

Death of Dr Enda McDonagh

It was with deep sadness that members of the Irish Federation of University Teachers learned of the death of our late colleague Dr Enda McDonagh on February 24, 2021.

Friends, former colleagues and students of Enda will have been pleased and consoled by the many warm and well deserved tributes paid to this wonderful man. We are very gratified by these and very happy to endorse and second all of the positive recollections of a life well lived and spent, for almost in its entirety, in the service of others and of the society to which he was such an important and generous contributor.

For us in IFUT Enda's death brings recollections of the crucial role which he played in the evolution of our union.

Enda served as the President of IFUT for two consecutive terms from 1972 to 1974. (In passing we should mention, in order to emphasise the milieu in which he thrived, that his predecessor in this role was Robin Dudley Edwards and his successor was Kader Asmal who was later to serve as Minister for Higher Education in the first democratic government of South Africa).

It is the fate of historically important people that they are found to be in the right place at the right and crucial time. So it was with Enda McDonagh. In the early years of the 1970's he played a central role in the development of IFUT from being an amalgam of associations of academic staff in universities to being a fully-fledged representative trade union encompassing issues such as academic freedom, fair and transparent competitions for promotion and the right to secure employment with an income commensurate with the role's inherent worth and the years of preparation necessary for its attainment .

Enda was the Convenor of IFUT's national sub-committee charged with the task "of examining the issue of [trade] unionisation of the Federation and how this might be brought about." It will come as no surprise to anyone even peripherally acquainted with Enda's skills that, without a schism in a Federation characterised by including in its ranks people of diverse and trenchantly articulated opinions, IFUT went on, without dissent, to become the recognised Irish Congress of Trade Unions' constituent union representing academic, professional and library staff in Higher Education.

Since his death many others have attested to Enda McDonagh's warm and inclusive nature. IFUT colleagues of his could add colour and detail to such narratives and testimonies. Our purpose today is to testify to yet another hugely significant contribution this extraordinary man made to the lives of so many people.

Joan Donegan,

General Secretary.