



Visitors queue to board the Irish naval vessel LE Niámh at Tokyo's Hamuri port yesterday. Hundreds came to see the ship on its first visit to Japan

# Watchdog criticises report on Sellafield

IRELAND'S nuclear watchdog has criticised a controversial EU-commissioned report which warned that one million people could die following an accident at Sellafield. The Radiological Protection Institute (RPI) has questioned a number of conclusions in the report into reprocessing at Sellafield and Le Hague in France, which was highly critical of both facilities.

Liam Reid



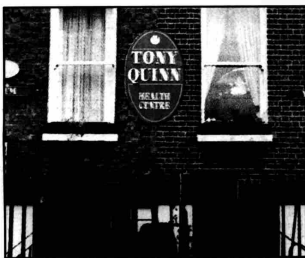
Nuala Ahern: criticised RPI's response

The report, which was carried out by a number of European and American scientists, a number of whom have been accused by the nuclear industry of being anti-nuclear campaigners, was commissioned by the European Parliament's STOA scientific committee. The commissions committee of the parliament is to have a hearing into the report this week. In an evaluation of the report for the Department of Public Enterprise, the RPI said the report was valuable as it gave a good overview of the issues at the centre of nuclear reprocessing. However, it took issue with a number of the report's findings, including the radioactive dose levels faced from reprocessing, the level of deaths from an accident at Sellafield and the health effects of exposure to radioactivity. The RPI evaluation goes as far as to suggest that reprocessing could be the lesser of two evils in that it means less uranium mining. "One factor that is not always considered, and is not referred to by the authors, is that the mining and milling of uranium has a significant environmental impact and will give rise to radiation doses to both the public and workers that may exceed those attribut-

# Tony Quinn products may be withdrawn following inquiry by Medicines Board

The multi-millionaire health guru may be asked by IMB to justify medicinal claims made about some of his products, reports **Richard Oakley**

THE controversial, self-styled health guru Tony Quinn may be asked to remove some of his diet and body-building products from shop shelves as a result of an investigation by the state's main regulatory body for medicines.



One of Quinn's health centres in Dublin

Within the next 10 days, Quinn's complete range of health and well-being products, sold in his stores throughout the country, are to be examined at a meeting of the classification committee of the Irish Medicines Board (IMB).

The IMB has refused to comment on the matter other than to say that a "decision will be taken as to what course of action will be carried out" at the meeting. However, *The Sunday Tribune* understands that Quinn may soon be asked to justify claims made for his products and could even be required to apply for a licence for others. He may also have to stop selling some products if the IMB decides this is necessary. The IMB is understood to be particularly interested in products which are marketed on the basis of medicinal claims.

The IMB's investigations into Tony Quinn products have been ongoing for a number of years. As part of its own investigation into Quinn and his organisation in early 2001,

*The Sunday Tribune* revealed that the IMB had warned Quinn about the over-the-counter selling of two of his food supplements and was considering taking similar action in relation to a third. Quinn was told to make two changes to products the IMB believed were being sold as medicines, and to labels and advertising brochures which were making medicinal claims for these products.

It is understood that the IMB has since examined another Quinn-labelled nutritional product, a so-called life

extension mix, on similar grounds.

Legally, a medicinal product cannot be marketed without authorisation. If it is categorised as medicinal or makes medicinal claims, the manufacturer must apply for a product authorisation from the IMB and the board is then obliged to carry out a stringent assessment to ensure it is what it says it is and does what is claimed.

Martin Forde, a member of the Tony Quinn organisation who has acted as a spokesman for Quinn, said this weekend

that he had no knowledge of the IMB's planned meeting. He said the Tony Quinn organisation was interested in working with the IMB and had been doing so but he refused to comment any further. During last year's investigation, however, Forde said the organisation had never sought authorisation for its products because it had no wish to sell any as medicines, but only as food supplements, which do not require a licence.

Forde also confirmed at that time that the organisation made a number of changes to literature relating to products following the IMB's approach. He said that the company had changed a statement in its literature for a liver supplement in order to remove any suggestion of a medicinal claim. He said it was also mistakenly asked to make changes to another product because its brochure made reference to St John's Wort, which had been classified as prescription only when this ingredient had already been removed. The IMB refused to give any more details on the cases and also declined to elaborate on its concerns relating to a third product, a 'life extension mix', sold in Quinn health stores.

*The Sunday Tribune* investigation into Quinn raised serious concerns about other claims made relating to his mind extension course. Two leading psychiatrists said certain claims made by Quinn when explaining his mind

advancement theory were without scientific validation. Quinn, a multi-millionaire, charges people around €30,000 to attend courses held in exotic places such as the Bahamas or Egypt. His controversial courses became popular after he appeared on the *Late Late Show* to speak about his training of the world champion

Irish boxer Steve Collins. Quinn has been accused by experienced hypnotists of attempting to influence people while they are under his control.

In tapes obtained by this newspaper, he can be heard telling people how to sell his seminars to others while they are attending his lectures.

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# ATGWU membership fall of 10% sparks row

THE membership of the country's second largest union, the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union, (ATGWU) has fallen by more than 10%, according to figures contained in a confidential internal document seen by this newspaper.

The document states that the membership of the union, which has been at the centre of controversy since its regional secretary Mick O'Reilly was suspended last June, has been calculated at 45,960 - substantially less than the 52,000-plus membership the ATGWU was understood to have.

The release of the figures have led to yet another row within the union, which has been badly split since O'Reilly was suspended. Supporters of O'Reilly have claimed that, under his leadership, the membership of the union had increased by an average of 8% each year to over 50,000 and that this figure was verified by the union's UK office. They have said that the fall-off shows the union is suffering without him in charge and is having difficulty recruiting members.

However, this claim has been denied by the current Irish leadership of the ATGWU, Ben Kearney, the acting regional organiser, said numbers had been dropping for a number of years. He blamed business closures, job losses and a decline in the manufacturing industry.

O'Reilly was controversially suspended last June after an internal investigation was carried out. A number of claims were made against him which O'Reilly's supporters described as "groundless". He is currently waiting to hear if he will be reinstated or fired from his position.

Richard Oakley



Mick O'Reilly: suspended

His suspension has caused turmoil in the union, which now seems to be floundering into a period of considerable change. The rationalisation plans propose the possible closure of a number of ATGWU offices and the replacement of these with fewer, larger ones. The document also states that the move could allow for a reduction in officers of almost 50%. There are over

30 officers currently working for the ATGWU in both the north and south of the country, but the document states this number could be reduced to 17. The figures relating to members show that there are now 28,820 ATGWU members in the north and 19,140 in the south - a total of 45,960. The drop below 50,000 means that the union is just one of the figures fall below this. At the last elections for the body, earlier this year, two members were elected, a fact which supports the pro-O'Reilly lobby's claim that the membership figures were much higher before his suspension.

Kearney said the rationalisation programme outlines a possible scenario and that it was not going to be implemented immediately. He said it would form the basis for debate on the future of the ATGWU, and that it would help to "keep the union afloat in a meaningful way". He said the union was currently saving €2.5m (€4m) in its Irish operations.

Meanwhile, O'Reilly has refused to rule out his possible involvement in the new anti-partnership union, the Independent Workers' Union (IWU), recently set up in Ireland. O'Reilly last week refused to deny that he would take up a position with the union if he was dismissed from his current role in the ATGWU. A decision on his fate was supposed to have been reached over four weeks ago.