

Manpower Policy

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INTERNATIONAL BACKGROUND

1. It seems clear that, in most countries, the development of an active manpower policy went hand in hand with measures to achieve full employment. The concept of full employment as an economic and social objective emerged towards the end of the Second World War. The peoples of the western world had bitter memories of the hardships and deprivations caused by large-scale and prolonged unemployment in the years before the war, and were determined that, having borne the brunt of the struggles and sacrifices of the War, these pre-war conditions should not be their lot again.

2. The International Labour Conference in Philadelphia in 1945 adopted full employment as a pre-eminent objective for member countries. Subsequently many Governments introduced positive measures aimed at creating conditions which would facilitate the attainment of full employment.

3. In the years between the 1945 Conference of the International Labour Organisation in Philadelphia and its 1961 Conference in Geneva many European countries were well on the road to attaining full employment. But this achievement gave rise to labour shortages and posed a threat to continued economic development. Productive capacity was being under-utilised and inflationary tendencies were arising because of pressure on wage levels. Remedial measures were necessary. These took various forms. Efforts were made to increase the overall labour force by attracting marginal groups (e.g. married women, older workers, handicapped workers) into employment. Many Governments set out to attract foreign workers from countries which had not achieved full employment. Placement and guidance functions of the national Employment Services were strengthened. Training and other facilities were provided to stimulate the mobility of labour, both between different occupations and different geographical areas.

4. I think it is fair to say that, in the early days, many of these measures were taken on an ad hoc basis and that it is only in recent years that the concept of a coherent manpower policy, embracing these and other measures, as an aid to economic and social development has gained general acceptance.

5. At its Geneva Conference in 1961 the International Labour Organisation proclaimed that all nations should strive to develop economies providing "full, productive and freely-chosen" employment, thus adding two further dimensions to the concept of full employment proclaimed at its 1945 Conference. By "productive employment" was meant employment which would enable the worker to make the optimum contribution to the economy and, at the same time, make the best use of his own

talents and training. "Freely-chosen employment" meant that an individual should be free to choose the type and location of his employment without compulsion. A further major step forward was a resolution adopted at this Conference recognising the importance of investment in the full development of the potentialities of human beings as individuals and as partners in all forms of association required for the achievement of social and economic progress. The Conference also gave recognition to the growing perception that such investment could be, even from an economic point of view, more rewarding than investment in material capital.

6. In 1961, also, the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) which was established in September of that year adopted as a primary objective:

"to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of world economy".

The Manpower and Social Affairs Committee of the OECD, in March, 1964, presented a comprehensive Recommendation on Manpower Policy which was approved by the Council for the Organisation on 21 st May, 1964. This Recommendation was entitled "Manpower Policy as a Means for the Promotion of Economic Growth". It dealt with the nature of active manpower policy and the need for it in the pursuance of national economic development, emphasising again that the social aspect of such policy should always be borne in mind. This Recommendation recognised that countries in the process of development, which generally have to cope with extensive under-employment in rural areas, must depend to a great extent on the accumulation of capital necessary for the creation of new industries or on adequate public investment. However, other studies undertaken by the Manpower and Social Affairs Committee confirm that, while active manpower policies are most developed and most sophisticated in countries which have attained full employment, they can be of considerable assistance to developing countries in creating a climate favourable to the expansion of existing, and the attraction of new, industries.

SPECIAL FEATURES AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT OF MANPOWER POLICY IN IRELAND

7. There are a number of special features affecting the development of manpower policy in Ireland. The main ones are the levels of unemployment, underemployment and emigration and the ratio of dependents to workers.

The primary task in this country is the creation of more jobs to reduce unemployment and to stem emigration. Our current unemployment rate, which is of the order of 5 per cent of the total labour force, is higher than that of most Western European countries. The drift from agriculture is indicative of the extent of underemployment on the land. It is estimated that the movement from agriculture may be of the order of 8,000 – 9,000

a year, on average, over the next few years. This, of course, is not a peculiarly Irish phenomenon – the drift from agriculture had been a feature of most developing economies for many years past.

According to the Preliminary Report of the Census of Population, 1966 the average annual net emigration figures for the two intercensal periods 1956–61 and 1961–66 were 42,400 and 16,771 respectively. While there is no general breakdown as yet of the occupations of most of the people who emigrated, a table in the Statistical Abstract, 1965, shows that, of the new passports issued to people leaving Ireland permanently for places abroad (i.e. outside Great Britain), the highest number was in the category of unskilled male workers. I mention this to show that one of our chief problems is in this sector.

Another feature of our manpower situation which merits comment is the high ratio of dependants to workers in our population. This is due partly to the general level of employment but also in part to the rate of female employment which is among the lowest in all OECD countries. The female participation rate in employment here is estimated at 35 per cent compared for example, with percentages (1964 figures) of 54.7 in Sweden, 52.0 in Denmark and 49.6 in the United Kingdom. Some 15 per cent of women in Ireland never enter into wage-earning employment.

The magnitude of the task which faces us in creating sufficient employment opportunities in line with expected increases in population is illustrated by the following projections of labour force and numbers at work quoted at Table 3 of NIEC (National Industrial Economic Council) Report No. 18 on Full Employment.

Year	Total Labour Force (000's)	Numbers at Work (000's)
1966	1,108	1,044
1971	1,128	1,089
1976	1,165	1,142
1981	1,226	1,201
1986	1,305	1,279
1991	1,417	1,389

Since the N.I.E.C. figures were published, additional data have become available from the 1966 Census of Population. These show that the estimated number at work in April, 1966 was 1,066,000 an increase of about 14,000 over the comparable figure for 1961.

In our attitude to education also we differ from some other countries. Although a change has been taking place in recent years, people in Ireland are still generally inclined to value more highly academic as opposed to technical education and to accept, without thinking, the idea that academic education is for brighter pupils and technical education for the less gifted. This attitude is, of course, out of step with modern conditions and is due in part to our lack of an industrial tradition in the European sense. This has made it difficult for people to recognise the value of technical education

and the extent of the opportunities for highly-qualified technical and technological personnel in supervisory and managerial positions in industry.

THE NEED FOR A MANPOWER POLICY IN IRELAND

8. The aims of manpower policy are social as well as economic but, despite this, manpower policy seems most developed in countries with full or perhaps overfull employment, which need to mobilise their labour resources to maximum effect to combat inflationary trends. It may be asked, therefore, how we can expect to develop a really effective manpower policy when conditions here are very different with a good deal of unemployment and under-employment. This is a fair question and one which merits a reasoned answer. I propose, therefore, to draw attention to a few points to illustrate why we, in our conditions, should have a manpower policy and why we can reasonably hope that it will be effective and successful.

In the first place it is socially desirable to give every worker an opportunity of developing his talents to the full and to minimise for him and his dependants the hardships which can follow an economic and technological change. It is both socially and economically desirable that we should solve our main problems of unemployment and emigration.

Bearing in mind that a primary aim of economic and social policy must be the achievement of full employment, it is important to stress first of all that our manpower policy is in no way being developed at the expense of our efforts towards the creation of greater employment opportunities. Indeed, far from detracting from these efforts, the development of a manpower policy is expected to prove a valuable and essential supplement to them. Experience to date in our drive for industrial expansion has clearly shown that, of the many attractions which this country offers to prospective industrial promoters, the availability of a pool of adaptable and intelligent labour is one of the most important. This is not surprising when it is considered that a major factor inhibiting development in most other countries of Western Europe has been, and may soon again be, the problem of labour shortages. It is reasonable to expect that, when we join the E.E.C., industrialists will look at Ireland with still keener interest as a possible base from which the increased market opportunities in an enlarged community can be readily exploited. This is a situation which holds out great prospects for our future industrial development but it will not be sufficient for us to proclaim far and wide that a pool of workers is available and leave it at that. Ideally, industrialists will look for a location where skilled workers are already available and can be recruited quickly but failing that, they will expect satisfactory facilities to exist for training and recruitment of workers to suit their specific requirements. A principal objective of our manpower policy is to ensure that facilities of this kind are available here.

Again, it would be wrong to assume that, because this country is not yet in a position to provide employment for all, the considerations which motivate the development of manpower policies in countries of full employ-

ment do not apply here. Unfortunately, we too are subject from time to time to inflationary pressures arising out of labour shortages in particular sectors or areas. Neither can we afford, merely because we have a labour surplus, to use our manpower wastefully and so undermine our competitive position on international markets by adding to production costs. If our competitors are sparing no effort in implementing manpower policies as a prime means of conserving their labour resources and of promoting economic expansion, how can we afford not to do likewise? To put the matter in a positive way, we must take every possible step to utilise our work-force to the greatest effect. This is necessary if we are to maintain our economic well-being, and to develop greater competitiveness in export markets which is the surest way to increased employment. This we can achieve best by equipping our workers for more productive employment geared to modern conditions – by training and retraining in new skills, by facilitating mobility of labour through placement and resettlement and by helping to shield workers and their dependants from the economic effects of change. All these measures our manpower policy is designed to effect.

EVENTS LEADING TO MANPOWER POLICY IN IRELAND

9. Against the background of Irish conditions which I have described, the question of adopting an active manpower policy in this country first became the subject of examination and discussion in the early nineteen sixties. The possibility of entry into the E.E.C., and the implications for us of the provisions of the European Social Fund gave rise to consideration of manpower policy and an Inter-departmental Committee reported on retraining and resettlement needs in the light of the provisions of the Fund. The reports of the Committee on Industrial Organisation had made it clear that improvement of existing techniques would be essential for our survival in a wider market and that there would be changes in the future pattern of employment. The Second Programme for Economic Expansion referred to the need for an active manpower policy and in November, 1963 the Irish National Productivity Committee organised a seminar on this subject at which management and trade union representatives, economists and representatives of Government Departments attended. The main conclusions of the seminar were that there was urgent need for a positive and integrated manpower policy and that it should be operated by one central institution. A report on Manpower Policy, prepared by a committee of members of the National Industrial Economic Council and endorsed by the Council was accepted by the Government and published in July, 1964. In this report the necessity for an integrated manpower policy was stressed and indications given as to how such a policy might be developed. An Inter-departmental Committee was set up by the Government to examine and report on the administrative arrangements for implementing manpower policy and this Committee furnished a report in March, 1965. N.I.E.C. published comments on the Inter-departmental Committee's Report in July, 1965 in the course of which they advocated the dissociation of the

Employment Service from the Department of Social Welfare and recommended that a single agency should be responsible for all major manpower functions.

The next major step forward was a Government White Paper laid before the Oireachtas in October, 1965. I think it would be helpful if I were to list here the main elements in an active manpower policy as laid down in the White Paper —

- (a) the forecasting of changes which are likely to occur in the supply of, and demand for, labour so that measures for adaptation can be put in hands in good time;
- (b) arrangements for the training of workers and for the retraining of workers who have lost their jobs or whose skills need to be brought up to date or upgraded;
- (c) the provision of a suitable scheme of redundancy payments for workers;
- (d) the provision of a suitable scheme of financial assistance to unemployed workers who must leave their normal place of abode to take up jobs in areas where employment is available.
- (e) the development of the Employment Service so that it may be informed to the greatest extent practicable about the occurrence of vacancies and the availability of persons to fill them and thus be better able to give information and guidance on employment opportunities to persons seeking employment for the first time and to unemployed workers;
- (f) the assignment to one agency of overall control and direction so as to ensure a co-ordinated and coherent approach to the problem as a whole. This Agency would also be responsible for the formulation of policy in relation to the Employment Service.

The advancement of the programme set out in the Government White Paper became the responsibility of the Minister for Labour and his Department when the Department was established in July, 1966.

10. This brings me to the measures taken, and intended to be taken, to implement the programme on manpower policy set out in the Government White Paper and in describing these I will comment on some of the problems involved. I will deal with these matters under the headings of Manpower Forecasting, Industrial Training, The Employment Service and Redundancy and Resettlement Arrangements.

MANPOWER FORECASTING

11. It is intended to set up a Manpower Forecasting Unit in the Department to gather the data and develop the techniques necessary to make forecasts of future manpower demand and supply. We must have effective manpower forecasts if our growth plans are to be realistic. Forecasting of future occupation requirements is essential as a guide to the planning of educational and training programmes and to the development of other aspects of manpower policy, e.g. the redundancy and resettlement schemes

and the Employment Service. No forecasting method is absolute but we must try as best we can to anticipate changes in employment. We have to assess where employment is likely to decline and where new jobs are likely to occur, in what occupations demand is going to grow and for what jobs and for what skills is demand likely to decline.

The difficulty in the setting up of the Manpower Forecasting Unit has been the recruitment of expert personnel to run it. Such experts are in short supply everywhere and in order to recruit a suitable person the Department of Labour had to make very special efforts, including approaches to international organisations and other outside bodies. As recently announced by the Minister, it is hoped to make an appointment shortly. It is difficult to make firm plans on how forecasting should develop in Ireland in the absence of expert staff. A brief description of the scope and methods of manpower forecasting in other countries may give some insight into the problems involved.

It is usual in manpower forecasting to begin by calculating a total labour force projection on the basis of demographic analysis. This serves as a basis for the preparation of employment forecasts, showing the likely distribution of the total labour force between industries and occupations.

Manpower forecasts are classified according to the period over which the prediction is made, for example —

- Short-term Forecasts*, which refer to a date about a year ahead;
- Medium-term Forecasts*, which refer to a date about five years ahead;
- and
- Long-term Forecasts*, which refer to a date ten or more years ahead.

The administrators of manpower policy can take only limited measures to affect the position of the labour market as predicted by short-term forecasts. In practice medium-term forecasts have proved the most useful as a period of five years enables the competent authorities to adjust their training plans so as to meet the changing demand for certain skills. Long-term forecasts are suitable for the regulation of supply of highly qualified personnel such as scientists, engineers and doctors, for which the courses of specialised training are themselves of comparatively prolonged duration. It is the aim of most countries to prepare forecasts by industries which are followed by forecasts by occupation.

If in making a forecast it is assumed that the various influences on demand will continue in much the same way as in the past, this is called an unconditional forecast. If, on the other hand, a major change in conditions is assumed (as, for instance, a higher rate of economic growth being achieved) this is a conditional forecast. Several conditional forecasts could be prepared, each based on a particular assumption about the future course of economic development. This can be of great assistance to administrators in deciding which course is feasible..

An essential requirement for any forecasting process is that at the outset the existing imbalances of demand and supply of labour are known. Then, so that the necessary remedial measures may be taken, separate forecasts of demand and supply must be made. In both instances the forecasts can

be made in different ways and the most suitable approach to be adopted in individual cases must, as in all forecasting exercises, be determined by the circumstances of the particular situation..

Demand forecasts, for example, can be made by two main methods. Firstly, there is the inquiry method in which the forecast is based on information obtained from employers about possible future trends. This is regarded as probably the best method for short-term forecasts but is likely to be less reliable for long-term forecasts because of the greater likelihood in the long-term of divergences in the assumptions which employers are required to make. The second method is the statistical one which deduces from past trends in employment. Forecasts made under this method must have regard to changing economic influences and a variety of other factors.

The forecasting of labour supply is a field in which a great deal of research still remains to be done. It is accepted, however, that this aspect necessitates a statistical analysis of the present stock, losses through transfers to other occupations, mortality, retirement etc. and it may be expected that, as this branch of forecasting is further developed, even more refinements will evolve. Our position is further complicated by a fluctuating rate of emigration.

I have endeavoured to illustrate briefly the complications associated with the application of manpower forecasting techniques. A report in the O.E.C.D. Observer No 7 of December, 1963, of a meeting of manpower specialists held in Brussels makes the following comment:

“Forecasting future employment patterns is a herculean task, for account must be taken of a host of factors most of them changing rapidly and many of them interdependent or themselves functions of what happens to employment”.

Despite the difficulties, however, we realise that every effort must be made to devise and implement a system which is best suited to our circumstances as we recognise fully the great importance of manpower forecasting as an essential instrument for an effective manpower policy.

12. It might be appropriate at this point to refer to the pilot manpower survey in Drogheda carried out by the Department of Social Science, University College, Dublin for the Department of Labour. It originated from a suggestion made to NIEC (National Industrial Economic Council) that a study should be made to find out the true availability of labour as distinct from the figures shown by the live register of unemployed. The main objectives of the survey were—

to ascertain the educational and employment aspirations of school-leavers at all levels; to study employment trends and patterns of unemployment; to examine the availability of adult manpower; to study employers' needs; and to test the value of research for similar surveys in other areas.

Drogheda was chosen for the pilot survey as it was a town with a wide range of commercial and industrial activities and because it appeared to be at a stage of development to which other Irish towns aspire.

Many interesting points emerge from the survey. Indeed the matters covered in the report are so numerous and so varied it would not be feasible even to mention them all in a paper of this sort. However, I feel that I might usefully refer to some of the important conclusions and recommendations of the survey team as an indication of the wide scope of the exercise and of the type of results which surveys of this nature may be expected to produce.

A basic objective of a manpower survey is to assess the present and likely future trends of requirements for various categories of labour in the particular area being surveyed and the Drogheda survey report contained some very useful information on such trends in the Drogheda region. It revealed that the increasing demand for women production workers of all kinds was so great that it would outstrip the number available, that the employment position for boys and young men was unsatisfactory and that the prospects of employment for those who were unskilled or semi-skilled were not good and showed no sign of improvement. On the other hand, the survey found that the demand for skilled workers was rising and would require special measures if it is to be satisfied.

The report went on to pinpoint certain reasons why these imbalances in supply and demand existed and made a number of positive suggestions as to how the difficulties might be overcome. In the case of skilled men, for example, the survey team, while pointing to the growing shortage in this category, commented that the situation was artificial in the sense that sufficient boys were interested and qualified to enter training but were prevented from doing so by lack of suitable openings for such training. This finding led to the conclusion that special attention should be directed to improving training opportunities but the survey team was also able to recommend other measures to facilitate the placement of young persons in suitable employment, such as the establishment of an advisory service on careers for school-leavers and the development of a special youth employment service.

Apart from the specific recommendations which it made for the purpose of remedying problems related to particular categories of workers, the survey report suggested various methods by which the overall employment balance could be improved. Of course, some of the conclusions reached arose from the conditions in the Drogheda area itself but others – for example, the attitudes of young people to the question of migration – might be regarded as having a more general relevance to the whole country. Again, while some of the findings threw light on aspects which had not perhaps been adverted to before, others served to confirm impressions already held before the survey was carried out. One matter confirmed by the survey which is, I think, agreed to be of general application throughout the country and which was already very widely accepted is that the Employment Service arrangements are not operating satisfactorily. The improvement of the Employment Service is one of the principal aims of our manpower policy and I shall be dealing with it at greater length later in this paper. I mention it here merely to illustrate the value of regional

manpower surveys in highlighting defects which require to be remedied on a national scale..

13. The Department of Labour is carrying out a survey of manpower in the Waterford city area and the success of the Drogheda pilot scheme has strengthened the belief that this survey too will produce most useful results. It is expected that the survey will provide an estimate of the present manpower position in Waterford city, that it will give a basis for an assessment of the probable pattern of development in manpower supply in the future and will identify the relevant sociological factors which are likely to influence this supply. The project is of special interest in connection with the development of Waterford as an industrial growth centre and the location there of an industrial estate. A similar survey is now getting under way in Galway.

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

14. I now come to deal with training. A new Industrial Training Authority, An Chomhairle Oiliúna, with adequate powers to deal with all aspects of industrial and commercial training was recently established by the Minister under the Industrial Training Act, 1967. The Authority includes representatives of workers, employers and educational interests. Its function is to provide and to promote the provision of training for persons in any activity of industry or commerce, other than persons employed in professional occupations or in occupations of primary production in agriculture, horticulture and fishing.

The range of training to be covered by An Chomhairle Oiliúna will include: the training of apprentices; the retraining of adults to skilled level by accelerated vocational training methods; the training and retraining of operatives; the training of unemployed and redundant workers who have the aptitude to acquire new skills; refresher training for workers whose skills need to be improved or brought up-to-date; the training of agricultural workers for other occupations; advance training of workers for new industrial projects; the training, where necessary, of instructors, supervisors and technicians.

The Act provides that An Chomhairle Oiliúna may make grants or loans from monies voted to it by the Oireachtas to persons providing industrial training courses or other training facilities approved by An Chomhairle. In addition An Chomhairle may impose a levy on all employers in an industry. From the levies collected in a particular industry, grants could be paid to those employers who provide training for the industry, the grants being in proportion to the amount and quality of the training provided. An Chomhairle will also have power to provide training courses itself where it deems this to be necessary or it can promote the provision of training courses at the request of an industry.

The Apprenticeship Act, 1959, has been repealed by the Industrial Training Act, 1967, and the functions assigned to An Cheard Chomhairle under the 1959 Act have been transferred to An Chomhairle Oiliúna.

The Industrial Training Act also makes provision for the training of adults to skilled level by accelerated vocational training methods. This system of training may not be welcome by some trade unions or individual members of unions, because they fear that it will interfere with apprenticeship training, or tend to flood skilled trades with adult trainees. Such fears are groundless. The apprenticeship system will continue to be the principal method of producing skilled workers. The main drawback of the system is its inflexibility. It takes some years to produce skilled workers through the apprenticeship system and it cannot therefore cope with a situation where shortages in a particular trade suddenly emerge. Such shortages retard progress and are very damaging to the economy as a whole. In an expanding economy the establishment of new industries may be dependent on the availability of skilled workers at reasonably short notice, and, if there is a shortage of such workers, A.V.T. methods should be available. In such cases opportunities will be provided for workers who have the ability and aptitude to train for occupations for which they had not the opportunity to enter on leaving school. The nature of the training courses and the number of adults who will be trained in them will be determined by An Chomhairle Oiliúna, which as I have said is a representative body. Furthermore, as An Chomhairle will also be responsible for apprentice training it will be in a position to strike a balance between the number of skilled workers to be produced by apprenticeship and by A.V.T. methods. In these times of intense competition the development of our economy must not be halted through shortages of skills which have been artificially created. Moreover, there is a duty to ensure that every worker gets an opportunity, through training, of improving his skills and obtaining for himself the best possible position for which he is suitable and no worker should be prevented from doing the job for which he has been trained.

The provision of the training facilities which I have described is an ambitious but necessary objective for the achievement of industrial progress.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

15. One of the major tasks of the Department of Labour is to develop the placement and guidance functions of the Employment Service in order that it may be in a better position to give information, assistance and guidance both to persons seeking jobs for the first time and to unemployed and redundant workers. It is essential that the Service should have wide information about vacancies and about persons available to fill such vacancies. For this reason greater co-operation of employers and workers must be sought. Employers must, so far as practicable, be induced to notify the Service well in advance of likely changes in their requirements both as regards numbers and qualifications of workers and to seek the help of the Service in meeting redundancy problems and in filling vacancies if it is proposed to expand activities. Ideally, the primary purpose of the Employment Service should be to help workers to find suitable jobs and to help employers to find suitable workers. This will require the provision of

better premises, the development of attitudes in accord with the new functions, the collection and dissemination of more information about employment opportunities and prospects, and the provision of staff trained in up-to-date placement and guidance procedures. All this will require a substantial investment. The Minister for Labour considered that a review in depth of the organisation, structure and staffing of the Service should be undertaken so that policy decisions for the long-term future of the Service might be soundly-based. He commissioned the Institute of Public Administration to undertake this task. The Institute is being guided by a Steering Committee representative of the Department of Labour and the other Departments concerned as well as of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Federated Union of Employers. It is hoped that this review will be completed early in 1968.

While this review is being undertaken the Minister decided, as a short-term measure, to implement certain improvements in the Employment Service in a number of centres. Placement officers were selected and trained for the four Employment Exchanges in Dublin, and it is intended to appoint Placement Officers in the Exchanges in Cork, Galway and Waterford as soon as possible. The Minister also decided to appoint an Industrial Psychologist who will be responsible for the development of guidance work in the Employment Service and will work in close liaison with the Guidance Service for Schools being operated by the Department of Education. Arrangements for the recruitment of a Psychologist are in train.

The provision of information on careers is a necessary adjunct to the development of the placement and guidance functions of the Employment Service. While much valuable work had already been undertaken in the field of careers information by educationalists, voluntary organisations and individuals, there was a pressing need to provide for our young people more information on careers and for a centrally organised Careers Information Service. Such a Service has been established in the Department of Labour with the objective of providing a wide range of information on the careers and job opportunities existing in this country in the spheres of industry, commerce, agriculture and the professions. The task of providing this information within a short space of time is a formidable one. As a first step it was decided, therefore, to enlist the aid of Government Departments, State-sponsored bodies and various professional and other organisations who would be likely to have available basic information relating to various occupations. With the co-operation and assistance of these organisations it has been possible to prepare an initial and experimental series of leaflets containing basic information on approximately fifty of the more popular occupations. These leaflets were distributed in June last to the various Employment Offices, Schools and Libraries throughout the country. Additional leaflets are in course of preparation and these will be distributed in groups at intervals.

The first issue of leaflets has proved very popular and the demand for them has been heavy. The Department is now working on plans for further leaflets.

REDUNDANCY ARRANGEMENTS

16. Another important element of manpower policy is the provision of a national scheme of redundancy payments for workers. A Bill to give effect to the Government's proposals in this regard is at present before the Oireachtas. As industry gears itself to meet the challenge of the future and efforts are intensified in all fields of economic activity to avail fully of improved techniques and methods, changes in the pattern and structure of employment must inevitably occur in some areas of the economy. Indeed, change is inextricably linked with worthwhile economic progress, whether it be a change in attitudes, in organisation or in the tools and methods of production. And, while these changes should lead to an overall increase in employment they may – and probably will – cause some disemployment in some industries and in some areas. This disemployment should not result in large-scale redundancies, but it will involve a change of employment for some workers with, possibly, a period of unemployment intervening.

It is to protect the interests of workers in these circumstances and to minimise as far as practicable the hardships arising that a redundancy payments scheme has been made an integral part of the Government's manpower policy.

So far as workers' interests are concerned, there are two aspects of redundancy that require to be considered. Firstly, there is the right to compensation for the loss of employment, the amount of which compensation should, in fairness, be related to the length of service spent in the employment. This Bill recognises the principle that, over the years, a worker builds up certain rights in his job, and if he is deprived of these rights by circumstances outside his control, that he ought to be compensated. This will give the worker a new status in relation to his job and, in the long run, will make for better relations between managements and workers. Secondly there is the need for some continuing financial assistance to enable a worker to maintain as far as possible his living standard during a period of unemployment that may follow on redundancy. From the worker's point of view, the second consideration would seem to be the more important and the main emphasis in the Bill is on a continuing weekly payment, although provision is included for a lump-sum payment as well.

The main provisions of the Redundancy Payments Bill are—

- (1) A qualified worker who is discharged because of redundancy will, if certain conditions are fulfilled, be entitled to redundancy payments, which will consist of —
 - (a) a lump-sum payment, and
 - (b) a weekly payment.
- (2) The lump-sum will be payable by the employer direct to the worker and the amount of the payment will be a half-week's pay for each year of service up to 41 years of age and one week's pay for each year of service over that age.
- (3) The maximum lump-sum payment will be the equivalent of twenty weeks pay.

- (4) The weekly payment will be contingent on unemployment and will be paid out of a special fund which will be financed by contributions payable by employers and workers. This payment will amount to 50% of a person's normal pre-redundancy weekly pay and will continue for at least one week for each year of service. It will be payable in addition to any Unemployment or other Social Welfare benefit due, subject to a maximum amount of 90% of pre-redundancy pay.
- (5) An employer who makes a lump-sum payment to a worker will be entitled to a rebate of 50%, which in certain circumstances may be increased to 65%, of the lump-sum. These rebates will be paid out of the Fund.
- (6) The qualifying period of service for a redundancy payment will be four years with the same employer.

The scheme will apply to all workers who are insured for all benefits under the Social Welfare Act. This means that almost all clerical workers with incomes of less than £1,200 a year and almost all manual workers will be covered with the exception of workers under 16 years or over 70 years of age. There are, of course, some workers below the £1,200 limit who, because of the permanent and pensionable nature of their employment, are not insured for all benefits under the Social Welfare Acts. These will not come within the scope of the scheme.

There may be some classes of workers for whom the general scheme would be unsuitable. It is accordingly provided in the Bill that the Minister will have power, following consultations with the employer and worker interests concerned, to introduce special schemes more suited to the needs of any categories of workers for whom the general scheme may be found to be unsuitable. The preparation of special schemes for the building industry and for dock workers and agricultural workers is, in fact, already under examination in consultation with representatives of the employers and workers concerned.

RESETTLEMENT ALLOWANCES

17. Of special interest in relation to manpower policy is the provision in the Redundancy Payments Bill for the introduction of a scheme of financial assistance to unemployed workers who must leave their normal place of abode to take up jobs in areas where employment is available. The object of this scheme is to encourage a desirable degree of geographical mobility of labour in the interest of national economic development, and it will cover such matters as the payment of transport costs, removal expenses and lodging allowances. It will be readily appreciated that, in the context of an economic policy which envisages the creation of new industrial areas, a scheme of resettlement allowances such as is proposed is essential as well as being socially desirable.

CONSULTATION PROCEDURE

18. It is obviously desirable that the people likely to be affected directly by manpower policy viz. workers and employers should be closely

associated with its development. A Manpower Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of a senior officer of the Department of Labour and representative of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and the Federated Union of Employers (FUE) has been established to advise on the preparation and implementation of various aspects of policy. This Committee has done very valuable work particularly in regard to the preparation of the redundancy payments and resettlement schemes. The ICTU and FUE are also represented on the Steering Committee reviewing the question of the development of the Employment Service. A special Working Party representative of employers and workers reviewed the Industrial Training Bill before it was passed by the Oireachtas and a number of worthwhile amendments were agreed. As I mentioned earlier, An Chomhairle Oiliúna, the new training authority, contains representatives of employers and workers. I think I can say both sides in industry are reasonably satisfied with the procedures for consultation on manpower policy, and that their co-operation has been of considerable value to the Minister in preparing many of the schemes which I have described.

Manpower policy does not exist in a vacuum. It can affect, and be affected by, other economic and social policies. It is clear, for instance, that it would be unwise to try, by means of retraining and resettlement schemes, to provide labour for expanding industries in a development area without ensuring that housing, schools and other facilities were adequate for the increased population. An Inter-Departmental Committee of Manpower Policy has been established to co-ordinate the activities of the various Departments and other agencies involved. This Committee is adequate for present purposes but as manpower policy develops and as new problems and new approaches emerge, it may be necessary to review the present arrangement with a view to strengthening this co-ordination machinery.

CONCLUSION

19. Manpower policy in this country is still in its formative years, and it is going to take a considerable time, a good deal of hard work, and fairly substantial expenditure before it becomes fully effective. It aims at allowing individual humans to develop their potentialities fully; at minimising hardships which may be involved for workers as a result of economic and technological change; and at contributing towards the reduction of unemployment and emigration. In regard to the latter point, it can help most by producing a highly skilled, mobile and adaptable labour force which is essential for the development of existing, and for the attraction of new, industries. The measures for training and retraining, for redundancy payments, for resettlement allowances, and for better placement and guidance facilities which I have described should, when fully developed, raise standards of skill, promote occupational and geographical mobility, and reduce resistance to change in our labour force. If an active manpower policy produces these effects and, at the same time, contributes towards the development of workers as individuals, the time, effort and money spent on its development will, indeed, have been well spent.

DISCUSSION

Dr. Conor Ward, proposing the vote of thanks to Mr. Agnew, said that manpower policy has been one of the most striking achievements in socio-economic provision in this country in recent years. Working in a field where little had been done elsewhere which could serve as a guideline and in which almost everything had to be done in this country the Department of Labour has rapidly developed an integrated programme of administrative reorganization, legislation and appropriate research for which it deserved congratulations.

One of the most important features of that policy, Dr. Ward continued, was the consultation procedure, including both the formal arrangements for discussions with various groups and the systematic attempt to use social survey techniques to ascertain the realities of the actual situation and the experience, attitudes, wishes and patterns of behaviour of those involved in the policy.

The ideal of the social researcher is to be systematic and objective, he said. He reports the results of his surveys and perhaps notes their implications. New and startling information sometimes emerges, but more often the contribution of social research to social administration is that partly-known facts and half-forgotten assumptions are presented in a systematic, objective form in which they can more easily be analysed precisely and discussed unemotionally.

D. J. McAuley: I would like to associate myself with the remarks made by Fr. Ward and Mr. McCarthy and congratulate Mr. Agnew on his paper on Manpower Policy. He has given us a comprehensive survey of the policies which will be pursued and the means of integrating them. He mentioned that both sides of industry had co-operated in the formulation of these policies but obviously the most difficult part of the exercise, implementation, has yet to be undertaken. I hope the Department of Labour will receive the same degree of co-operation at local level in implementing the policies outlined as has already taken place at national level in their general formulation. The involvement of both sides of industry and other community organisations at local level is necessary for success.

One aspect of manpower policy which was not stressed by Mr. Agnew concerns the change which has taken place in the direction of efforts to secure a higher level of employment through industrialisation. Until recently it appeared that in promoting industry the emphasis was on bringing jobs to workers in areas where there was a surplus or under-utilisation of labour. The emphasis has now changed with the decision to set up a limited number of centres where the efforts to establish new industries would be concentrated. This is important from the point of view of manpower policy in so far as it means pursuing policies which will induce workers to come to the areas of development.

I would like to mention that in the context of the European Economic Community a national manpower policy will have to be consistent with the aims and objects of the social policies of the EEC. Heretofore emphasis

in the EEC has been on commercial policies but it can be expected that when the last reduction in external tariffs between member states of the Community takes place next year greater emphasis will be placed on the social objectives laid down in the Treaty of Rome. This country will have to fall in line with these policies if and when it becomes a member of the Community. For instance, it will have to co-operate in the policies concerning vocational training. Not much progress has been made in this area by the EEC so far but there are signs that the tempo will quicken. Already a European Charter has been drafted for the trade of fitter. This is aimed at setting international standards for the training of this class of operative. Similar Charters for the building trades and metal working industries are under consideration. Another aspect of EEC membership which is relevant to manpower policy concerns the free movement of workers. The final stage of the EEC's programme on this matter will probably come into force on the 1st July next. From that date there will be a responsibility on member states to ensure that there is complete parity between nationals and non-nationals with regard to job opportunities, wages, conditions of employment and social security. Workers will be able to move freely between member states of the Community and take up employment when offered work. It is unlikely, however, that there would be any significant inflow or outflow of workers between Ireland and EEC member states. In 1964 only about 300 persons left Ireland to take up employment or residence in the EEC and the number of citizens of member states of the EEC which were granted work permits to take up jobs in this country was in the region of 700. As in the past the major flow of labour will be from this country to Britain. It might also be worth mentioning at this point that aid from the European Social Fund could assist in developing an integrated manpower policy in this country. Under existing EEC regulations applications can be made by member states for a refund of half the cost of re-training and resettling workers. It is fairly obvious from what Mr. Agnew has said that the Redundancy Payments Act which comes into force next January has been prepared with a view to satisfying the requirements of the European Social Fund in the event of this country joining the Community. It would also appear probable that the functions of the Fund might be extended in the future, even greater emphasis being given to the problems of countries which are in the course of economic development.

These remarks may not appear relevant just at this time but it is obviously important since an application to join the EEC has been made that all future economic and social policies should be prepared in such a way that they would be incompatible with membership of the EEC or a hindrance to entry. It is encouraging to know that manpower policies have been prepared with our possible future position in Europe clearly in mind.

In conclusion I would again like to express my appreciation of the survey made by Mr. Agnew. I hope it will be studied very widely.

Dr. R. C. Geary: As I understand Mr. McCarthy's concluding remarks, I am in complete agreement with him. Social administration in future should be conducted in a spirit of Charity (with a capital C). Each indivi-

dual in the State will be treated as a special case, as a matter of right. For instance, if Pat Murphy has the misfortune to be unemployed and attends the Local Office of the Department of Social Welfare he will cease to be a cypher, a "married man with three dependent children", but perhaps a man with his own problem to be dealt with on the spot by an almoner service. I am not suggesting that the service of the Department of Social welfare is not as kindly as it can be within existing rules. Of course we would want to know what such a personal service would cost this small, rather poor, country and clearly we shall have to work harder and more efficiently to be able to afford it. A civil service which is truly civil will be worth working for.

I am unhappy about Mr. Agnew's bracketing of emigration and unemployment, in the context of an objective of his Department being to reduce both, implying that both are "evils" to be eradicated. There can be no doubt about unemployment of those able and willing to work (leaving aside the "labour pool" argument). But emigration is quite a different matter. When, oh when, will this country recognise emigration as a gigantic fact and realise all that such recognition implies? Why should we be shamefaced about emigration? As Mr. McAuley has suggested, migration must become part of our way of life if and when we enter the Common Market. We should be the last country in the world to object to immigration and we should be glad when other countries reciprocate by hiring our people. I am tempted to call attention egregiously to my own writings down the years on emigration but I mercifully refrain, Mr. President, at this late hour. Our thinking of the Irish social problem will never be right until we make the freedom and general good of the individual our paramount aim, the individual and not the State, or even the family.

The lecture has referred to manpower forecasting. There is not a little danger that in the institution of the Department of Labour manpower forecasting will be regarded as a problem in isolation of placing the manpower cart before the economic horse. In my opinion manpower should be made part of a general model of the economy. The demographic elements should be subordinate to purely economic elements, GNP, imports, exports and the rest for the reason, amongst others, that we will have no shortage of manpower *in toto* in future though we will have to train or to import particular skills: set up first a forecasting model with economic variables and then ascertain what manpower in the different categories is required. In The Economic and Social Research Institute we have considerable experience in, and knowledge of, this field. Forecasting, I think I may say, is our main preoccupation. Set up by the generosity of the Ford Foundation, the Institute is now financed entirely by the Irish Government. We are not sufficiently consulted by Government Departments. We are, it is true, an academic institution, but with a social conscience. Departments cannot ignore Academe in this technological age. And we will charge the Government far less (if anything at all) than foreign experts who are notoriously expensive, and who invariably come to us anyway at some stage in their peregrinations.

Commenting on the main points raised during the discussion, *Mr. Agnew* said:

1. There was no question of treating workers as ciphers or having an impersonal, institutional approach towards manpower policy. The fact was that the primary aim of manpower policy was to enable workers to develop as individuals and the human angle would loom large in the minds of everybody connected with the implementation of manpower policy. He thought this was clear from his paper.

2. He could perhaps have stressed more forcefully in his paper that the various measures which he had described were not disconnected but formed integral parts of a coherent, co-ordinated manpower policy.

3. The Department was convinced that the successful implementation of manpower policy demanded the involvement of all concerned at local level. It was planned to seek co-operation at local level at the earliest practicable date. This matter had been discussed fully by the Manpower Advisory Committee. The conclusion had been reached that it would be a mistake to set up local committees until they could be properly serviced. There was the danger otherwise that initial enthusiasm would be dissipated and and would be difficult to re-awaken.

4. As regards forecasting, the position was that demographic forecasts and labour force projections would continue to be prepared by the Central Statistics Office. The Economic Development Branch of the Department of Finance would give break-downs of the labour force by major sectors of activity. It would be a job for the Department of Labour to try to break these down as between industries and occupations on a national, regional and local basis, Despite the fact that the appointment of an expert is still awaited, quite a substantial amount of work in relation to forecasting is going ahead. An attempt is being made to analyse the live register figures to determine in more detail the actual numbers of people available for employment with an indication of their qualifications. Manpower Surveys were under way in Waterford and Galway, and other work which would be useful in relation to forecasting was in hands. He did not think that it would be very fruitful to base forecasts on data collected through enquiries at local level although such information could be of assistance to the fore-caster. This had been tried elsewhere with disappointing results. He agreed with the points that Mr. Linehan had made on this subject. There had been consultation with the former Director of The Economic and Social Research Institute about forecasting and the recruitment of an expert and the Department of Labour had made a number of suggestions to the Institute for research work.

5. As regards a suggestion that training, guidance and placement facilities should be available to workers who intended to emigrate, this would cut across present Government policy and he did not feel that it would be proper for him to comment.

6. An Chomhairle Oiliúna aims to work in close consultation with the Department of Education and other educational authorities. It would avoid duplicating courses provided by educational or other authorities. In fact, before it set up a new course An Chomhairle had to satisfy itself

that there was not a suitable existing course available. Furthermore, An Chomhairle would use to the fullest extent existing facilities for training before providing new training facilities itself. However, it was agreed by all concerned that there was such a vast job to be done in the training field that the activities of educational and other authorities needed to be supplemented by further facilities which would be provided by An Chomhairle.