: Page Nine

First day dispute to delay divorces

By **STEPHEN O'BRIEN**, **GENE McKENNA** and **BAIRBE POWER**
DIVORCE got off to a disastrous start yesterday when first applicants had their cases put on hold due to a shortage of trained staff.

And Government backbencher Alan Shatter, a leading family law expert, predicted the system will be gridlocked by this time next year unless new measures to deal with cases are urgently implemented.

Divorce applications were yesterday "accepted" but not processed by Circuit Court staff as a civil service union sought talks on training and recruitment.

The Civil and Public Service Union (CPSU) insisted members were not taking industrial action or working to rule.

They simply had not been trained in implementing divorce legislation for the first time in already over-worked family law courts.

Union officers will meet Dept of Justice officials today to seek training and recruitment for clerical officers to handle the increased workload.

Yesterday, lawyers trying to process the first stage of divorce proceedings were told applications would be date-stamped but documents would not be registered because of trained staff shortage.

FRUSTRATING

Dublin solicitor Paul O'Shea tried to submit a number of applications. He explained: "In the normal course of events, you would hand in the documents and they would give you a record number and issue the summonses which you could serve."

When he arrived, the family law court office at Aras Uí Dhalaiigh in Dublin at 10.15am, he was told staff would only date stamp the documents

"But that's no use," he said. "I was told staff would not issue the proceedings. A Civil Bill cannot be served until a number is issued."

Dublin County Registrar Michael Quinlan said he was notified on Monday about the potential difficulties and informed the Department of Justice. He did not hear back from them.

Mr Quinlan said: "I have told staff to accept the papers but not to issue the summonses. Hopefully the matter will be sorted out quickly."

The CPSU are adopting a similar position countrywide. Senior officer Ursula Nolan said: "Normally they would help people but they are not in a position to do anything because it is new legislation and they don't know at this stage what to do."

Meanwhile Equality and Law Reform Minister Mervyn Taylor hit back at people who he said were "playing Cassandra and predicting doom" by implying there would be deluges of divorce applications and breakdown of the judicial system as we know it.

"I don't accept their prophecies of doom," he said, adding that he was confident the system put in place would be able to cope with the demand for divorce.

More than 1,000 people had applied to legal aid centres for help with their divorce costs.



● Divorce is final, but children and property are forever. Analysis on the difficulties ahead: Page Eight

INSIDE

Tops for Property

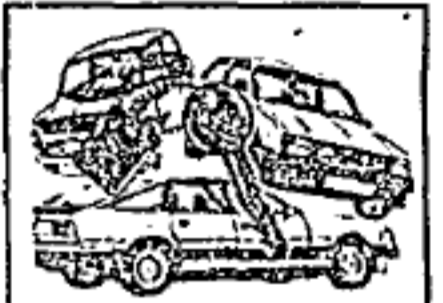


In your colour *Independent Property* supplement today: Queuing for a livingroom — the determined house hunters who stood in line for three days (see also Page Eight of main paper) . . . the £700,000 Foxrock home . . . 70pc jump in new home registrations so far this year . . . Government lashed on stamp duty . . . First landlords to be taken to court under Housing Act . . . Greystones Marina postponed for another year . . . plus new and mature homes to view this weekend.

£100,000 DREAM HOME

Also in today's *Property Supplement*, your chance to win the home of your dreams worth £100,000 and located anywhere in Ireland. All the details, Page 21.

The paper for cars



In the section that's motoring . . . on-the-spot speeding fines hit 300 a week; designs on the future and the past; plus three test drives. All and much more in your *Motoring* pull-out today.

The top Dubliner

He is a man who cares about our teenagers, who tries to help them avoid the pitfalls of violence and drugs. He is our *Dubliner of the Year*. Find out who he is on Page 14

THE '97 BMW DIESEL RANGE

GET INTIMATE WITH THE ULTIMATE



Supremely powerful, smooth and economical. Talk to your local dealer about the BMW range of turbo diesels. Available in Compact, 3 Series Saloon and Touring models in 4 and 6 cylinder turbo diesels.

THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE



Motor Import Ltd, BMW House, Naas Rd., D. 12 Phone 01-4508044

Dunne 'set to release £1.1m key document'

KEY players in the "payments to politicians" controversy will be directed next week to produce relevant documents to the tribunal of inquiry, writes *Brian Dowling*.

This comes amid indications that businessman Ben Dunne is prepared to hand over the sworn affidavit that gave rise to reports of a £1.1m payment to a former senior Fianna Fail figure.

However, there are no details of any such payment in the document, which shows instead that a sum of £700,000 to £800,000 was paid out.

The intended beneficiary of this money is not named, although Mr Dunne is said to know his or her identity. Sources insisted there was nothing in the document to indicate the payment went to

a prominent politician.

Meanwhile, Mr Justice Brian McCracken will begin to gather relevant documents for the tribunal in earnest on Wednesday when orders for the discovery of documents will be made.

Apart from Mr Dunne's affidavit, the judge will also seek the Price Waterhouse report and other company records.

It is expected the tribunal will hold a public session on Wednesday although there are indications that if all parties consent to the orders this may not prove necessary.

Legal advisers to Dunnes Stores, its director and also to Ben Dunne have already been closely examining the terms of reference for the tribunal.

Swim coach facing 90 charges

A SWIMMING coach is to go on trial charged with 90 sexual offences against young girls, 21 years after the first offence allegedly took place.

Mr Justice Kelly in the High Court yesterday rejected the man's argument that too much time had elapsed between the alleged offences and his being charged.

The offences, involving nine girls aged 11 to 15, are alleged to have taken place between 1976 and 1992 — the bulk of them between 1976 and 1984 — when the man was attached to a school in connection with swim-

ming coaching.

The man was charged with the offences on July 10, 1995. In the High Court, he sought an order of prohibition to stop the DPP proceeding, saying he would not get a fair trial due to the period of time between the alleged offences taking place and his being charged.

Mr Justice Kelly said the allegations were of systematic sexual abuse of young girls between those years. The man said he did not commit any of the offences and if he did come to trial, he would be pleading not guilty.

The man said the alleged offences took place so long ago that he could not hope to find witnesses and account for every hour of every day during the period of the alleged offences.

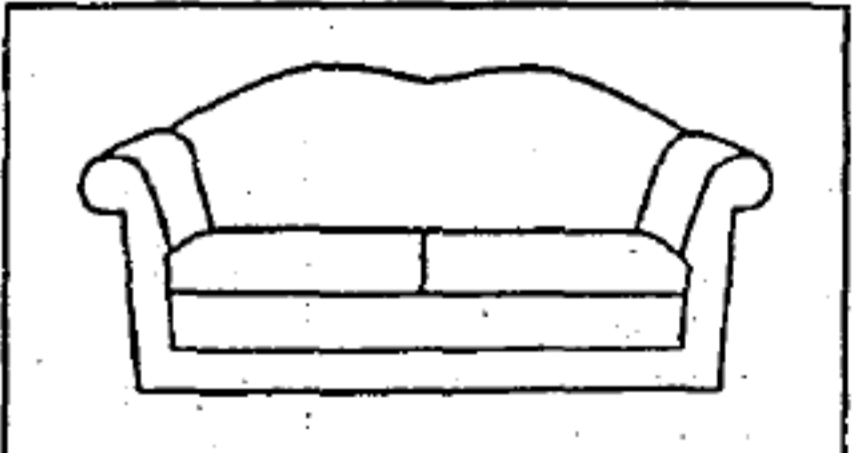
The judge said the evidence did not satisfy him that any actual or particular prejudice had been established by the man which would render the trial unfair.

There were significant periods of time between the alleged offences and the charge.

Continued on Page Eight

Major suffers whitewash in Wirral — Page 32

FURNITURE EXHIBITION



30% Bigger

And Now 3 Halls!

Main Hall R.D.S Dublin

9-12 March '97

TRADE ONLY

The only show to visit for all that's new in furniture, beds, pictures, mirrors, ceramics, fabrics, rugs, lighting, gifts, bric-a-brac.

Sunday	11am - 7pm
Monday	11am - 7pm
Tuesday	11am - 7pm
Wednesday	11am - 6pm

Organisers:

IRISH SERVICES LTD

For Trade tickets phone: (01) 288 8821

Fax: (01) 288 3127