

IRISH TIMES: 20/10/2011

'This way and that but we're not getting answers'

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not to talk to the media.
Referring to screens erected in
Aviva's reception area before the
announcement, seemingly to
block photographers, he said it
was a "complete clamp".
"They'll just go on the way
they've been going on. Hide
everything and have secrecy
around everything," he said.
In Galway, where Aviva
employs 200 of its Irish

workforce in the building
formerly occupied by Fibberman
Insurance in Knocknacarra,
mother of two, Judith Meeze,
said the company had been a
good employer, but she had no
idea what the future held for her
and her colleagues.
"I'm in shock," she said. "I'm
10 years in Galway, and the last
7½ were in Aviva, but I could be
out of a job in two weeks."

Colleague Clive O'Donnell
was disappointed at the lack of
information proffered yesterday
by management. "It would be
nice if we knew what the
situation was," she said.
The trade union Unite is due
to meet staff employed at
Knocknacarra this evening about
the cuts. Aviva also held a
meeting with the 200 staff at the
claims processing operation

which opened in September 2001
and is based at the Cork Airport
Business Park.
One employee there, Clare
Cluney, said everyone was still
very confused about the situation
yesterday afternoon. "All we've
been told is that there will be a
presence in Galway, Cork and
Dublin, that's all we know for
now. It's been a difficult day for
everybody."

Job losses at Wicklow plant a 'massive blow'

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THR LOSS of up to 40 jobs at a
Rethlum, Co Wicklow, plant
announced by pharmaceutical
giant MSD, formerly Merck Sharp
and Dohme, yesterday has been
described as a "massive blow" to
the village.

The redundancies at the facility,
which once employed 400 people,
will see the workforce reduced to
280 by December 2012. The firm
said it is seeking to "secure the
future of the Wicklow plant" by
implementing the competitiveness
and cost efficiency programme.

The facility produces active
pharmaceutical ingredients for
the global market and has been in
the area since 1961. Employees will
be offered a "very competitive
package", a spokeswoman said.
She hoped redundancies would
be achieved voluntarily, but if com-
pulsory redundancies were needed
they would be "fair and objective".
Negotiations between the com-
pany, staff and unions have begun.

The director John Smyth said
the plant remained a "key part" of
the company's manufacturing net-
work "underpinned by a €55 mil-
lion (£39.9 million) upgrade and
expansion that was recently
become operational".

Labour Councillor Jimmy
O'Shaughnessy said "it's going to
have a massive impact on local
families here", pointing out Ath-
down has a population of 1,400.

A worker who attended a
meeting at the plant said he was
worried about the future. "It was a
real shock and out of the blue for
me," he said, declining to be
named. "The workers are really
low down over the announcement
and are just devastated, as this is"
"Fliss Gael TD for Wicklow City
"I'm sorry expressed regret at the
move but hoped it would "lead to a
stable and secure future for other
workers and the plant".

A spokeswoman for IDA Ire-
land said any job losses
were "regrettable" but the reorgani-
sation was to ensure the long term
sustainability of the facility.

In Short

Roddy Doyle receives Social Entrepreneurs Ireland award

Writer Roddy Doyle and former director of Amnesty Ireland
Séán Lohan last night received one of three Social
Entrepreneurs Ireland awards at a ceremony attended by
Taoiseach Enda Kenny.

They received the honour for Fighting Words, a writing
centre which runs free creative writing and storytelling
workshops for students to enhance their writing skills.
The centre, which has been running for over two years, has
hosted more than 28,000 students of all ages in workshops in
fiction writing, film-making, song writing and graphic novels.
Other award winners included Michael Kelly of GIY Ireland,
who received an award for his mission to empower people to
grow their own food, and Niamh Gallagher and Michelle
O'Donnell Keating who set up Women for Election, a
non-partisan organisation which wishes to see a balanced
participation of women and men in political life in Ireland.

University 'falls' to enrol Protestants

Traditional Unionist Voice
leader Jim Allister has
accused the University of
Ulster of a "lamentable
failure" in recruiting more
Protestants, while also
questioning the number of
students from the Republic
studying at the university.
Mr Allister spoke of his
disquiet at the number of
Protestants attending
Queen's University, Belfast
and the University of Ulster,
which has four campuses.

"It is alarming to notice the
very pronounced difference
between the number of
students coming from
Protestant and Roman
Catholic backgrounds
attending both of our
universities," he said.

Charity helping more foreigners

A leading Dublin homeless
charity said yesterday an
increasing number of foreign
nationals who had lost jobs in
the country's ailing
construction sector were
availing of its services.

Chief executive of the Peter
McVerry Trust, Pat Doyle,
said many European migrants
who were attracted here
during the boom and had now
lost their jobs, were living
homeless on the streets of
the capital. "Like many of the
Irish who lost their jobs in
Britain or the US in previous
decades, many don't return to
their home countries for
reasons of family
commitments or shame," he
said at the launch of the
charity's strategic plan.

School transport questioned

caused in relation to teacher rede-
ployment with a further follow-
through of anxiety to students
emerging from LICE (League of
Ireland College of Education) at
that time seeking to secure jobs.

"The reasons for both anxiety
and vigilance are clear," he said.
"The department's stated objec-
tive is one of finding significant fur-
ther savings, in the region of €1 bil-
lion over the next four years."

The proposals to repair raise the
pupil/teacher ratio at primary and
secondary level "accelerate the
risk of the reduction of pupils' occu-
pational experience", he went on.
"From this equation we need to
throw the department's own pro-
jection that primary school mita-

bers are due to rise by 6 per cent
over the above four-year period."

Where healthcare and the
Church of Ireland were con-
cerned, he said, "we embrace the
need for contemporary govern-
ance arrangements expected in
modern healthcare, balanced with
honouring past traditions. An
example of our commitment to
give assistance in the delivery of
patient-centred care in the contem-
porary healthcare service is dem-
onstrated by our willingness to
implement change in the areas of
governance and change at Tal-
lough Hospital."

Private schools only solution for
Protestants: page 16

Maths Puzzle Solution

The young Gauss spotted that $1+100=101$, $2+99=101$,
and so on to $50+51=101$. In total that's simply $50 \times 101 =$
 5050 . We're not sure if the story is true, but the young Gauss
went on to revolutionise many areas of maths and physics.