

DANGERS AND POSSIBILITIES OF IRISH TELEVISION

Outlined By Eamonn Andrews

Full Text Of Gormanston Lecture

The dangers and possibilities that lie ahead of Irish television were outlined by Mr. Eamonn Andrews, chairman of the Irish Television Authority, when he delivered the opening lecture at the ninth annual Summer School of the Social Study Conference in the Franciscan College, Gormanston. The theme of the deliberations was "The Challenge of Television."

Mr. Andrews said:—All this week my best friends have been telling me. They've told me to be careful. They've told me to be courageous. They've told me to tell you the usual facts. And they've told me to offer you the usual bromides. So all in all I'm just as confused as I must have been in the first place to have accepted this invitation from Michael O'Flanagan.

I've looked up the usual books. I've read down many of the relevant and vital statistics. I've read Pope Pius XII's Encyclical on television and I've read Newton Minnow's address on behalf of the American Federal Communications Commission—to the annual Convention of Broadcasters. I've spoke with Bishop Fulton Sheen and I've asked my mother why she looks at Juke Box lury. In general—up to 24 hours ago—I was ready to deliver you the most comprehensive, best best-researched, most informative and most useless talk you'd ever heard on Irish television.

It was 24 hours ago I started all over again. I realised it was no use hiding behind a quotation from Pope Pius. Since you're all interested in the subject you've probably read the Encyclical, anyway. It was no use blinding you and boring you with facts you could research for yourself. I'll promise not to blind you and I'll try not to bore you.

For a long time I've recognised that one of the most dangerous things in the world for anyone in show business was to judge a baby competition. You can't win. Then a few weeks ago I judged a dog competition—and in the last ten days, having been savaged by three indignant dog owners, I now place dogs ahead of babies. But way in front of them both I place the shark-infested waters occupied by Television Authority Chairmen. So as a possible stimulus to your future discussions I thought it might be more fruitful if I told you—as I see them—the dangers and the possibilities that lie ahead of Irish television.

Let me list them for you without order of priority: Public morals, Irish language, rural communities, family life, censorship, emigration, juvenile delinquency, education and tradition. I don't know how many more there are. But given the slightest chance, television will be presented by someone somewhere either as a cure for or a cause of pride, envy, gluttony, sloth, and the chapped hands Mrs. Murphy gets from washing shirts.

ITS PURPOSE
So let me tell you right away what I think is the purpose of television in Ireland. I think it's here to reflect the smile on the face of the ordinary Irishman or woman. I think it's here to bring brightness and laughter and music into the homes of Irishmen and women. I think it's here to steal away the cares that sometimes crowd around us at the end of a day's work. I think it's here to stimulate us, and refresh us and show us something of the wonders we often miss in this exciting world of ours. I think it's here to help us if we want help, to teach us if we want teaching, to bore us if we deserve boring.

I don't think its purpose is to scratch souls down to hell or to replace the pulp with the camera, to corrupt the innocent or to force people to speak Irish who don't already have pride enough to want to know it anyway.
I'm tired of being told of the dangers of television without being told, too, of the inviting and exciting possibilities. I'm weary of people who relate the imagined effect of Irish television to other countries

and other communities that just don't have our background—a background contributed to not only by the Catholics but by large bodies of Protestants and Presbyterians, by the Jewish community and by all who have given us values and set us standards we must preserve. And I'm sceptical of people who preach how we must be protected from foreign influences as if the Irish Television Authority were composed of subversive emissaries from Peking or Moscow or Mars or somewhere. I welcome people like yourselves who are prepared to sit down and check what it's all about, and having checked, make concrete, constructive, objective proposals.

MAMMOTH UNDERTAKING
Irish television—make no mistake about it—is a mammoth undertaking. The complexities are a tangled net of light and sound, of steel and brain, of artistic endeavour and electronic magic. It's going to cost the nation a lot of money. It has already cost the nation a lot of money. But bear in mind that even two million pounds is probably less than a sixth of what for instance the B.B.C. spent on one building for its television centre without personnel or equipment or programmes.

Bear it in mind when you come to think of the kind of programmes you would like to see Irish television doing and of the numbers you would like to see it doing. Bear it in mind when you see the mistakes we are going to make—and we're certainly going to make them. Bear it in mind when you come to consider how many studios we can afford to build and how much any one studio can give to any one network.

Already we have a brilliant team of young men working on Irish television. We have a trainee school in progress that has already shown remarkable evidence of skill and enthusiasm. And we have the whole operation headed by America's second most famous Bostonian, Edward J. Roth, who has already done what so many thought was impossible—staffed over 90 per cent of Irish television with Irish people.

BEST MEN FOR JOBS
In general, what about jobs in Irish television? There are bound to be many disappointed people and we are bound to find experienced men not only to start the service but to guide the inexperienced. Some have said in criticism that to get a job you first must emigrate. Nothing could be farther from the truth; and eventual statistics will prove it. I prefer to think of what a wonderful thing it is that even in its beginnings Irish television has been able to call home some of her sons who would have lived and died and whose children would have lived and died in other distant and not so distant countries.

Also—and I should not have to say this—in all cases the best man for the job has got the job. The day has never existed in Irish television where you have to know someone, when you have to use that so abused word—"influence." There's a world of difference between a recommendation or a reference and a pressure or an influence.

It's an unpleasant subject and people don't often talk about it outside protected areas. But I'd rather mention it now because if the Authority or the Director-General or any of his administration could not run Irish television honestly and cleanly at this stage what hope would they have of giving you the service they are solemnly charged with giving you?
It doesn't mean, of course, that if

your first cousin is the best acrobat in County Kerry you shouldn't tell us about it. How else would we know? But heaven help you if he's the second best.

Despite three separate setbacks beyond our control, we still hope to get on the air before the end of this year. Certainly we will not want for trying. And although Kippure will be the first transmitter there will be no question of sitting back to see how it's going before attempting to cover the rest of the country. On the contrary, we are actively engaged in preparing provincial coverage as we are in planning the first pictures. Within one year—in indeed in some cases within far less—of Kippure going on the air the other four transmitters should all be blazing happily away.

And even in the interval we will not be giving a purely metropolitan reflection of Ireland. Our mobile video facilities will be out and about with no limit but the sea to where they'll travel.

RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMES
Many of you—particularly at this conference—will want to know what we are going to do about religion. It is not my province to talk in detail about this. I would make one point only—that, in my opinion, the best religious programmes are those that set out to do something else and that the most effective religion or television is that which comes from a climate, a thought, a background of philosophy, a reflected way of life, than from a formalised and frontal approach.

Incidentally—still bearing in mind that we cannot compare a community such as ours, which is predominantly Catholic, with one where the Catholic group represents a minority—bearing this in mind I would like to give you some facts worth your consideration.
In 1957 a special survey of the religious programme audience was carried out in the Archdiocese of New York. Without bothering you too many percentages let me tell the most startling aspect of it. The sample groups looking at different programmes varied from 30 per cent Catholic to 70 per cent Protestant, and from 64 per cent Catholic to 36 per cent Protestant. Nevertheless, when asked subsequently did they know what religion or denomination was represented, over 67 per cent said no.

Needless to say there was no way of measuring whether the religious broadcaster had got his message home to the viewers or not. No one can estimate the effect of a single programme or gauge its impact on the individual viewer. "A sermon is intended as an occasion of God's grace; so, too, by intention is any form of Catholic broadcasting." But—looking at the figures and the current standard of behaviour. The girl may come to think that sexual promiscuity is normal and smart. So does the boy—and he, further, may get the impression that brutality and toughness are the fashionable, the obligatory things. This lugubrious puritanism and hypocrisy of our race, which has long believed that you can suppress vice by refusing to discuss it. But what if that is simply true? Certainly, to that minority of parents which tries to instil a decent standard of behaviour into its offspring, television must be a constant embarrassment. So I must conclude, unwillingly, that the responsibility on the authorities is onerous and urgent to cut out the innuendoes, the brutality and the general nastiness. They know that it is wrong."

IRISH LANGUAGE
The Irish language. It's a great sadness to me that we speak with so many different voices on this subject, that so precious a heritage has been harnessed to so many baser things, that tempers and intemperance should so constantly be associated with it, that so many public men are even afraid to talk about it, so certain are they to be misunderstood by someone somewhere. And lest I in my turn be misunderstood, let me say here and now that I know at first hand how it has been harnessed to too many noble things and generous men. Let me quote President John Kennedy who recently said: "To quarrel over the past is to lose the future." The more I think of that the more I feel it applies to Ireland in general and to the Irish language in particular. So long as I am associated with Irish television I determine it will never lose the future, and if Ireland has decided that Irish is part of that future then it will be right there. Television does not hold your destiny in its huge electronic hands. You do. And only you can decide these things, and it will be the solemn but happy duty of Irish television to do your bidding.

IMMORALITY AND BRUTALITY
What about immorality, brutality, the over-frank report? Recently, Maurice Wiggan in the "Sunday Times" asked "Is TV Immoral?" Father Agnellus Andrew has sparked off the question when he said: "The responsibility for grave evil is heavy

NEED FOR GOOD TASTE AND DESIGN

PRESERVATION OF COUNTRYSIDE

RESTRAINT ON OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

So much was said and written these days about the need for good taste and design and the importance of preserving our fine buildings and countryside that a stranger might comment: "With such vigilance Ireland has little cause to worry," said Mr. Aidan O'Hanlon, Bord Fáilte, when he addressed delegates to the Muintir na Tire Rural Week in St. Patrick's College, Cavan.

The Archbishop of Cashel and Emily attended the Rural Week, and was received by Very Rev. M. Morrissey, national chairman, Muintir na Tire; Very Rev. P. Canon Gaffney, President, St. Patrick's College, and by Professor J. Lyons, vice-president, Muintir na Tire. His Grace is a former honorary recording secretary of the organisation.

The Bishop of Calabar, Most Rev. Dr. Moynagh, who is on holiday in his native County Cavan, also attended the Rural Week.

POOR RECORD
In his address Mr. O'Hanlon remarked that in Ireland while sentiments were often lofty the record of action regarding the preservation of the countryside was poor. The people who seemed to be getting most done were those who, in one way or another, despoil the face of Ireland. There was invariably no malice in their actions—their only interests were profit and convenience—but the damage they do was none the less grievous.

It was no coincidence that within the past couple of weeks, he said, distinguished spokesmen from Monaco, Israel and the U.S. had elected to show their friendship for Ireland by offering the same words of advice—"keep your country unspoilt." Time and again other visitors expressed the same thought; many of them admire longingly in Ireland what were once familiar sights in their own countries—graceful architecture and a countryside comparatively free of hoardings and badly-sited power stations and factories.

"Let us have modern buildings, offices, factories and housing schemes," he said, "and even advertising signs—but well designed and, above all, placed where they properly belong."

Too often the national interest can slip into second place in a ding-dong battle between commercial interests, Mr. O'Hanlon continued. It was over a year ago since a major appeal for a restraint on outdoor advertising was issued, but instead of diminishing these hoardings had multiplied. The classic example was the road from Dublin Airport, which was fast becoming a billboard alley.

CONTROL AWAITED
He remarked that something real and tangible and worthwhile must be achieved indisputably as a result of the farmers' own efforts. Mr. J. Lynch, Johnstown, Navan, proposing a vote of thanks, said the agricultural advisory services were doing excellent work. The farmers needed technical help and it was only through these services that they could obtain that knowledge. Co-operation with Muintir na Tire and the rural organisations was essential.

Lest anyone say they were unduly sensitive in this matter, Mr. O'Hanlon pointed-out, that recently the President of the U.S. appealed for an intensified effort to keep inter-State roads free from hoardings; in California, owners of bill-boards are given a few-years to remove them, and in Oregon a commission is selecting scenic areas in which no signs will be permitted.

"In the preservation of our countryside and fine buildings, it is better to secure the co-operation of the individual people and organisations concerned than to have to invoke coercive measures," he said. "Influential groups such as Muintir na Tire can shape the minds of others and can achieve a lot by example and peaceful persuasion."

AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTORS
Ireland had now reached a stage where they had a high concentration of graduate agricultural advisers, said Mr. Patrick Bolger, agricultural instructor, Wicklow, who gave a lecture on "The Community and the Agricultural Advisory Services" at the Rural Week.
There was greater specialisation in these services in other countries, he said, but the role of the agricultural instructor as the guide, philosopher and friend of the farmer was the best one for this country. The instructor was a general practitioner rather than a specialist.

It was not the function of the agricultural instructor merely to pass on technical information to individual farmers. The instructor was given a wider and more comprehensive term of reference. The problem on many farms was that the people made the mistake in thinking that two generations of the same family could live on the same farm at the same time.

The situation could be altered only by a change in mental outlook. The advisory services were organised to help people to help themselves and every consideration must be given to the social background. The position at present, however, was that instructors were so fully occupied with the practical requirements of farmers that they had not become too deeply involved in the social aspects of life on the land.

Mr. Bolger added that something real and tangible and worthwhile must be achieved indisputably as a result of the farmers' own efforts.

TV SYMBOL
Finally I would like to show you the new symbol for Irish television. It will be the first time it has been shown publicly and I hope you like it. I am grateful that my colleagues at Radio Eireann thought so much of this conference that they permitted me this pleasure that you should be the first people to see it. It is a new treatment on the theme of St. Brigid's Cross prepared by our

Thirty years ago...

WHEN THE SWEEPSTAKES BEGAN



The Horse-drawn Barge

Thirty years ago the horse-drawn barge was still a familiar sight on the inland waterways of Ireland. The dozing angler, stretched out in the reeds by the water's edge, often had scant warning of the danger to his rod from the silently approaching barge. The lock-keeper's children, if they had worked hard at the opening and closing of the lock gates, would be rewarded with a jaunt on the horses' back. Sometimes, when passing through a town, the man at the tiller would be subjected to much banter. Remarks, such as, "Where are you bound for, skipper?" "Bring us back a parrot" were his daily lot, but he took them in good humour and replied with appropriate witticisms.

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SNAPSHOTS

Joseph Gaynor, Reynellon, Brackliff, Clonmelon, was fined 10/- at Athboy Court last Thursday for using an untaxed car. Mr. A. J. Malone, L.L.B., solicitor, defended.

A summons at Athboy Court last Thursday against Joseph Reilly, Skeerke, Mullagh, alleging the use of an untaxed car, was adjourned for a month.
The Dogs Cap, for the supreme champion in the cattle section, was won by Mr. F. A. Crowe, Kilbracken House, Cavan, at Longford Agricultural Society's annual show last Thursday.

Garda Michael Ahern, Clontarf, Dublin, a native of Newport, Co. Tipperary, has retired after 39 years in the force. The last ten he spent at Store Street Station. He also served in Counties Cavan, Monaghan and Meath.

The cycling races took pride of place at Knockdrin sports and Paddy Flanagan (Midlands C.C.), his clubmate, P. Doyle, and J. Anderson (Bohermoon C.C.) shared the three events. There was a record entry for the sports.

District Justice D. O'Donnchadha, at Athboy Court last Thursday, adjourned for a month summonses against Patrick Lynch, O'Growney Street, Athboy, alleging the dangerous driving of a car at O'Growney Street on 2nd August and driving while drunk on the same occasion.
The marriage arranged between James Brasill, J. Merchants', Quay, Drogheda, and 159 West 228th St., New York, and Noreen McDermott, Portloman, Mullingar, and 55 Adrian Avenue, New York, will take place at St. Kevin's Church, Harrington Street, Dublin, on 6th September.

An adjournment for a month was granted at Athboy Court last Thursday in a summons against John Joseph Fahey, Moneymore, Rathmolyon, alleging that, at Ballivor on 4th August, he drove or attempted to drive a motor vehicle while drunk. Mr. A. J. Malone, L.L.B., solicitor, was for the defendant.

Darts clubs who intend participating in the Slaine Mineral Waters cup and trophies competition are reminded that the closing date for entries is near at hand. All entry forms with cash should be returned immediately. Clubs who have not applied for entry forms yet and who intend competing should write to the secretary, Boyne Darts Club, 27 Watergate Street, Navas.

James Smith, Cavan Street, Oldcastle, was fined 5/- at Athboy Court last Thursday for a no light offence.

Paying his annual visit to his relatives in Killinkere is Father Ultan McCabe, U.S.A. Father McCabe's parents were natives of Killinkere parish.

District Justice D. O'Donnchadha, at Athboy Court last Thursday, struck-out a summons against Thomas Fox, Archerstown, Delvin, alleging failure to produce a driving licence.

Alan Dillon (Clan Brugha C.C., Dublin) finished 10 lengths ahead of Con Carr to win Ballinabrackey C.C.'s 52 miles massed start cycle race in 2 hours, 20 minutes. There were thirty starters.

Mr. P. F. Finegan, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Finegan, Main St., Ballinboro', is spending a holiday at home. Mr. Finegan has been six years in America and was last home three years ago.

The feature event at Lough Owel S.C. Gala at Mullingar, the Lough Owel mile for the Coughlan Cup, was won by C. Hardy (Colmille S.C.) with a time of 20 minutes, 37 seconds.

Sister Mary Bridget, Presentation Order, Pakistan, India, is spending a three-months' holiday in her old home at Anaharny, Killinkere. Sister of Mr. Gerard Tackney, Anaharny, she has been in India for the past fifteen years.

Mr. Patrick Callaghan, c/o Sheletons, Kingscourt, escaped with slight injuries when his motor cycle collided with a horse at Meath Hill on the main Ardee-Kingscourt road. The animal, the property of Mr. Francis Martin, received two broken legs and later was destroyed.
A tractor driven by Mr. John Marron, Corles, Maglietacloone, collided with a lorry, the property of Gypsum Industries Ltd., at Drummond cross on the main Kingscourt-Carrickmacross road. Both drivers escaped uninjured but the tractor was extensively damaged.
Mrs. Margaret Burke, whose regretted death occurred in a Lanchashire hospital, was widow of Mr. John Burke, Scurlogstown, Delvin. She is survived by her sons, daughters and a sister, to whom much sympathy is extended. Following Requiem Office and High Mass in Killallon Church on Friday the funeral took place to Delvin Cemetery.

Mr. B. Daly, dental surgeon, has changed his address from Market Street to John Street, Kells.
William Dugdale, Delvin, was fined £4-10-0 at Athboy Court last Thursday in respect of an untaxed van.

The engagement is announced between Owen McGuinness, Tully House, Monaghan, and Ellen O'Reilly, formerly of Booloos, Kells.
Brian Smith, Rahoney, Athboy, was fined 10/- at the local Court last Thursday in respect of two fighting offences.

Married at the Church of the Three Patrons, Rathgar, Dublin, were: Mr. D. McDermott, Austin Friars Street, Mullingar, and Miss Ruth Morrison, Drumfin, Sligo.

The engagement is announced between Wallace, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Wilson, Lisgar, Ballinboro', and Ivy, eldest daughter of Mrs. V. Shekleton and the late Richard Shekleton, Malo House, Tierworker, Kells.

The death has taken place in the United States of Mr. Patrick Weynes, a native of Kinnegad. He was brother of Very Rev. M. Weynes, P.P., Glasdon, and of the late Mrs. M. B. Judge, N.T., The Downs.

Both vehicles were slightly damaged when an ice-cream van, driven by Mr. J. J. Martin, Carrickmacross, and a car driven by Mrs. M. Smith, St. Mary's Park, Navan, collided near Ballinboro'. None of the occupants was hurt.

Nicholas Finegan (10), son of Mr. and Mrs. John Finegan, St. Ernan's Hill, Kingscourt, was removed to the Surgical Hospital, Cavan, with injuries received when he fell from his bicycle on the Kingscourt-Ballinboro' road. He is progressing satisfactorily.

The marriage was solemnised in the Church of St. Michael and Martin, Hounslow, Middlesex, of Mr. James O'Brien, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. O'Brien, Higginstown, Athboy, and Miss Mary Beirne, S.R.N., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. Beirne, Mantua, Co. Roscommon.

The attendance at the annual Pattern Fair of Mull was not as large as usual due to bad weather. Horses were plentiful with prices much higher than in previous years. Open deck dancing, together with Irish dancing, were the main attractions and the numerous side shows were much enjoyed.

Rev. A. Trainor, Main Street, Ballinboro', has returned to Sacramento after spending a three months' holiday with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. M. Trainor, Father Trainor, who was a playing member of the local football team and won a county senior football medal with the club in 1957, has been in America for the past four years.

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art director, Richard Butterworth—retaining the centuries old line but matching all that is modern and progressive in modern Ireland.
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