



‘Donal Nevin, 1924-2012: A Century of Achievement’

13 February 2024

Nevin Economic Research Institute

Royal Irish Academy

**Francis Devine,
Musicians’ Union of Ireland**

**Donal Nevin,
1924-2012**



Donal Nevin

my thanks to

Shay Cody, President, ILHS

**Tom McDonnell, Paul Mac Flynn &
Louisa O'Brien, NERI**

Bill Attley Peter Cassells

Patricia King Jack McGinley

Dan Murphy Jack O'Connor

Connal Parr Owen Reidy

John P. Swift

and particularly to

Anne Nevin

Donal Nevin

life in Limerick

Civil Servant in Dublin

Labour Party

Congress

Internationalist

Labour historian

assessment

Donal Nevin

born 20 January 1924 at 8 Cornmarket Row, Limerick

**second youngest of eight children of
Thomas, self-employed cabinetmaker, and Alice**

childhood 'without affluence' but 'sufficient and happy'





CORNMARKET ROW
RAE AN MHARGAIDH ARBHAIR

THE MILK MARKET

Donal Nevin

attended Sexton Street CBS
fixture in the Carnegie Library

six Leaving Cert Honours
First Prize in Oireachtas essay competition

1941, Clerical Officer Statistics Branch, Department of
Industry & Commerce

active in the Civil Service Clerical Association



Donal Nevin

when first in Dublin during the Emergency

serves in the LDF (Local Defence Force)

and saves hay on a farm in Meath





Donal Nevin

Labour Party

**Honorary Parliamentary Officer
Chair, Dublin Regional Council, 1955**

drafted speeches for Young Jim Larkin

1957 Workers' Union of Ireland

No 15 Clerical Branch

effectively the WUI Research Department



Welcome Home rally for release of Unemployed leaders, College Green, 1953

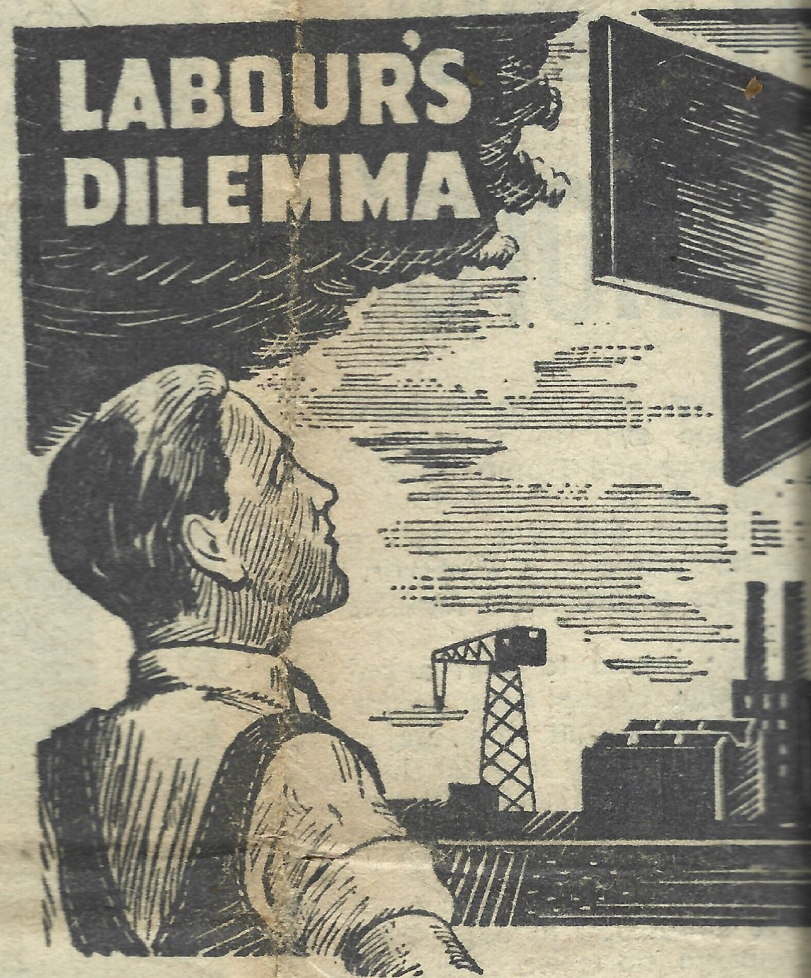
★ LAST ARTICLE IN THE SERIES:

POLITICS—AND FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

PART of the reason for the relatively weak position of the Labour Party in Irish politics over the last thirty years

By:— DONALD NEVIN

have contributed towards this industrial area—a natural base the persistence of the antagonis







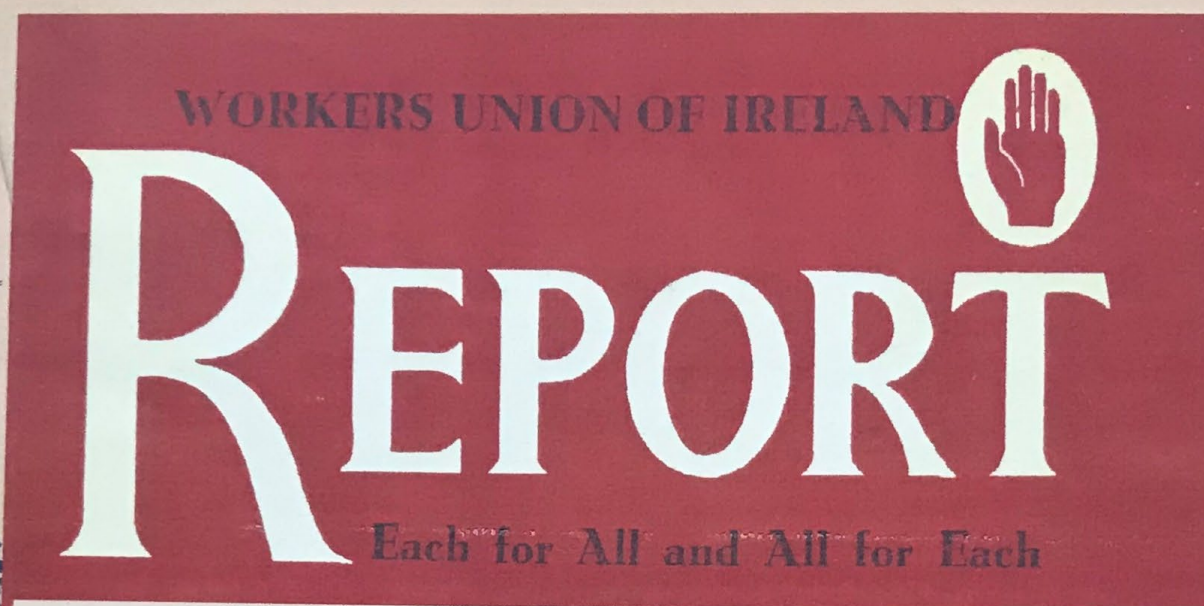
Donal Nevin

WUI journals – *Report & Bulletin*

close to Young Jim Larkin

Frank Cluskey

poverty & social welfare



**‘A Trade Union Journal,
First, Last & Always’:
the Workers’ Union of
Ireland *Report*,
1952-1954**

edited by
Francis Devine



Catherine Bulbulia (FG), Niall Andrews (FF), Donal Nevin, Reg September (ANC), John Hume (SDLP), Ruairí Quinn (Labour), Tomás MacGiolla (WP) & Kader Asmal (IAAM) celebrate ANC 75th Anniversary, 1987



Protest against
Springboks tour,
1970





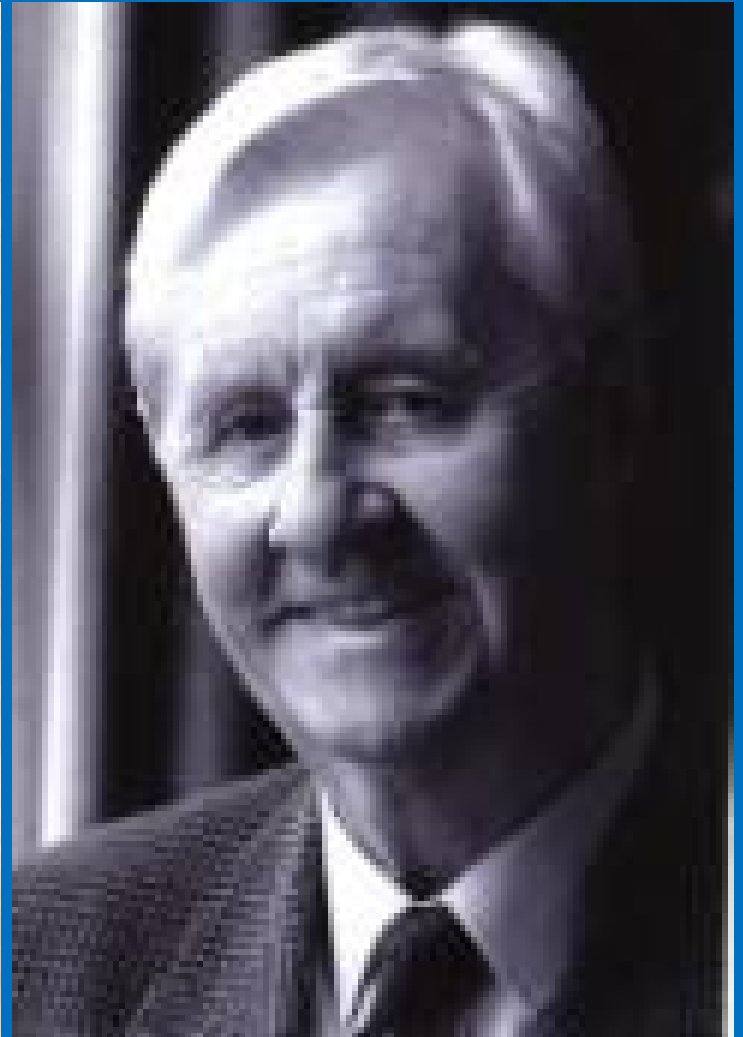
Donal Nevin

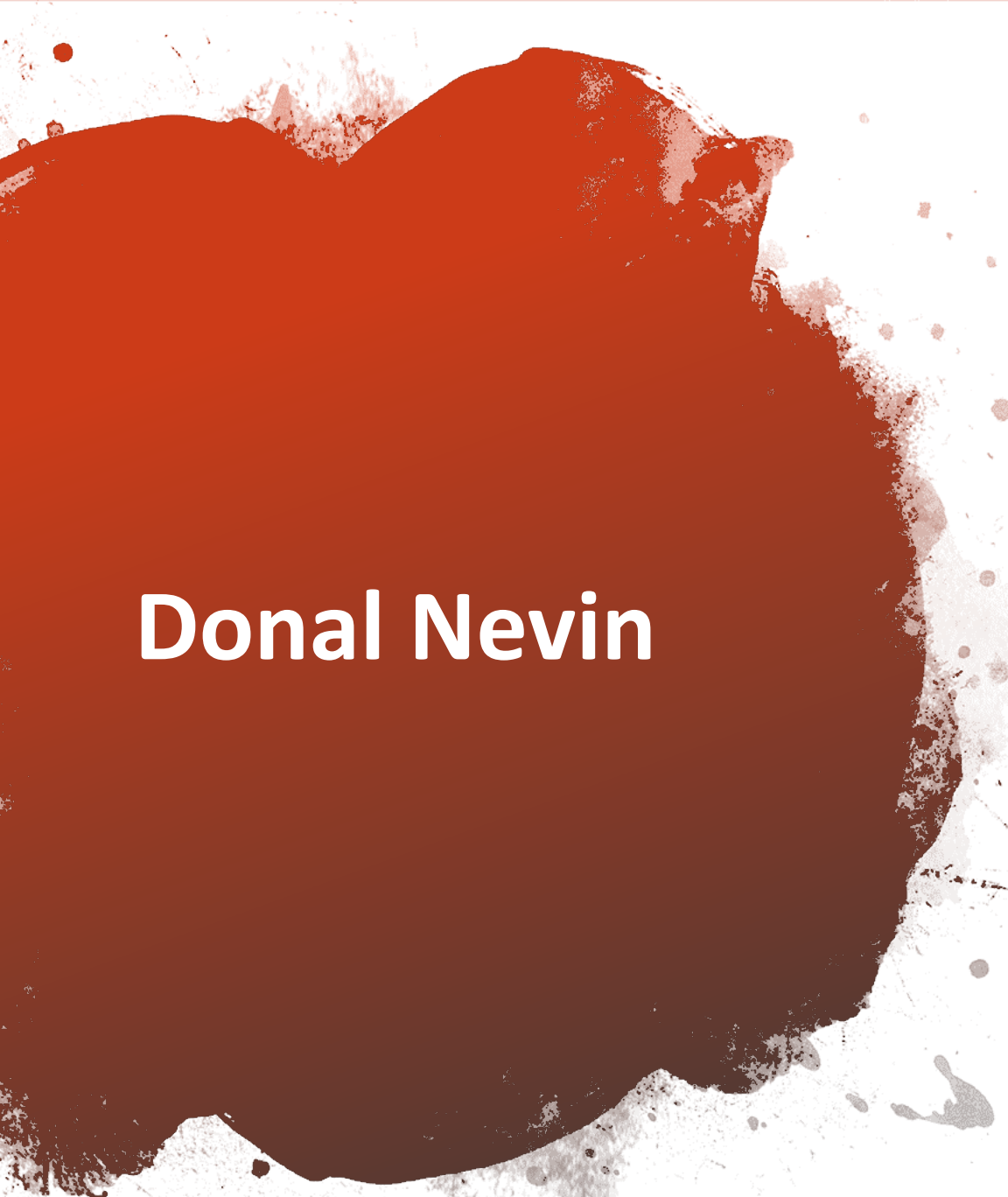
**an internationalist
admiration for writings of
Antonio Gramsci**

**attended conference of CGIL
Confederazione Generale Italiana del
Lavoro
with Bill Attley**

interest in Eurocommunism

**Antonia
Gramsci
&
Donal Nevin**





Donal Nevin

**an internationalist with
'an absolute horror of war and violence'**

Irish CND, Anti-Vietnam War

supported Irish entry to EEC, 1973

**accepted foundation vision
peaceful Europe
modernising social Ireland**

THE IRISH TIMES, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 1959

NUCLEAR PROTEST AT FRENCH EMBASSY



A deputation from the Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament pictured yesterday outside the French Embassy in Dublin, where they called on the French Ambassador to present a copy of a resolution. Their resolution, passed on March 13th, urges the French Government to consider its policy of nuclear armament. Members of the deputation are (left to right): Mr. Donal Nevin, of the Irish T.U.C.; Mrs. de Courcey-Ireland, secretary of the campaign; Miss Helen Chenevix, the chairman; Dr. Michael Smyth, of Dunsink Observatory; and Professor Cormac O'Kelly, Senior Professor, School of Cosmic Physics, Dublin.



ICTU Conference on EEC, Malahide, 1988: Patricia O'Donovan; Christy Kirwan (ITGWU), Peter Cassells, Gerry Quigley (ICTU President/INTO), Jacques Delours (President European Commission), Nevin, Brian Lenihan, Minister for Foreign Affairs



Donal Nevin

hears Jim Larkin's street orator
in campaigns against the Trade Union Act, 1941
and Wages Standstill Orders

1949 appointed Irish Trades Union Congress's
first Research Officer

edits *Trade Union Information*, 1950-1982
ground-breaking source for industrial relations

industrial, economic, social and political
information & data

**James Larkin
Junior &
John Swift**



TRADE UNION INFORMATION

APRIL 1960 No. 1 (New Series)

A Brief Guide to Pay As You Earn

Survey of Company Profits

The Price of Skill

Graduated Pensions for Northern Ireland

Boom in Industrial Exports

Earnings in Britain and Ireland

Labour Court Recommendations

IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

Research Department

Vol. I, No. 4.

Sixpence

TRADE UNION INFORMATION

ISSUED BY THE IRISH TRADE UNION CONGRESS RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

BELFAST CONGRESS

The fifty-fifth annual meeting of the Irish Trade Union Congress held in the Husband Memorial Hall, Belfast, from the 27th to 29th July, was attended by 191 delegates representing 58 affiliated unions with a membership of 195,900, and 9 Trades Councils with a membership of 61,550.

Fraternal delegates present were: Mr. Victor Feather (British Trades Union Congress), Mr. James Campbell (Scottish Trades Union Congress), Senator Miss Eleanor Butler (Irish Labour Party), and Mr. R. Morrow (Northern Ireland Labour Party).

The Presidential Address of Mr. James Larkin, T.D., is being printed and will be available for distribution shortly at 3d. per copy. Delegates to Congress will each receive a free copy.

The Report of the National Executive for the year 1948-1949 was adopted. During the year the National Executive had discussions with Ministers and Departmental officials relating to Wages, Prices and Profits; Worker Co-Operation in Industry; the Industrial Development Authority; The Insurance (Intermittent Unemployment) Act and the International Labour Organisation. Correspondence with Government Departments covered, inter alia, Income Tax, Holidays Employees' Act, Apprenticeship Committees, Transport, and International Trade Organisation. The Report also reviewed other activities of the Executive including the Economic Policy Conference convened by the Joint Council of the Labour Party and the Irish Trade Union Congress; a special conference of affiliated organisations on working conditions in industry; international affiliations; E.R.P. International Trade Union Committee; Trade Union Unity; Northern Ireland Committee; Research Department; Labour Weekly and the Adult Education Association.

AUGUST, 1949

Sixteen resolutions were adopted by Congress, the texts of which appear on pages 2 and 3. Fifteen resolutions were referred to the National Executive without discussion.

The following were elected as officers and members of the National Executive for the year 1949-1950:—*President*: Mr. S. Kyle (Amal. T. & G. W. Union); *Vice-President*: Miss H. Chenevix (Irish Women Workers' Union); *Treasurer*: Mr. John Swift (Irish Bakers', Confectioners' & Allied Workers' Amalgamated Union); *Members*: Mr. James Larkin, T.D. (Workers' Union of Ireland); Miss Louie Bennett (Irish Women Workers' Union); Mr. Sean Dunne, T.D. (Federation of Rural Workers); Mr. Gilbert Lynch (Amal. T. & G.W. Union); Mr. James Barry (Cork Workers' Council); Mr. D. F. Murphy (Railway Clerks' Association); Mr. P. J. Cairns (Post Office Workers' Union); Mr. John McAteer (National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers); Mr. R. Smith (Plumbing Trades Union); Mr. R. F. Morgan (National Society of Painters); Mr. W. Carpenter (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers); and Mr. M. Gray (Amal. T. & G. W. Union).

The following are the results of other Congress elections: Fraternal Delegate to the Scottish Trades Union Congress, Mr. S. Kyle; *Standing Orders Committee*, 1950: Miss E. Caffrey (Irish Women Workers' Union), Mr. J. W. Kerr (Belfast and District Trades Union Council), Mr. E. O'Sullivan (Cork Workers' Council), Mr. Thomas Kavanagh (Workers' Union of Ireland), Mr. P. Horan (Post Office Workers' Union). *Substitutes*: Mr. J. H. Binks (Clerical & Administrative Workers' Union), Mr. W. J. Leeburn (Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union), and Mr. D. Robb (Amalgamated Engineering Union).

TRADE UNION INFORMATION

ISSUED BY THE IRISH TRADE UNION CONGRESS RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

A NEW DEPARTURE

An Introduction by
JAMES LARKIN, T.D.
(PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS)

The publication of *Trade Union Information* marks a new departure in the activities of Congress and extension of its services to the affiliated Trade Unions.

Each day witnesses a growth and development of the role of the Trade Union Movement in the whole national economy and ever greater responsibilities are having to be assumed by all sections of the organised industrial movement.

The Trade Unions as organisations and their officials and members can only measure up to these new developments and responsibilities to the extent that they are fully and properly informed of the facts of our economic and industrial life. *Trade Union Information* is being published to serve that purpose and to present in a condensed and readily available form the information, statistics and authoritative views which will be helpful in the day to day work of the Movement.

It is the earnest wish of Congress that full support will be given to this venture.

JAMES LARKIN.

Our Purpose

Our title *Trade Union Information* expresses the purpose of this bulletin, which is to make available to Trade Unions information which will be of use to their officials, their delegates and their active members. We hope that every Union will find it to be in their own interest to secure among their members a wide distribution of this bulletin.

It will not, of course, be always possible to include in 8 or 12 pages as many articles and notes as we would desire, and the articles we publish will necessarily be condensed. The Research and Information Service of the Irish Trade Union Congress is, however, now available for the use of affiliated Unions and will undertake enquiries on request, or relate information published in our articles to particular industries.

Our present issue is mainly concerned with a survey of Employment and Unemployment, and we felt that the introduction of other features which would necessitate any greater limitation of the treatment of these important matters would not be justified. Future issues will include summaries of recent Wage Awards, Agreements, and Labour Court Recommendations.

This is the first time that a bulletin of this nature has been published for the Trade Union Movement in Ireland. Each Union can assist in improving the usefulness of the material selected for publication, particularly during the early and formative period by sending us their criticism and suggestions.

RUADHRI ROBERTS,
Secretary, Irish Trade Union Congress.

MAY, 1949

**Nevin,
Thomas &
Marie
Johnson,
Sheila & John
Conroy**





**Final ITUC Executive,
seated, l-r, Patrick
Crowley, James Sloan,
Norman Kennedy,
Dominick Murphy,
Walter Carpenter,
Ruaidhrí Roberts, Jack
Macgougan, W.J.
Leeburn, Andy Barr;**

**standing Seán Casey,
Nevin, James Larkin,
Harold Binks, John
McAteer, Robert
Smith, Jimmy Tully,
Andrew Faulkner**

Donal Nevin

1960-2004, founder member ESRI (Economic & Social Research Institute)

National Industrial Economic Council

National Economic & Social Council

Committee on Industrial Organisation, prior to EEC entry

active & informed member of Commissions on Taxation

1969-1963 led to PAYE system

Social Welfare in Ireland

AT the present time, well over 300,000 men and women are in receipt of weekly payments under the social insurance and social assistance schemes operated by the Department of Social Welfare. With their dependents, numbering about 150,000, they constitute about one sixth of the population. In addition, some 280,000 families are in receipt of children's allowances.

How £50 m. is distributed



What our manpower policy can mean

THE decision by the Government announced in the recent White Paper that the initial steps to developing a manpower policy should be taken by the various departments concerned is a most timely one. It is generally accepted that there has been a great deal of discussion in the various departments on the subject of manpower policy, but that no coordinated effort has been made to bring the various departments together to discuss the subject in a coordinated manner. The White Paper states that the various departments should be asked to submit proposals for a manpower policy by the end of the year. This is a most timely decision, as it is now time to start thinking about the future of the Irish manpower policy.

TAXATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

quote: Social budget

by Donal Nevin

STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT

Equal pay for women!

REPORT URGES NEW £5m. DEAL IN WAGES AND PROMOTION

THE LIBERATION of Irish women is urged in a 13,000-word submission by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to the 13-member Commission on the Status of Women.

The Commission was set up in April by the Government and headed by Dr. Thekla J. Beere, former Secretary of the Department for Transport and Power.

The five-part submission, prepared, written and argued by Mr. Donal Nevin, assistant general secretary of Congress, emerged following debate within the Congress and after discussions with the Women's Advisory Committee and the Public Services Committee.

● Radical changes in our approach to the education of girls, particularly equipping them for living in an industrial society.

● A call for an investigation into the promotion of women in the public service, the professions and State-sponsored bodies.

● The admission of women into a wider range of skilled employment and a complete re-appraisal of the whole concept of what has come to be regarded as "women's work" and women's work.

The document, which has a bibliography containing about 180 references, shows that the number of women at work has dropped from 129,000 in 1926 to 281,000 in 1964 (the last census). The number of women between 15 and 64 at work fell from one-third of the work force in 1926 to one-fifth in 1964. It is concluded that it was substantially less than men.

The conclusion was that since, in the North the earnings of a woman

agricultural accounted for two-fifths of working women, by 1966 the proportion had dropped to one-eighth. Over the same period, the proportion of domestic servants fell from almost one-fourth to less than one-twelfth.

The number of women engaged in the manufacturing industries doubled in the 40-year period and there were substantial increases in the numbers employed in services but, overall, the proportion of women in the total work force of the State was "low by comparison with most developed countries."

Women constituted a majority of all employees in a number of major occupations. They made up 100 per cent of typists and maids; 87 per cent of nurses; 83 per cent of telephone operators; 77 per cent of waiters and waitresses; 65 per cent of cooks; 61 per cent of teachers; 54 per cent of shop assistants; and 53 per cent of clerks.

While, according to census figures, "professional and technical occupations" (which include teachers and

remaining 19 per cent about nine per cent are married and 10 per cent widows.

The average hourly earnings for women in the manufacturing industries was 55 per cent of that earned by men but there were wide variations from industry to industry. The average statutory minima prescribed by Irish Labour Committees at December 31, 1969, was two-thirds of a man's wage.

In the public service many posts carry lower remuneration when the post is held by a woman. In sex-differentiated scales women earn usually about 80 per cent of men's salaries.

A survey carried out this year showed that only one-quarter of the women at work were organised in trade unions and there were only seven women union officials out of a total of 230.

On the projected increase in the work force forecast by the National Industrial and Economic Council up to 1981, the figure for women



Mr. Donal Nevin

Dublin Council of Trade Unions demand Fair Taxation, c1980

Paddy Donegan (ITGWU), Ruaidhridh Roberts (ICTU), Paddy Coughlan (Painters), Tom McGrath (ICTU), Sam Nolan (DCTU), Dan Murphy (PSEU), Mai Clifford (IWWU), Nevin, unknown, Mick O'Halloran (ICTU), Charlie Monoe (AGEMOU)





Donal Nevin

1966 becomes ICTU Assistant General Secretary

1982-1989 succeeds Ruaidridh Roberts as General Secretary

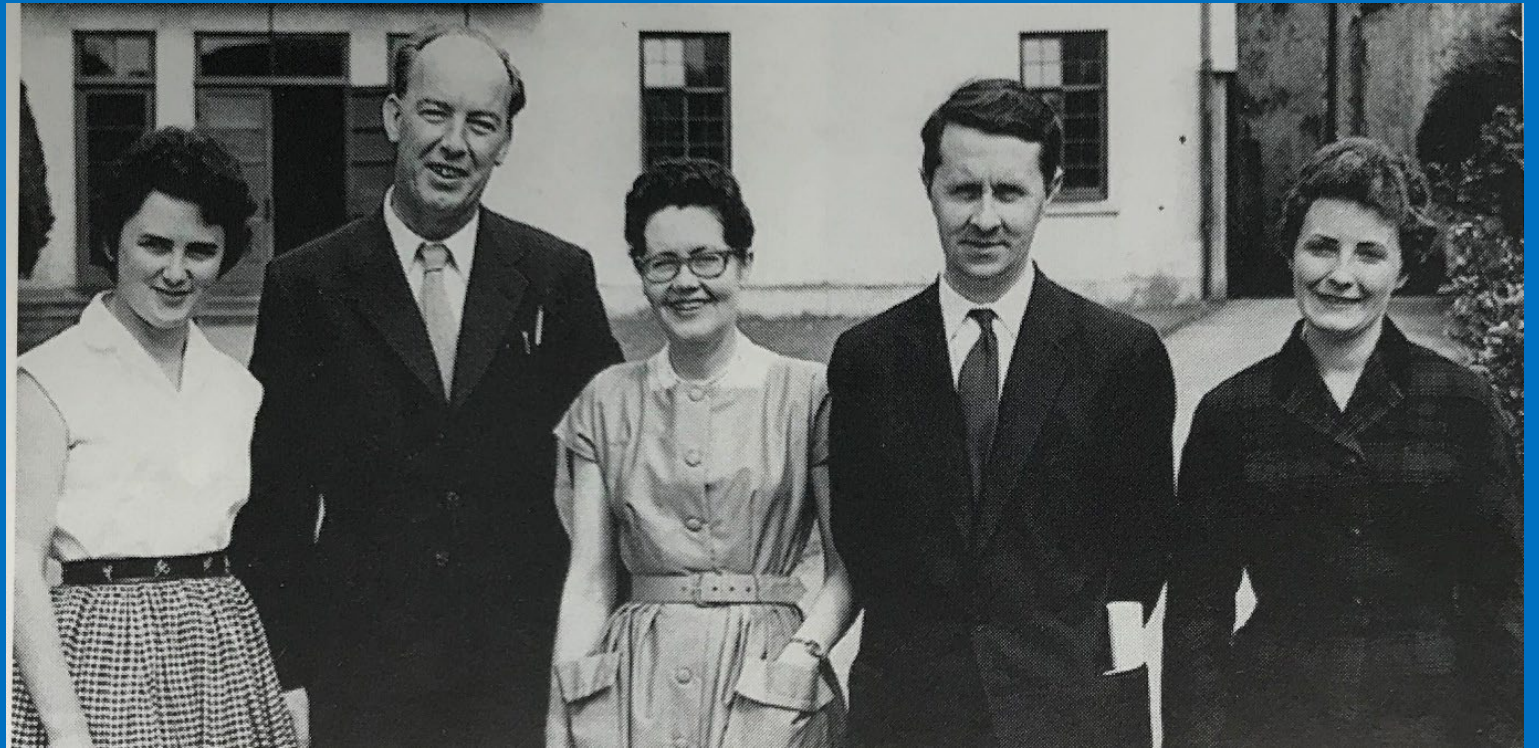
**a fountain of position papers, briefings,
representations to Inquiries and Commissions,
Dáil briefings,
radio & television presentations & interviews**

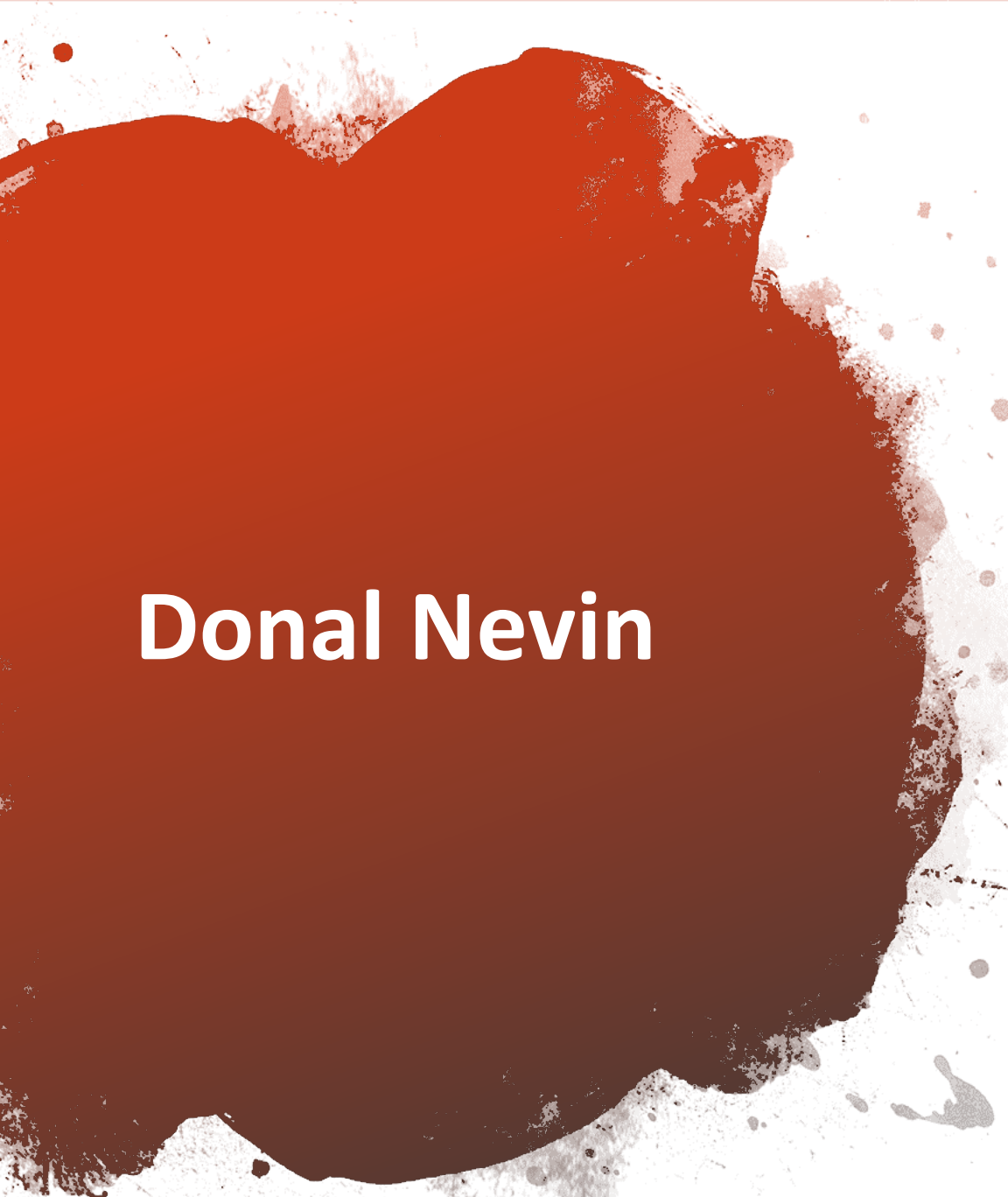
policy formation & Congress addresses

**key role in nineteen-week Post Office Workers' Union strike,
1979**

**Irish TUC Head
Office staff, 1959**

**I-r, Shirley Lowe,
Ruairidh Roberts,
Máire MacDonagh,
Nevin, Clare O'Neill**





Donal Nevin

as ICTU General Secretary

**seen as aloof,
'somewhat removed' industrially**

**thinking behind
Programme for National Recovery, 1987**

**he saw it as moving towards
a (Young) Larkinite vision**





Donal Nevin

developing thinking
for united, collective representation
of trade union policies
to Government
on economic planning, incomes,
job creation, social welfare,
Education, health

National Understandings 1979

Programme For National Recovery, 1987



Donal Nevin

Combat Poverty Agency
European Social Fund Advisory Committee
Focus Ireland
Higher Education Authority
Irish Hospice Foundation
Irish National Productivity Committee
Irish Council of People with Disability
Irish Times Trust

commitment to and engagement in
Commissions and organisations
‘Stakhanovite’



Donal Nevin

labour historian

1913: Jim Larkin & the Dublin Lockout

Lion of the Fold

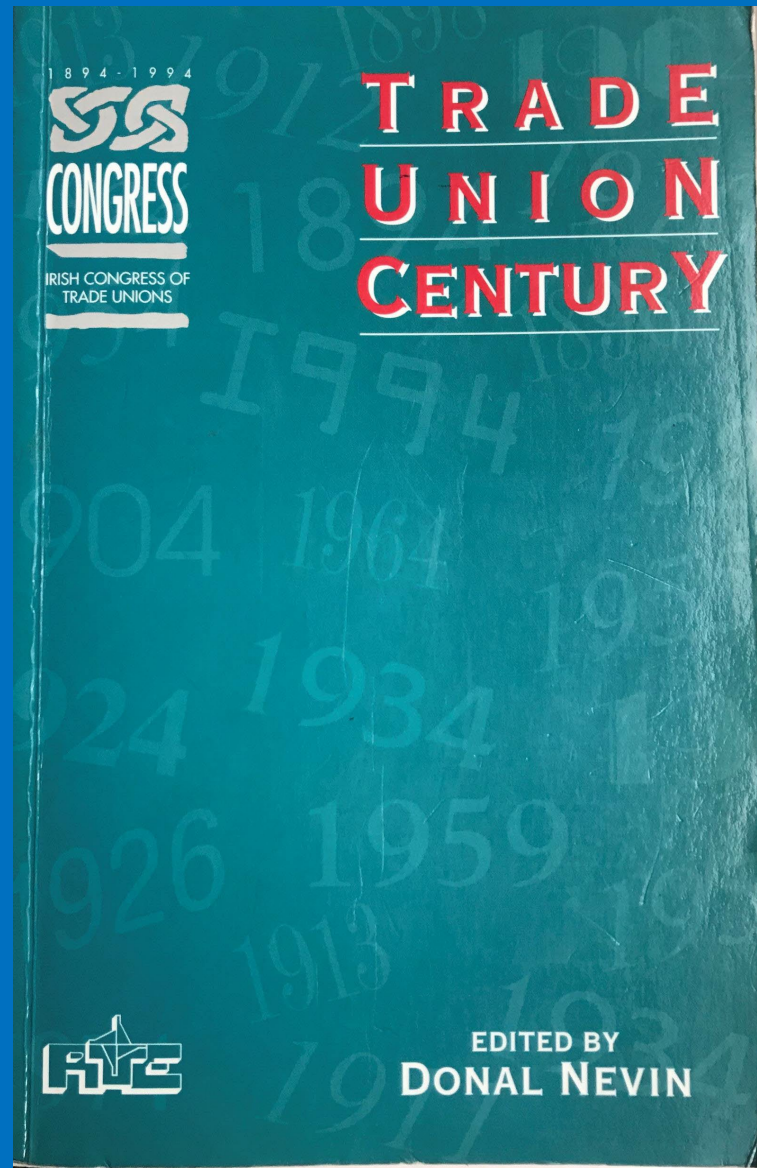
James Connolly: A Full Life

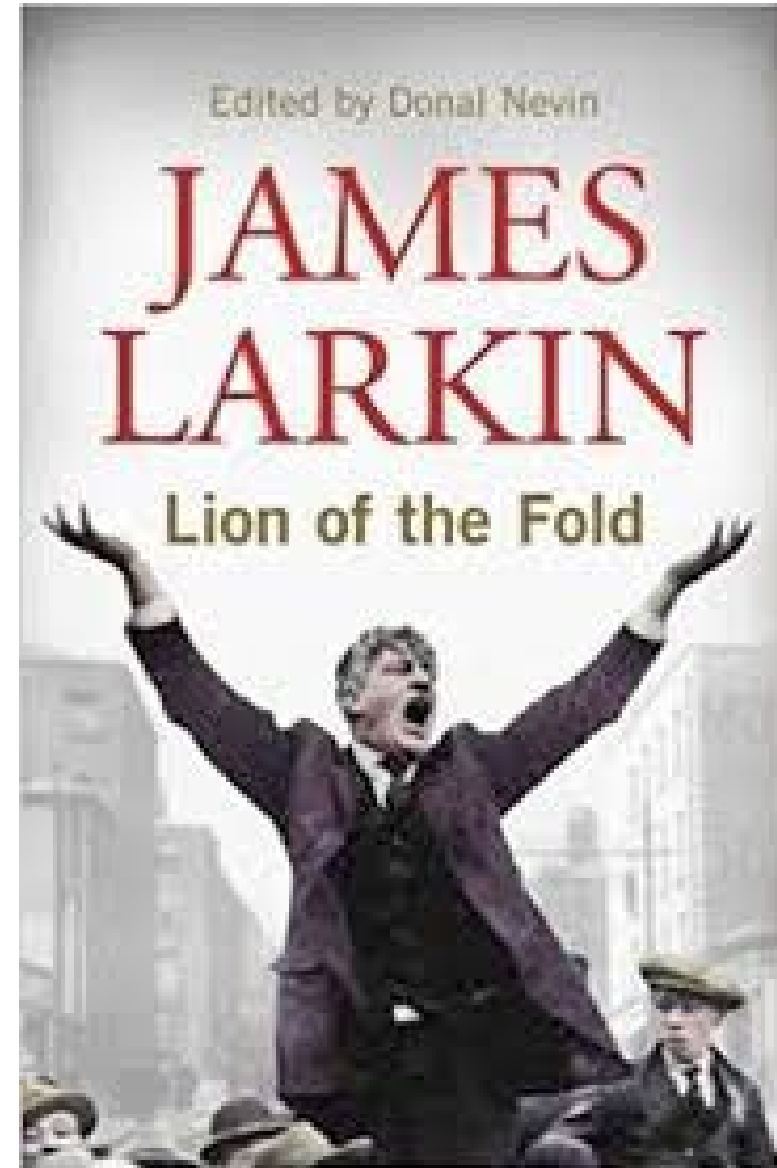
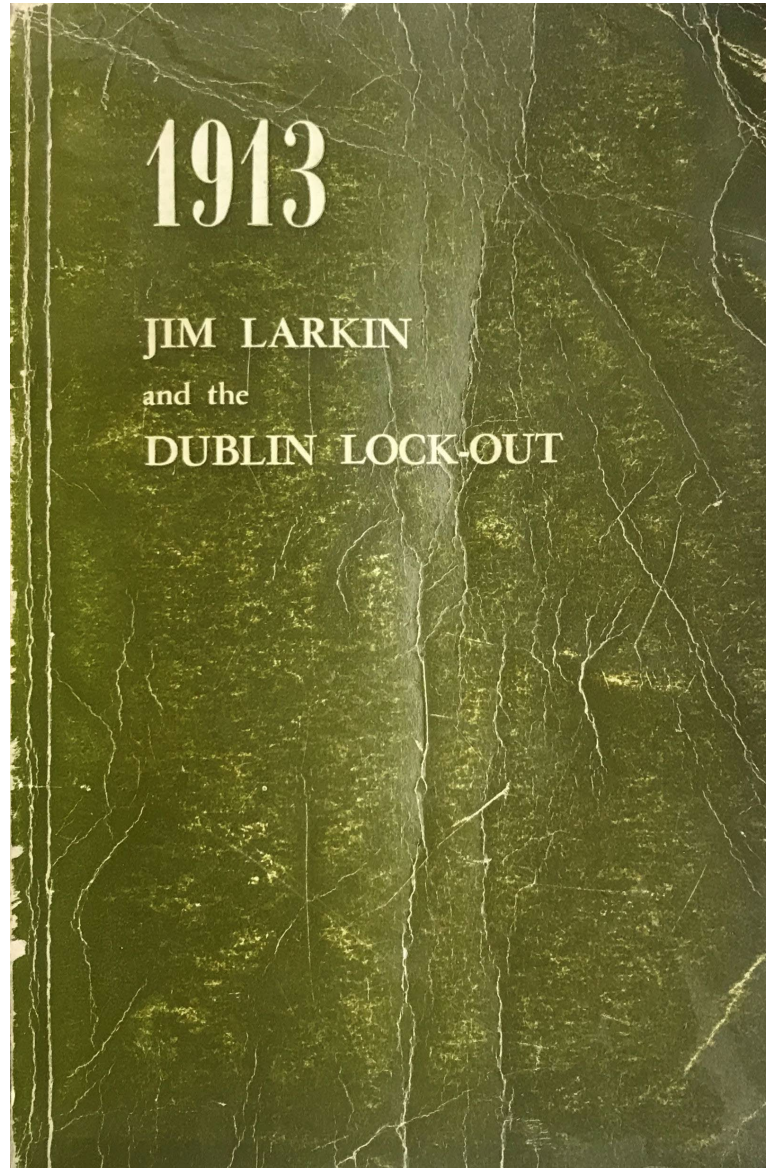
RTÉ Thomas Davis Lectures

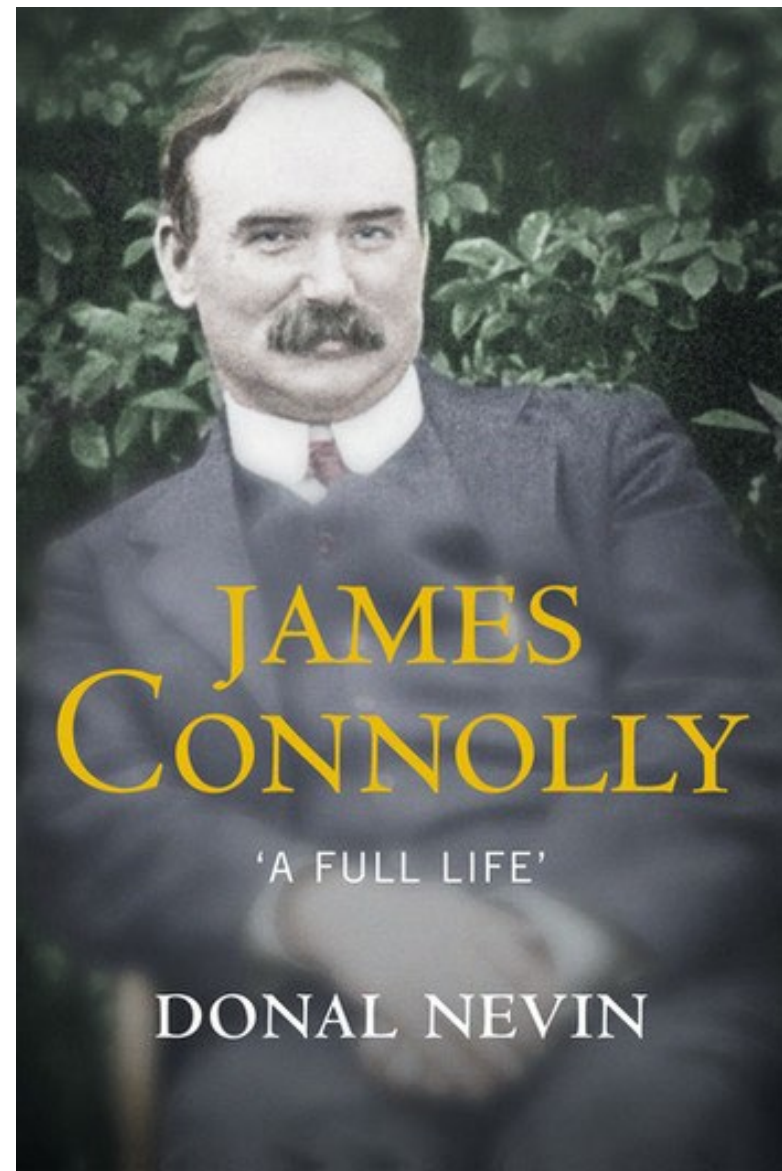
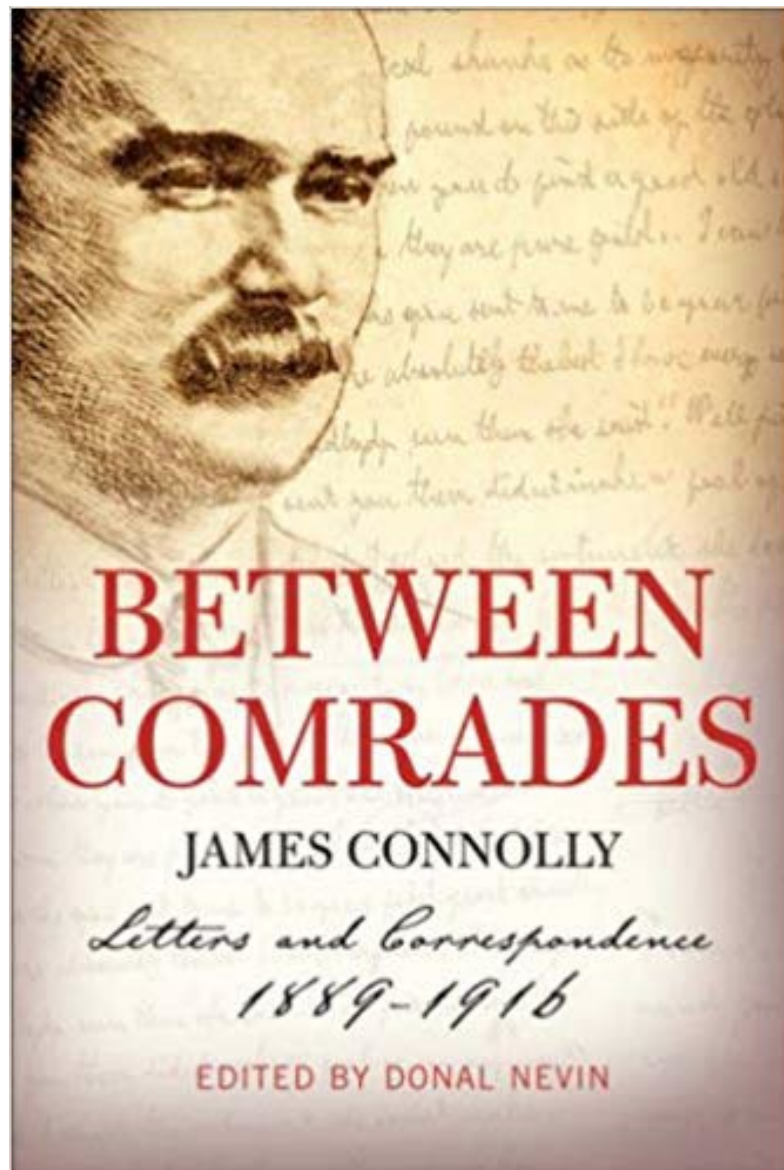
TRADE UNIONS
and
CHANGE
in Irish Society

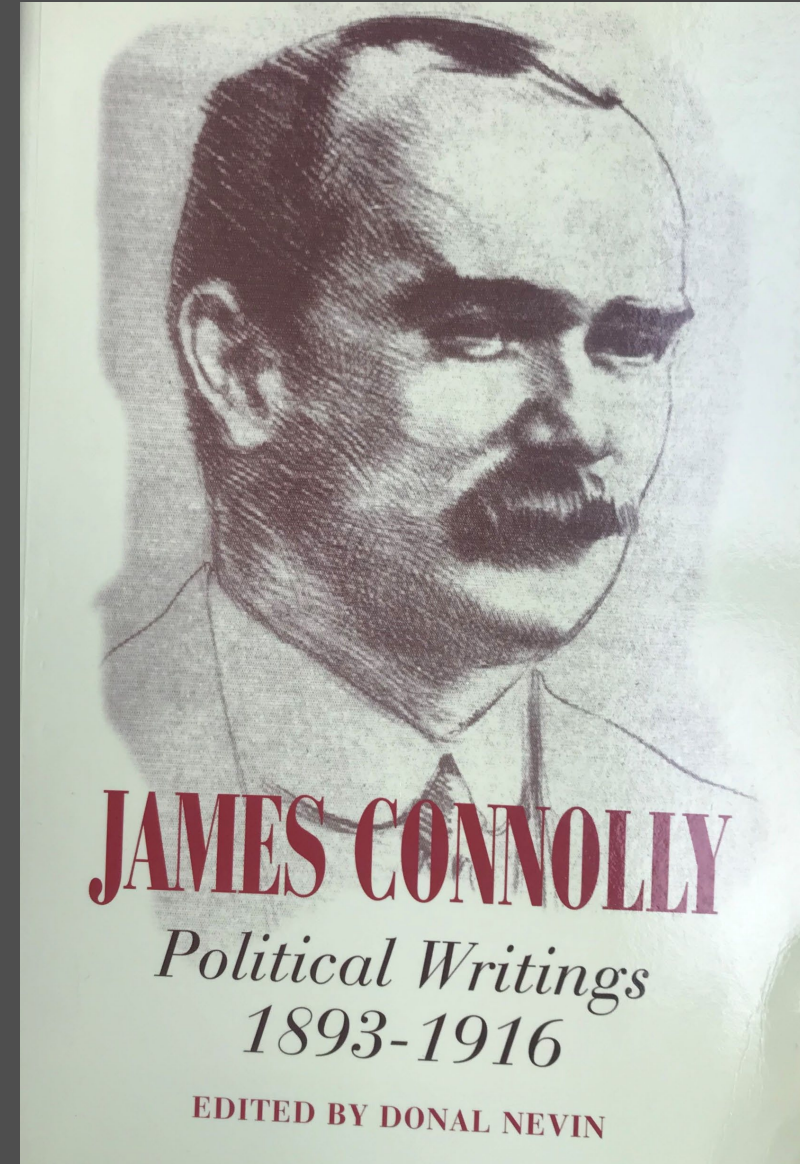
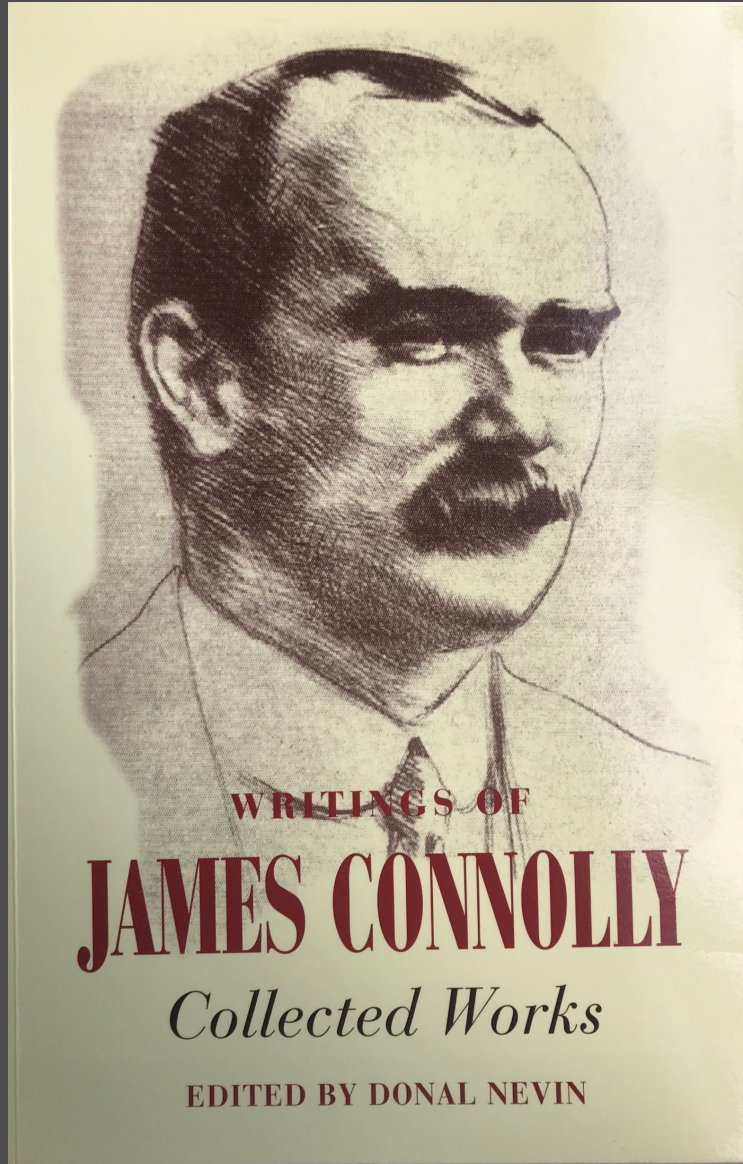
Edited by
DONAL NEVIN

MERCIER/RTE











Donal Nevin

Honorary Doctorates

**University of Limerick
National University of Ireland
National Council of Educational Awards
Royal Dublin Society**

Doctor³ - 'Doctor Cubed'

2012, Nevin Economic Research Institute



**Honorary
Doctorate of Laws,
University of Limerick**

**Anne Sadlier,
former Labour TD and
ITGWU/SIPTU Official
Frank Prendergast
& Donal Nevin**





Donal Nevin

private life

**1952 met Kerrywoman Maura Murphy
in Adelaide Ballroom**

1960 marries

**daughter (and unofficial Secretary)
Anne**



Donal Nevin

died 16 December 2012, St Vincent's Hospital

another 'full life'

**sense of social justice
informed by deeply-held religious beliefs**

**courteous but tough negotiator
fastidiously researched detail**

restless, always a project



UNLESS we find solutions quickly to today's immediate problems, the longer term will not be of our devising but rather an imposition on us. I've no doubt that if we do not succeed in bringing inflation under control that the future will be grim indeed irrespective of what strategies we adopt — grim, in terms of jobs lost and opportunities for progress towards full employment foregone, not to speak of the implicit threat to our living standards.



Donal Nevin

**‘an intellectual giant of the trade union
movement’**

a great twentieth century Irishman

under-appreciated

time for doctoral study ?



Donal Nevin – from LDF to ICTU

