

Common sense is not enough

OPSAHL, the name of a Norwegian civil rights lawyer, has become well-known in discussion of the North's (and therefore Ireland's future). His Commission has just produced an enormous and really excellent report. (Anyone who wants serious thought rather than rhetoric should spend £8.99 on a copy.)

The key points are worth re-emphasising.

1. The two communities in Northern Ireland, should enjoy "parity of esteem". As a step towards this, legislation should recognise, formally, the aspirations of the nationalist community.
2. The British government should talk to Sinn Fein/IRA. Since the former has the support of one voter in eight this makes sense and validates John Hume's stand.
3. Since the Northern Ireland state was designed with a built-in unionist majority, and since it practised vicious anti-nationalist discrimination in jobs and education, there has always been an assumption of unionist dominance. But now, even in the face of that discrimination, more than 40 p.c. of the population is Catholic, and more than half the children. So Opsahl proposes a power-sharing government in which each community should have equal power and a veto. To a Norwegian, it's obvious. Only after its



establishment should there be negotiations with the British and Irish governments. All of this "obvious" sensible stuff brings us back to the point that the unionists will not share power. And if Sir Patrick Mayhew were to persuade the British Government to establish a devolved administration with equal power for both sides and a veto, the unionists would use the veto to destroy such an arrangement.

I think the Opsahl report is magnificent and full of good sense. I think also that our Government's hopes for larger settlements are pipe dreams. What we are left with therefore is a problem to which there is no short-term solution. On the rock of Paisleyite intransigence, common sense will perish.

I SUPPOSE it is a sign of getting old that I keep contrasting the present lot of "Western" political leaders with those of past decades.

The image of the era which started with the end of World War II was one of strength — de Gaulle, Adenauer, Churchill, Truman, all people who seemed to embody their country and who ruled for long periods with a large consensus.

Now we see leaders who seem trivial, weak, expendable, fashioned for a short life with a clear "sell-by" date. Everywhere politicians are disliked, distrusted, and ineffectual.

A great deal of political speculation always centres on who gets what. Who is going to succeed John Major or Bill Clinton (or John Bruton)? But underneath these trivial changes deeper ones are at work.

One such concerns the failure of policies. The end of the Cold War was to release a huge peace dividend, which could be used to solve unemployment and Third World problems. It hasn't happened.

The more we can do technically and scientifically, the less we seem able to do politically and socially. Justice and equality recede, unemployment rises inexorably, and old and new nationalisms are tearing Europe apart.



THE EDGE: Zooropa role

Zooropa album's leading Edge

THE Edge is the featured vocalist on the debut single from the new U2 Zooropa album.

The track, Numb, which will be released on Monday, is a song which was held over from the Achtung Baby sessions. But fans won't be able to buy it in the shops because initially the track is being supplied only to radio DJs.

The album is scheduled for release on July 5. Originally intended as a mini-al-

bum, the new release grew to include 11 tracks as the sessions progressed.

Zooropa was recorded in Dublin prior to the band's current tour.

As the number of songs for inclusion on the release grew, the band were forced to fly home after European gigs to complete the recordings.

One track, In Cold Blood, which is deemed to be controversial, has been withdrawn from the album.

Cranberries get a taste of the States



THE CRANBERRIES: supporting The The on US tour

LIMERICK band The Cranberries began a tour of the US last night in Denver.

This is the band's second visit to the States. When the band filmed the video for their single, Linger, there earlier in the year, Michael Stipe of R.E.M. attended the session.

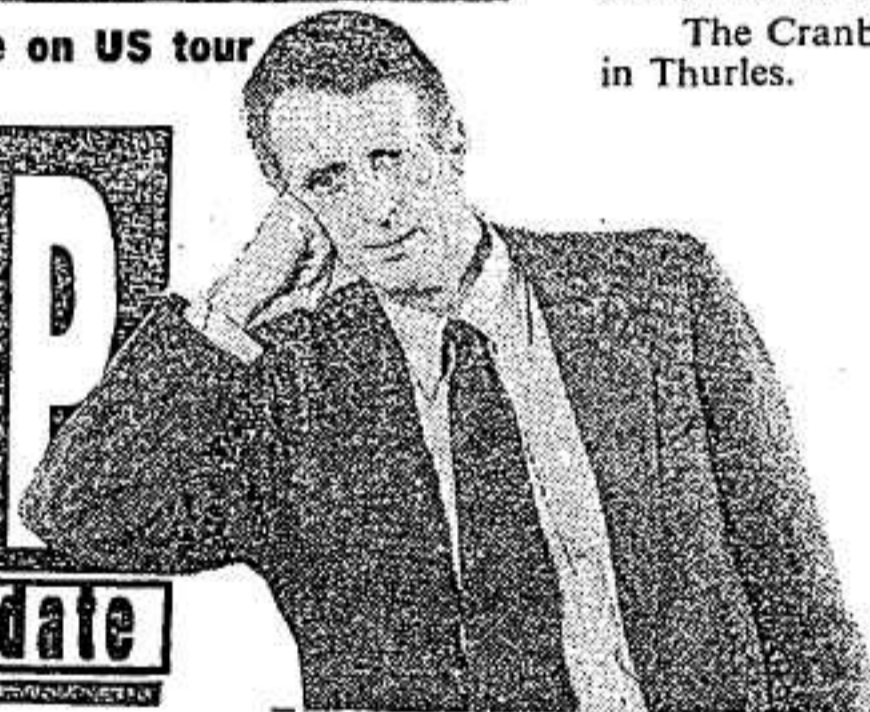
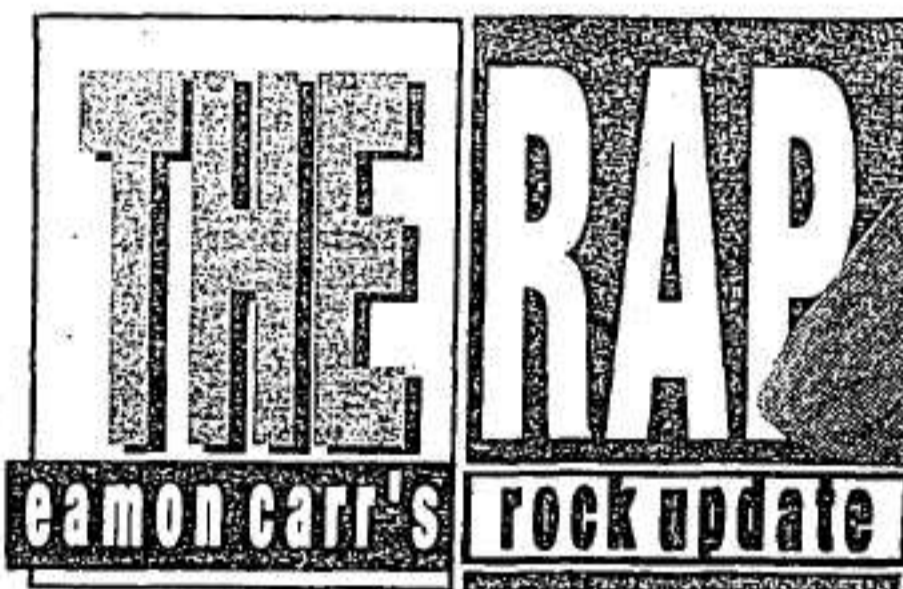
Now The Cranberries are supporting Matt Johnson's group The The on a tour which takes in major venues on both coasts.

The album, Everybody Else Is Doing It So Why Can't We has been receiving positive airplay since its release early last month.

Now the group have recorded four tracks for their next album with producer Stephen Street.

It's been a busy year for the band. Following their support to Mike Oldfield at the Albert Hall, the band toured 10 European countries with Hothouse Flowers.

The Cranberries' next Irish date will be at the Feile in Thurles.



Win! The finest sounds of rock's sisters

WOMAN To Woman is a 20-track compilation of the very best of female singer/songwriters.

Annie Lennox, Carly Simon, Tasmin Archer, and Shakespear's Sister are just four of the acts featured on this superior collection.

In conjunction with Polygram, I've got SIX Woman To Woman CDs to give away.

There's over 77 minutes of great music on this album which you can win by answering the question below.

Get your answer on a postcard, or back of a sealed envelope, to Woman To Woman Competition, The Rap, Evening Herald, 90 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1. Entries should arrive not later than Monday June 21. The first six correct answers out of the hat will win.

QUESTION: Stevie Nicks, whose Rooms Of Fire is on this album, is associated with which international supergroup?



SO much for the illness excuse that the Red Hot Chili Peppers gave for cancelling their European tour, including Sunstroke at Dalymount, as they sack guitarist Arik Marshall... Currently in the charts with their Face The Strange EP, Therapy? have received a complimentary package of Nintendo gear from the manufacturers... Superhate are

due home from the States this week to begin work on a new demo tape despite guitarist Mark being involved in a minor car accident... Dub-style agit-poppers Radical Dance Faction have turned down several companies to sign with new indie Irish label AX-S Records and will be releasing a single later this month to coincide with their tour supporting Rebel MC... Young Irishman Tom O'Brien has directed a video for Hinterland's upcoming single, Resurrect.



ANNIE LENNOX: on the Woman To Woman album

Irish Top-20 Albums

This Week	Last Week	Album	Artist
1	-	The Holy Ground	Mary Black
2	8	Originals	Various
3	1	A Woman's Heart	Various
4	4	Automatic For The People	R.E.M.
5	5	Too Long In Exile	Van Morrison
6	9	Hits 93 Vol. 2	Various
7	2	Now! 24	Various
8	6	Other Voices Other Rooms	Nanci Griffith
9	3	No Limits	2 Unlimited
10	-	Junk Puppets	An Emotional Fish
11	12	Energy Rush Phase 4	Various
12	7	Dream Harder	Waterboys
13	10	Mary Black The Collection	Mary Black
14	12	No Nonsense	Don Baker
15	14	The Bodyguard	Original Soundtrack
16	15	A Year In The Life	Christie Hennessy
17	18	Harvest Moon	Nail Young
18	-	Gold - Greatest Hits	Abba
19	20	Sharon Shannon	Sharon Shannon
20	16	Keep The Faith	Bon Jovi

Chart courtesy IFPI

Catch Eamon Carr's Rock Update in stereo on his 6 O'Clock Report, Sundays, 6-7pm