

Some Results from Pilot Surveys of Attitudes, Values and Perceptions of Socio-Institutional Structures in Ireland

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AN earlier paper¹ reported the results of a programme of exploratory work carried out as a basis upon which to initiate a research programme into attitudes, values, and social structures associated with economic and social development, paying particular attention to rural Ireland. Following that work, a series of pilot studies was initiated to examine social attitudes, feelings about society and the way it should and does operate, and perceptions of the structure of society. It was intended that these pilot studies would be followed by a main survey which would provide large enough numbers to permit confident generalisation about sub-groups of the population. In this we would have concentrated on topics which seemed from the pilot work to be the most important, and we would have modified some of the questions used in the pilot and extended the coverage of some of the topics. Unfortunately, before this survey could be carried out, financial stringency and other work intervened, with the result that it now seems unlikely that the proposed large-scale survey will be carried out in the foreseeable future. The data presented here are therefore made available in the hope that they will stimulate others to carry out further inquiries in this area. It is hoped that the model which led to these topics being studied in the way that they were will also be available shortly.

The data to be reported were collected in the course of three pilot studies, each based on a quota sample of about 70 informants. The samples were, as far as possible, nationally representative.

1. Raven, J. and Molloy, E. *Report on Exploratory work carried out prior to initiating a Programme of Research into Values, Attitudes and Social Structures Associated with the Development of Different Types of Society*. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute Memorandum Series. No. 73, 1969.

It is, of course, impossible to draw firm conclusions from data based on such small numbers; and, in particular, it is difficult to know exactly what to make of apparently contradictory data where these arise from questions addressed to different samples of informants. Nevertheless, on the whole, the data are highly consistent (even though they were obtained on different occasions from different samples of people) and highly suggestive. If, as we suspect, it is of sufficient interest to generate controversy, the rational response to this is not argument about the representativeness of the present samples, but the initiation of further work designed to arrive at firmer conclusions, involving both larger samples and a more adequate selection of attitudes in relation to some of the topics covered.

We deal first with attitudes concerned with money, materialism, progress, and the justice of society; move on to feelings about fatalism and efficacy, and the perceived locus of control over what happens in society; and conclude with a discussion of attitudes concerned with trustworthiness, leadership and cooperativeness.

Concern with Money, Progress, Materialism, Doing Well

During our exploratory work we gained an impression of a population suffering from a major conflict in this area: on the one hand, they would say they wished to avoid materialism; on the other hand, the first thing they would often ask in connection with whether they would undertake some task was, "What's in it for me?" Farming problems were not viewed as tasks which were intrinsically interesting to tackle: only the profitability mattered. In this there seemed to be a marked contrast to Oeser and Emery's Australian results.²

Furthermore, although many, early in the interview, disclaimed any interest in materialism, they would later go on to say that, if they lived their lives over again, they would not follow the same course. And why not? Because they wanted "more home comforts"—cookers, fridges, washing machines and cars.

Another reason for wishing to pursue this matter was for the insight which might be gained into the psychological background to cultural changes such as those indexed by economic indicators. Numerous hypotheses have been advanced concerning the relationships between these things. We therefore included some questions dealing with attitudes which appeared to be relevant to the debate in our pilot studies and hoped to relate these to significant behavioural consequences which might summate to produce important social effects in the main study.

We therefore included some questions on these topics in our pilots and hoped to combine these with measures of behaviour in our main study.

We give below the questions we asked and the *percentaged* frequency distributions: the number of respondents in pilots A, B and C respectively was 67, 72 and 71. The letters adjacent to the question numbers indicate the pilot from which the data are derived.

2. Oeser, O. A. and Emery, F. E. *Information, Decision, and Action*. University of Melbourne Press, 1958.

C. 31. *How important is to you to accumulate more money and possessions?*

Very important	19	} 64
Of considerable importance .. .	45	
Of very little importance ...	27	
Of no importance whatsoever .. .	6	
Other .. .	3	

C. 32 (a). *When you read about prosperous people or countries how strongly do you wish to see prosperity on the same scale in Ireland?*

Do you:

Wish very strongly to see such prosperity here? .. .	48	} 97
Wish to see an increase in prosperity but not on the same scale? .. .	49	
Or do you not wish to see such prosperity here at all? .. .	1	
Other .. .	2	

(b) *What sort of prosperity had you in mind?*

Material goods, wealth .. .	13
Economic prosperity .. .	11
Industrial prosperity: better finish to goods .. .	12
Higher standard of living, particularly for the lower paid workers .. .	11
Better housing and social welfare benefits .. .	14
Higher incomes .. .	18
Other .. .	21

A. 14. *What changes would you like to see in your community?*

Better recreation facilities .. .	41	} 71
Improved amenities, e.g. telephones, trees .. .	30	
Better community relations .. .	14	
More provision for old people .. .	14	
Improved education system .. .	8	
More industry .. .	6	
Better health services .. .	6	
Law and order improved .. .	6	
Fairer taxation .. .	4	
Bring down cost of living .. .	3	
Other .. .	20	

A. 28. *Speaking generally, what are the things about this country that you are most proud of as an Irish man or woman?*

General progress, e.g., industrial advancement, keeping up with Great Britain; new airport; Aer Lingus planes; good standard of living; improved housing	47
Natural beauty	41
Religion and morality: tradition of loyalty to the church; Christian beliefs; lack of discrimination in job or religion; ability to withstand materialistic pressures	39
Character of the Irish people: friendly, independent, peace-loving, slower, relaxed pace of life	32
Law and order: freedom of expression and movement, peace of mind; free from riots; drug addiction being properly dealt with, tolerant country	25
Good, fair, democratic government, ability of government officials; government sponsored bodies, e.g. CTT	16
International standing: peace keeping force in UN, international mediator	14
Irish culture: language, tradition, songs, music	14
Welfare services	7
National sports	6

It would seem, therefore, that although we do not know how Ireland compares with other countries, there is a fairly high degree of concern with money and the things it will buy. Nevertheless, there are hints in the answers to the last question that some have reservations about this: the emphasis on material progress evident in the first group of answers does not square well with the emphasis on lack of materialism and an easy-going life evident in codes three and four.

Are people prepared to put in extra work to get these possessions on an individual basis?

29. *How often do you give up leisure time in order to earn more money with which to buy things for your home?*

Often	16
Occasionally	34
Seldom	13
Never	36

It would seem that they are: but there are problems. In the first place one is likely not to get a fair reward for one's efforts: ..

And all-in-all there is little to choose between getting on and staying in the same place:

C. 27. *Do you think that, in general:*

More of the people who get on in life are happier than those who don't get on?	31
That they are about the same?	28
That less of those who get on are happier than those that don't get on?	29
That far less of the people who get on are happier?	12

Conclusion

It seems that there is a very high level of concern with money and the things it will buy. However, many feel they are exploited and not fairly rewarded for their efforts. They feel also that businessmen make too much profit. So their concern with money may well lead to attempts to increase their own share of *current* wealth, rather than to a higher level of concern about, and increased efforts to increase, the overall level of economic growth.

From the point of view of the overall study it is unfortunate that our pilots were discontinued before we had collected information on such things as interest in solving problems for their own sake. As I have indicated, one of our main hypotheses was that attitudes of this sort would be those most likely to lead to economic growth.

A Note on Survey Design

Before moving on I would like to draw attention to the problem of making sure that all the important aspects of an issue of this sort have been properly sampled in one's survey. Had we been content with only one question on this subject in our interview we would not have gained the degree of insight and depth of perspective that we now have—an insight which we would have extended had the other data we had planned to gather from further pilot studies become available, and had we been able to go on to a large-scale survey in order to relate these things to their consequences. I may also draw attention to the use of an analysis of pilot data to suggest further topics which appear to merit study. It would seem, from the results so far presented, essential to invent some means of investigating in more detail the psychological conflicts associated with this issue. People cannot be expected to work happily and effectively if they feel they are going against their own best interests, their own nature, God's law, and the interests of society.

More generally, one would envisage that the value of research of this sort, in the long run, would be to provide people with the information they need if they are to make more informed decisions concerning the desirability of various

courses of action. In other words, we would like to be able to provide people with much more information about the real, social and personal consequences of holding different values and attitudes, of pursuing different life-goals, and of organising society in different ways.

How Just is Irish Society?

Apart from the facts that the financial recognition and rewards meted out by the society are unjust and that getting on is felt to be as much a function of who one knows as of knowledge and ability; the society is felt to be extraordinarily just:

C. 26. *Do you think that in Ireland, people who put a lot of effort into their work:*

Generally get the recognition they deserve?	27
Do not generally get the recognition they deserve?	42
Or hardly ever get the recognition they deserve?	28
Other	3
	} 70

B. 25. *Some people say that getting on in this country is dependent not on what you know but on who you know. How often do you think this is true?*

Is it:

Always true of people who get on?	16
Usually true of people who get on?	36
Sometimes true of people who get on?	41
Never true of people who get on?	6
Other	1
	} 47

And, all in all, the society seems to be fairly just:

A. 22. *If you had some trouble with the police; a traffic violation maybe, or being accused of a minor offence; do you think you would be given equal treatment?*

Would you:

Always be treated justly, that is, as well as anyone else?	58
Usually be treated justly?	30
Occasionally be treated justly?	4
Hardly ever be treated justly?	8
	} 88

A. 23. *Some people say that many judges in our courts base their decisions, not on justice, but on politics.*

What proportion of judges in our courts would you say do this?

Three-quarters or more	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
About half	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
A quarter or less?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	69
Other	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8

General Attitudes to Authority

There is an enormous emphasis on respect for and obedience to authority. Unquestioning obedience is highly valued in young people.

B. 22. *Should there be more emphasis at present on children learning to respect and obey authority?*

Do you think there should be:

More emphasis?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	85
Is there sufficient emphasis?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Should there be much less emphasis?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5

B. 23. *Do you think that a person who always obeys rules and laws is to be:*

Highly commended?	37
Is just normal?	42
Is not really commendable?	19
Other	2

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B. 25. *How important do you think it is for children to do what their fathers say without question?*

Is it:

Very important to obey without question?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	39
Fairly important to do this?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	42
Of little importance to do this?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Or is it very important for children to question what their fathers say?	16

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B. 27. *How much obligation or duty does a young man have to obey old people?*

Does he have:

Much obligation?	15
Some obligation?	60
Little obligation?	21
No obligation at all?	4

However, apparently, it should still be possible for young people to discuss things on equal terms with their elders and to have some influence in family decisions.

B. 26. *How important do you think it is for children, aged about ten, to be able to discuss things on equal terms with their parents?*

Do you consider it:

Very important for children of this age to be able to do this?	36	} 60
Fairly important?	24	
Not very important for them to be able to do this?	34	
Very important for children of this age not to discuss things on equal terms with parents?	16	

B. 33. *Returning to our questions on children; in general, how much voice do you think children of sixteen should have in family decisions?*

Do you think that they:

Should have the same influence on decisions as older members of the family?	8
Should have some influence?	88
That they should not have any voice in family decisions?	4

It would appear that although authority should not be questioned, and no active steps should be taken to influence it, it should do what is good and right without influence, and should take steps to inform itself about the views of others. We will find this pattern replicated at a more macroscopic level in relation to civil processes.

Fatalism and Pawn-like Nature of Man

We have seen that in Ireland people are not agreed about whether "getting on" is associated with happiness: there was an equal balance of opinion in either

direction, and about a third of those surveyed said that those who got on were as happy as those who did not. That was in a context of financial success.

In a context of activism it would appear that moderate degrees of activism are thought to be associated with maximum happiness, but complete passivity is thought to be unlikely to lead to happiness:

C. 3. *Do you think you are most likely to be happy if:*

You try to be content with what comes your way and don't expect too much out of life?	7
Are you usually content with what comes but make occasional efforts to get things you want?	22
Usually make efforts to obtain things you want, but are sometimes content with what comes?	48
Or always set out to get what you want?	22
Other	1

} 70

In addition, although a large minority of people thought that it was important for children to learn that there was not much they could do about their fate, the majority felt that it was important for children to learn to take active steps to do something about it:

C. 1. *How important is it for children to learn early in life that there isn't much you can do about the way things are going to turn out?*

Is it:

Very important for children to learn this?	16
Fairly important for children to learn this?	19
Not really important?	16
Or is it very important for children <i>not</i> to learn this?	48
Other	1

An even higher proportion thought that people should not accept their fate:

C. 2. *How strongly do you agree that when a man is born, the success he's going to have is already in the cards, so he might as well accept it and not fight against it?*

Do you:

Strongly agree that this is so?	5
Agree somewhat?	15
Disagree somewhat?	20
Strongly disagree?	60

} 80

Furthermore people are not born lazy and, if people don't get on, it's their own fault rather than the fault of the system:

B. 43. *Would you say that:*

Most people are basically active?	21
That some are active and some lazy?	71
That most people are lazy and have to be goaded into activity?	8

B. 42. *It has been said that most poor people stay poor because they don't care enough to try to improve themselves.*

Do you:

Think this is true of nearly all poor people?	7
Think it is true of many poor people?	64
Do you think it is not true of many poor people at all?	29

A small majority think that man will one day bring most of the previously capricious factors which controlled his destiny under control:

C. 34. *Some people say that men's lives will always be at the mercy of things that they can never understand or control such as the weather, plagues, food shortages and disease. How likely do you think it is that men will one day be able to control such things?*

Is it:

Certain?	9	} 53
Very likely?	13	
Fairly likely?	31	
Very unlikely?	46	
Other	1	

They feel that such developments in the past have, on the whole, been beneficial and are unlikely to end in disaster in the future:

C. 35. *On the whole, how beneficial do you think the developments in science, industry and the organisation of society over the last 20 years have been?*

Have they been:

Entirely beneficial to mankind?	22	} 89
Considerably beneficial?	67	
Somewhat detrimental?	10	
Entirely detrimental to mankind?	1	

- C. 33. *How likely is man's attempt to understand and control the world to end in disaster?*

Is it:

Certain to do so?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Fairly likely to do so?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34
Not very likely to do so?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	43
Or will this attempt certainly not end in disaster?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Other	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3

} 87

Few think that there are supernatural forces at work, which it will not be possible to understand:

- C. 22. *It has been said that in spite of modern knowledge some people are able to harm others and bring them bad luck through something like magic. How true is this?*

Very true	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Partly true	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Don't really know	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24
Very untrue	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	63

However, once religion is specifically introduced people feel constrained to acknowledge its efficacy:

- C. 21. *Suppose a man's wife is gravely ill. He obtains the best possible medical care and he also prays. She finally recovers. Which do you think was more important in her recovery, prayer or medical care?*

Prayer	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Medical care	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Both	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	75

In conclusion we seem to have a population which believes in active control over its destiny. We will turn in a later section to questions dealing with willingness to take personal responsibility for initiating activities designed to improve the environment. What one can say from this data is that there does not appear to be any widespread belief that it is wrong to take steps to control the future or what happens to one, or that it will lead to unhappiness. Thus if there appears to be a low level of such activity it must be attributed to other causes—such as having no faith that individual acts will add up, to not perceiving anything

The most popular answer was forming a working group—an answer which in fact avoided personal responsibility.

The possibility that avoidance of personal responsibility may be a major factor in the situation is strengthened by the answers to the next two questions. One would expect people who wanted to take personal responsibility to want the credit for it: the population interviewed did not appear to want this:

C. 14. *How much do you dislike sharing the credit of the achievement with others, even if they have contributed to it just as you have yourself?*

Do you:

Very much resent sharing credit?	..	..	..	..	..	3
Find yourself resenting this somewhat?	..	..	..	..	..	3
Not really care one way or the other?	..	..	..	..	..	24
Or do you enjoy sharing credit with others?	..	..	..	..	..	69
Other	..	..	..	..	..	1

And they were not even very happy about the idea of standing for a committee:

(b) *How would you feel about standing for a local committee? Would you be:*

Very willing to stand?	..	..	..	..	..	17
Not very willing, but if necessary would stand?	..	..	..	..	..	53
Very unwilling to stand?	..	..	..	..	..	30

It was not that they felt that the action would not be successful if it was mounted:

(c) *How likely do you think it would be that you would succeed?*

Would it be:

Very likely?	10	} 48
Fairly likely?	..	..	..	..	..	..	38
Not very likely?	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Very unlikely	..	..	..	..	..	..	8

Although it may have something to do with their own feelings of ability to understand the relevant issues:

- A. 17. *Some people say that politics and government are so complicated that the average man cannot understand what is going on.*

In general, do you:

Strongly agree?	38	}72
Agree somewhat?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34
Disagree somewhat?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Strongly disagree?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12

- A. 18. *Thinking of the important national and international issues facing the country, how well do you think you can understand them:*

Very well?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Fairly well?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	58
Not very well?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
That they are very difficult to understand?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8

- A. 19. *How about local issues in this town/part of the country? How well do you understand them?*

Do you understand them:

Very well?	50	}78
Fairly well?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	28
Not very well?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
Are they very difficult to understand?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1

- A. 16. *We know that the ordinary person has many problems that take his time. In view of this what part do you think the ordinary person ought to play in the local affairs of his town or district?*

1. Support local committees?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	59
2. Help create a better community spirit?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23
3. Form groups?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
4. Let T.D.'s or councillors know your feelings?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
5. Keep informed of national and local affairs?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
6. Vote conscientiously?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
7. Perform jobs more efficiently?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
8. Other	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3

These results are consistent with the widespread feeling of inability to influence local and national government found in the survey of adults' civic attitudes. With

regard to local affairs it seems that the most one should do is to give support to committees. One should not actually become a member or take active steps to set up structures to deal with the problems of which one is aware.

Beliefs About Agencies Controlling Development

We have seen that the factors controlling development are not thought to be beyond the control of man; indeed our respondents felt that every effort should be made to encourage children to take control of their destinies. Yet people themselves felt that they could do relatively little to influence the course of development or even the individual situation in which they found themselves. They were even less willing to take personal responsibility for activity.

Who then, do they think controls the course of national development? In the main survey of civic attitudes informants were asked how important the ordinary people, the government, civil servants, international industrialists, bankers and international economics were in determining what happens to the country and how it develops.

The percentage thinking each very important is given below;

What the government does	..	..	..	83
Ordinary people	..	..	..	61
Bankers	..	..	..	46
International industrialists	..	..	..	41
International economics	..	..	..	39
Civil servants	..	..	..	38

It would seem that civil servants, and even the exploitative businessmen, don't have all that much influence. The government does have control. Furthermore, unlike the money-grabbers, the government is thought to have a highly positive effect:

- A. 6. *On the whole, do the activities of the national Government tend to improve conditions in this country, or would we be better off without them?*

Do you think that they:

Tend to improve conditions?	..	..	..	..	77
Do not make much difference one way or another?	..	..	..	..	7
That we would be better off without them?	..	..	..	..	16

Nevertheless, it does tend, on balance, to help the rich rather more than the poor, although that is far from being the opinion of the overwhelming majority :

- A. 26. *How often do you think that the Government helps rich people more than it does poor people?*

Do you think that it:

Always helps the rich more than the poor?	21	} 58
Usually helps the rich more than the poor?	..	..	..	37
Usually helps the poor more than the rich?	..	..	..	24
Always helps the poor more than the rich?	..	..	..	7
Other	

Who then, determines what the government does and in whose interests does it act?

From the results of the main survey³ it is clear that a substantial majority feel that politicians pay little attention to the opinions of ordinary people:

In your opinion, how much attention do politicians pay to the opinions of ordinary people?

A great deal	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
A considerable amount	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
Only a little	..	..	..	..	..	..	52
None	..	..	..	..	..	..	21

- A. 1. (a) *How much more influence do you think senior civil servants have over decisions in the Dáil than people who are not senior civil servants?*

Do you think that they have:

A great deal more influence?	53	} 80
Somewhat more influence?	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
Just the same influence?	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Other	..	..	..	..	..	..	3

- (b) *And how do senior civil servants and T.D.'s compare?*

Do you think that:

The views of civil servants have a great deal more influence on what happens in the Dáil than the views of the T.D.'s?	..	17	} 34
That the views of civil servants have somewhat more influence than the views of T.D.'s?	..	17	

3. *The National Survey of Adults' Civic Attitudes*. Sample size: 1,226.

That the views of T.D.'s have somewhat more influence than the views of civil servants?	32
That the views of T.D.'s have much more influence on what happens than the views of civil servants?	30
Other	4

(c) *How much more influence do you think someone who is a friend or a relative of a T.D. has over decisions in the Dáil than someone who is not a relative or friend of a T.D.?*

Do you think that they have:

A great deal more influence?	42	} 73
Somewhat more influence?	31	
Just the same influence?	24	
Other	3	

(d) *Now, we've been comparing one group with another so far. How much influence do you think ordinary people have on what happens in the Dáil?*

Do you think they have:

A great deal of influence?	4	
A moderate amount of influence?	13	
A little influence?	42	} 83
No influence at all on what happens?	41	

(e) *And what about popular opinion as expressed in the newspapers?*

Do you think that this has:

A great deal of influence?	22	
A moderate amount of influence?	34	
A little influence?	27	} 43
No influence at all on what happens in the Dáil?	16	
Other	1	

If ordinary people have little or no influence on what happens in the Dáil, and if T.D.s have much more influence than civil servants, what determines the T.D.'s decisions?

A. 2. *Do you think that the decisions of T.D.'s in the Dáil are:*

Almost entirely influenced by the desire of T.D.'s to look after their own interests?	17
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Mostly influenced by the desire of T.D.'s to look after their own interests but somewhat by a desire to look after the interests of people in general?	17
More or less influenced by each equally?	30
Mostly influenced by a desire to look after the interests of people in general but somewhat by a desire to look after their own interests?	24
Almost entirely influenced by a desire to look after the interests of people in general?	10
Other	2

} 64

Strangely enough, although T.D.s are thought to have at least a moderate interest in the community as a whole, civil servants are motivated by dedication to themselves:

- A. 5. *How much are Government officials (that is civil servants etc.) sincerely interested in serving the public as against merely serving their own careers?*

In your opinion are officials:

Mostly interested in serving the public?	24
Mostly interested in their own careers?	61
Exclusively interested in their own careers?	10
Other	5

} 71

One of the implications of this seems to be that administrators will not be expected to behave in ways that are responsive to the public interest unless there are formal devices enforcing accountability. Are there any other groups that have a major influence on the Government and what happens in society?

- A. 24. (a) *One sometimes hears that some people or groups have so much influence over the way the Government is run that the interests of the majority are ignored.*

Strongly agree that this is so	14
Agree to some extent	47
Disagree that this is so to any great extent	28
Strongly disagree	10
Other	1

} 63

(b) *Who, or what groups?*

1. Political groups	25
2. Trade unions	8
3. Farmers	8
4. Gaelic League/GAA	6
5. Foreign industrialists	7
6. IRA	4
7. Church	4
8. News media	3
9. Other	35

We seem, therefore, to have arrived at the extraordinary situation in which politicians are supposed to, and in practice believed to, do what is for the good of the country without being subject to any major influence other than, perhaps, political parties.

There is another piece of evidence which helps to make sense of this apparently extraordinary situation. Members of voluntary organisations are thought to be primarily motivated by a desire to do what is best for the community:

A. 28. *What is your opinion of people who belong to organisations such as Chamber of Commerce, ICA, Muintir na Tire, Committees of Residents' Associations etc.?*

Do they:

Mainly want to make a name for themselves?	10
Usually want to make a name for themselves rather than further community goals?	10
Are they usually more interested in furthering community goals?	34
Are they mainly in such organisations to work for the good of the community?	44
Other	2

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It would seem that the concern with money we discussed earlier is so dominant and pre-occupying for most people that when it can no longer be seen to be operative—as in the case of T.D.s and members of voluntary organisations—it is felt that there can be no other ulterior motive to activity; the activity must be motivated by concern with the public good.

Although this finding may help to explain the previous results it does nothing

to detract from their significance. What the results tell us is that, although, as we shall see in a moment, people believe that both they themselves and other members of society have to be constrained to behave well, they feel that when these same ordinary people move into positions of authority—whether as head of a family or as a member of state—they somehow cease to need any equivalent to the constraints which they apparently needed so badly before they moved into those positions. Once occupying positions of authority they seem to be on their honour to do what is good and right, to be moral and consultative, without any further need for the surveillance by mortals—surveillance which they had previously needed so badly in their own interests. As a mortal they had been expected to be unable to resist temptation—and had to be helped to resist it by other mortals. As in authority this is no longer the case. Although the abuse of such authority will, in the long run, be accountable to God it would seem that, in spite of recognising the fallibility of human nature, the bulk of the population of Ireland favour a structure of authority which takes no account of the fact that leaders are fallible men, which is devoid of short-term corrective mechanisms generated by men rather than by God, and which does not accord validity to the belief, found elsewhere in the world, that responsibility for leadership should be *shared*: that *all* are responsible for playing their own part and helping others to achieve group goals, that *all* are responsible for dealing with those who vandalise plans, plants and social organisations. The behaviour of the lowly is suspect and has to be checked up on by those above them. By the same token those in authority are accountable to those above them. And since the closer one gets to the highest power the more one is under the direct influence of that highest power the more trustworthy one's behaviour is bound to be. What need for surveillance from below? In any case how could those below *understand*? And surely, since they are not under the direct supervision of the highest authority, *they* would make all sorts of corrupt uses of their privileged position and knowledge.

Returning now to the pre-occupation with money, it would seem that so all-pervading is this pre-occupation that, apart from the fact that the financial recognition and rewards meted out in the society are unjust, the society is, as we have seen, felt to be extraordinarily just.

Trustworthiness and Need for Controls on Human Nature

We have seen that the population in general feels exploited by businessmen and that civil servants are dedicated to furtherance of their own interests. These things suggest a low level of trust in the society. We now turn to examine this in more detail: Do people trust themselves? Do they trust others? Do they think that trustworthiness is important? Do they believe that human nature is basically bad and that human beings have to be forced to be good?

We would have liked to have explored these questions in more detail.

However, it would appear that people do not trust themselves too much; that they feel that *they* need the checking-up system they recommend for others:

B. 24. *How much do you need to be pressurised by the church or the law to do things you should do?*

Do you:

Need to be heavily pressurised?	4	} 53
Need some pressure?	49	
Do neither the church nor the law influence your doing what you should do?	47	

And although children are not naturally bad and do not have to have the badness beaten out of them, punishment is somehow good for them:

B. 38. *How true is it to say that children are naturally bad; that they have to be forced to be good?*

Is this:

Always true?	1
Usually true?	6
Occasionally true?	26
Hardly ever true?	67

B. 36. *How strongly do you agree that children have to have the badness beaten out of them?*

Do you:

Strongly agree?	6
Agree?	14
Disagree?	46
Strongly disagree?	35

B. 37. *Is punishment in its own right good or bad for children?*

Is it:

Always good?	8
Usually good?	60
Usually bad?	21
Always bad?	8
Other	3

Indeed it is *necessary* to have corporal punishment to maintain good behaviour in schools and boys who are not kept busy are likely to get into trouble:

B. 41. *Do you think that:*

Corporal punishment should be completely abolished in the schools?	28
That it is necessary in some circumstances?	62
That it is very necessary in the schools?	10
	} 72

B. 39. *How likely is a boy, who is not kept busy, to get into trouble?*

Is he:

Very likely to get into trouble?	49
Likely?	46
Not very likely?	4
Very unlikely to get into trouble?	1
	} 95

However, most people are naturally good without having to be forced to be:

B. 48. *How many people do you think are naturally good without having to be forced to be?*

Nearly everyone?	24
Most people?	68
A few people?	8
Hardly anyone?	—
	} 92

B. 47. *Do you think that:*

Most people are honest through fear of being caught? ..	8
That this is one of many reasons why people are honest? ..	46
This is certainly not why most people are honest?	46

Nevertheless the church is one of the few forces acting against evil, and it is not at all clear that good will overcome evil:

B. 49. *How true is it that the church is the main force against evil trends in modern society?*

Is it:

The only such force?	17
One of a few such forces?	50
One of many such forces?	33
A completely unimportant factor?	—
	} 67

B. 52. *How confident are you that in the long run good will overcome evil rather than the reverse?*

Are you:

Very confident?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24
Fairly confident?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	47
Not confident at all?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	29

All-in-all it would seem that human nature is basically good, but it needs a strong church and legal system to make sure that good triumphs. Beyond that, all our troubles are due to a few people:

B. 40. *How strongly do you agree that most of our social problems would be solved if we could somehow get rid of the immoral, crooked and feeble-minded people?*

Do you:

Strongly agree?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	40
Agree somewhat?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	32
Disagree somewhat?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Strongly disagree?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14

And most people feel that trustworthiness is an important goal to aim at and that they are reasonably honest and trustworthy themselves.

B. 35. *How important do you think it is for children to learn to be honest, straightforward and open in their dealings with others?*

Do you think it is:

Very important for them to learn this?	..	..	..	..	..	..	96
Moderately important?	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Not important at all?	..	..	..	..	..	..	—

C. 10. *These days, how important do you think it is for a mother to bring up her children so that they always pay for goods and services even when they could easily get away without paying?*

Do you think it is:

Very important to bring up children to do this?	..	..	..	..	..	97
Moderately important?	..	..	..	..	..	3
Not important to do this?	..	..	..	..	..	—
Or, very important not to bring up children to do this?	..	..	..	..	..	—

- C. 11. *Most people have a sort of respect for people who can break the law and get away with it. How much would you respect someone who could consistently steal things from supermarkets without getting caught?*

Would you:

Respect them immensely?	..	..	..	..	..	3
Respect them somewhat?	..	..	..	..	..	6
Not really respect such people?	..	..	..	..	..	45
Or would you despise them?	..	..	..	..	..	43
Other	..	..	..	..	..	3

} 88

- C. 12. *How wrong is it to cheat at cards?*

Is it:

Very wrong to cheat?	..	..	..	..	..	60
Somewhat wrong?	..	..	..	..	..	24
Not really wrong?	..	..	..	..	..	15
Or is it all right to cheat?..	..	..	..	..	..	1

- C. 13. *How many of your friends think you are trustworthy?*

All of them .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	63
Some of them think this .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	31
Many of them think I am not .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	—
All of them think I am untrustworthy .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	1
Other .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	5

And woe betide anyone who does things that the powers that be consider evil:

- C. 24. *With the world the way it is many people feel that it is important to stop evil forces gaining the upper hand. How important do you think it is to have strong controls to stop people behaving in evil ways?*

Is it:

Very important to have strong controls?	..	..	..	72
Important to have some controls?	..	..	..	27
Not really important to have controls?	..	..	..	—
Very important not to have strong controls?	..	..	..	1

B. 30. *It has been said that our treatment of criminals is too harsh; that we should try to cure them, not punish them.*

Do you think that:

We should make a greater effort to cure them by means other than punishment?	33
We should put more emphasis on doing this?	24
That we should punish criminals to a greater extent?	42
Other	1

B. 31. *How strongly do you agree that the police should be tougher in their dealings with suspected criminals?*

Do you:

Strongly agree?	31	} 57
Agree somewhat?	26	
Disagree somewhat?	29	
Strongly disagree?	14	

B. 32. *How strongly do you agree that crimes of violence should be punished by flogging?*

Strongly agree?	21	} 46
Agree somewhat?	25	
Disagree somewhat?	18	
Strongly disagree?	36	

Styles of Leadership and Concern with, and control over, exercise of power

We have seen that the people have delegated to the government great powers and that the government is expected to exercise this delegated function wisely and justly without pressure being brought to bear. It seemed that once the money motive had been removed what further motive but the common good could be attributed to people prepared to play leadership roles? How important is such leadership?

The following table gives the results obtained in the nationwide survey of adults' civic attitudes for the percentage of people thinking each of the factors very important for the future of the country:

Good planning on the part of the government	90
The hard work of the people	80
Good luck	35

- B. 15. *How strongly do you agree that what this country needs most, more than laws and political programmes, is a few tireless, devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith?*

Do you:

Strongly agree?	64	} 82
Agree?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
Undecided?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Strongly disagree?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4

So leaders are important. But they, like parents, also need to be open to influence through discussion.

- B. 13. *How important is it for any organisation to have one firm, strong leader, whose decisions cannot be questioned?*

Is this:

Very important?	32	} 49
Fairly important?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Of very little importance?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Is it important not to have such a leader?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	44

- B. 14. *How effective is a leader who discusses his plans with others and changes his mind to take account of what they say?*

Is he likely to be:

Very effective?	44	} 88
More effective than the average?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	44
Somewhat below average?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Very ineffective?	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2

- B. 10. *In their dealings with other people, some people feel that other people should:*

Do what they want them to do without question	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
But other people expect to have to answer questions and perhaps change their own mind in the process	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	90

Which do you feel is the best method?

B. 11. *How often do people like managers and supervisors, who have been working at a job for years, have anything to learn from ordinary workers?*

Do they always have something to learn?	56	}	89
Do ordinary workers sometimes have something to contribute?	33		
Or do those working longest at a particular job know best?	11		

And discussion by committees is by no means ruled out.

B. 21. *How often does improvement result from discussion of a course of action by groups of people or committees?*

Almost always	35
Usually	49
Occasionally	15
Hardly ever	1

Quite clearly, then, the governmental leaders who at present are not amenable to influence by the public are in fact expected to be open to influence—even though people do not regard it as the essential part of the job of a citizen to bring pressure to bear on such people.

Yet, not only do people not think it is their own job to attempt to influence authority, as we saw earlier, people feel that there has been too much of a drift from obedience to authority and, as is clear from the figures below, people do not think leaders should formulate general policy and leave it to others to work out details. Under these circumstances it is difficult to see how influence is to be exercised on any leader who chooses not to be open and consultative of his own accord.

B. 17. *How important do you think it is for a leader to make sure that he gives people clear commands as to what to do and what not to do, and avoid just indicating areas of work, leaving people to make their own decisions?*

Is it:

Very important for a leader to give clear commands?	72
All right for a leader just to give general directives?	18
Or is it important for a leader just to give general directives and leave people to make their own decisions?	10

Because of the fallibility of human nature on which we have already commented people do not seem to be trusted to do what is best without direction.

In any event it is important that a leader know his own mind because he is surrounded by divergent interests:

- B. 16. *In how many situations do you think it is true that people have such divergent interests that only a strong leader who knows his own mind can make any progress?*

Is this true:

In all situations?	14	} 66
In many situations?	52	
In a few situations?	30	
In no situations?	4	

And in the last analysis or perhaps even earlier, people can be forced to comply.

- B. 18. *How strongly do you agree that the one way to deal with difficult people is to force them to comply?*

Do you:

Strongly agree?	4	} 70
Agree that this must be done sometimes?	47	
Disagree somewhat?	19	
Strongly disagree?	30	

- Nat. Civics 26. *How strongly do you agree that, although freedom of speech is a worthwhile goal, some political groups must be curbed when they abuse that freedom?*

Strongly agree	36	} 78
Agree somewhat	42	
Disagree	14	
Strongly disagree	7	
Other	1	

- Nat. Civics 19. *If someone believes that something is good and right, how justified is he in imposing it on others?*

Absolutely justified	16	} 61
Somewhat justified	45	
Somewhat unjustified	21	
Completely unjustified	15	
Other	3	

Pluralism and Co-operativeness

We have seen that the main fault of politicians is that they do not in fact listen to the public. However, this is understandable; in many situations only a strong

leader who knows his own mind can make any progress towards the increased material prosperity that is wanted. From the National survey of civic attitudes, too, it is clear that the opportunity to have greater participation in the work situation was less important than having better facilities.

How pluralistic do people consider their society to be? To how many divergent pressures do they think politicians would be subject if they did listen?

C. 5. (a) Do you think that people all basically want to lead their lives in the same way? 13

That they have a few differences but still want to lead their lives in much the same way? 36

That there are a number of groups of people who want to lead their lives in very different ways? 49

Other 2

(b) *What groups?*

1. Different social class, groups of people of different opinions/ability/environments 10
2. Young people 24
3. Different religious groups, agnostics, atheists 9
4. Socialists 4
5. Artistic people 6
6. IRA/Sinn Fein 2
7. Drop outs 6
8. None, don't know etc. 51

In order to get things done people say they would rather work through groups than assume personal responsibility themselves. In our discussion of the results of the national survey we argue that this high rating of group activity seems to be more an expression of a feeling that one *should* be able to use groups to influence government decisions than a belief that one would actually adopt this approach in practice.

In fact it seems that co-operation, while desirable, is difficult to attain:

C. 9. *Some people feel that it is only through co-operation that we can achieve our goals; other people feel that so many group projects have ended in failure that it is always better to act on your own. How do you feel about co-operation?*

Do you feel:

That co-operation with others is something you are always aiming at? 52

That co-operation is an ideal which you are so unlikely to achieve that you make only limited efforts in that direction? 36
 Or that co-operation is impossible so you always work on your own? 12 } 48

- B. 20. *Many people can see what people ought to do and what would be best for them if only they would do it: However, only a few people seem able to get people to pull their weight and forget their differences for the sake of the long-term interest of all.*

On the whole do you find that you are:

Usually able to get people to co-operate? 39
 Sometimes able to do this? 50
 Do people usually ignore your suggestions and continue to squabble? 11

- C. 7. *It has been said that men, co-operating with one another and relying on their own efforts, could achieve anything they wished to achieve. How likely is it that they will co-operate in this way?*

Is it:

Very likely? 9
 Fairly likely? 36
 Does it not really seem likely? 33 } 55
 Is it very unlikely? 22

It would seem, that in spite of the emphasis on working through groups, eliciting co-operation and working with others, is felt to be extraordinarily difficult. Failure to take personal responsibility does not seem to stem from a conviction that group activity is likely to be more efficient. The answers to the following questions lend support to the possibility that the real cause of the unwillingness to take responsibility for dealing with matters of communal importance upon oneself may be that there is a tendency to consider that a life problem is only real or worthy of attention if it affects oneself directly.

- B. 19. (a) *How often do you find that people you know tend to consider their own short-term interests in a narrow way rather than what would be best in the general interest in the long-run?*

Very often 43 } 67
 Frequently 24
 Occasionally 26
 Never 7

(b) *What sort of situations had you in mind?*

1. Business and work situations	26
2. Labour relations	19
3. Neighbours	10
4. Everyday life, e.g., selfishness in the home	26
5. Other	9
6. Don't know, none etc.	10

A. 27. (a) *If you were on a local committee, how strongly would you feel it your duty to get amenities such as a school or a factory for your own town or district, rather than let them go to some other town or district, say six miles away?**Would you feel it your duty:*

Very strongly?	86
Fairly strongly?	10
Not very strongly?	1
Not at all?	0
Other	3

The National Survey of Civic Attitudes shows that people would change, and had changed, their jobs in order to better themselves on an individual basis, but that they had done little or nothing to improve society as a whole. It would seem from the present data that the reason for not taking communal action to achieve shared, communal goals is that it would be difficult to do so given the present institutional structure, present perceptions of that social structure, and present expectations of oneself and of others. We would have liked to have explored these issues in much more detail and done more to discover whether the real problem arises from a felt lack of personal competencies, perceived deficiencies in others which would preclude joint action, or a lack of the sort of institutional structures which would be required if joint action to tackle shared problems was to be easily initiated.

Summary

Both the results we have presented in this paper and the conclusions we have drawn from them are tentative. They require confirmation in larger samples and with improved questionnaires. Additional topics need to be included in the survey and the topics we have covered need to be investigated more thoroughly.

Yet the results we have obtained would seem to indicate that this is a field which is important for the social and economic development of Ireland and which would amply repay further study: If the results are confirmed it would seem that we live in a society in which many people are preoccupied with money and material possessions (although suffering from some degree of mental conflict

about the desirability of this), willing to delegate leadership in the attainment of these goals to any group which is in no position to benefit financially from working toward them (and to no other), are unwilling to take personal responsibility for initiating activity concerned with general social improvement yet willing to take individualistic action for personal advancement in economic terms; distrustful of human nature but trustful of those in authority and those to whom no financial motive can be imputed, opposed to a society run by businessmen or civil servants and who believe that if one did wish to influence the system (which, however, one does not, although one does want it to do things one wants to have done) one would have to go outside the system and form protest groups. The government has power and should exercise it responsibly without the need for citizens to intervene except by voting. In practice, however, one's votes are mostly determined by allegiances some 50 years old. As far as legal matters are concerned the society is fair and just; regulations are thought to be administered impartially and promotion is on merit.

Some Possible Futurological Implications

As to the future? It would seem that leaders should go out of their way to listen. Then they must plan to produce the goods. And failure cannot be blamed on International Economics or Industrialists. Should economic targets not be met an excuse in terms of international capitalists will not be accepted, although exploitation by a vague "they" probably would. In achieving its goals the government cannot count on much local initiative or leadership—or even willingness to take a broad view of development and recognise that modern societies cannot develop uniformly, that is to say in all geographical areas, at the same time. Since social control is exerted through a malicious gossip network, rather than either open personal intervention or internalised controls, one cannot expect an innovative society to develop which could make rapid use of new ideas. One therefore cannot expect to be able to muster support for the sorts of educational and economic policies which would in fact enable the society both to deal with its 9 per cent unemployment rate and create the sort of socio-physical environment which is wanted. Such policies would involve giving people freedom to exercise personal discretion. This they cannot be given since they are, correctly or otherwise, expected to display evil tendencies under such circumstances. Not only are people unwilling to give others the opportunity to exercise personal discretion, they are unwilling to take personal responsibility for dealing with others who do display evil tendencies. Since they are unwilling to take personal responsibility for doing this they must insist on generalised, absolute, impersonal regulations for checking evil. These regulations in turn are likely to inhibit innovation by limiting the opportunities which people have to be different from others.

Yet on the other hand, neither can the society hope to reap the benefits of a centralised, tightly planned, developmental system—because it would seem that few people are prepared to take the responsibility for enforcing the regulations that are generated! One may therefore predict that any rules and regulations that

are generated will not be enforced. Not only will they not be enforced the general public cannot be expected to make great efforts to abide by them since they feel they have played no part in their formulation. In other words, they cannot be expected to identify with the rules which businessmen and politicians generate for the running of society.

A final, tentative conclusion which may be drawn from these data is that if people do become dissatisfied with the way society develops it would seem that we can expect the demand for change to be channelled, not through existing parliamentary institutions, but outside the established system through street demonstrations and physical force.

Some Possible Implications for the Improvement of Educational and Social Structures

Since the present system appears to stifle local initiative, prevent the development of a wide perspective on development, and prevent the growth of an understanding of the process of development, one may ask what steps would have to be taken if one was to build up a social system which would function differently.

Such steps might involve new educational inputs and the generation of new social institutions. New educational inputs might be concerned with developing an understanding, cognitive and effective, of the way social structures operate, with developing the effective, cognitive, and behavioural components of the human resource characteristics which would be required to function effectively in new types of social organisations, and with providing opportunities for value-clarification. These would be designed to help people think about the sort of society they wanted to live in, the sort of lives they wanted to lead, and the sort of people they wanted to be. Educational inputs of these sorts would, of course, entail a much fuller understanding of the consequences of pursuing different life goals and possessing different human resource characteristics than is available at the present time.

One example of the sorts of things which might profitably be discussed would seem to be attitudes toward, and the operation of, different structures of authority. The interaction of structure and attitudes in relation to their consequences would need to be highlighted, preferably with the aid of research which we do not yet have. Nevertheless it might be suggested that, instead of assuming that those who rise to positions of power become, in the process, highly moral, one might assume that such people remain little different from others in this respect. As a consequence it might be suggested that, if abuses of authority are to be prevented, the more open the actions of authority to observation by others the better. However, if such a system were to function effectively, it might have to be operated by people who were themselves possessed of a high level of personal responsibility, who understood that decision making involves subjective judgement, who were unwilling to make cheap points for themselves, and who were sufficiently self-confident not to insist that all decisions be formally ratified by others before being acted upon and not to insist that the evidence amount to certainty before it was acted upon.

Examples of the sorts of human-resource characteristics that it might be important to develop would be: the ability and willingness to take initiative, different sorts of self-confidence (such as, for example, knowledge, based on experience, that one can learn from the effects of action initiated on the basis of example of evidence, will be able to take effective corrective action, and will be able to get people to work together to achieve the goal), creativity, willingness to take personal responsibility for community activities, ability to work with others, to lead and to follow, ability and willingness to clarify and articulate group goals and release the energies of others in their attainment, ability to make good decisions, breadth of understanding, sensitivity of problems, willingness to take active steps to do something about them, sensitivity to feedback concerning ways of improving society and one's performance, ability to clarify goals and resolve mental conflicts, etc.

As far as institutions are concerned it might be necessary to set up institutions which would enable people who had noticed social problems to get specialist institutions set up to deal with them; it is pointless expecting people to "participate" in everything, to solve all their problems by themselves; what may be needed is an institution, or set of institutions, which will be better than the apparently un-influenceable, non-participatory, parliamentary procedure; a set of institutions which enable people to participate in the general running of their society to the extent of being able to set up procedures and specialist institutions to tackle the important problems which they have noticed, important problems which cannot be obvious to those who occupy positions of authority since they, by that token, lead very different lives, lives which do not bring them into contact with those problems.

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