LEABHARLANN CHOLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH | TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY DUBLIN
Ollscoil Átha Cliath | The University of Dublin

Terms and Conditions of Use of Digitised Theses from Trinity College Library Dublin

Copyright statement

All material supplied by Trinity College Library is protected by copyright (under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 as amended) and other relevant Intellectual Property Rights. By accessing and using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you acknowledge that all Intellectual Property Rights in any Works supplied are the sole and exclusive property of the copyright and/or other IPR holder. Specific copyright holders may not be explicitly identified. Use of materials from other sources within a thesis should not be construed as a claim over them.

A non-exclusive, non-transferable licence is hereby granted to those using or reproducing, in whole or in part, the material for valid purposes, providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. Where specific permission to use material is required, this is identified and such permission must be sought from the copyright holder or agency cited.

Liability statement

By using a Digitised Thesis, I accept that Trinity College Dublin bears no legal responsibility for the accuracy, legality or comprehensiveness of materials contained within the thesis, and that Trinity College Dublin accepts no liability for indirect, consequential, or incidental, damages or losses arising from use of the thesis for whatever reason. Information located in a thesis may be subject to specific use constraints, details of which may not be explicitly described. It is the responsibility of potential and actual users to be aware of such constraints and to abide by them. By making use of material from a digitised thesis, you accept these copyright and disclaimer provisions. Where it is brought to the attention of Trinity College Library that there may be a breach of copyright or other restraint, it is the policy to withdraw or take down access to a thesis while the issue is being resolved.

Access Agreement

By using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you are bound by the following Terms & Conditions. Please read them carefully.

I have read and I understand the following statement: All material supplied via a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of a thesis is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

THE PREPARATORY COLLEGES 1926 – 1961

AN EXPERIMENT IN IRISH EDUCATION

Thesis

presented to the

University of Dublin

in accordance with the regulations for
the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Valerie A. Jones

School of Education
Trinity College
Dublin

TRINITY COLLEGE
- 9 MAR 2000
LIBRARY DUBLIN
THESIS
5797.2.

SECTION 111

FIANNA FÁIL IN CHARGE

FIANNA FÁIL IN CHARGE

Overview

This section examines the development of the preparatory system during the period, 1932 – 1948, throughout which Fianna Fáil was in Government. It will also explore the role of Thomas Derrig,[1] who was Minister for Education for almost the entire sixteen years,[2] and will argue that it was due to his strong defence that the system continued without radical change. In Chapter V, *1932-1939: A Period of Consolidation followed by Uncertainty,* the thesis will examine the dominant feature of education in the thirties: the over-recruitment of primary teachers.

In addition the thesis contrasts the prospects for the preparatory system in the opening years of the decade with its state at the end of the thirties, when its future looked uncertain, following the confidential *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges,* in 1938,[3] which highlighted its many weaknesses. It will suggest that it was at this point that the system should have been radically changed, and that entry should have been confined to students who had completed the Intermediate Certificate Examination.

An analysis will be made also of increasing tensions between Finance, which strove hard to end the system, and Education, which fought strenuously to defend it. These tensions were first discussed in Chapter 111, and in this chapter it will be argued that they were a factor in Education's refusal to make radical changes to the preparatory system. The thesis will suggest that these tensions were further exacerbated by rising costs at a time of

economic stringency, and by the personalities of the ministers involved: Derrig, and his counterpart in Finance, from 1932 – 1939, Seán MacEntee.[4] The effects of the McDonnell High Court case are also considered, where as a result of an action brought by a teacher in C. Mhuire against the Department, in 1938, preparatory teachers, who were made redundant had to receive compensation.

As demonstrated earlier in the thesis the Roman Catholic Church had a powerful role in the new State, and it will be contended in this chapter that it was the policy of Fianna Fail Governments, throughout this period, to avoid offending the Hierarchy, even at the expense of the gaelicisation policy. The thesis will argue that this was a major factor in the closure of C. Chaoimhin. (first discussed in Chapter 1V).

In Chapter VI, *1939 – 49: Surviving with the help of Derrig,* the thesis will examine the workings of the preparatory colleges during the Emergency and its aftermath. In addition it will consider the take-over of C. Moibhí,[5] and C. Éinne,[6] as military hospitals, and argue that had it not been for efforts by Derrig the colleges would not have continued. The thesis will demonstrate the power of the Bishop of Galway as manager of C. Éinne, who by insisting on certain conditions, was able to delay its take-over for over two years.

The thesis analyses the role of the INTO throughout this period, particularly its deteriorating relationship with Derrig. It will suggest that his rejection of the findings of

the INTO's *Inquiry into the Use of Irish as a teaching Medium for Children whose home language is English*,[7] was a factor in the primary teachers' strike in 1946, as was his increased emphasis on the gaelicisation policy. An examination of the INTO's *Plan for Education*[8] with its radical proposals for recruitment is included. The chapter concludes with an assessment of Fianna Fáil's attitude to the gaelicisation policy.

FOOTNOTES

[1] See pp. 277 - 279
[2] Derrig was Minister for Education from 1932 until 1948, except from 8th – 27th September, 1939, when Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh was minister and from 27th September, 1939, until 18th June, 1940, when Éamon de Valera was minister.
[3] See pp. 305 - 329
[4] See p. 343, n. 8
[5] See pp. 361 - 366
[6] See pp. 367 - 374
[7] INTO, *Inquiry into the Use of Irish as a Teaching Medium for Children whose home language is English,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941)
[8] INTO, *A Plan for Education,* (Dublin: INTO, 1947)

CHAPTER V

1932 – 1939:
A PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION FOLLOWED BY UNCERTAINTY

The thirties began well for the State's language policy with large numbers continuing to compete for places in the newly established preparatory colleges.[1] Furthermore students from the preparatory colleges played a not inconspicuous role in the transformation of the training colleges into Irish-speaking institutions, producing teachers with an easy fluency in Irish, fully capable of implementing the language policy in the schools.[2] Thus a major aim of the gaelicisation policy had been achieved. In addition the number of serving teachers with qualifications in Irish had increased considerably, and the language was a major part of the curriculum in almost all national schools throughout the State.[3] Moreover, with the establishment of the preparatory colleges, the training colleges were ensured of a sufficient supply of well-educated candidates, who had completed the Leaving Certificate Examination successfully, and were well capable of undertaking the training college course. Recruitment, therefore, should not have been problematic, when the first Fianna Fáil Government came into office. Nevertheless, these achievements were to be undermined by the dominant feature of education in the thirties: the over-recruitment of primary teachers.

From 1932 – 1948, Thomas Derrig was Minister for Education,[4] and he played a significant role in supporting the preparatory system. Indeed it was mainly due to his

robust defence that it lasted into the fifties. Strongly committed to the Irish language, his impeccable republican credentials included participation in the 1916 Rising, several terms of imprisonment, and a period on hunger-strike in 1923. Born in Westport, Co. Mayo, in 1887, he was educated at the local Christian Brothers' School, and University College, Galway. In 1915, he joined the Irish Volunteers and as leader of a College Corps at UCG took part in the 1916 Rising. Subsequently, he was arrested, deported, and interned at Frongoch, in North Wales. On his return to Ireland he graduated with a degree in Commerce from UCG. He joined Sinn Féin in 1917, and was imprisoned again the following year. That same year he was appointed headmaster of Ballina Technical School, a post he held for seven years. In 1919, he became commandant of the West Mayo Brigade of the IRA and, subsequently, was interned in the Curragh.

His political career began with his election as Sinn Féin MP for Mayo and, in 1921, he was elected to the Dail for South Mayo. Virulently anti-Treaty, he was a signatory of the anti-Treaty proclamation in June 1922 and was involved in much military activity during the Civil War. A member of the Four Courts' garrison, he escaped from Jameson's Distillery, where he was in captivity after its surrender. In July 1922, he was in action in Dublin, Wexford, and Wicklow. Totally without mercy, as adjutant-general of the anti-Treaty forces, he called for the assassination of all members of the Provisional Government. In April 1923, however, he was captured, and wounded in an attempt to escape. This was eventually to lead to the loss of an eye. Nevertheless, he still pursued the republican cause relentlessly, and while imprisoned in Kilmainham went on hunger strike in October 1923. During his long political career, he was TD for Carlow-Kilkenny,

from 1923 – 54. A founder member of Fianna Fáil, his Cabinet posts included Education, from 1932 – 48, except for a brief period when de Valera was in charge, Posts and Telegraphs in 1939, and Lands from 1951 – 1954. He died in 1956.

Derrig was deeply committed to the language revival, and made strenuous efforts in a number of areas to assist its progress. Within the Gaeltacht, he tried hard to improve educational facilities; he increased the numbers of university scholarships, and drew up comprehensive plans for the provision of second-level education. At national level, he increased curricular emphasis on the language, resulting in the 1934 *Revised Programme for Primary Schools,*[5] while at second-level he made the award of the Leaving Certificate, contingent on obtaining a pass in Irish.[6] A staunch supporter of the preparatory system, he frequently defended it at Cabinet meetings.

During the period the Cumann na nGael Government was in office, the system had been supported at Cabinet by Blythe,[7] and it is possible that had Cumann na nGael continued in Government, modifications to the system could have occurred more easily. Moreover, Fianna Fáil was keen to demonstrate its nationalist credentials, and being in Government for the first time made it difficult for the party to modify the language policy. Despite the change of party in Government, however, opposition by Finance to the preparatory system continued as before and, at times, particularly when Seán MacEntee[8] was Minister, was more trenchantly expressed.

At the beginning of the thirties, the preparatory colleges were busy overcoming teething difficulties to be expected in establishing any new system. There were also the added difficulties, caused by the Department's lack of planning, and undue haste, in getting the system established. Nevertheless by 1934, five of the colleges had moved to their intended permanent accommodation.[9] The exceptions were C. na Mumhan, which still awaited its promised new building at Ballyvourney, and C. Éinne, which in 1931 became the third college to have to move to Talbot House. Subsequently, it occupied Marlborough House and Glasnevin House, which were vacated by C. Moibhí in 1934. Despite the difficulties of their early days, however, all the colleges continued to achieve high success rates at public examinations, and demand for places was keen, with more than ten students competing for each place in a preparatory college between 1932 and 1934.[10] As the system was heavily subsidised, this was not surprising. Students were certain of secure, pensionable employment, provided they passed their examinations.

At the beginning of the decade, students entered training from three sources: firstly, the preparatory colleges, which had first claim on places in training colleges. The second source was the revised pupil-teacher system. Under this system pupil-teachers were selected from students who had passed the Intermediate Certificate Examination with honours, including honours in Irish.[11] Subsequently, they were admitted to a secondary 'A' school, where they undertook the Leaving Certificate course through Irish. This system worked well for girls, as there were a number of girls' 'A' schools, and the Department was happy to declare that such students were 'little inferior' to preparatory

college girls.[12] It was more problematic for boys, however, as the only schools they could attend had English as the medium of instruction.[13]

The third source by which students could enter training was Open Competition, which in 1931, replaced the Easter Scholarship Examination.[14] Students entering training in this way had to be successful at 'the Easter orals.' These were oral tests in Irish and English, and a test in Music. In addition girls had to pass a test in Needlework. These preliminary tests were held annually at Easter, and the results of the Leaving Certificate Examination combined with the results of the 'Easter orals,' determined whether a student obtained a place in training. Open Competition students had to fulfil three conditions in the Leaving Certificate Examination. Firstly, they had to obtain a pass in the examination generally. Secondly, they had to obtain honours in Irish, and thirdly, they had to pass in English, Mathematics, History, and Geography.[15] The Department did not greatly favour entry by Open Competition, and declared the new pupil-teacher scheme 'much more beneficial' than Open Competition.[16] Needless to say, its preferred method of recruitment continued to be the preparatory system, despite the fact that its costs were significantly higher than the other systems. For the school-year 1932/33, the cost of maintaining 605 students in the preparatory colleges was £37,342 – 9s. – 6d. compared with £3,299 – 8s. – 9d. for the maintenance of 245 pupil-teachers. The outlay on the preparatory colleges was more than ten times that of the pupil-teacher scheme, though the two systems supplied the same number of students to the training colleges in both 1932 and 1933. The cheapest method of entry by far was Open Competition, where the only cost incurred was the financial outlay on the holding of the 'Easter orals.'

Table 5.1: Costs of preparatory colleges and pupil-teacher scheme 1932 – 33

	Costs for 1932/33	No. of students	Cost of 1 student
Preparatory College	£37, 342 – 9s. – 6d.	605	£61 – 14s. – 5d.
Pupil-teachers	£ 3, 299 – 8s. – 9d.	245	£13 – 9s. – 4d.

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education,* 1931- 32, p. 101 and 1932 - 33, pp. 136 & 146

At the beginning of the thirties, the numbers entering training from the preparatory colleges and from the pupil-teacher scheme were similar, but with the increased efforts made by the Department to assist the recruitment of Gaeltacht students,[17] the numbers from preparatory colleges increased considerably from 1934 on, while the number of pupil-teachers decreased.

Table 5.2: Sources of recruits to training colleges, 1932 – 1935

	1932	1933	1934	1935
Preparatory Colleges	30.4%	30.9%	42.3%	49.6%
Pupil-Teachers	30.6%	30.9%	19.8%	14.7%
Open Competition	26.2%	25.2%	22.8%	22.8%
University graduates/untrained assistants	12.8%	13.0%	15.1%	12.9%

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education,* 1932 - 1936

By 1933, the three systems were working well and the Department was able to declare with some satisfaction:

> With few exceptions all students admitted to the training colleges have completed a course in secondary education and in almost all cases have obtained honours at the Leaving Certificate.[18]

The Department's satisfaction, however, at having solved a major aspect of the recruitment problem, the supply of students who had received a secondary education, was to be short-lived, for already there were indications of another major problem. Indeed the same report referred to the output of male teachers as 'somewhat in excess of requirements.'[19]

Moreover, by 1936, the Department's failure to estimate correctly the required number of primary teachers, led to large numbers of fully-trained teachers being unemployed. Many sought work on the roads and in the bogs. Others emigrated.[20] Not surprisingly as the number of unemployed teachers rose, many students abandoned the idea of teaching and entered the civil service, as the Department noted plaintively in 1934:

> There is an increasing tendency for students to abandon teaching and enter the civil service and the obligation to refund the cost of their training is no deterrent. Spread over a number of years its reductions are easy to bear.[21]

The possibility that the preparatory system was being used as a means of securing cheap education by students, with no intention of fulfilling their undertaking to become teachers, was seriously examined, but an analysis of the numbers involved, showed that the annual leakage from the training colleges was as small as five per cent[22] and they were not all from preparatory colleges. It had always been the Department's policy in such cases to make efforts to recoup the money spent on their training, by instalments deducted from their salaries as civil servants.[23] Pupil-teachers, and students from the preparatory colleges, also had to repay the costs of their secondary education:

> preparatory colleges was inserted on the instruction of the Department (20/1/30) arising out of the decision that a period spent as a pupil-teacher, or as a student in a preparatory college, was part of a teacher's training.[24]

The Department used the proportion of pupil-teachers failing to enter training as an excuse to end the scheme:

> The relatively high proportion of pupil-teachers appointed, who resigned during the course, or on completion, failed to enter training is further evidence that the need for the system as an avenue of recruitment has passed.[25]

Moreover, in an effort to discourage students leaving teaching, consideration was given to ways of making it more difficult for them to repay their fees, by insisting on the repayment being in one large sum, instead of by instalments.[26] A further difficulty for the Department was that the annual fee of forty pounds did not cover the total costs in a preparatory college. Department officials did not know the cost per student, per year, at the colleges. One official pleaded that this cost would not be known, until 'all the colleges were complete with full numbers,' while another explained:

> The cost changes from year to year according to the price of food. Other factors are changes in the teaching staff and administrative staff.[27]

Consideration was also given to barring preparatory college students from entering the civil service examination.[28] When this proved impossible, the question of raising the fees in preparatory colleges to fifty pounds, per annum, was considered.

Why did the Department's recruitment policy fail so badly, with regard to the numbers required annually, and why was recruitment allowed to continue for such a long time,

when the over-supply of teachers was obvious? The Department's failure to review its recruitment policy sooner is difficult to understand, as its own statistics published in its annual reports, showed that enrolments had fallen.[29] Some of the decrease was brought about by the Department's policy, introduced in 1927, of amalgamating small schools, which resulted in the closure of an estimated eighty-nine schools, with the loss of 167 posts. The introduction of Rule 187,[30] in April 1929, also resulted in the amalgamation of a further 250 schools, affecting 208 teachers. The lack of planning by the Department, which had a recruitment drive for the preparatory colleges and the new pupil-teacher scheme, at the same time as it was reducing the number of teaching posts, led to a series of panic measures to absorb the surplus teachers. The Marriage Ban, [31] whereby female teachers had to resign their posts on marriage, was announced in 1933, followed by the discontinuance of the pupil-teacher scheme in 1936. From 1938, entry by Open Competition [32] ceased, and the subsequent curtailment of male admission to training resulted in the temporary closure of St. Patrick's Training College. Finally in 1939, when these and other measures were inadequate, recruitment to the preparatory colleges was suspended.[33]

A possible explanation for the failure of the Department's recruitment policy is to be found in the following comments in a letter written by a former inspector, Seamus Fenton:[34]

> A good National Board would have checked many of the foolish innovations and would have forced the lazy officials to work. In the old days the Secs worked till midnight before "Board Day" preparing for such questions as "No. of trained teachers unemployed." The number rarely exceeded twenty. In our day the number once reached 800 and the official in special charge of

> Training Cols Mr James Brennan (the famous footballer) was called to account by nobody: neither was he punished. Instead he is in charge of broadcasting. "A man who reads books," said he one day to Mr. Henry Morris,[35] " is a square peg in a round hole."[36]

The Department's lack of planning was compounded by its relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, which due to the managerial system wielded enormous power in education. In addition, as that Church had control of five of the six training colleges, its influence on the formation of primary teachers, was considerable. The Church's influence in Irish society generally had been greatly increased by the holding of the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in June 1932. Indeed so vast was the array of church dignitaries, clergy, and others, that converged on Dublin, that they had to be accommodated in schools and colleges throughout the country, and both C. Chaoimhín and C. Éinne were used in this way. [37] With so much power concentrated in the hands of the Church, it was no wonder that the Department was careful to ensure that it had the consent of the bishops, before it made policy changes of any kind, and regular consultations with the Hierarchy continued to be a feature of the Department's life.[38] An example of the power of the Church to frustrate the Department's plans was the proposal to build a training college in Galway in the twenties. In July 1926, the authorities of UCG, proposed setting up a training college for nuns in Galway Model School building.[39] Both the Department and the Hierarchy agreed to the proposal, but it came to nothing. In 1928, a second proposal was made to establish a training college in Galway for 160 women students, including nuns.[40] In the Department's view, there was an urgent need for accommodation for 180 women teachers:

> The Department is satisfied that the annual requirement for the present position in schools is eighty to ninety in excess of the

> present supply of Roman Catholic women teachers. 230-240 teachers are presently required. There are 150 in training.[41]

The problem was accentuated by a shortage of substitute teachers. The Department, however, was keen that the Church, or the Order, which was to run the college, would make a financial contribution to the building costs. A memo in May 1928, referred to O Brolchain[42] 'sounding' the bishop as to the 'extent to which, and method by which, the bishop, and the Order, would be prepared to raise, or repay the money, or the amount of rent they might be prepared to pay.'[43] As negotiations proceeded, it was established that none of the Orders considered: the Loreto, the Dominicans, the St. Louis, or the Mercy Order, Galway, would be in position 'to undertake financial responsibility, or any large share of financial responsibility' in setting up the training college. Nevertheless, the Minister made certain decisions: firstly, that extra land adjoining Galway Model School would be acquired. Secondly, a plan for the building would be prepared, and thirdly, the St. Louis Order, Monaghan, would be in charge.[44]

From the beginning, the building of a new training college was opposed by Finance, which proposed instead that the new college should be located at the Royal Hibernian Marine School, in the Phoenix Park, on which over £100,000 had been spent in refurbishment.[45] In response, Education argued that Galway was a better choice than Dublin, as it offered more opportunities for speaking Irish. In addition it argued that the Model School could be used for teaching practice. These advantages did not satisfy Finance, where an official noted pragmatically:

> Two preparatory colleges in Dublin already. No detriment to gaelicising. Pool teaching staffs from St Patrick's and Carysfort.

> Health point very good in Phoenix Park. As near to university as All Hallows. Tramline passes door. Two schools, one in the Park and one in Chapelizod.[46]

In response, Ó Brolcháin reiterated the somewhat sanguine view, that Galway held a 'pivotal position' for the gaelicisation of Ireland, and insisted that a training college there, with 160 Irish speakers, would strengthen Irish in the west. To which an exasperated official in Finance responded:

> What contact do training colleges have with local areas? Have been passing through Blackrock for years past, never any visible evidence of the existence of the institution. (Carysfort College)[47]

Despite its earlier objections, however, £160,000 was sanctioned by Finance for the college, and in 1930, a seventeen-acre site, at Polnarooma, Salthill, was purchased at a cost of £2,210.[48] Shortly afterwards, an extra fourteen acres, at £100 per acre, were purchased and building started, following the signing of a £16,500 contract for steel.[49] These were large sums of money at a time when the initial salary for a male teacher was £170 per annum. It was the Department's intention that the St. Louis Order would run the college, and it believed that the bishop had agreed to this, though it had no written agreement with him. It was not until the Reverend Mother of that Order wrote to the bishop, that he realised that an Order from outside his diocese would be in charge.[50] This he rejected totally, insisting that the Order of Mercy, Galway, should be in charge, and it is likely that he would have got his way, but for the inadequate education of his chosen personnel, for following the general election of 1932, Fianna Fáil formed its first Government, and Thomas Derrig was appointed Minister for Education.[51] As this was Fianna Fail's first time in Government, and it was anxious to avoid any disagreement

with the Hierarchy, it was prepared to sanction a training college in Galway for nuns only.

Shortly afterwards the bishop's nominees were interviewed for the positions of principal and vice-principal.[52] However, a report from the interview committee, which included the chief inspector, his deputy, and an inspector from the Secondary Branch, concluded that the nuns from the Order of Mercy, Galway, were insufficiently qualified: Sr. Mary Alphonsus Coghlan, aged 33, who was to be principal and Sr. Mary Anthony Boland, aged 28, the proposed vice-principal, were described as having 'no knowledge of training colleges or their work; nor were they qualified for recognition as principal teacher of a National School.'[53] The committee noted also that: 'Neither had the education, training, experience, outlook, or personality, for the posts.'[54] Moreover, they pointed out that Sr. Mary Anthony, whose 'grasp of Irish was not very wide or very exact,' would qualify only as an untrained assistant. With that, the whole project stopped, as the bishop refused to consider any other Order.

Despite this setback, there were further negotiations on the matter between the Department and the Hierarchy, and in December 1933, the Minister was said to have been considering 'the intimations conveyed on behalf of their Lordships:'

> (a) that it was undesirable that a college should be for nuns alone. There was provision for nuns at one or more training colleges.
>
> (b) intend to ask the Orders in the Free State if it is feasible for them to provide the cost of erection and equipment of such a college for a hundred nuns (fifty in first year and fifty in second year) Recognition and grants to be the same as for the other colleges.[55]

By this time, Derrig must have been well aware that there was an over-supply of teachers in training, and that recruitment would have to be curtailed. Nevertheless he was prepared to give the proposal 'favourable consideration,' provided the college fulfilled two conditions: it was run on an Irish basis, and it had well-qualified staff.[56] Some time later, however, the Hierarchy proposed that instead of a new training college, more nuns should be accepted into Carysfort Training College, in Dublin. Despite the fact that work on constructing the Galway college had begun, and that a large sum of money would have to be expended on an extension to the hostel for nuns at Carysfort, the Department agreed to admit twice as many as planned.[57] This was another example of the power of the Hierarchy. In its desire to please the bishops, the Department paid little heed to its own statistics. At the same time that it was increasing the number of nuns in training, its annual report[58] noted that the number of unemployed male teachers was 'a matter of serious concern.' Of considerable concern too, was its note that it was 'difficult to adjust the numbers entering training' because students, from the preparatory colleges and the pupil-teacher scheme, were beginning to enter training. This was a further indication of incompetent planning by the Department, which had little idea of the number of teachers required. Moreover, officials do not seem to have considered that the additional number of trained teachers offered an opportunity to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio and also the chance to eliminate the large number of untrained teachers in the system, which in 1933 was almost twelve per cent.

Table 5.3: No. of Untrained Teachers 1932/33

No. of Teachers	Men: Trained	Men: Untrained	Women: Trained	Women: Untrained	TOTAL
Principals	2,818	55	1,924	124	4,221
Assistants	914	93	2,604	743	4,354
Lay Assistants	220	10	334	157	721
	3,952	158	4,862	1,024	9,996

Total untrained: 158+1024= 1,182 =11.8% of 9,996

Source: *Report of the Department of Education,* 1932 - 33, p. 139

Fortunately for the Government, at the time it decided to abandon its plan for a training college in Galway, C. Einne began to encounter difficulties regarding its premises. In May 1929, [59] legal problems arose over securing clear possession of the Furbough premises. As the matter dragged on, the vendor's solicitors had to make an application to the courts to appoint trustees for the sale. This was refused by the judge, and a subsequent appeal led to C. Einne having to vacate Furbough, in December 1930,[60] and move to Talbot House, in Dublin. Before that move could take place, however, the consent of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Byrne,[61] had to be obtained.

This was given on condition that the arrangement was to last no longer than two years and six months:

> I have seen the Bishop of Galway and given my consent to Talbot House becoming a preparatory college.... It is necessary to make it quite clear that at the end of two years and six months, the two priests, who are not incardinated to the Diocese of Dublin would have no claim of any sort on the diocese.... The matter is not as simple as it seems, the transferring of priests from one diocese to another is for a strictly limited time.[62]

Subsequently all proposed appointments and arrangements for C. Éinne had to be approved by Byrne. In 1934, the proposal to build a training college, in Galway, was finally abandoned, and the Department came up with a plan to house C. Éinne there instead. By this time, the half-finished building was derisively known to the Galway public, as 'the hen-roost,' or 'the white elephant.'[63]

Throughout this whole episode, Education displayed a cavalier attitude to the large sums of money involved, and the ineptness, which characterised the establishment of the preparatory system, was clearly to be seen. Indeed it was little wonder that an official in Finance noted plaintively:

> Education not greatly concerned. Will use building as a preparatory college. Had Furbough House six miles from town. £50,000 sanctioned. £1,200 spent, satisfied title could not be established. Abandoned. Preparatory college only ninety pupils. Furbough and training college bad business for the taxpayer.[64]

The whole affair confirmed Finance in its opposition to the preparatory system, and increased the tensions between the two Departments. Furthermore it strengthened the resolve of Finance, to insist on reductions in the costs of teacher recruitment and training:

> Before 1922, teachers came straight to training college. State is going to have to face economy in future. Enormous amount of money spent on preparatory colleges. Cut two-year training course to one year. Have been to preparatory college.[65]

A further area where the Department avoided a clash with the Church, was on the question of amalgamating preparatory colleges. As early as 1933, when difficulties arose over C. Éinne's lease at Furbough, Finance sought to reduce costs by amalgamating C. na Mumhan and C. Éinne, and abandoning plans for a new building at Ballyvourney. But

mindful of the power of individual bishops to determine which Orders could operate within their dioceses, particularly following the debacle over the Galway training college, the Department feared a refusal, and the plan was dropped. This was a further instance of the power of the Church, which would not allow a college run by secular priests to merge with one run by the De La Salle Order.[66] The question of amalgamation arose again, with the same result, in the forties, when the colleges had few students. [67] In view of the fact that all the costs connected with the colleges were borne by the State, including the costs of religious requirements, provision of chapels, and chaplains' salaries, the Department's behaviour was somewhat supine.[68]

A further example of the Department's policy of consulting the bishops in advance of any proposed changes occurred, in January 1932, when Ó Brolcháin wrote to Archbishop Byrne,[69] to seek his views on the proposal to introduce a ban on married women teachers from 1st April that year. [70] A letter from Joseph O'Neill,[71] secretary of the Department, to the secretary of the Hierarchy, in March 1932,[72] explained that there were more women candidates for training than could be admitted, and that there were difficulties getting substitutes for teachers on maternity leave. The letter gives some insights into the conservative thinking on social issues, prevalent in the country at that time:

> Is the employment of married women desirable in mixed schools? Generally it is satisfactory but there must be some loss in home or school; money saved in salaries by substitutes on the main scale could provide gratuities for retirement on marriage. [73]

Noting that the average age of teachers on marriage was approximately thirty-one, with ten years' service, O'Neill blamed the employment of married women for limiting the

number of jobs for young people coming on.[74] He also observed that there was local resentment at two-income houses, particularly, where the husband had a shop, or large farm. From this letter, it would appear that the Marriage Ban developed from a conservative social policy, as much as in reaction to the surplus of trained teachers.[75] Moreover, the idea that the place of married women should be in the home, was affirmed in the 1937 Constitution,[76] which reflected the social values of the period. However, at the time the ban was announced, on 1st July 1934, it was but one of a list of measures to curtail recruitment. These measures included firstly, a reduction in the number of men to be admitted to training. Secondly, teachers trained outside the Free State would no longer be appointed to posts in national schools. Thirdly, students who failed their final training college examination would not be allowed a supplementary examination, and fourthly, the pupil-teacher scheme was to be discontinued. [77]

The Hierarchy's powerful role in education was again shown, when Derrig's plans to provide second-level education in the Gaeltacht had to be dropped because of opposition from the bishops. Soon after he became minister, Derrig tried hard to improve second-level educational facilities in the Gaeltacht, a need highlighted by Coimisiún na Gaeltachta [78] and the Department drew up detailed proposals,[79] for higher primary schools in Irish-speaking districts, to be finalised after discussion with the Hierarchy, the managers, and the INTO. The number of schools, proposed for each Gaeltacht, was: Donegal and Galway, five; Kerry, four; Mayo and Cork, three; Waterford, one. They were to be three-teacher units, with an enrolment of fifty to seventy pupils, or to have four teachers, with an enrolment of seventy to a hundred. In addition pupils were to

transfer from the ordinary national school, at the age of twelve and over, or, if under twelve, on the completion of fifth class of the national school. Attendance was to be compulsory for two years. Curricular emphasis was to be on practical subjects, such as Manual Instruction and Rural Science for boys, and Domestic Science for girls. Furthermore subjects, such as History, Geography, and Arithmetic, were to have a 'rural bias,' reflecting the schools' environment.

A significant part of the plan was the provision for transport; pupils living three miles or more from a school, were to travel on bicycles, supplied by the Department. The projected capital costs for the twenty-one schools, were £79,475, with annual running costs, estimated as £29,000.[80] The proposals do not contain a break-down of the number of children likely to avail of these educational opportunities, but twenty-one schools, with an average of sixty pupils, would have provided education, for over 1,200 pupils, at a much reduced annual cost, compared with the cost of running the preparatory colleges for a year. [81] A further memo on the system proposed that as the money could not be raised locally, the full costs should be borne by the State, and a system of joint management inaugurated.[82] This innovative scheme, with its radical proposals for the financing and management of the schools, showed Derrig's commitment to the Gaeltacht. It was dismissed, however, by Finance on the grounds of cost, and ridiculed for its transport proposals:

> The proposal re bicycles for pupils three miles from the new schools are "fantastic". Won't last long on mountain roads. Will "disappear" frequently. Accident riding Department machine.[83]

As an alternative, Finance proposed that there should be one school, managed by the local VEC, in each Irish-speaking area: Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Kerry, and Cork.[84] With such opposing views in Cabinet, it was not surprising, that when the matter came before the Executive Council, in February 1934, it deferred making a decision on the matter until the Hierarchy had been consulted. Subsequently, Ó Brolcháin's letter to Dr. O'Doherty, Bishop of Galway, was criticised by Finance, for giving the impression that the project had been sanctioned by the Cabinet, and was awaiting only the bishops' agreement. An official in Finance cynically commented, 'If they agreed. Trouble.'[85]

The Hierarchy's response came after a meeting in October 1934,[86] which also endorsed the Archbishop of Dublin's proposal that accommodation for nuns at Carysfort be extended. [87] The Hierarchy expressed fears that the scheme with its proposals for joint management would be a further extension of State control, an issue which greatly exercised the Roman Catholic Church of that period. The bishops also feared the danger, 'from the moral point of view' of boys and girls, aged twelve to sixteen years, coming long distances without supervision. They expressed the view that such extra educational provision was unnecessary, in view of the existence of vocational schools.[88] The issue clearly demonstrated the power of the Hierarchy. Had the Bishops been in favour of the scheme, it would have gone ahead. Despite this setback, however, Derrig continued his efforts to extend educational provision in the Gaeltacht, and in 1938, he and de Valera[89] were responsible for establishing vocational schools in Cnoc na hAille, and Inis Mór, Árann.[90] Derrig's commitment to Gaeltacht education was clearly demonstrated the following year, when he strongly resisted the proposed closure of C. Chaoimhín,[91] and

proposed that it should be kept open as a college for Fior-Ghaeltacht scholarship holders.[92] Moreover, Derrig showed his dedication to the Gaeltacht when he made this firm declaration of his policy, in a memo to Seán MacEntee,[93] the Minister for Finance, in 1939:

> The policy has been to monitor and extend Irish as a living speech in the Gaeltacht and to revive it in the Galltacht. Personally I am strongly in favour of additional measures and I am sure the Taoiseach desires that much more should be done. I have been considering providing secondary schools in each of the main Gaeltacht areas.[94]

Unfortunately for Derrig, it was a period of severe economic depression and Finance's demands for a policy of fiscal rectitude were unassailable. Even if the economic climate had been more favourable, it is doubtful whether he would have succeeded, for there was little sympathy for Gaeltacht education in Finance. Indeed an indication of how Derrig's proposals were viewed by Finance, was the writing of two large exclamation marks, beside the last sentence quoted above.[95]

Despite the failure of his plan to provide secondary schools in each Gaeltacht, Derrig continued the policy initiated by Blythe,[96] of reserving places in the preparatory colleges for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students,[97] and of awarding scholarships to secondary schools to those who passed the preparatory entrance examination but were unsuccessful at gaining a place in a preparatory college.[98] He also continued the programme of preliminary courses, provided for those who reached the qualifying standard but did not gain a place, to enable them to gain places the following year. Other incentives included grants for outfits for candidates accepted for a preliminary course[99] and prizes of five pounds each

for the remaining candidates who qualified. Derrig defended these policies on the grounds that 'the economic conditions of the Gaeltacht and the dearth of secondary schools, meant that native Irish speakers had no opportunities of getting to training college, only through the preparatory colleges.'[100]

With such incentives it was not surprising that numbers increased [101] and, in 1933, a limit of fifty prizes had to be imposed due to rising costs,[102] while the courses were discontinued from the end of the school year, 1935/36.[103] By this time, the surplus of trained teachers, many of them from the Gaeltacht, must have been obvious though this does not seem to have been a consideration.

Derrig also expanded the number of scholarships for Fior-Ghaeltacht students under another scheme initiated by Blythe,[104] to provide secondary education for Irish speakers. It was envisaged that on completion of their secondary education, they would then be eligible to compete for special university scholarships. As part of the scheme, places in training colleges for teachers of Domestic Economy were reserved for girls who passed and wished to enter that profession.[105] In addition to free education, students were also awarded travel and outfit allowances and teachers of award-winning students received gratuities.

In a further effort to assist Gaeltacht students, preparatory college students were eligible for university scholarships, and when successful, the Department released them from their undertakings to become teachers. But it feared that such schemes might deflect

native speakers from the preparatory colleges, and warned of the need to monitor the schemes carefully.[106] It need not have worried, however, the narrowness of the curriculum in the colleges restricted the students' choice of university courses. In addition the failure to teach Latin to Leaving Certificate level, was particularly problematic.[107] An unfortunate example of this, was the case of a student from C. Ide, who because she had not studied Latin, was not accepted for an Arts course, and as she had not studied a modern language, she was unable to do a Commerce course, so she had to return to the training college. [108]

Table 5.4: Scheme of University Scholarships for the Fíor-Ghaeltacht

	1931	1932	1933	1934
No. of applications	16	37	27	31
PC applications	9	25	17	14
Non-PC	7	12	10	17
Awards	5	5	4	5
Awards to PC students	2	5	3	2
Awards to others	3	--	1	3

Source: Scheme of scholarships in Secondary Schools for pupils from the Fior-Ghaeltacht, UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P24/303

An analysis of the numbers applying for university scholarships supports the arguments of those who maintained that many Gaeltacht students in preparatory colleges did not really want to become teachers.[109] A memo on the candidates who applied for scholarships in 1934, revealed that three of the fourteen students wanted to become doctors. [110] The criticism that some Gaeltacht students were using the system to obtain free secondary education is hard to discredit. Indeed an analysis, undertaken by the Department, of the fees paid by both Gaeltacht, and non-Gaeltacht students, from

1930/31 to 1937/38, shows that only sixteen per cent of students paid full fees[111] and that the average fee, for the period, was only £10 – 10s. – 10d.[112]

Table 5.5: Fees paid by new Entrants 1930 – 1938

YEAR	No. of Entrants	PARTIAL FEES		NO FEES	
		Non-G	Gaeltacht	Non-G	Gaeltacht
1930/31	156	43	20	27	42
1931/32	201	50	23	46	29
1932/33	150	37	11	25	50
1933/34	132	33	8	18	56
1934/35	156	14	12	23	84
1935/36	174	17	18	11	105
1936/37	159	18	11	17	94
1937/38	120	17	14	17	71
TOTAL	1,258	229	117	184	531

Source : Department of Finance Papers, S25/4/34

These figures show that out of a total of 1,258 students entering between 1930–1938, more than half, 648, were from the Gaeltacht, of whom 117 paid partial fees, while the remaining 531 paid no fees. They are also a clear indication that Finance's grounds, for complaining that the preparatory system was too costly, were justified.

It has to be remembered, however, that many of the students were from poor socio-economic backgrounds, and while financial grants of different kinds were provided for Gaeltacht students, they were not the only ones in poor circumstances. The question of

equality of treatment of students in poor circumstances led to a serious clash between Education and Finance, and the ensuing correspondence revealed fundamental ideological differences between them. In 1935, a memo from Education to Finance, claimed that a number of students were in circumstances worse than the poorest Fior-Ghaeltacht student, and cited as an example, a student whose mother asked the principal to keep the boy over Christmas, because she could not afford the fare for him to return home.[113] A subsequent survey to establish the number of Galltacht students in poor circumstances, showed cases of considerable hardship in all colleges. Moreover, the wide divergence in approach between Derrig and MacEntee, was clearly illustrated in the following correspondence:

> On reading the enclosures from Education one gets the impression that there is a tendency to regard the preparatory colleges as charitable institutions or homes for orphans. Is neither category and was never intended to be. No case for extending grants to outside Fíor-Ghaeltacht.[114]

In addition there was this revealing comment from a senior official in Finance: 'If pupils can't afford Travel and Outfit, they shouldn't be in the preparatory colleges. Ample facilities elsewhere for post-primary education.' [115]This comment showed how out of touch Finance was. Facilities for post-primary education were very limited. It also showed clearly MacEntee's ambivalent attitude towards the gaelicisation policy; Finance opposed Derrig's attempts to provide higher primary schools in the Gaeltacht and yet, he used the gaelicisation policy, in this instance, as the reason for favouring Fior-Ghaeltacht students in the preparatory colleges:

> For the first time in centuries there is a chance of better opportunities for the Fíor-Ghaeltacht. At the same time contributing an immeasurable 'something' to assist re-Gaelicisation

> of their contemporaries and of future generations. Others from homes with acute poverty and depressed social conditions must be subject of grave doubt if wise to seek, in such circumstances, material out of which to evolve inculcators of morals, manners and culture for future generations. Cases with trouble are pupils from undesirable home surroundings. [116]

MacEntee's snobbishness and prejudice in equating poverty with trouble and wrongdoing were clearly revealed, as was his double standard regarding poverty. He was willing to accept students from deprived homes in the Fíor-Ghaeltacht, but not students from deprived homes in the Galltacht. Moreover, MacEntee's conservatism was clearly shown in the following comment:

> The theory of equal opportunity for all does not impose on the State the obligation to incur exceptional expenditure of a charitable nature with the object of facilitating entry of poor children from the Galltacht to those higher walks of life for which superior education is a necessary qualification.[117]

Yet MacEntee was one of those who took part in the 1916 Rising, which began with the Proclamation that the new State would cherish all the children of the nation equally. Moreover, MacEntee queried whether students, 'from homes so far below the economic line that adequate care and nourishment in childhood has been impracticable,' could be physically fit for the teaching profession. Nowhere does it seem to have occurred to him that it was the State's responsibility to ensure that all homes provided adequate care and nourishment. The fundamental difference between the two departments was further illustrated by Derrig's robust reply in which he emphasised that 'great poverty should not be a bar to a talented boy or girl taking up teaching,'[118] and recalled that under the British system, 'which we have displaced, there was equality of opportunity at a great cost to the State. This undemocratic policy gives less chance to the poorest pupils, than under that of

the former undemocratic regime.' Derrig easily refuted MacEntee's argument, that students from poor backgrounds were trouble makers, by enclosing an analysis of the home circumstances of students, who had not been allowed to continue the course, because of misconduct.

Table 5.6: Home Circumstances of Students dismissed from Preparatory Colleges

	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Fíor-Ghaeltacht	3	1	6	8	18
Gaeltacht (apart from FG)	3	1	3		7
Breac Ghaeltacht	2	1	2		5
Galltacht	13	10	5	1	29
	21	13	16	9	59

Source: Department of Finance Papers, S25/1/31

Derrig concluded trenchantly: 'No particular class has a monopoly of 'undesirables' and the very poor come well out of the total, as regards character and conduct'. The arguments arose out of the case of a boy, who could not accept a place in a preparatory college because the grant of £100 was insufficient, and Education wanted to raise it to £300. Eventually MacEntee agreed, because of Education's persistence, though he stubbornly insisted that he was not convinced by the arguments.

At national level, Derrig was responsible for increased emphasis on Irish in the schools. Shortly after his appointment, he declared that the major responsibility for the revival of the language rested with the schools.[119] However, he was unhappy with the progress being made at primary level, and in 1934 he introduced the *Revised Programme of*

Primary Instruction.[120] The main changes brought about by this programme were a reversion to an all-Irish day for infants, and the adoption of the higher Irish course, as set out in the Second National Programme in 1926 [121] for all schools. This was intended to strengthen Irish by lessening requirements in other subjects. English was made optional for First Class, and in other classes the lower course of the 1926 Programme was to be taken. In addition the Mathematics programme was reduced, and Rural Science made optional. Derrig gave this somewhat sanguine justification for the changes:

> The lightening of the Programme through the omission of Rural Science and of Maths in many schools as well as the less ambitious scope of the Programme in English will, it is expected, make for more rapid progress and more effective work in the teaching of Irish and in the development of teaching through Irish.[122]

Derrig's changes resulted in a very narrow curriculum compared with that of 1926, or its predecessor of 1922.[123]

The changes made by Derrig led to increased teacher dissatisfaction and the INTO became openly hostile to the emphasis on Irish. The teachers' hostility culminated in action in 1936, when Congress of the INTO instructed the organisation's Central Executive Committee to establish an inquiry into the use of Irish as a teaching medium. Teachers complained with good reason, that the burden of reviving the language had fallen on them, and the *Irish School Weekly* predicted:

> A sigh of relief from thousands of our immortal patriots if it were announced that the Department decided to cut out the Irish language altogether from the list of obligatory subjects in the school programme.[124]

THE INQUIRY INTO THE PREPARATORY COLLEGES 1938

Derrig refused to consider the teachers' complaints. He did, however, set up an internal Department Committee of three Divisional Inspectors: Tomás P. Ó Conaill, MA, Séamus P. Ó Modhráin, MA, and Proinsias E. Ó Suilleabháin, Ph.D., to examine the workings of the preparatory system in October 1937.[125] Why he did this is not clear; it may be that he hoped its findings would disarm Finance's criticisms of the system. Originally it was envisaged that the work which was to include visits to each college, would be completed within seven weeks, and a number of District Inspectors, with special knowledge of certain Gaeltacht areas, were seconded to assist for one week.

The terms of reference were:

(1) To examine and make recommendations on the method of selection of pupils for admission to preparatory colleges.

(2) To examine and report on the routine and life of the preparatory colleges, especially from the view of suitability for Gaeltacht pupils.

(3) To examine the suitability of the School Programme in the preparatory colleges from the view of Gaeltacht pupils and when reporting to make special reference to the teaching of English and Maths to Gaeltacht pupils

(4) To make a report and recommendation on the method of testing pupils in preparatory colleges by examination

(5) To assess the influence of the preparatory colleges as Gaelic centres on the people in the surrounding districts

(6) To assess anything else in relation to the preparatory colleges or to the training of pupils from the Gaeltacht for the teaching profession, which in the committee's opinion should be brought to the notice of the Minister.

It is worth noting that four of the six terms of reference, referred to either the Gaeltacht, or Gaeltacht students. The exceptions were No. 4, which dealt with a review of the examination system, one area where all students were treated equally, and No. 1, which dealt with the method of selecting students. While No. 1 made no specific reference to Gaeltacht students, a review of selection could not have taken place without considering their position as the system was heavily biased in their favour. The inspectors took much longer than expected to examine the working of the colleges, and it was five months before they produced a detailed and comprehensive report. Moreover, its findings were described as 'revolutionary' by Education, which, not surprisingly, in view of Finance's attitude to the colleges, did its best to keep it from Finance, despite repeated requests.[126] Indeed the file was marked 'not to be released without the express permission of the secretary of the Department.'

What was so revolutionary about its contents? The twenty-eight-page report written entirely in Irish, was significant because it was highly critical of the system, and showed ambivalence about its future. On the one hand the inspectors declared at the beginning of the report, [127]that they were satisfied that the colleges were still necessary, while on the other hand at the end of the report,[128] they suggested that falling enrolments would eventually bring about the demise of the system. Apart from accepting that the siting of the colleges in the Gaeltacht had positive effects on these areas, the report had little that was positive to say about the system. Three major aspects of the colleges were criticised. They were firstly, the teaching staff, secondly, student life, and thirdly, the way the colleges were run. Its greatest criticism related to the recruitment of Gaeltacht students,

many of whom, it said, were unsuitable for the teaching profession. The report also emphasised, in several places, that candidates should be assessed for personal suitability before they were accepted.

At the beginning of their report,[129] the inspectors outlined how they undertook their investigations, visiting each college, consulting with management and teaching staffs, speaking to the students, and examining them 'as they felt necessary.' They also consulted people interested in the language revival. Somehow the inspectors gave the impression to the staff of C. Chaoimhín, that they were there to investigate complaints about girls from the Fior-Ghaeltacht:

> The Commission of Preparatory Colleges – three inspectors for primary schools came to C. Chaoimhín to investigate a complaint that girls from the Fior-Ghaeltacht were not to be compared with girls from the Galltacht in the preparatory colleges. [130]

In addition the inspectors managed to carefully conceal any criticism they had of the college from its staff:

> They spent three days in C. Chaoimhín with the President of the college, and one-and-a-half hours with the staff. They needed only a couple of hours in the classes to see how wonderful the Fíor-Ghaeltacht students were.[131]

In the report the inspectors outlined the reasons for the establishment of the system: the failure of other recruiting schemes in the twenties, and the need for candidates entering training to have a good secondary education: 'Better to have them in secondary schools, so that the teaching and training they received would awaken and keep alive the characteristics for teachers later on'. [132]

On the sensitive issue of segregating student teachers in special colleges, the report acknowledged that this should not happen, except for a special reason, but accepted that giving students a good grasp of the language, folklore, and history of the country, justified such segregation, particularly as there were no second-level 'A' schools at that time. In addition the inspectors accepted that the students from the colleges were to be 'lasair Ghaedealachais ar ball i scoileanna na tíre'. (eventual beacons for Irishness in the country's schools). However, they were not too impressed with the operation of the system, and had some harsh criticism of Gaeltacht students. They also condemned the selection of many candidates, who were clearly unsuitable for teaching, simply because they were from the Gaeltacht.[133]

In dealing with the selection of students, and the special advantages given to Fior-Ghaeltacht students, the inspectors examined the entrance requirements, and concluded that the concession on age, for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students, was not justified. However, they found differences of opinion in the colleges, over the question of the extra year for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students. The President of C. Chaoimhín was satisfied with it but his counterpart in C. Éinne was not. This the inspectors claimed, 'though they could not prove it,' was because C. Chaoimhín got better student material, while Fíor-Ghaeltacht students in C. Éinne came mainly from Connacht.[134] Emphasising that this was not just personal bias, they claimed that the entrance results supported their view. They reported, 'Apart from C. Moibhí, we were strongly told in all colleges, except C. Chaoimhín, that the oldest students were the weakest, and most difficult, to mould.' [135]They unanimously recommended a reduction in the age limit for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students:

> Compulsory school attendance has been in operation for a long time now and pupils progress earlier. Therefore it is not hard for them to learn Irish. They have Irish already and a low standard in English at entrance. Therefore they should not get an advantage.[136]

Reviewing the entrance examination programme, they recommended abolishing the optional subjects as, with the exception of Singing for boys, they were not taught in most primary schools. This, they believed, would encourage more country pupils to attempt the examination, as due to the small size of rural schools, the teachers had less time for the programme. The inspectors showed some ambivalence over the question of optional subjects. On the one hand, they acknowledged that the teachers in the colleges would like pupils to have done some Algebra and Geometry, before entry, while on the other hand, they claimed that the teachers were confident that they could complete the Mathematics course for the Intermediate Certificate Examination, in two years, with good students. This was not an extravagant claim and it was borne out by the students' results, though one further unmentioned condition was necessary – the need for good teachers.

Reviewing the marking of the entrance examination, the inspectors gave their opinion that Irish was more important than English, a view one would expect from Department officials in the thirties, and recommended that marks for English be halved, even though they expected that teachers from the Galltacht might complain. They justified this recommendation on the grounds that that it would mean open competition for all places. Such a recommendation, however, gave an advantage to Gaeltacht students, whose English was generally weak. The inspectors showed some ambivalence in their attitude to English. At one stage they declared Irish to be more important than English, while at a

later stage in the report, they pointed out that English was the language of the majority of the people of the country.[137]

In keeping with the view that Irish was more important than English, they recommended that there should be two one-hour papers in Irish, both worth one hundred marks, while in English there should be only one paper, with one hundred marks for Essay and Grammar. They also recommended changes in Arithmetic, advocating that there should be two papers, one where a student could obtain a maximum of eighty marks, by answering eight straight questions involving computation, and a second, where 120 marks were obtainable for answering questions, needing reasoning ability. In examining other subjects, they recommended that there should be forty marks for Penmanship, while History, Geography, and Needlework, should remain unchanged.

In examining the conduct of the examination, they made a number of important recommendations. Firstly, that all papers should be in Irish, and that the bonus for doing a paper through Irish, should be abolished. Secondly, they recommended that the examining inspectors should meet more frequently, than once every three years, to discuss the oral Irish examination, and to set a standard. Thirdly, Singing and oral tests should be held in the candidate's own school, or parochial centre, after the written examination. They also made the significant recommendation that the inspector should assess the candidate's personal suitability, including their physical, intellectual, and speaking capabilities.

On the question of providing places for Gaeltacht students, the inspectors were ambivalent. On the one hand they accepted that some Gaeltacht students were necessary to assist the non-Gaeltacht students' progress, and to ensure that each college would be a small Gaeltacht, yet on the other hand they were forthright in their declaration that the colleges 'were not a sop to the Gaeltacht but were founded to revive the language.'[138] The report was also damning in its opinion of Gaeltacht students, totally refuting Corcoran's view[139] of Gaeltacht students as natural teachers, saying:

> Native speakers are not always the most loyal to Irish. Some are cowardly and lazy and have a tendency towards decadence that goes with the Gaeltacht as long as there is a lack of understanding of the importance of Irish in National affairs. They think they have done enough when they get a place; that the Department cannot do without them. So they take life easy.[140]

The report went on, 'We saw students in some colleges and both for the country, and for education, it would be better if they didn't become teachers,' and it reiterated that it was not right for candidates to enter teaching unless they were suitable.

The report examined the way places in the colleges were awarded, and concluded that too many places were reserved for those, with eighty-five per cent or more, in oral Irish. Furthermore the inspectors pointed out that this was the greatest complaint from college managers, a conclusion with which they agreed. Moreover, it was their view from talking to students, that those who got eighty-five per cent in oral Irish, did not deserve it. On the division of places in the colleges, they were unanimous that half should be awarded to those with eighty-five per cent at oral Irish, who achieved a pass in the examination, but they were divided on how to ensure that candidates, from each Gaeltacht, obtained

places.[141] Nevertheless, they reiterated that they wanted to avoid taking students with little aptitude for teaching, as this was an injustice to the youth of the country.

With regard to the selection of students, the inspectors recommended that ten per cent of places should be reserved for students, who had completed the Intermediate Certificate Examination, and who had obtained honours in Irish, and a pass in Mathematics, plus honours in the whole examination. They also recommended that such students would have to obtain certain standards at oral English and Irish and be assessed for personal suitability. This recommendation, which was similar to one made by Coimisiún na Gaeltachta in 1926,[142] they believed, would help 'A' schools, though they did not give reasons for their opinion. Presumably they believed that such students would very likely be recruited from amongst pupils at these schools and the winning of places in preparatory colleges would enhance the prestige of 'A' schools. The inspectors concluded their proposals regarding the entrance examination by raising the possibility of abandoning entrance examinations, and replacing them with IQ tests and personality tests. These were rather radical proposals for 1938, though they realistically admitted: 'we haven't the personnel in the country to do the tests'.

The report reiterated the need for greater attention to be paid to character assessment, pointing out that a student required only recommendations from a doctor, and an inspector. Obviously the inspectors had little regard for the abilities of either the medical profession, or their own colleagues, in making such assessments, for they declared 'it was easy to satisfy them.' They also described some students, whom they believed should not

have been admitted: 'a student with a cantankerous appearance and a blemish/defect on his neck.' In another instance, a student was epileptic, while a third had a twisted mouth. The report recommended that inspectors should be given a longer period to inquire about prospective candidates, and that managers and teachers should provide whatever information they could about students. They felt, however, that they could not recommend this, because of the difficulties involved. Presumably they meant that managers, and teachers, would feel constrained to give only favourable reports on candidates for fear of repercussions in the community.

A significant part of the report dealt with the teaching of Irish in the colleges, which came in for some harsh criticism. Pointing out that the standard of oral Irish in national schools had greatly improved in the previous twelve years, and that, consequently, there should be less difference between students entering the colleges, the report noted that there was no great improvement in written Irish: 'we saw it ourselves - many inaccuracies in writing, grammar and spelling.'[143] The inspectors also urged that the standard should be raised, so that greater progress could be made in the colleges. Some of their remarks about the standard of Irish in the colleges were damning. While acknowledging that there was a good spirit towards speaking and cultivating Irish in the colleges, and that a sufficient number of native speakers had a love of the language, they noted that Gaeltacht students stuck together, and that little was done to use native speakers to help others. [144]

Furthermore they pointed out that students from the Galltacht had a fluency in the language, but little else. Indeed their Irish was marked by three characteristics. Firstly,

they seldom had correct pronunciation. Secondly, they were unable to speak Irish naturally. Thirdly and most damning of all, the inspectors declared that often the Irish of Galltacht students 'was nothing but a translation of English phrases:'

> There is not enough interest in Irish as a language and this must be improved. The time goes on memory work and assessment of prose and poetry. Often Galltacht students leave the colleges with nothing but a weak inaccurate mixture of dialects.[145]

This was an indictment of the whole *raison d'etre* of the colleges, but the inspectors did not call for its ending, instead they contented themselves with recommending that Galltacht students should be advised by the teaching staff, to go to the Gaeltacht in the summer holidays.[146] As four of the colleges had been specifically established in the Gaeltacht, and a fifth was waiting to move to the Ballyvourney Gaeltacht, this showed the ineffectiveness of the policy of locating the colleges in the Gaeltacht. Moreover, the inspectors concluded their remarks by saying proficiency in Irish gained in a preparatory college should not be regarded as sufficient to enter training. At this point, the inspectors should have called for an end to the system, but lacked the moral courage to do as this would not enhance their promotion prospects in the Department.

The inspectors were not short of criticism of the teachers: 'They do not all speak perfect Irish and some of them had unnatural pronunciations.'[147] Furthermore they declared that only teachers with fluent Irish should be employed, but they were realistic enough to acknowledge that many of the teachers were chosen for the posts as nobody else was available. Aware of the difficulty of getting teachers qualified to teach certain subjects through Irish, they contented themselves with recommending that teachers whose Irish

was poor should be encouraged to improve it. In addition the report noted a dearth of dictionaries, and other reference books, necessary for students to do research, and criticised the teachers for not having requested the Department to supply them. [148] In an effort to encourage the students to read and to take an interest in books, the inspectors recommended that students be allowed to keep their text-books, whether they paid for them or not, as this would encourage them to collect books, and to use them as sources of information.

The inspectors examined the life and organisation of the colleges,[149] and found that students had not sufficient free time, though out-of-class activities were described as satisfactory. Sport was well catered for, with hurling and football for boys, while the girls had camogie. Extra-curricular activities included debates, drama, Irish dancing, and addresses by visiting speakers. In addition food was declared to be excellent, and the pupils were taught good manners. Nevertheless, they felt that the routine life of the colleges was too restricted, and they recommended more freedom for students, with one half-day free per week.[150] They also recommended a free hour after dinner before study, and more freedom for students at study. Moreover, they recommended that students should be allowed to study, whatever subject they liked. This was an unusual recommendation for those times, when it was customary for students at boarding schools, to have certain prescribed studies to undertake. Furthermore, it was not a very practical recommendation, due to the shortage of text-books and general reading material in Irish. They also recommended more responsibility for prefects to help their personal

development, and, particularly, for Gaeltacht students who were lacking in self-confidence.

In the third part of their remit, the School Programme from the Gaeltacht student's view, the inspectors were particularly asked to examine the teaching of English and Mathematics. In both subjects they recommended that classes should be streamed, as there were wide variations of student knowledge and ability, particularly in Mathematics, where not all students had studied Algebra and Geometry at primary school.[151] They further recommended that the full courses in Irish and English should be shortened, particularly, the Irish literature course. They also criticised the teaching methods. In their opinion, students were too dependent on the teachers' notes and rote-learning. Teachers' summaries were learned by heart, without thought or understanding. Such study habits, in the inspectors' opinions, encouraged inaccuracies.[152]While the inspectors' comments about learning by heart were sensible, they did not take into account the difficulties posed for the teachers in trying to teach without text-books. The provision of text-books in Irish was problematic throughout the history of the colleges. In the early years of the colleges, the shortage was due to a lack of writers, but as time went by, the failure to provide text-books in Irish was due to their high costs. As the numbers required were small, their costs were much higher than text-books in English.

In examining the existing programme, the inspectors found little interest in Latin in most colleges.[153] C. Chaoimhín was the only college to take Latin in the Leaving Certificate Examination. Indeed teachers reported that they had not enough time for Latin, as it

would be necessary to study Latin for three years for the Intermediate Certificate Examination. The inspectors accepted that teaching time was limited. Nevertheless they recommended that a modern language should be taught to the more able students. Other subjects examined, included History, PE, and Art, and this section concluded with a recommendation that Horticulture be studied in all colleges with an emphasis on the practical aspects of the subject.

One of the principal reasons for founding the preparatory system, and for allowing it to continue was that students were to undergo teaching practice in the colleges. Moreover, paragraph 15 of the regulations, stated that teaching practice should be undertaken to 'assess the student's suitability for teaching, voice, speech, intellect, and personality,' and also to make the student consider, if he had 'a true vocation' for teaching. In their examination of this aspect of the system, the inspectors stressed that some teaching practice should be undertaken, with an emphasis on the students' ability to express themselves clearly. They also emphasised that students should be reminded continuously of the vocational aspect of their choice of career:

> We are not suggesting that the course should include anything of a professional training; boys and girls should pursue studies just as pupils in a secondary school but principals and professors remembering the vocation, for which classes are destined, should seize every opportunity to form their minds and hearts for success in it.[154]

In reiterating the need for certain personal qualities to be nurtured in student teachers, however, they again expressed implicit criticism of the teachers, and drew attention to their poor teaching methods, and the boredom of life in a preparatory college classroom:

> A teacher should be able to think clearly and to express his thoughts well. There is little done in this area, little interest in reading aloud, or in acting. Students are examined in writing only; therefore oral work is neglected. They are seldom asked a question in class or to come to the blackboard to do a sum. There is so much to do to get honours that their knowledge has gaps. It depends too much on memory.[155]

Nevertheless in their report, the inspectors were careful to stress that the Department wanted only a limited amount of teaching undertaken to pick out unsuitable candidates. In keeping with their informal approach, they recommended that each student should do only a ten-minute lesson in Mathematics, History, or Geography, in the second term of each year, and that staff should keep a record with the student's name, lesson, and date of lesson.[156] Why they recommended such short lessons is difficult to understand, for little could have been discerned of a pupil's potential as a teacher in ten minutes. Moreover, in discussing teaching practice, the inspectors again showed little respect for the teachers at the colleges, and declared that their explanation of insufficient time for teaching practice, 'was only an excuse,' because they could not be bothered. Indeed it was the inspectors' belief that the teachers really wanted to give it up altogether.

In keeping with its emphasis on personal suitability, the report recommended oral tests in Irish, and English, and a test in Singing, at the end of the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate years. It also recommended that the Irish oral test should include reading, acting, and explaining, and that students should have to obtain seventy per cent to enter training college.[157]In contrast to the high standard for oral Irish, only forty per cent was required to pass in oral English. The report stoutly defended the introduction of an oral

English test, though the inspectors expressed the fear that, in view of the State's Irish policy, it would be regarded as a retrograde step:

> English is a modern language and spoken by the majority in the country. Therefore teachers should be able to teach it so long as it is a compulsory subject in the curriculum.[158]

Again the inspectors were ambivalent towards English,[159] recommending that a pupil, who failed English should be allowed into the training college, if he was usually very good. There was nothing to indicate, however, who was to say that 'he was usually very good,' or on what criterion this was to be based. As Gaeltacht students were more likely to fail English this recommendation was an attempt to ensure that they went on to training. The report also noted that while teaching staff could send unsuitable students home anytime, seldom had anyone, who passed the Leaving Certificate Examination, not been admitted to training. In deciding if a student could be allowed to continue, they recommended that a candidate's performance at the oral tests, should be taken into consideration, as well as his results at written examinations.

The report examined the oversight of the colleges, and recommended that it should be undertaken by inspectors from the Primary Branch[160] as the training colleges were under their care, and cases involving expulsion were investigated by them. With regard to examinations, however, it recommended that students should continue to do written examinations, set by secondary inspectors, but in order to ensure uniformity of standard, there should be consultation between the Primary and Secondary Branches. To end competition between the colleges, the report recommended that examination results be

published, by numbers, with a statement that the student was from an unnamed preparatory college.

On the question of siting the colleges in the Gaeltacht, one of the principal aims underlying the system and something which Blythe[161] considered essential to its success, the report admitted that the expectations had been too high.

> We would not say the colleges could work every bit as 'Gaelach' and as well in every way if situated in the city. One advantage would be that the professors would be happier, it would be easier get lecturers for special occasions and to encourage students to be smarter in their outlook and behaviour.[162]

This part of the report, discussing the location of the colleges, is noteworthy for its failure to mention how C. na Mumhan, which was in temporary premises in Mallow, and the two Dublin colleges, C. Chaoimhín, and C. Moibhí, compared with the colleges in the Gaeltacht. This was a significant omission, and suggests that the inspectors were prejudiced in favour of the Gaeltacht, believing that it had certain advantages. Firstly, students met native speakers through concerts and drama. Secondly, they had a chance to listen to *seanchaí*, (storytellers) when they visited the colleges, or on visits to Gaeltacht houses. In this regard, however, the inspectors acknowledged that often the students did not receive a great welcome, though they attributed this to the fact that the students called at 'inopportune times as they cannot be let out in winter, which is the best time for *seanchaí*.'[163] Thirdly, the inspectors reported that the colleges had a positive effect on the Gaeltacht: not only were they a clear sign that a new era in the nation's history had begun, they also demonstrated the State's commitment to the language.

In view of the criticisms of the teaching of Irish, the poor quality of the teachers' own Irish, and teaching methods, and the lack of mixing between Gaeltacht and Galltacht students, it was surprising that the report did not recommend ending the system. It did, however, make this forecast:

> Falling enrolments in primary schools and the decrease in the number of teachers required, will lead to a decreasing number of students in preparatory colleges and, if this happens, then all the colleges will not be needed so some of them could become ordinary secondary schools for Gaeltacht students, or Vocational Schools, or Domestic Science schools.'[164]

The report, which ended with a list of recommendations, with financial implications, was signed by Tomás Ó Conaill, and S. F. Ó Modhráin, with a dissenting piece by P. E. Ó Suilleabháin,[165] who promised to send his own report and recommendations:

> I accept that this report will improve the present system but I do not think that this is the best system for teachers selecting children on results of examinations and then trying to teach them the skill of teaching.[166]

As the report contained some harsh criticisms of the preparatory system, it was to be expected that some major changes would have been made and that many of its recommendations would have been speedily implemented. However it was some time before changes were put into effect. One of the earliest to take effect in 1939[167] was to do with teaching practice, which the Department decided should be undertaken annually, in the second term of the school year, when each student would teach his or her own class. The following year the recommendation that there should be a test in Singing, and oral tests in Irish, and English, for preparatory students at the Intermediate and Leaving

Certificate Examinations was implemented.[168] This was an important change for failure meant that a student would not be allowed to continue.

Other recommendations took longer to be put into practice and it was February 1942, before new Regulations for Preparatory Colleges were issued.[169] These included a reduction in the age limit for Fíor-Ghaeltacht candidates: from 1943, all candidates were to be between thirteen and fifteen and a half, while from 1944, they were to be between thirteen and fifteen on 1st August of the year of the examination. In addition it was announced that entrance examination papers would be in Irish only with no bonuses for answering in Irish' though half the places would still be reserved for candidates with eighty-five per cent in oral Irish.[170]

Other changes concerned the entrance examination where it was proposed to alter the Arithmetic programme by giving a hundred marks for calculation questions, and a further hundred marks for doing three out of five problem questions. In addition boys were required to do three optional subjects with a hundred marks awarded for each subject, while girls had a choice of two subjects, and Needlework. It was also announced that Singing would become obligatory for all in 1943,[171] and that from that year on,[172] optional subjects would be abolished. This proposed change led to a question in the Dáil as to why Algebra, and Geometry, were not on the course for the entrance examination.[173]The Minister for Education responded:

> The new regulations removed optional subjects, including Algebra and Geometry, to give 'comthrom céanna' (equal opportunity) to pupils from small schools where such subjects were not taught.[174]

It is likely that the small schools, referred to by the Minister, were in the Gaeltacht, and this was a further attempt to ensure Gaeltacht students continued to be successful in gaining places in the colleges. By 1944, the entrance examination consisted of examinations in Irish, English, Arithmetic, History, Geography, English and Irish Pensmanship, Singing, and Needlework for girls. From 1945, all Singing tests, included tonic solfa and sight reading,[175] but exceptions were allowed in certain cases. Candidates, who got over seventy-five per cent in total, but failed Singing, would be accepted.

The important recommendation of the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry*[176] that students be accepted into the preparatory colleges after the Intermediate Certificate Examination, was seriously considered by the Department at this time, and in 1942, a circular outlined conditions for such entrants:

> Arrangements may be made from 1944 onwards to reserve a percentage of the total number of vacancies for clever pupils, if a sufficient number is available from secondary schools, who have a good knowledge of Irish and who have passed the Intermediate Certificate with honours and satisfied other conditions.[177]

Furthermore the following rules were drawn up: candidates had to pass the Intermediate Certificate Examination with honours, gaining a pass at English, honours at Irish, and satisfactory marks in Mathematics, History and Geography. [178]

However, in 1943, it was announced that this form of entry was 'curtha ar ath-ló' (postponed).[179] According to a Memo on Entry to the Preparatory Colleges[180] it was turned down on the grounds that it was unfair to those parents, who could not afford secondary education to Intermediate level for their children. This was a mistake, because

had that recommendation been implemented for all students, many of the weaknesses in the system would have been eradicated, particularly regarding the age at which students entered the system. Furthermore at sixteen-plus students would have attended at least one other secondary school and have mixed with students going on to other careers. Of much more significance was the fact that the costs of running the system would have been greatly reduced, and the fees to be reclaimed when a student did not go on to teach, would have been halved. It would have also made it much easier to match the number of students in training to the numbers required, a difficulty acknowledged by the Department in 1938.[181] An exception was made, however, in the case of C. Moibhí, which in 1944, was allowed to accept candidates who had completed the Intermediate Examination. This was a concession to the minority community, which was experiencing severe difficulties with recruitment.[182] A further exemption for C. Moibhí, was that when the age limits for entry were reduced in 1946, to between thirteen and fifteen, an upper age limit of fifteen-and-a-half, was kept for its entrants. Furthermore examination papers for entry to the college continued to be published in English.

THE McDONNELL COURT CASE

The failure to make significant changes as a result of the inspectors' report was compounded in 1939 by a significant test case involving C. Mhuire, when one of the staff, Mrs. Margaret McDonnell, (née Gillan), claimed damages from the Minister for Education, and the Archbishop of Tuam, for alleged wrongful dismissal from her position as 'Professsor of Science.'[183] In the case before the High Court, Mrs. McDonnell, a UCG graduate with a first-class honours B.Sc. degree in Mathematical Science, and the Higher

Diploma in Education, claimed that her employment was terminated, without justification or excuse. Evidence was given that she first began teaching at C. Bhride, in Dublin in 1929, and subsequently transferred the following year to C. Mhuire as a full-time 'professor.' Throughout her teaching career, she had excellent reports and recommendations, but shortly after her marriage, in January 1937, she had received a letter from the Department informing her that she would have to leave her post immediately, and that they would be advertising for a new 'professor.'

The case highlighted the casual way, in which the Department treated preparatory college staff. In response to a number of requests from Mrs. McDonnell for reasons for her dismissal, she was eventually given three months' notice. According to a newspaper report she gave the following evidence:

> She wrote to the Archbishop of Tuam but nothing came of that. She had no formal agreement. When appointed in August 1929, she was told that she would have to sign a formal agreement but was never asked to do so. She was never told she would have to give up teaching on marriage.[184]

In its defence the Department claimed, however, that in 1935 conditions were laid down that 'lady teachers must resign on marriage and six teachers in preparatory colleges had done so.'

In addition the case clearly demonstrated the way in which the colleges were managed, and the powerful role played by the local bishop as manager. This was made clear in the evidence of the principal of C. Mhuire, Sr. Aquinas, who said that she was informed of

the intended wedding, before Christmas 1936, and that she had told Mrs. McDonnell that she would not be retained on the staff. The newspaper reported:

> It was just the witness's opinion that the Archbishop did not favour the retention of married women on the staff. Marriage did not interfere with her efficiency or capacity.[185]

Other evidence corroborated the view that, ultimately, the power to dismiss the teacher lay with the archbishop. Indeed evidence was given that the Department eventually suggested that Mrs. McDonnell be allowed to continue in the post until the end of the school year, but a letter from the archbishop's representative, insisted that the post be advertised immediately. In its defence, the Department claimed that it 'did not appoint, or dismiss teachers, without the bishop's approval, a matter on which the bishops insisted.' Moreover in his summing up the judge declared:

> The position of managers of preparatory colleges was somewhat peculiar and, all the more so, by the fact that there were no statutory regulations governing these colleges. But as a matter of practical arrangements between the Department and the bishops, the manager was consulted with reference to appointments to, and control of these colleges. It was quite clear that the archbishop was consulted with reference to the dismissal.[186]

Nevertheless the judge dismissed the action against the archbishop with costs, and directed the Minister to pay to the plaintiff, by way of compensation, the costs of the archbishop. The judge also declared three months' notice insufficient, though he was careful to say that 'it was not for him to decide what was reasonable notice.' He believed 'nothing under six months sufficient' and made an award of £280, one year's salary, to Mrs. McDonnell. [187]

The McDonnell case, as it came to be known, was important because it established certain rights for preparatory staff, and effected changes in the way they were treated subsequently. The most significant change was that the verdict entitled redundant teachers to compensation and this was a factor used by Derrig, in his dealings with Finance. Furthermore the case was notable, because facts given in evidence showed the casual way in which the preparatory colleges had been established, without statutory provision or regulations,[188] factors which were to be of considerable significance when the Department decided to end the system in the late fifties. This was a further example of the effects of the Department's haste to get the colleges established in the twenties. In the Department's defence, its lawyers stated that they were established in 1926, by inclusion in the parliamentary vote,[189] and while the teaching posts were pensionable, and permanent, they pleaded that the colleges were 'in an experimental stage,' and had never received legislative sanction.[190]

During the case some illuminating figures concerning the position of Irish teaching in secondary schools, throughout the country, were given in evidence:

Table 5.7: Irish Teaching in Secondary Schools

No. of Secondary Schools	350
No. teaching through Irish	97
No. teaching 50% through Irish	47
No. teaching one or more subjects through Irish	63

Source: *The Irish Times* 5/7/1939

These figures are important because they show that there was no longer a pressing need for the preparatory colleges, as there were 'A' schools in many places. The preparatory colleges, however, had a significant advantage in that each one was really a 'mini-Gaeltacht' where ideal conditions existed for the 'total immersion' method of language learning.

The case was of some concern to the Department, as negotiations over the closure of C. Chaoimhín were taking place at this time.[191] Indeed the sudden closure of the college, the flagship of the system, in 1939, dealt a hammerblow to the preparatory system. For about eighteen months before its closure, Education fought strenuously to keep the college open and tried to persuade Finance to provide extra scholarships for Fior-Ghaeltacht boys, to fill places left vacant by the temporary cessation of recruitment to preparatory colleges.[192] But with an enrolment of only fifty-nine pupils, for the school year 1939/40, Finance refused to keep it open any longer. Despite the fact that the college had more than fulfilled the Government's aspirations for the preparatory system, and was a source of pride to the Department, the Christian Brothers, and to its staff, and students, past and present, the college was closed with very short notice in July 1939. The first official knowledge the staff had was a letter received by the president, Br. Ward, [193]from the Department, dated 13th June, announcing the closure on 31st July.[194] The following reasons were given for the closure:

> The decline in the number of pupils enrolled in National Schools and the resultant decrease in the number of national teachers needed, has rendered necessary a review of training of teachers and candidate teachers.[195]

How honest was this explanation? The explanation was true in, as far as it went, but it was not the whole truth. There were indeed, a large number of teachers unemployed as the following table shows:

Table 5.8: Numbers of Unemployed Teachers and of Students in Training and Preparatory Colleges in 1939

No. of unemployed Roman Catholic male trained teachers	361
No. of unemployed Roman Catholic female trained teachers	291
No. of lay men in Roman Catholic training colleges	120
No. of lay women in Roman Catholic training colleges	204
No. of students in Boys' Preparatory Colleges	248
No. of students in Girls' Preparatory Colleges	288

Source: Letter from Department to Archbishop Byrne, June 1939, Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers.

THE CLOSURE OF C. CHAOIMHÍN

Moreover, the conclusion of the Joseph O'Neill,[196] secretary of the Department, who wrote the letter to Archbishop Byrne, was that there was sufficient material available for ten years. Why was C. Chaoimhín chosen for closure? The reason given for closing C. Chaoimhín, was that it would be easier to dispose of the building, or to find alternative uses for it, as it was in Dublin. But there were two other important factors. Firstly, the Department could not close C. na Mumhan as its new building, costing £100,000, in Ballyvourney, had not been used, and there would have been a public outcry about the large amount of money spent on its construction.[197] The waste of money incurred by the Department, in building the college at Ballyvourney, was a further instance of the

incompetent planning by officials associated with the preparatory scheme. Secondly, the Department wanted to avoid further upsetting the De La Salle Order, as it was in the process of withdrawing recognition from its training college in Waterford.[198] (This issue is discussed in chapter 1V) Negotiations about its closure had involved the highest levels in both Church and State, and included the Hierarchy and the Taoiseach, de Valera.[199]Furthermore relationships between the Hierarchy and the Government were strained for some time after its closure on 31st August 1939.

Concern over the closure of C. Chaoimhín exacerbated tensions between Derrig and MacEntee.[200] Derrig tried hard to prevent the closure and presented a memo to the Cabinet, in which he paid tribute to the zeal and enthusiasm of its conductors. Such characteristics, he said had been forthcoming to an extent that could hardly have been expected. Moreover, he asserted:

> The college had been a model for the development of teaching through Irish and instrumental to a large degree in demonstrating the practicability of using the language as the sole medium of instruction in a wide secondary school curriculum.[201]

In addition he wrote of the outstanding place of the college in the educational and cultural life of the country, in the twelve years of its existence, and praised its valuable contribution to the movement for the advancement of Irish games in schools, and colleges.[202]

These were not extravagant claims puffed up to overcome Finance's objections. The Christian Brothers at C. Chaoimhín were fully committed to the restoration of the

language, and the college had been outstanding as one of the first schools to show that the Leaving Certificate course could be taught, through Irish, with very successful results. But it was all to no avail. In a later effort, Derrig recalled in vain that the State's policy had been to maintain, and to extend Irish, as a living speech and to revive it in the Galltacht.[203] His assertion that due to its Dublin location, the college had exerted a very powerful influence on Irish cultural development, was marked with derisory exclamation marks by officials in Finance, as were his remarks hinting that de Valera supported his proposals, to provide secondary schools in each of the main Gaeltacht areas.[204] Despite his assertion that its closure would be regarded as a set-back for the gaelicisation policy, particularly in Dublin, there was little sympathy for his view in Finance, where the preparatory system had been viewed with scepticism from the beginning. [205]

Earlier in an effort to avert closure, Derrig wrote to MacEntee suggesting that savings made by closing the De La Salle Training College in Waterford, could be used to provide funds to keep C. Chaoimhín open with scholarship pupils. [206] MacEntee, however, was not to be moved and totally refused to consider any further measures to help the Gaeltacht, arguing that the whole population had fallen since 1926, and in greater proportion in the Gaeltacht. In his opinion:

> Preferential treatment of the Gaeltacht. Cannot agree should be increased at the expense of the rest of the country. The number of preparatory college students from the Gaeltacht is excessive with regard to the number of vacancies in the teaching profession and the State cannot be expected to maintain a figure for scholarships and preparatory colleges based on what had been an error of judgement in the past as to requirements.[207]

He strongly opposed the use of scholarships to keep the college open, and reiterated his opinion:

> It is extremely undesirable that boys brought up in the same level of poverty should receive secondary education together. Should come into contact as early as possible with boys of a different environment, outlook, etc.

While he had this to say regarding C. Chaoimhín's educational record:

> Secondary scholarships were designed to combine with University Scholarships for the Fíor-Ghaeltacht. The objective of the two schemes is the creation of a professional and academic class of person with his whole education received through Irish. If at C. Chaoimhín grave danger main objectives of scholarships lost and C. Chaoimhín merely a cramming institution for the Civil Service instead of a stepping stone to higher education for the professions.[208]

While what MacEntee said about the students mixing with students from other backgrounds was reasonable, his remarks about students using C. Chaoimhín as a cramming institution for the civil service did not stand up to scrutiny. In 1941, when Finance was involved in a further wrangle with Education over raising the fees at the colleges, an examination of numbers entering the civil service from the training colleges was made. This revealed that, between 1939 and 1941, only eight students from training colleges were successful at the civil service examinations, and they were not all from the preparatory colleges:

> The annual leakage is only five per cent. Therefore can only recover fees from civil servants. Very few. From 1928 – 1941 only eight from training colleges successful at the civil service examinations. Not all of them were from the preparatory colleges.[209]

Finance persisted, however, with its efforts to close C. Chaoimhín, and used the poor condition of the country's economy to its political advantage, estimating that the closure would save the Exchequer £6,400 annually. Despite Derrig's best efforts to assert the importance of improving the position of Irish in the schools, when the matter had to be decided, de Valera concluded[210] that 'the prime consideration was the saving of expenditure,' and to Finance's delight the closure of C. Chaoimhín went ahead.

The Department's lack of concern for the staff and students of C. Chaoimhín, was demonstrated by the short notice given of the closure. Lay teachers were told they would be offered posts, in other preparatory colleges, or, alternatively, they would receive three months' salary in lieu of notice on condition that it was to be returned, should they obtain posts within that period. In addition they were to receive compensation, according to their length of service.[211] Three of the staff: Ó Lubaigh,[212] Ó Loideáin, and Diskin, were offered posts in C. Éinne, while two others: Ó Muimhneacháin,[213] and MacSitric, were offered posts in C. na Mumhan. Three of those who accepted the offered posts, not unreasonably demanded removal expenses, which were not inconsiderable, as they had to move to Ballyvourney. Moreover, MacSitric was to go to C. Éinne, in Galway, for a year, before moving to Ballyvourney permanently. The teaching Brothers did not fare so well. They were to get three months' salary, while the medical officer, the chaplain, and the music teacher, were to receive one month's notice.[214]

Education's poor treatment of the staff was possible, in those days, when the staff were not members of a teaching organisation, and the domestic staff would not have belonged

to a trade union either. The effects of the McDonnell case[215] had not yet come into law. A further aspect of the closure was the poor treatment of the Christian Brothers, who received little reward for their dedicated service to the college. A letter from the secretary of the Department to Br. Peter Kiernan Ward,[216] President of C. Chaoimhín, on 20th July, 1939, expressed in one sentence the Minister's appreciation of his and the Brothers' work, since the foundation of the college. In addition it went on to give him notice, that his service with the college would end on 1st August, and that he would receive three months' salary in lieu of notice. The Department's lack of generosity was further emphasised by the condition, that this sum of money would be reduced by the amount of any salary, or other emolument, received from the State during the three months, starting 1st August. [217]

The Brothers' reaction to the closure, however, was stoic, 'they had no option but to accept the decision.'[218] One reason for their quiet acceptance may have been that they hoped to acquire the college's splendid building cheaply. It had been decided that the building was to be given to the Office of Public Works, to be used by the National Museum.[219] But shortly after the closure, the Christian Brothers' Provincial Council, with the approval of Archbishop Byrne,[220] made a formal application to the Government, to let or sell the building to the Order, as a House of Studies for either postulants or scholastics[221] Their application might have been successful, but for the outbreak of World War 11, when the building was taken over by the Department of Defence.

The Department's treatment of the house staff, and students, showed scant concern for their welfare. House staff were told that they would be written to later, and the president of the college was instructed to inform the students, that they would not be returning to C. Chaoimhín, but would receive word later from the Department, as to where they were to go, for the school year 1939/40.[222] Indeed the Department's indifference to their welfare, was further demonstrated when the fifty-nine students in C. Chaoimhín were sent, first to C. Éinne, where thirty-four completed their course, and the remaining twenty-five were sent on to C. Íosagáin after one year. The latter had the unusual distinction of having been pupils at the three boys' colleges.[223]

The closure aroused some opposition, and this was led, not unexpectedly, mainly by the lay staff, though there was some opposition from Irish language organisations also. The lay teachers appealed immediately to the manager, Archbishop Byrne,[224] 'to use your influence to prevent the grave injustice being done to us and to all concerned.'[225] In addition they pointed out that C. Chaoimhín was being closed at a time when a college in another part of the country, that has not yet been opened, was allowed to continue, and listed the personal hardship for themselves as teachers losing their employment. They also pointed out that a 'grave wrong was being done to the Christian Brothers.'[226]

Byrne, however, showed little interest in the staff's future, and his behaviour contrasted sharply with the way he behaved at the time of their appointments, when all details had to be sent to him for approval, before their appointments were sanctioned by the Department.[227] Byrne himself, had only been officially informed of the closure a few

days earlier,[228] though in keeping with the Department's policy of obtaining the bishops' approval, before making a major decision, it is likely that he was unofficially informed of the possibility of the college's closure much earlier. The staff next appealed to the Taoiseach, de Valera, and in a lengthy memo, outlined their views on three issues: firstly, the preparatory system in general, secondly: education in the Gaeltacht, and thirdly: on the closure.[229] They pointed out that the preparatory colleges were the only effective way for Gaeltacht people to get higher education, and so be in a position to obtain professional posts. They omitted to mention that the only professional posts to be obtained by preparatory students were in teaching. They also recalled that Coimisiún na Gaeltachta[230] had recommended the establishment of secondary schools in Gaeltacht areas. Therefore they asserted, with some justification, that the Government should be increasing the number of schools, in these areas, instead of reducing it. This argument was flawed for it could be used to favour the retention of the Munster college as it was in the Gaeltacht, unlike the Dublin-based C. Chaoimhín.

They also claimed that by closing C. Chaoimhín, the Government was giving in to those who complained that the preparatory scheme benefited the youth of the Gaeltacht unduly. As the scheme favoured Gaeltacht students more than the others, those who made this complaint were justified, though the teaching staff at C. Chaoimhín were unlikely to agree. Moreover, the teachers pointed out that there were no boarding schools, except the preparatory colleges, where 'all teachers taught through Irish, and where Irish was the only language of the school.' [231] For that reason they asserted that closing a preparatory college would be a big blow to the Government's language policy. Here they were on

stronger ground. The closure of C. Chaoimhín, was indeed a major blow to the Government's policy, for it was one of the most successful colleges

The teachers listed a number of reasons why C. Chaoimhín should not be closed. Firstly, they pointed out that it was the first preparatory college [232] to open. Secondly, that it had excellent examination results generally, and thirdly, that it had led the way for other Irish-speaking colleges. While their remarks about its examination results, and the example it set other Irish-speaking colleges were justified, they seemed unaware that C. Íde opened on the same day as C. Chaoimhín. In addition they went on to assert that as the majority of teachers were working in Dublin, some teachers should begin their training in the city. This was a weak argument, forgetting that two large training colleges, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and Our Lady of Mercy Training College, Carysfort, were located in Dublin.

The staff tried to highlight the injustice being done to the Christian Brothers by the closure, and asserted that C. Chaoimhín was the only college run by the Brothers, whom they claimed had done more to keep Irish and the national spirit, alive, than any other group. In addition they pointed out that the Order employed up to 700 teachers, so they should have some say in their training. As the Government was already embroiled in a row over training colleges for Religious Orders, [233] these remarks were unlikely to help their cause.

In dealing with their chief grievance, which was their own treatment, their main concern was that they would have to leave Dublin, and they stressed that they had accepted their posts on the understanding that they were permanent and full-time. They had taken the posts because they were in Dublin, and had given up full-time posts elsewhere. Subsequently, they had been offered posts with better pay and prospects, but had refused them because they did not want to leave the city, where they were well settled. In addition they pointed out that four of them were married, while the fifth was getting married. None of these reasons was likely to effect a change in the Department's decision.

The staff made certain proposals for keeping the preparatory colleges open:

> One of the colleges should be a secondary school for Gaeltacht boys so they can go on to become doctors, lawyers, civil servants or whatever. That would help to spread Irish among educated people.[234]

To do this the staff recommended that twenty scholarships per year should be awarded to Gaeltacht boys without means while eighty scholarships should be given elsewhere in the country. They believed that there should also be forty to fifty other places for students paying sixty pounds per year. They estimated that this could be achieved at a cost of £4,000 per annum. Their second proposal was that one of the colleges should become a secondary school, run by the Government, to give 'Fíor-Ghaeltacht education' to boys from all over the country, who had a good knowledge of Irish. They recommended that the students should pay fees of thirty-five pounds per year and that the Government

should subsidise the college by paying a similar amount per student per year also. Moreover they made this prediction:

> Such a college would give a lead to all the other colleges in the country and would help them to become gaelicised. There is no other way for the learned professions to become gaelicised because Irish will never ever be the usual language of young people of the Galltacht, particularly those who will be the country's leaders unless many of them spend some years in a school like that.[235]

This was a realistic proposal, made by people who were deeply committed to the gaelicisation policy. Moreover, the proposal could have been adapted for the other colleges. One of its weaknesses, however, was that the staff do not seem to have considered the importance of the management question. Had the Government been seriously committed to the gaelicisation policy, it would have given the proposal some consideration. There is nothing to show that it ever did, and in view of its strained relationships with the Hierarchy, it was unlikely to have done so.

Eventually the grievances of the teachers were settled, and, subsequently, all opposition to the closure died. The affair showed the shallowness of the Government's commitment to the Irish language. In C. Chaoimhín it had a very successful school, judged by the standards of the times. As a college it was renowned for the enthusiasm of its staff, and pupils, for the language, which was acknowledged by an editorial in the *Evening Mail*, a newspaper not given to promoting the language policy:

> The college was established some twelve years ago, and in Gaelic circles its reputation stood high; it was staffed by teachers with an infectious enthusiasm for the language, and the solid practical work that was done there earned the admiration of all who had any contact with it and saw the results it achieved. Those who passed

> through its courses emerged as very competent Irish speakers - and such are rare enough in spite of the large doses of the language that have been served up to our youth during the past fifteen years and what is, perhaps, more important to the cause so dear to the heart of the Government, propagandists and apologists for the restoration of the ancient tongue, burning with conviction and sincerity.[236]

The closure of C. Chaoimhín was ironic, as the college had achieved more for the gaelicisation policy in the twelve years of its existence, than anything else in the previous twenty years. It achieved exceptional results in public examinations. These included Leaving Certificate Examinations, where students obtained first place in History, Botany, and General Science, in 1934, and in General Science in 1935, and 1936. In addition in 1938, students obtained first place in History, Botany, and General Science, and seven students obtained full marks in higher level Irish. [237] Outstanding results at the Intermediate Certificate Examination, included first place in Science, and Manual Instruction in 1933. Similar outstanding results were achieved in Geography, Manual Instruction, and Botany, the following year, in addition to winning two medals for the best composition in Irish. The college also made a notable contribution to Gaelic sporting endeavours and many of its former students went on to distinguish themselves in this area. In addition a number made outstanding contributions to education, and were noted contributors to the advancement of the Irish language.[238] A further irony was that it was the college on which the least amount of money had been spent. Moreover, the closure of C. Chaoimhín illustrated the shallowness of the Government's commitment to the language, showing clearly the hypocritical attitude of de Valera and his Government, which only two years earlier had put before the public the 1937 Constitution,[239] with its

declaration, in Article 8, that Irish was the national language - the first official language of the State.

CONCLUSION

As the end of the thirties approached, the fortunes of the preparatory system had been transformed. At the beginning of the decade, the preparatory system was establishing itself and despite the poor planning, incompetence and haste, which marked the development of the individual colleges, they were soon successfully providing students for the training colleges, who were not only fluent Irish speakers, but had also received a secondary education. In this way they solved the Government's dual problem regarding recruitment by providing well-educated candidates, capable of passing the training college examinations and also capable of putting the gaelicisation policy into practice in the primary schools.

The transformation of the system's fortunes was brought about by certain factors: firstly, the Department's failure to estimate accurately the number of teachers required, which before long resulted in a large surplus of trained teachers. Despite measures to reduce these numbers the Department was eventually forced to order a temporary cessation of recruitment to training colleges, and finally, in 1938, to curtail recruitment to the preparatory colleges for two years. A second factor in the changed fortunes of the system, was the confidential *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges* in 1938, which revealed many defects, and expressed the view that the colleges would

eventually be no longer necessary. The third factor was increasing friction between Finance and Education, over the high costs of the system which led to the closure of C. Chaoimhín, one the most successful colleges, though the Government's strained relationships with the Roman Catholic Church, over the closure of Waterford Training College, played a major part in the decision.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1] See p. 206
[2] J. Coolahan, A study of curricular policy for the primary and secondary school, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Dublin University, 1974
[3] S. Ó Buachalla, *Education policy in twentieth century Ireland*, (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1988) p. 349
[4] Derrig was minister for a continuous period of sixteen years except for a short break from 8th September 1939 to 18th June 1940 during which Seán T. O'Kelly was minister for the first nineteen days and de Valera for the remaining period.
[5] *Revised Programme for Primary Schools*, (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 1934)
[6] From 1934 obtaining the Leaving Certificate became contingent on obtaining a pass in Irish
[7] See p. 60, n. 50
[8] Seán MacEntee, (1989 – 1984). Revolutionary and politician. He was born in Belfast and educated at St. Malachy's College, and Belfast Municipal College of Technology, where he qualified as an electrical engineer. He joined the Irish Volunteers and took part in the 1916 Rising. Subsequently he was sentenced to death but this was commuted to life in prison. He served periods in different English prisons before being released in the general amnesty the following year. He was first elected to Parliament in 1918 as MP for Monaghan. He took part in the War of Independence, and in the subsequent Civil War, he fought on the anti-Treaty side for which he was imprisoned by the Free State Government. At one stage he led an attempt to break into Mountjoy Gaol in an effort to help anti-Treaty prisoners to escape. He was unsuccessful in his attempt to gain a seat in the Dail, in the 1923 elections.

A founder member of Fianna Fáil, he was eventually elected a TD for Dublin County in 1927, and from then until his retirement from politics in 1969, represented various Dublin constituencies. In 1932, he became the first Fianna Fail Minister for Finance, a post he held until 1939, when he became Minister for Local Government and Health. His other Cabinet posts, included Industry and Commerce, and Health, and he was Tánaiste from 1959 – 65. As a politician he was much feared by his political opponents, particularly for his sharp invective and the ruthless pursuit of his political objectives. He was one of the most conservative Fianna Fáil ministers of the period.
[9] C. Íde and C. Bhríde had both been extended, while C. Mhuire's purpose-built college had opened at Tourmakeady in February 1931. In January 1934, C. Moibhí had moved to new premises in the Phoenix Park
[10] See p. 206
[11] See p. 82
[12] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1932 - 33, p. 15
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] See p. 76
[15] *Report of the Department of Education.*, 1932 – 33, p. 16
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] See p. 215
[18] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1932 – 33, p. 7
[19] *Ibid.*

[20] O'Connell, p. 397
[21] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1933 - 34, p. 18
[22] DF Papers, S25/4/32
[23] DF Papers, S25/9/34
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1935 - 36, p. 17
[26] *Ibid.* S25/4/34
[27] *Ibid,* S25/9/34
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Enrolments fell from 522,090 in 1926 to 495,829 in 1934 while the number of schools decreased from 5,648 to 5,212 in 1936. *Reports of Department of Education,* 1926 - 27, 1933 - 34, 1936 - 37
[30] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1927 - 28, p. 11
[31] See p. 255
[32] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1937 - 38, p. 14
[33] DF Papers, S20/35/38
[34] Séamus Fenton was chief inspector at the time the preparatory colleges were established.
[35] Henry Morris was a divisional inspector. He attended the Second Programme Conference in 1926. See p. 166, n. 152
[36] Letter from Séamus Fenton to Bishop Browne of Galway, 1st September, 1944
[37] DF Papers, S25/1/32
[38] See p. 69
[39] DF Papers, S20/4/28. See also Ó Buachalla, p. 225
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *Ibid.*
[42] See p. 68
[43] DF Papers, S20/4/28
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.*
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] *Ibid.*
[48] This did not include the purchaser's legal costs, which also had to be paid.
[49] DF Papers, S20/4/28
[50] C. Einne PPA, *Coláiste Einde 1928 – 1978,* (Indreabhán: Clodóirí Lurgan:1978), p. 15
[51] See p. 277 - 279
[52] Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] Letter to Archbishop Byrne, December 1933, *Ibid.*
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1934 - 35, p. 10
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] DF Papers, S25/20/34
[60] *Ibid.*
[61] See p. 93

[62] Letter from Byrne to Ó Brolcháin, December 1930, Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers.
[63] C. Éinne PPA, *Coláiste Einde 1928 – 1978*, (Indreabhán: Clodóirí Lurgan, 1978), p. 15
[64] DF Papers, S20/4/28
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] *Ibid.*, S22/2/33
[67] *Ibid.*, S22/5/44. See also p. 351
[68] The Bishop of Galway insisted that a chapel be provided before C. Éinne could open. *Ibid.*, S22/4/34
[69] See p. 69
[70] Letter from Ó Brolcháin to Byrne, Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers
[71] See p. 63, n. 30
[72] Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers
[73] Letter to secretary of Roman Catholic Bishops Conference, *Ibid.*
[74] *Ibid.*
[75] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1933 - 34, p. 8
[76] John Horgan, *Seán Lemass The Enigmatic Patriot*, (Dublin: Gill &Macmillan, 1937), p. 86
[77] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1933 - 34, p. 8
[78] *The Report of the Coimisiún na Gaeltachta* proposed that secondary schools should be established in the Gaeltacht. *Statement of Government Policy on Recommendations of the Commission presented to both Houses of the Oireachtas by Order of the Executive Council*, p. 7, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1926)
[79] DF Papers, S20/1/34
[80] *Ibid.*
[81] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1934 - 35, p. 55
[82] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S2512
[83] DF Papers, S20/1/34
[84] *Ibid.*
[85] *Ibid.*
[86] *Ibid.*
[87] See p. 290
[88] Department of the Taoiseach Papers S2512
[89] See p. 61, n. 88
[90] Ó Buachalla, p. 262
[91] See pp. 247 - 252
[92] DF Papers, S25/2/39
[93] See p. 343, n. 8
[94] DF Papers, S25/2/39
[95] *Ibid.*
[96] See p. 60, n. 50
[97] See p. 215
[98] The regulations for scholarships varied slightly from those for the preparatory colleges; English was an optional subject.

[99] Male students attended C. Chaoimhín while female students went to 'A' schools such as the Convent of Mercy, Tuam, and the St. Louis Convent, Monaghan. DF Papers, S25/4/31,
[100] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1932 - 33, p. 11
[101] DF Papers, S25/4/31
[102] *Ibid.*, S25/4/31 For 1932 - 33 and 1933 - 34 the combined costs were £1,345 –2s. – 4d.
[103] *Ibid.*, S76/8/36 By 1936 as many as 118 had qualified for the five pounds prize so the scheme had served its purpose.
[104] Scheme of Scholarships in Secondary Schools for pupils from the Fior-Ghaeltacht, UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P24/303
[105] See p. 126
[106] DF Papers, S25/4/31
[107] See p. 261
[108] DF Papers, S19/7/34
[109] *Ibid.*, S19/7/34
[110] *Ibid.*, S19/1/31
[111] *Ibid.*, S25/4/34
[112] *Ibid.*, S19/7/34
[113] *Ibid.*, S20/8/35
[114] *Ibid.*, S25/1/31
[115] *Ibid.*
[116] *Ibid.*
[117] *Ibid.*
[118] *Ibid.*
[119] *Irish Educational Documents*, vol. 11, ed. A. Hyland and K. Milne, (Dublin: CICE, 1992), p. 113
[120] Department of Education, *Revised Programme for Primary Instruction*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1934)
[121] See p. 138
[122] Department of Education, *Revised Programme for Primary Instruction*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1934), p. 2
[123] Department of Education, *The First National Programme*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1922). See also p. 45
[124] *The Irish School Weekly*, 29th July, 1933, vol. XXXV, No. 30, p. 722
[125] *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges*, DF Papers, S25/4/37
[126] In February 1938 Finance began seeking the report but Education refused to release it despite repeated requests. A note on the file stated that it was not to be released without permission from the Department Secretary.
[127] *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges, p.3*
[128] *Ibid.*, p. 27
[129] *Ibid.*, p. 1
[130] *Análacha Coláiste Caoimhghín, (Annals of C. Chaoimhín)*, St. Helen's Provincialate, York Road, Dun Laoghaire, 7th February, 1937
[131] *Ibid.*
[132] *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges*, p. 2
[133] *Ibid.*, p. 7

[134] *Ibid.*, p. 8
[135] *Ibid.*, p. 5
[136] *Ibid.*
[137] See p. 319
[138] *Report of Committee of Inquiry*, p. 7
[139] See p. 48
[140] *Report of Committee of Inquiry*, p. 7
[141] *Ibid.*, p. 12
[142] See p. 116
[143] *Report of Committee of Inquiry*, p. 6
[144] *Ibid.*
[145] *Ibid.*, p. 23
[146] *Ibid.*, p. 21
[147] *Ibid.* p. 23
[148] *Ibid.*, p. 27
[149] *Ibid.*, p. 14
[150] *Ibid.*, 15
[151] *Ibid.*, p. 17
[152] *Ibid.*
[153] *Ibid.*, p. 15
[154] *Ibid.*, p. 25
[155] *Ibid.*
[156] *Ibid.*, p. 26
[157] *Ibid.*, p. 19
[158] *Ibid.*
[159] See p. 310
[160] *Report of Committee of Inquiry*, p. 22
[161] See p. 60, n. 50
[162] *Report of Committee of Inquiry*, p. 24
[163] *Ibid.*
[164] *Ibid.*, p. 27
[165] *Ibid.*, p. 28
[166] *Ibid.*
[167] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1939 - 40, p. 13
[168] *Ibid.*, 1940 - 41, p. 13
[169] Circular 2/42 New Regulations for Preparatory Colleges
[170] An exception was made for candidates for C. Moibhí, whose examination papers continued to be set in English.
[171] That same year oversight of the colleges became part of the Primary Branch.
[172] See p. 309
[173] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S10999
[174] *Ibid.*
[175] Circular on the Preparatory Colleges 1944
[176] See p. 312
[177] Circular 2/42 New Regulations for Preparatory Colleges
[178] *Ibid.*

[179] Circular 1943. The acceptance of students for a three-year course continued at C. Iosagain.
[180] Memo on Entry to Preparatory Colleges, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S10577. An exception was made for pupils at C. Moibhi where After Intermediate pupils were accepted from 1943.
[181] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1937/38, p. 9
[182] Valerie Jones, 'Recruitment and Formation of Students into the Church of Ireland Training College,' unpublished M.Litt. thesis, Dublin University, 1989, p. 168
[183] *The Irish Times*, 5th July, 1939
[184] *Ibid.*
[185] *Ibid.*
[186] *Ibid.*
[187] *Ibid.*
[188] See p. 93
[189] *Ibid.*
[190] *The Irish Times*, 5th July, 1939
[191] DF Papers, S25/2/39
[192] *Ibid.*
[193] Br. Peter Kiernan Ward, 1883 – 1969, was Vice-president of C. Chaoimhín from its foundation until 1934, when he was appointed President, following the departure of Br. Donal Lucius Hurley, the first President. Br. Ward, who taught English, was a brother of Dr. Con Ward, one-time Minister for Health.
[194] *The Christian Brothers Educational Record*, p. 300
[195] *Ibid.*
[196] See p. 60, n. 130
[197] The total cost of the building came to £100,000 which was a huge sum at a time, when a full year's salary for a teacher at a preparatory college was only £280.
[198] See pp. 248 - 252
[199] *Ibid.*
[200] DF Papers, S20/26/37
[201] *Ibid.*
[202] *Ibid.*
[203] Letter from Derrig to MacEntee, *Ibid.*
[204] *Ibid.*
[205] See p. 91
[206] DF Papers, S25/2/39
[207] *Ibid.*
[208] *Ibid.*
[209] *Ibid.*, S20/8/35
[210] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S10577
[211] DF Papers S25/2/39. Ó Lubaigh was offered three months' salary in lieu of notice and sixteen months' salary as compensation.
[212] *Ibid.* Ó Lubaigh was offered a post as a lecturer in Botany in UCG but did not accept it due to his wife's ill-health.
[213] *Ibid.* Following advice from the Attorney-General Ó Muimhneacháin was given an ex-gratia payment.

[214] DF Papers S25/2/39
[215] See pp. 324 - 327
[216] See p. 348, n. 192
[217] Christian Brothers' Archives, C. Chaoimhín Papers
[218] *The Christian Brothers' Educational Record,* p. 299
[219] DF Papers, S25/2/39
[220] See p. 93
[221] *The Christian Brothers' Educational Record*, p. 301
[222] *Ibid.*
[223] See p. 254
[224] See p. 93
[225] Letter from the entire lay professorial staff at C. Chaoimhín, Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers
[226] *Ibid.*
[227] See p. 195
[228] Dublin Diocesan Archives, Byrne Papers
[229] Memo against the Closing of C. Chaoimhín for presentation to the Taoiseach, Christian Brothers' Archives, C. Chaoimhin Papers
[230] See p. 104
[231] Memo against the Closing of C. Chaoimhín for presentation to the Taoiseach, Christian Brothers' Archives, C. Chaoimhin Papers
[232] C. Íde and C. Chaoimhín opened on the same day: 1st March 1927
[233] See pp. 248 - 252
[234] Memo against the Closing C. Chaoimhín for presentation to the Taoiseach
[235] *Ibid.*
[236] *The Evening Mail,* 8th August, 1939
[237] *The Irish Press,* 3rd November, 1938
[238] An Br. Oir. M.S. Ó Flaitile, 'Coláiste Chaoimhín,' *An Réiltín,* Fómhar, 1956, p. 8
[239] *Bunreacht na hÉireann, The Constitution of Ireland,* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1937)

CHAPTER VI

1939 – 1948: SURVIVING WITH THE HELP OF DERRIG

The period, 1939 – 1948, was difficult for Ireland with economic stagnation and little industrial growth. Much of it was dominated by the Emergency with fuel shortages, food rationing, lack of transport, and fears of invasion. Isolated from the rest of the world, the national focus was on economic self-sufficiency. Education was in the doldrums with a widening rift between the Government and the INTO, that was to culminate eventually in a prolonged strike by primary teachers in 1946. A significant contributory factor was the Government's rejection of the findings of the INTO's *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish as a Teaching medium to Children whose Home Language is English,* published in 1941.[1]

For much of this period, recruitment was at a low ebb as the series of measures taken by the Department to absorb the over-supply of teachers, which characterised the thirties, resulted ultimately in the temporary cessation of recruitment by Open Competition to training colleges in 1938, [2] and the temporary closure of St. Patrick's Training College in 1944.[3] The Emergency was problematic for the preparatory system with a temporary cessation of recruitment during 1939 and 1940. Furthermore two colleges: C. Éinne, and C. Moibhí, were taken over by the Department of Defence, and it was due to determined efforts by Derrig,[4] that they eventually re-opened.

For most of the forties, pupil enrolments in national schools declined, with a subsequent decrease in the number of teachers required.[5] These factors, and the increase in the

number of all-Irish secondary schools, [6] meant there was less need for the preparatory colleges.

Throughout this period, Fianna Fáil was in Government and Derrig's long spell as Minister for Education continued for much of this time.[7] Money for Government projects, however, was in short supply, and the wrangle between Finance and Education over the preparatory system continued unabated. Buoyed up by its success in having achieved the closure of C. Chaoimhín in July 1939,[8] Finance considered how it might ensure the closure of a girls' college:

> Only eighty girls in the preparatory colleges. Closing of a girls' preparatory college would save £3,500 in staff salaries alone.[9]

However, this could only have been done by amalgamating two of the girls' colleges, something which would have been justified on the grounds of numbers, and economic necessity. Finance was loath to pursue the proposal as relationships between the Government and the bishops were already strained over the withdrawal of recognition from Waterford Training College.[10] An official in Finance noted glumly:

> Bishops a stumbling block. They would not allow nuns from say Kerry diocese (C. Íde) to transfer to Galway diocese.[11]

Education was also loath to give offence to the Church and despite the curtailment of recruitment in 1938, [12] to students from the preparatory colleges, 'who have already entered upon their course of training,' it continued to accept members of Religious Communities for training.

The bishops, however, were not the only difficulty to be considered when closing a preparatory college; there was also the outcome of the McDonnell constitutional case.[13] As a result of this case, the Department would have to pay large sums of money to compensate redundant staff. In the early forties, Finance continuously sought to reduce costs, and in the straitened economic conditions prevalent at that time, this was not unreasonable, particularly as the costs for the preparatory colleges were almost as high as those for the training colleges.

Table 6.1: Cost of Board at Preparatory and Training Colleges, 1942 - 1944

	1 week's maintenance		
		training colleges	
	preparatory colleges	men's colleges	women's college
1942/43	13s. - 0d.	14s. - 7d.	14s. - 9d.
1943/44	13s. - 3d.	18s. - 11d.	15s. - 6d.

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education*, 1942 - 44

Finance estimated that the temporary ban on recruitment introduced in 1939, in an effort to reduce the number of unemployed teachers, would result in annual savings of £3,600[14] in 1940, and 1941. It also estimated that by closing one boys' college for four years, and one girls' college for three years, an estimated £32,000[15] would be saved. Such savings have to be seen in the context of the period, when over fifty per cent of primary teachers earned less than four pounds a week. [16]

Finance continued its efforts to reduce costs, arguing forcefully that considerable savings would be made if student teachers were recruited through Open Competition, [17] instead of through the preparatory colleges, where the costs were considerable:

Table 6.2: Annual Costs of Preparatory Colleges 1939 – 1948

YEAR	ANNUAL COSTS	YEAR	ANNUAL COSTS
1939	£42,632-14-1	1944	£32,263-15-4
1940	£38,463-18-9	1945	£35,062-0-0
1941	£32,954-15-4	1946	£40,647-7-9
1942	£29,348-2-8	1947	£44,938-10-4
1943	£29,779-6-10	1948	£50,890-13-5

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education*, 1939 - 1948

A significant factor in favour of Open Competition, was that it was much easier to regulate the numbers recruited, and to prevent the disastrous over-recruitment of the thirties.[18] Education, however, was determined to keep the colleges open, and in a long memorandum[19] to the Taoiseach, de Valera, defended the system on the grounds that it provided vocational testing before entry to training:

> Must continue if the majority admitted to training college will have had some preliminary training and testing on a vocational basis set out in 1926 in An Dáil when the system was introduced. No satisfactory alternative way for teaching practice prior to the training college stage.[20]

This was a remarkable claim by Education considering the limited nature of teaching practice, revealed in the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges*, in 1938.[21] The real reason for Education championing the system was that its ending would be a severe set-back for the language policy. Furthermore it would allow

the Opposition to taunt the Fianna Fáil Government about its lack of commitment to the gaelicisation policy. In the same memo Derrig asserted:

> The system is an integral part of the national policy for the restoration of the language. The discontinuance of the preparatory colleges in which really enthusiastic and efficient work for the language has been the keynote of the administration would be a grave setback to the movement.[22]

Moreover, the closure of a second college so soon after the closure of C. Chaoimhín would be a severe blow.[23] In an effort to prevent a second closure, Education pointed out that there would be considerable difficulties over staffing, and redundant staff would have to be paid high costs in compensation:

> The principal and vice-principal would have to go to preparatory colleges. Senior professors could claim posts should not be terminated, particularly if they only came from C. Chaoimhín and at a time when the closing of a further college was not in mind at all. Senior professors mightn't be able to get jobs, better qualified junior staff. Compensation on same terms as C. Chaoimhín. *Ad hoc* gratuities calculated in relation to service and not on any recognised basis. Given as an alternative to continued employment in another college. Could claim no alternative available and present staff would receive 'abolition of office' terms as given to De La Salle Training College staff. Will entail pension to those with ten years' service or over.[24]

The question of which college to close was problematic. On the one hand, C. Éinne was more conveniently located for students from Donegal, and other northern counties, than C. Íosagáin in remote Ballyvourney. Moreover, Education asserted that closing C. Éinne would be a blow to the Irish movement in the West, and would arouse strong criticism in Galway. Nevertheless, it would be easier to use it for alternative purposes. On the other hand, the De La Salle Order would not accept the closure of C. Íosagáin, after only one year in operation,[25] and Education feared a public outcry over the high costs incurred in building the college.[26] A further significant factor in any decision was the role of the

Roman Catholic Church, and in particular, the reaction of the Bishop of Galway, who was manager of C. Éinne.

> The management of the colleges would object and this would cause divisions in the communities because when disbanding teachers it would be impossible to send De La Salle brothers to Galway Diocese.[27]

The possibility of closing all the colleges, temporarily, and disbanding the staff was also considered. This was resolutely opposed by Derrig, who proposed providing extra scholarships for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students to fill the empty places, pointing out that re-opening the colleges after a temporary closure would be problematic. He also claimed that it would be difficult to get enthusiastic new staff to run the colleges.[28] As the gaelicisation policy had been in operation over fifteen years, this was a somewhat doubtful claim. Furthermore in view of the criticism of the teaching staff in the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges,* in 1938,[29] it was not without merit. The provision of extra secondary school scholarships for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students, however, was rejected by Finance[30]on the grounds that the number was already adequate, and even if more were provided, the numbers would be insufficient to keep the colleges open. Finance also pleaded that the absence of Fíor-Ghaeltacht students from ordinary secondary schools, would deprive them of 'a gaelicising leaven.' Finance's real fear was that if Fíor-Ghaeltacht students were in an atmosphere and surroundings solely associated with the teaching profession they might want to become teachers.[31]

Other proposals considered to prevent temporary closure included the speeding up of female recruitment for 1941 and 1942, and plans for refresher courses for national teachers. Detailed plans for such courses at two of the colleges, C. Muire for women, and C. Éinne for men, were drawn up in 1941. It was proposed that courses in Irish,

Mathematics, History, Geography, Rural Science, and Drawing, should be given. In addition courses in infant teaching for female teachers, and instruction in Woodwork for men, were considered along with lectures in Latin, French, German, and Christian Doctrine. It was envisaged that three three-monthly courses would be held each year, and that fifty teachers would be accommodated on each course. Classes would take place for four hours daily, from Monday to Friday.

As the proposed courses were to be taught by the staff of the preparatory colleges, an examination of their qualifications was made. According to a memo, [32] the staff of C. Éinne were competent to teach the courses, but the staff of C. Mhuire 'could not deal with all the necessary subjects.' Moreover, two teachers, who were 'not required,' would have to transfer to other preparatory colleges. A further difficulty was that students at the two colleges, would have to be relocated. This would entail boys going to C. Íosagáin, where some rearrangement of personnel might be necessary. Despite the proposed rearrangements and the change in their work requirements, the Department refused to consider any monetary compensation for the staff: 'Neither bonuses, nor awards, would be offered to the teachers.' The plan was a further example of the casual way the Department treated the staff and students of the preparatory colleges. Nowhere was any consideration given to their welfare, as the Department moved them around like pawns on a chessboard.[33]

In July 1941, however, the plan came to naught as Education decided not to pursue the scheme on the grounds that 'teachers would be unlikely to attend courses, given by preparatory college staff; such courses were normally given by university staff.' [34] The high cost of the courses was a further factor. A more significant reason was the rejection

of the proposal by the Taoiseach, de Valera, who refused to press Finance to make the necessary money available.[35] This episode highlighted the way in which de Valera's Cabinet worked. Derrig had drawn up the plan and put it to the Taoiseach for approval, without consulting Finance, as he was well aware that the Minister for Finance was not likely to agree. Had the Taoiseach backed the plan, Finance would have had to accept it. This, however, did not happen so Education withdrew the plan, and in this way avoided a defeat in Cabinet. Had this plan succeeded, a proper scheme for in-service training for primary teachers might have developed. The failure to implement the planned courses in the 1940s, allowed the system to continue to the present day, whereby teachers make their own arrangements about in-service training, and pay to attend a course of their choice, their reward being three days' paid leave during the school year.

Throughout this period recruitment continued to be problematic, as the Department was unable to make accurate forecasts regarding the number of teachers required. Furthermore because of the way schools were organised, the number of posts for male teachers was less than for females, and recruitment had to reflect this. While a careful study of the annual birth-rate figures should have indicated the number of pupil enrolments likely four or five years later, the situation was complicated, during the Emergency, by the need to make allowances for emigration, or even immigration:

> There was an increase of 1,500 children on rolls in June 1940.The increase was due to the temporary enrolment of 3,000 pupils from Great Britain. Therefore there was in fact, a decrease of about 1,500 compared with the decrease of 7,000 as between 1937/38 and 1938/39 [36]

Education's efforts to resolve recruiting requirements became more problematic, as it clashed with Finance over the issue. In 1940, the *Report of the Department of Education*

Committee on Future Requirements with regard to Recruitment for the Teaching Profession made the following recommendations: firstly, recruitment should be resumed on two levels in 1941;[37] examinations for the preparatory colleges should be re-started, and seventy-five women should be recruited by Open Competition[38] and graduate avenues to the Roman Catholic training colleges. Secondly, it recommended that, in subsequent years, the numbers to be recruited should be determined about a year beforehand. Thirdly, it recommended that the five Roman Catholic preparatory colleges be continued, and gave as its opinion that all the colleges would definitely be required from 1944/45 onwards. These recommendations were queried by Finance, which expressed dissatisfaction with the report, [39] pointing out that the committee had overlooked certain factors in reaching its conclusions: it had not included in its estimate the number of nuns becoming teachers, who would fill posts currently filled by lay teachers. Neither had it considered the number of teachers likely to become redundant, due to the amalgamation of schools, and who would go on the panel.[40] Finance urged greater economies in the education system, and reiterated its preference for recruitment by Open Competition.[41] In addition it demanded the closure of a further boys' college, and the restriction of admission to the remaining boys' college to those from the Fíor-Ghaeltacht.

A memo from Finance, in March 1941, showed that there was a pupil-capacity of 540 places in the five Roman Catholic colleges, which had only 186 students, while domestic and teaching staff numbered 122:

Table 6.3: Staff/pupil ratio at Preparatory Colleges 1941

COLLEGE	PUPIL CAPACITY	PUPILS IN RESIDENCE	DOMESTIC & TEACHING STAFF
C. Íosagáin	120	23	20
C. Éinne	120	33	26
C. Bhríde	100	45	26
C. Mhuire	100	40	27
C. Íde	100	45	23
	540	186	122

C. Moibhi was not included

Source: Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307

This was a ratio of less than two students per staff member and showed the justification for Finance's demands.

As the wrangle over recruitment continued, Education quoted a prediction of Geary,[42] the Government statistician, that the decline in the school-going population would cease in 1945. A factor which contributed to difficulties in predicting the number of students to be recruited was the way in which the need for teachers was assessed. The Department's practice of keeping series of complex and detailed figures regarding the number of children in schools was confusing. An example of this was the numbers enrolled between 1939 and 1943, which according to one report were as follows:

Table 6.4: Statistics regarding Primary School enrolments 1939 – 43

Year	Average on rolls	Average daily attendance
1939	392,141	330,602
1940	392,588	333,766
1941	392,872	328,450
1942	391,627	328,947
1943	389,363	325,916

Source: *Report of the Department of Education,* 1942 – 1943, p. 9

However, it also gave these figures in its annual reports.

Table 6.5: Statistics of Pupil Enrolments in Primary Schools 1939 – 1943

	Average on rolls	Average daily attendance	
1939	462,526	384,572	83%
1940	464,108	389,390	83.9%
1941	462,245	380,929	82.4%
1942	459,932	380,592	82.8%
1943	454,647	373,414	82%

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education,* 1939 – 1943

The explanation for the different sets of figures appears to be that those in Table 6.4, which are lower, refer to the number of children in national schools to whom the School Attendance Act 1926 applied: children between six and fourteen years of age.[43] The Department also had a complex set of statistics for each school. Firstly, there was the number enrolled, which included every child whose name was entered on the rolls. Secondly, there was the average on rolls, and these were the figures on which new appointments depended. Before such appointments were sanctioned, however, the average attendance had to be maintained above a certain figure for a fixed period. If pupils were absent for more than fifteen consecutive days, their names had to be removed

from the roll, and consequently, the average on rolls dropped. In addition the daily average attendance had to be calculated. [44]

Throughout the struggle between Finance and Education, the attitude of the Taoiseach, de Valera, was of the utmost importance, and Derrig was careful to ensure that he was aware of developments, and fully briefed on the difficulties in advance of Cabinet meetings. [45] This strategy was successful and when the two opposing views were put to the Cabinet, in March 1941, a decision on the matter was postponed.[46] Eventually Finance accepted that it would not get its way, and did not press the issue. The fact that MacEntee, who was known for his confrontational style, had been succeeded as Minister for Finance, in 1939, by Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh,[47] may have been a factor in this decision.

TAKE-OVER OF C. MOIBHÍ

Though Ireland was neutral, the Second World War affected life in the Irish Free State considerably; two of the preparatory colleges, C. Moibhí and C. Éinne, were particularly affected as they were taken over by the Department of Defence. In the early years of their existence, both colleges had been in temporary premises. C. Éinne had two moves, before going to Salthill in 1938.[48] It was not until 1934[49] that C. Moibhí had settled into its intended permanent home, which was officially opened with much publicity by Derrig, at a ceremony attended by de Valera, on May 8th 1934.[50] The Government's lack of commitment to the preparatory system and to the gaelicisation policy was clearly indicated in the casual way it treated both colleges. C. Moibhí's fine premises in the Phoenix Park were taken over by the Department of Defence, in 1941, for use as a military hospital, and the college's work was considerably disrupted, until its eventual

return to the Park in 1946. C. Moibhí was unusual amongst the preparatory colleges in that it was under Protestant management, co-educational, and staffed by lay teachers. In the Department's hurry to get the college established, it opened in Glasnevin in 1927,[51] with the promise of more suitable premises later. Eventually in 1934 the college moved to refurbished premises in the former Royal Hibernian Marine School in the Phoenix Park.[52] At one stage the Department had proposed that the Church of Ireland Training College should move from Kildare Street, to another part of the building in the Phoenix Park, but the Board of Governors turned the idea down. [53]

With the take-over of its premises, C.Moibhí had to find alternative accommodation, and from 11th January until 31st August 1941, was accommodated in the Church of Ireland Training College in Kildare Place. This created tensions for both colleges, which were exacerbated by shortages of fuel for heating and cooking, and difficulties over food supplies; contingency plans for evacuation had to be made and air-raid drill practised. The Department would have been happy for C. Moibhí to have stayed in Kildare Place, but this was not possible.

As it was, conditions were far from ideal, classes were held in the neighbouring Department of Fisheries, while Art lessons took place at the College of Art. Gym classes were held in the basement of Kildare Place, which was underground and served as an air-raid shelter. On 1st September 1941, C. Moibhí moved to 22 Upper Merrion Street, the former Orthopaedic Hospital, where the cramped conditions and the poor food had their effects. Fever broke out in November 1942, when several students were taken to hospital,

and both the matron, and principal, became ill.[54] In January 1946, an outbreak of influenza was so bad, that half the students became ill.[55]

The college's situation in Merrion Street contrasted greatly with that of the Park, and was worsened by the Emergency conditions, which affected the whole country, but the preparatory colleges were also affected by the loss of Ó Brolcháin.[56] His sudden death in 1934, deprived the system of its foremost defender, who was always willing to provide them with the very best. In Merrion Street, the college had severe difficulties functioning, as domestic staffing levels were inadequate.[57]A memo from an inspector in January 1944, reported that both the principal and the matron had to do much extra work, and recommended that a messenger boy, and 'a man for heavy work and looking after the boiler,' be appointed. [58] Moreover, accommodation was limited, and only the principal, and one teacher, could reside there. Indeed the principal's accommodation was so restricted, that Lil Nic Dhonnchadha (Duncan)[59] had to maintain a flat of her own to accommodate her books and possessions.

It was September 1946 before C. Moibhí returned to the Park, and that was to be only for a short while. Before the college's return, however, its location was discussed by the Cabinet in a wrangle between four Government Departments. At the end of the Emergency, local politicians: Dr. James B. Lynch, Bernard Butler, Harry Colley, and John S. O'Connor, made representations to MacEntee,[60] who was Minister for Local Government and Public Health that the premises, which were to be handed back by Defence to Education, should be retained as a hospital, pointing out that the 380-bed military hospital was bigger than any of the existing voluntary hospitals in the city, and

its use as a sanatorium for TB patients would clear the long lists of patients, waiting for treatment of this highly infectious disease.[61] The case was supported by MacEntee, a strong opponent of the preparatory system, who requested Education to allow the Park premises to be used in this way, until a proposed sanatorium at Santry, would be ready in two to three years. In a memo to the Government, he pointed out that demands for treatment of TB cases were likely to increase, as a result of the introduction of mass radiography, which was revealing a very large number of, hitherto unsuspected, active areas of the disease.

This presented a dilemma for the Government, as the Commissioners for Public Works were not in favour of a sanatorium in the Park, on the grounds that it would 'detract from the Park's amenities.'[62] A further difficulty for the Government was that the number of students in C. Moibhi was small, compared to the hundreds, who could be treated for TB. Nevertheless the Merrion Street premises had to be vacated, as they were urgently needed by the Department of Lands, and as no alternative accommodation was available, the college had to be returned to its premises in the Park, which Defence agreed 'under pressure' to vacate.[63] However, MacEntee persisted in arguing that the promise given to C. Moibhí that its premises in the Park would be returned, would be met by the fact that efforts were being made to find the college alternative accommodation. In a long memo, prepared for circulation at a Cabinet meeting, he argued that it was a case of 'the well-being of forty students as against the claims of 600 - 1,000 people a year:'

> Wasteful to move C. Moibhí to the Park and after a few months move it out and fit out the premises as a hospital once more. The Minister for Local Government and Public Health believes that the promise given to the college would be met by the fact that efforts are being made to provide alternative accommodation. Emergency conditions still operate in many instances and no effort will be

> spared to find the college a new home within a reasonable period. The Minister has some reason to believe that some such assurance would prove acceptable.[64]

The memo ended with a promise 'to make every effort to help with the provision of an alternative home for C. Moibhí within a reasonable period.' Why MacEntee thought these assurances would be acceptable is not clear, for later in the same memo, he requested that the cost of an alternative home for the college be borne by the Hospital Trust Fund, an organisation funded by the Irish Hospital Sweepstake. This proposal showed MacEntee's lack of sensitivity towards the minority, for that organisation's funds were raised through lotteries, a practice which was anathema to Protestants of that period.

Derrig, however, was able to use the religious aspect of the college to his political advantage, and in his response to the Cabinet, stressed C. Moibhí's significance for the minority community. Moreover, he pointed out that it had been housed in four locations, .and because no suitable premises could be found, it had been moved to Merrion Street, where the grossly unsuitable conditions and congested accommodation had led to a deterioration in the health of both students and staff, and the college's medical officer, Dr. Dorothy Price, [65] had protested vigorously against the maintenance of C. Moibhí there. Derrig emphasised that he could not put off re-opening C. Moibhí in the Park, and reiterated its significance for the Protestant community:

> C. Moibhí caters for Protestant students only and I attach considerable importance to the success of this college. You know, as well as I do, that a large proportion of the Protestants in this country do not favour our national aspirations culturally, or politically, and I regret to say that the teaching of the Irish language in Protestant schools leaves much to be desired. [66]

This memo gives an insight into how Derrig regarded the role of C. Moibhí and shows the poor opinion he had of Irish teaching in Protestant schools. In addition he went on to underline the significance of C. Moibhí's role in inculcating a nationalistic outlook among Protestant teachers:

> C. Moibhí in addition to making them competent Irish speakers endeavours to give its students a thoroughly Irish outlook so that later, when they are teachers, these schools may attract the Protestant youth to the Irish viewpoint. Any check on C. Moibhí would be a source of intense satisfaction to the reactionary Protestant element. It might be held against us that because the college is for the benefit of the religious minority we are indifferent to its welfare, and make patent our indifference, by uprooting the college whenever it suits our convenience to do so, without regard to the adverse effect of these transfers on the efficiency of the college.

The memo shows what Derrig thought of criticism of the language policy: regarding anyone who dared to openly criticise the Government's policy as 'reactionary.'

Some of Derrig's remarks about Protestants may have been exaggerated to gain support for his view, in the argument with MacEntee, and to ensure that the college was returned to the Park. However, it is clear that Derrig saw the preparatory colleges, not just as being in the vanguard of promoting the Irish language, but he also admitted that teachers from the colleges would be used to propagandize the nationalist viewpoint. This admission is important, because C. Moibhí received little special treatment, despite its significant role in the minority community.[67] The college's return to its premises in the Phoenix Park was of short duration, and two years later it moved to Shanganagh Castle, Shankill, Co. Dublin. As the premises were too small to accommodate the college, a new wing was added to provide sleeping accommodation. On its completion the college had first-class facilities including spacious grounds with two tennis courts, and a hockey pitch.

TAKE-OVER OF C. EINNE

The Department's dealings with the Church of Ireland authorities were notable for the quiescent manner in which the minority accepted the Government's decisions. The take-over of C. Éinne, however, was not so easily accomplished due to the persistent refusal of the manager, the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Michael Browne,[68] to accept the Department's plans without a written agreement that the college would return to its Salthill premises at the end of the Emergency. The problem arose early in 1942, when concern over the lack of hospital provision in the west of Ireland led to plans for the take-over of C. Éinne as a military hospital.[69] This was resisted by Derrig, who feared it was simply a ploy by Finance to close the college down, and in a memo for the Government, he made his opposition clear, emphasising the importance of the preparatory colleges in the system of education:

> C. Éinne one of seven preparatory colleges established 1927/28. These colleges are essential to the success of the Government policy of creating a really national system of education. They provide unique facilities for ascertaining and developing in suitable candidates a natural aptitude for the teaching profession. Teaching practice in the colleges is an important part of student preparation not possible in secondary schools.[70]

In addition he continued to imply that the preparatory colleges provided important opportunities for teaching practice, which were not available anywhere else. [71] The memo went on to outline the philosophy behind Derrig's staunch defence of the system:

> In fifteen years of existence the preparatory colleges have become the pioneers and are looked on as the strongholds of Gaelic culture for the preliminary education of primary teachers in such a manner as to inspire in their future pupils the ideals necessary for the building of a nation. The intensively and generally Irish atmosphere outside and inside is everywhere recognised and because of these factors they have acquired a high propagandist value in national efforts. Models for secondary schools generally.[72]

Derrig had only limited success in his efforts at persuading his ministerial colleagues to leave the college alone. Subsequently on 23 March 1942, the Cabinet decided to set up a committee[73] to examine the situation, and to consider firstly: if alternative accommodation for the college could be found, and secondly: whether a building other than C. Éinne could be used for a hospital.[74]

The matter was discussed at Cabinet again some time later, when Derrig presented a lengthier memo.[75] In it, he reiterated that the preparatory colleges were essential to the success of the Government's policy of 'creating a really national system of education, chiefly with the help of the National language.' In addition he recalled the closure of C. Chaoimhín and expressed fears of the effects of a further closure on the language policy:

> The closure of C. Chaoimhín had a definite depressing effect on the whole Irish movement. The closing of another boys' preparatory college would have very serious repercussions on the language revival movement. [76]

Furthermore he reminded the Government of the difficulties C. Éinne had experienced in its early years:

> Only after considerable difficulties was the site secured and with experienced and enthusiastic staff was C. Éinne established on a sound basis in its present premises in Galway.

Analysing student numbers at the colleges he predicted that, in a few years, the two colleges for boys would be full, though he admitted that C. Éinne had only forty-nine students in residence[77] in a building with accommodation for 110 students and staff. The memo showed Derrig's fear that the college would be closed down, for he stressed that one college would be unable to accommodate the total number in the two colleges for

September 1943. In addition he dismissed the idea of a temporary take-over, declaring that 'no suitable temporary accommodation was available,' and went on to plead:

> C. Éinne caters especially for students from the Connacht and Tir Conaill Fíor-Ghaeltacht. Temporary closing and transfer to Ballyvourney will create hardship and expense for parents and State.[78]

He also pointed out that the staff would have to be compensated on the same terms as the staff of C. Chaoimhín.[79] This he predicted would 'cost not less than £2,000' and would result in 'grave criticism' of the Government. Finally, he pointed to the role of the manager of the college: 'The Bishop of Galway keeps in close touch with the college and won't be in favour of closing, or transfer.'[80] These were the three arguments used by Derrig continuously to defend the preparatory system: firstly, the large amount of compensation that would have to be paid to redundant staff. Secondly, the undesirable public criticism that would be heaped on the Government. In addition Derrig constantly reminded his colleagues that the attitude of the Hierarchy had to be considered.

The Report of the Committee on the Provision of Hospitals in the West of Ireland, which had been established earlier that year,[81] was presented to the Cabinet at the same time.[82] It stressed that hospital provision was 'a matter of pressing urgency,' though it noted that in Co. Donegal military patients used ordinary hospitals. Outlining its efforts to find alternative accommodation for C. Éinne, it reported that it had examined a number of different locations, including: Tullamore, where there was a new county hospital, Ballinasloe, Athlone, Castlerea, and Roscommon, and concluded that such places were all unsuitable, because of transport difficulties. It also examined C. Mhuire, at Tourmakeady, and decided that its poor location, and small size, made it unsuitable, though it noted that

like C. Éinne, it was only 'half used.' The report commended the suitability of C. Einne, and listed its facilities: sufficient accommodation for staffs, a good kitchen, large halls, and classrooms, which could be easily converted. The committee also noted that it had good laboratory facilities, which could be adapted for operations, was in a good position with private grounds, and was near a hospital in Galway. A further significant advantage was that as it was State property, rent would not have to be paid.

The take-over of C. Éinne highlighted the role of the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Michael Browne,[83] as manager of the college. Moreover, the circumspect way in which the Government dealt with Browne, contrasted with the way in which it dealt with the manager of C. Moibhí, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Arthur Barton,[84] whose name was not even mentioned in the correspondence about that college's take-over. At the beginning of negotiations, the Cabinet was given a report of an interview with Browne, in which he had 'agreed to co-operate.' Browne, however, wanted C. Éinne to stay within his diocese, and proposed that there should be consultations with the president of C. Mhuire, another college in his diocese, to see if C. Éinne could be temporarily located there.

Subsequently, Browne laid down conditions for the take-over: firstly, that it would be only for the duration of the Emergency. Secondly: the teachers' rights would be protected, and thirdly: the building would be returned to the college at the end of the Emergency.[85] These demands caused consternation amongst senior civil servants, and led to high-level discussions between Finance, Education, and the Department of the Taoiseach, where a memo[86] noted that O'Neill, the secretary of the Department of Education,[87] in a telephone

call had 'agreed that no binding undertaking could be given to the Bishop of Galway,' and in a further call to the Taoiseach's Department had warned against telling that to Browne, 'lest he take fright when he saw that the undertaking was not an absolute one.' O'Neill's strategy was to avoid putting anything in writing: 'Trying to get in touch with bishop to discuss it. Could not go sending a letter.' This strategy failed, however, and eventually following discussions between officials from Finance, Education, and his own Department, a carefully-worded letter, drafted by several senior civil servants, was sent by de Valera to the bishop. How far it reflected the Government's view, that it could not tie itself, and succeeding Governments, to his conditions is not possible to say, but the difficulty with the bishop remained unresolved, and the following week, 28th April 1942, it was reported to the Cabinet[88] that as the plan to move C. Éinne in with C. Mhuire was not possible, a number of alternatives were being considered. These included the possibility of the college returning to the original premises, Tigh Furbacha, where it had started in October 1928, and was located until January 1931. The memo noted that the owner would be satisfied to rent it. Moreover, it could accommodate thirty-five pupils, and staff, and there would be no difficulties over daily Mass as there was a church nearby. This was a point of some significance, as earlier in 1928, the opening of C. Éinne had been delayed as Browne's predecessor, Dr. O'Doherty, had insisted that arrangements for the provision of a chapel, or an oratory, be made before work started on the college buildings.[89] At the same meeting on 28th April 1942, a letter from Browne reiterating his demands, was read. The letter noted that the Government was unwilling to assent to his demand for firm guarantees that the premises would be returned to C. Éinne at the end of the Emergency. It also noted the Government's statement that it could not

promise 'to tie itself and succeeding Governments' to this promise as they 'could not foretell what the circumstances would be in the future'.

The matter remained unresolved until the following April, when Browne agreed to the east wing of the college being taken over by the army.[90] How Browne was persuaded to come to this arrangement is a matter for speculation. But it can be said that the arrangement was not very satisfactory for either party. The work of C. Éinne was restricted as only forty students could be accommodated, while the army had insufficient accommodation for its requirements: 170 – 220 patients, eleven doctors, thirty nuns, thirty orderlies, five captains, a commandant, and a matron. [91] However, efforts to persuade Brown to allow the army to take over the whole building were unsuccessful, until 2nd August 1944, when the Department decided to involve the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. J. C. McQuaid, in the affair.

As Archbishop of Dublin for forty years John Charles McQuaid dominated Irish society. A doctor's son from Co. Cavan, he was born in 1895 and educated at Blackrock College, Clongowes Wood, UCD, and the Gregorian University, Rome. At the age of eighteen, he entered the Holy Ghost Order and on his ordination in 1924, was appointed dean of studies at Blackrock College. Seven years later, he became president of the college and the same year, was elected chairman of the Catholic Headmasters' Association. During the thirties, he carved out an influential niche for himself in the Irish Church; he became an educational adviser to Archbishop Byrne[92] and developed a warm friendship with de Valera, who consulted him when he was drawing up the 1937 Constitution. In 1940, McQuaid was appointed Archbishop of Dublin, a post he was to hold for thirty-two years.

As archbishop, he was an able administrator with an interest in social matters. In 1941, he founded the Catholic Social Service Conference to help alleviate poverty in the city, while the following year, he established the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau, an organisation to assist emigrants. Moreover, as the city developed, he saw to it that the sprawling suburbs did not lack churches and schools. With his background in education, it was not surprising that a feature of his educational policy was the encouragement of Religious Teaching Orders to set up primary and secondary schools in his diocese.

A strong believer in Church control, he sought to extend its power to third-level education, and from 1944 annually repeated the ban, first pronounced by the Hierarchy in 1929, forbidding Roman Catholics attending Trinity College, Dublin, without the permission of their bishops. In 1951, his leadership of the Hierarchy's opposition to the Government's Mother and Child Health Scheme[93] underlined the power of the Roman Catholic Church in the State; a power that was further illustrated by the subsequent fall of the First Inter-party Government. But his long period as archbishop found him out of tune with changes in society in the sixties, when his style of leadership, with its strict control over his clergy, his autocratic rule of his diocese, and his conservative attitude to Christians of other denominations, became increasingly out-dated following the Second Vatican Council. In 1972, he retired from the episcopate, and died the following year.

As manager of St. Patrick's Training College, McQuaid had been involved in negotiations concerning that college and its staff, during the period when it was not functioning as a training college.[94] In August 1944, the Department wrote to McQuaid about the possibility of moving C. Éinne to St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra,

which was empty, due to the ban on recruitment. In view of McQuaid's immediate agreement, Browne had no choice but to accept the Department's proposal. He insisted, however, on certain conditions: that one room in the building be retained by the college and that the name of the college should be kept on the gate, for he told the secretary of the Department of Education:

> I would like to place it on record that I do not see much validity in the reason advanced by the Department of Defence over its use of the whole of the college. They have not proved any urgency arising from an increased number of patients. [95]

He also insisted that other buildings in his diocese: Lough Cutra Castle, and Kilscornan Castle, be considered as possible locations for the college, should the army's stay at C. Éinne be longer than anticipated, and this was accepted by the Department:

> In view of Your Lordship's decision that should the need for occupation by the Military Authorities of C. Éinne be prolonged beyond the 1944/45 academic year, or at most 1945/46, alternative accommodation for the college should be secured in the Diocese of Galway, steps are being taken immediately by the Department to have the possibilities fully investigated.[96]

The episode illustrated the power of Browne, as manager of the college, and the supine way in which the Cabinet bowed to his will. Memories of protracted negotiations over the closure of Waterford Training College,[97] and subsequent strained relations with the Hierarchy would have been still fresh, and no doubt contributed to the Government's desire to avoid a further confrontation with the Church. For these reasons, Browne's insistence on conditions for the take-over was allowed to delay the provision of a military hospital for over two years. This was a matter which could have been of considerable national importance, for when the project was first conceived in 1942, it could not have been predicted which way the world-wide conflict would develop and the need for such a

hospital could have become urgent. An example of the way in which C. Éinne might have been needed had already occurred in September 1939, when the liner, Athenia,[98] was sunk off the west coast and a small Norwegian vessel, the Knut Nielsen, rescued hundreds of passengers and landed them in Galway. At the behest of the Government, the Department requested the Bishop of Galway to allow C. Éinne to be used to accommodate those who were uninjured. Subsequently, more than a hundred passengers from Europe, Canada, and the United States, stayed at the college and the opening of the school term was delayed by a fortnight.

In addition the Cabinet's fear of a confrontation with the Bishop of Galway was shown in the way it failed to take any further action after the carefully-worded letter from de Valera in April 1942 failed to persuade him to agree to the college's take-over. The possibility, however, that it suited Derrig, that Browne's intransigence delayed the closure of the college, must not be overlooked. While much of Browne's determination to insist on an agreement may have been due to his autocratic nature, it was also due to his realistic assessment of the situation. He was well aware that once the building was taken over, it was unlikely to become a preparatory college again.

The powerful role of the Roman Catholic Church in the Irish education system of this period was clearly illustrated in this episode. It also showed the growing authority of McQuaid, who became Archbishop of Dublin in 1939,[99] and his ability to exercise control over the headstrong Browne. Indeed the tone of Browne's correspondence with the archbishop was in marked contrast to that in which he wrote to the various departments. Subsequently, Browne had to write to McQuaid with a request that two

confessors be appointed to the college.[100] In the letter he was careful to thank McQuaid, 'for agreeing to the transfer,' and he, deferentially, raised the question of McQuaid becoming manager of C. Éinne. McQuaid, however, was satisfied that Browne should stay as manager.[101] The skilful way in which McQuaid handled the turbulent Browne was further demonstrated when it came to settling arrangements between the two colleges. McQuaid suggested that this should be left to the President of St. Patrick's Training College, the principal of C. Éinne, and the Department. Subsequently, an agreement was drawn up between the two colleges at the beginning of August 1944:[102]

1. The transfer will not affect St. Patrick's Training College re-opening
2. Management is a matter for agreement between the Archbishop of Dublin and the Bishop of Galway
3. The preparatory college is a direct charge on the Department and its operation will not interfere with the functions of the training college
4. The care and discipline of the staff and students of C. Éinne are matters for the Principal of the college. The ultimate jurisdiction over the premises of St. Patrick's Training College remains with the training college authorities
5. Board and residence of the three priests on the staff should be undertaken by the authorities of the training college.

While much of what happened was due to the personalities involved, it is worth noting that the question of the Archbishop of Dublin taking on the role of manager did not arise during the 1930s, when C. Bhride, C. Mhuire, and C. Éinne, were temporarily located in Dublin.[103] Neither were agreements drawn up, though in 1944 this was probably to circumvent further difficulties arising with Browne for there were indications that he was quite involved in the management of the college, a fact noted by Derrig in his memo to the Cabinet.[104] Correspondence in Galway Diocesan Archives shows that Browne was regularly sent information with regard to pupils at the college. An example of this

occurred in September 1944, [105] when he was consulted over a boy, who was not allowed to return to the college. Browne also took a keen interest in the way discipline was exercised at the college. In February 1946, he complained to the principal, Fr. Denis Hynes, [106] about boys being allowed to go into Galway on unsupervised visits, and Hynes was forced to give a lengthy explanation as to how the custom developed.[107] In a four-page letter, Hynes gave these reasons for the practice. Firstly, it had been going on for a long time before his appointment as principal. Secondly, he asserted that it was a privilege for senior boys only. Thirdly, he pointed out that because of the decline in numbers, it was very difficult to organise recreational life with only forty-four students of different ages, in the college:

> In these circumstances they were let into Galway on special occasions, holy days, or preparation for vacation etc. I never thought of dangers till the Bishop mentioned them. I met students going and coming back. Our past students are all doing well in training colleges and teaching posts and there is no evidence otherwise.[108]

Hynes's letter shows how problematic life was for C. Éinne, during the early forties, when due to the ban on recruitment, it was difficult to organise sport and recreation for the students, whose numbers were as low as thirty-eight:

> Even playing parish against parish, province against province, class against class, it is very difficult to organise games. Only three schools outside. We could not rely on them except one. Leagues were no good. We were beaten in the first round and the students lost interest. We need a hundred students. As for handcrafts we cannot get material, or equipment, and chess sets are unobtainable.

The letter gives insights into Hynes's character, and his relationship with Browne. His naïve explanation for continuing the custom of unsupervised visits, was that he considered his predecessor, Fr. Aindrias Ó Seisneáin, the college's first principal, 'a good

judge, and good with boys.'[109] The letter also indicates the need for better communication between Hynes and the bishop. An example of this was where Hynes pointed out that he had always obtained the bishop's permission for anything he undertook, though there were times when he felt that 'the bishop wanted him to act on his own responsibility.'[110]The relationship between Browne and Hynes was to be of crucial importance, a decade later, when a scandal at the college led to the expulsion of a large number of students. [111]

Browne's commitment to the college, however, was only skin-deep for shortly after its move to Dublin he readily agreed, in September 1944, to a request from the National University Women Graduates' Association, at UCG, that if the Government did not restore C. Éinne as a preparatory college at the end of the Emergency, it would become a hostel for Domestic Economy and university women students.[112] Earlier the organisation had passed a resolution, calling on the Government to take immediate steps to establish at C. Éinne on the conclusion of the Emergency, an Irish-speaking College of Domestic Science for Connacht, 'if it be found impossible to continue to use the building as a preparatory college.'[113]

Indeed it was obvious that few believed that the college would re-open in Galway, and this view was reflected in a critical editorial in a national newspaper, entitled *The Unwanted Colleges*:

> The Preparatory College at Galway is to become a military hospital. Thus another chapter has been added to the story of an ill-conceived experiment in education.[114]

The editorial outlined the history of the preparatory system and criticised the age at which students entered the colleges and the high costs involved:

> Eighteen years ago the strange idea was conceived by the Department of Education that children of twelve (sic) years were capable of deciding that they had a vocation for teaching and that, if they so decided, the proper thing to do with them was to put them in a college all by themselves for four years, doing a secondary school course which they could have done at any existing secondary school. In accordance with this scheme seven Preparatory Colleges were provided and equipped at a cost to the taxpayer of more than £500,000.

Furthermore it expressed strong disapproval of the entrance examination saying:

> One would have expected that an open competition examination with the vacancies to be given to those securing the highest marks would be the fair and simple method. The Department's experts ordered things differently. They in effect laid down the rule that the predominant test was not to be merit, as shown in the examination but the accident of a candidate's place of birth.

This was a reference to Blythe's misguided efforts[115]to ensure that Gaeltacht students gained places in the colleges, and that all the existing areas of the Gaeltacht were represented in the colleges. The editorial was scathing in its criticism of this system, reminding its readers that it was possible for a boy from the Gaeltacht, 'with Irish acquired by accident,' to secure a place in one of the colleges, to the exclusion of a boy from an English-speaking district, 'with Irish acquired by effort,' who had scored higher marks, not only in the aggregate of subjects, but even in the Irish language. Recalling that the INTO had protested in vain against this system, it went on to angrily denounce the Department's failure to assess recruitment requirements more accurately:

> While this strange experiment was being worked on these strange lines a still stranger thing was happening. Evidently simple mathematics is not their strong suit in the Department of Education. The Department's own returns had been showing that schools were becoming fewer and fewer and that the school-going population was declining at an alarming rate. But the Department continued to train a surplus of teachers who joined the ranks of the unemployed. Finally the officials woke up and at once fell into a panic. They

> closed down the Training Colleges proper – this is the only civilised country in which Training Colleges were ever closed down – and they restricted the number of students to be admitted to the preparatory colleges.[116]

This criticism was thoroughly deserved, though the editorial was careful not to lay the whole blame on Derrig.[117] Earlier it pointed out that as the system began in 1926, 'the present Minister of Education has to answer only for the sin of its continuance, not of its origin.' Referring to the numbers of students the editorial went on:

> Built and equipped to house some 650 students the seven (sic) preparatory colleges when the public last obtained any figures from the Department had only a third of that number. The preparatory colleges have become white elephants. The Board of Works, which spent so much public money in laying them out for students, will now exercise their skill in spending more money in turning at least one of the colleges into a hospital.[118]

Somehow the fact that C. Chaoimhín had been closed in 1939, escaped the writer's notice, but this did not lessen his vitriolic pronouncement on the way in which public money had been consumed by the system. How fair was this criticism? Much of this criticism was justified, particularly the large amounts of money poured into the system. The editorial ended by reiterating the dubious claim of the Commission on Vocational Organisation,[119] that 'the work done in the colleges might possibly have been done in the existing secondary schools, a view which we ourselves expressed several years ago.'[120] This was untrue because at the time the colleges were established, they were the only second-level residential 'A' schools, and they pioneered teaching, through Irish, at both Intermediate and Leaving Certificate levels.

As the Commission on Vocational Organisation was chaired by none other than the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Browne,[121] it can be fairly inferred that he agreed with the

newspaper comments. Such an inference was made by Séamus Fenton,[122] a former chief inspector, who wrote to Browne, full of self-justification, the day the newspaper piece was published, reminding him that 'the best of the inspectors and many others,' had opposed the establishment of the preparatory colleges.[123] Fenton went on to give Browne a report on the progress of the gaelicisation policy:

> I have been three weeks in Lisdoonvarna where every priest I spoke to tells me that there is not the least hope of reviving Irish. In Brakes to Doolin and elsewhere I find the crowd more unIrish than ever; songs of music hall character. One young Waterford priest sang with cheers a jingo song of our liberation by Allied planes.[124]

When the Emergency ended in 1945, to the surprise of everybody in Galway, the staff and students of C. Éinne returned from their temporary stay in Drumcondra to Salthill, but their tenure continued to be somewhat insecure, and efforts to take the college over soon started again. In 1948, the election of the First Inter-party Government brought an intensified drive to eradicate TB, and the new Minister for Health, Dr. Noel Browne,[125] wanted to take the college over as a hospital. As in the earlier take-over, alternative homes were suggested for C. Éinne, including Ballinahinch Castle, Co. Galway, and Belleek Manor, Co. Mayo, but on inspection these were too small to accommodate eighty-eight students and staff. Subsequently, it was proposed that C. Éinne could move to C. Chaoimhín's old building in Glasnevin, if its occupants, the Accounts Staff of the Department of Defence, were moved to other Government premises at Clarendon Street, or Morehampton Road.[126] But nothing came of these suggestions and the college was allowed to stay at its Salthill premises.

The treatment of C. Éinne and C. Moibhí showed the ambivalent attitude of the Fianna Fail Government to the preparatory system and again illustrated the casual way students and staff were treated[127] with little consideration given to their needs, or to the disruption of teaching when the colleges were taken over. Indeed the colleges were fortunate that their premises were returned to them when the Emergency ended, as neither the Fianna Fail Government, nor its successor, the First Inter-party Government, showed any great desire to keep their commitments to the colleges.

THE INTO'S INQUIRY INTO THE USE OF IRISH

The careful manner in which the Roman Catholic Hierarchy was treated contrasted with Derrig's attitude to the INTO. Furthermore the minister's refusal to listen to the teachers' views on compulsory Irish, led to increasingly strained relationships between the teachers and the Department, which were a major feature of the forties. As early as 1930, teacher dissatisfaction with the language policy had manifested itself at the annual Congress of the INTO, when a motion was passed calling for 'an educational assessment of the use of Irish as a teaching medium, in schools in English-speaking districts.'[128] Four years later, a memo by the organisation noted that 'the continuous teaching of a new language imposed undue strain on children of tender years. They tend to become wearied and listless during the latter part of the day, and teachers' energy is largely wasted.' [129] Moreover, in 1936, a resolution calling for an inquiry[130] noted claims in medical reports from different parts of the country, that many school children were ill-nourished, anemic, or suffering from defective vision or hearing. For such children the gaelicisation policy was an added burden. The resolution called on the Government to take action to remedy these defects.

In establishing the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish as a Teaching Medium, the INTO claimed that it was responding to 'growing doubts among the teaching body as to whether the use of Irish as a medium of instruction in English-speaking districts, was hindering, rather than helping, the cause of the language revival.' The five members of the committee: J.P. Griffith, Mayo; Seán O'Grady, Dublin; Tadhg Desmond, Cork; Thomas Frisby, Kilkenny; and D.J. Kelleher, Dublin, were all experienced teachers with 'Highly Efficient' ratings.[131] The committee's strategy was to elicit information from teachers, by sending questionnaires to over 9,000 members of the organisation, in September 1936, [132] requesting replies to be returned by the first day of the following November. This was later extended to 31st December 1936[133] Instructions with the questionnaire stressed that

1. Only teachers who themselves have taught through Irish should answer the questionnaire

2. Teachers should answer queries in the particular section in which they had experience

3. All replies should be given as a result of personal experience, irrespective of one's opinions, or of the experience, or, opinion of others

4. The questionnaire would be regarded as a strictly confidential document; the facts and opinions set down would be used to enable the committee to come to general decisions but the content would not be disclosed to any person or body outside the Executive[134]

The questionnaire had seven different sections dealing with how teachers perceived teaching through Irish affected their work. These were headed:

1. The Teacher and the School
2. Infants
3. Standards 1, 11, and 111
4. Standards 1V to V11
5. The Religious Programme

6. General
7. Observations

In 1939, the committee produced its long-awaited interim report, but it was not until May 1942, almost six years after the committee had been established, that the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish as a Teaching Medium to Children whose Home Language is English,* (Hereafter called the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish*) was published.[135] The report found the main subjects of the curriculum: Mathematics, History, and Geography, were affected detrimentally by teaching through Irish. Only two subjects, Singing, and Needlework, were unaffected. These findings were not unexpected, but its findings regarding Infant Teaching were devastating; the majority of teachers were of the opinion that teaching through Irish imposed a greater mental strain on young children:

> The constant use of Irish tends to kill enthusiasm and love, due to the inevitable monotonous nature of the work. It puts a strain on the child and dulls the normal receptiveness of his mind. It tends to make the 'All Irish' policy defeat its own ends.[136]

In addition the section of the report on Infant Teaching through Irish concluded with these damning remarks:

> Living as he is in an atmosphere of repression there is the further danger of his associating the language with what is unpleasant and distasteful. A positive dislike of the language may easily be developed and the ill effects of such an attitude cannot be too strongly stated. [137]

According to the report, over sixty per cent of respondents wanted Irish and English, used in infant classes, though it was careful to point out that while the majority of infant teachers were opposed to teaching infants through Irish 'this does not mean they are

against the teaching of Irish, as a subject, to young charges, rather it was a case of how it was undertaken.'

Table 6.6: Teacher Responses to the Effects of teaching Infants through Irish

Question: *Do all the pupils derive benefit from instruction through the medium of Irish, equal to that which they would receive through the medium of English?*

No. of infant teachers who responded: 422
No. of teachers rated 'Highly Efficient': 115
No. of teachers rated 'Efficient': 298

No. who responded No: 345
No. who responded Yes: 45

Question: *Does the child get a sound grasp of numerical values and processes when taught entirely through Irish?*

No. who responded No: 275
No. who responded Yes: 107

Question: *Does the child acquire adequate power of expression in regard to his everyday experience when taught solely through the medium of Irish?*

No. who responded No: 341
No. who responded Yes: 57

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p. 18

However, a sizeable minority, almost forty per cent, expressed the view that the sole use of Irish would benefit the child's language development, but at the expense of other things. In their view, opportunities for character formation and moral training would be considerably narrowed.[138]

Table 6.7: Teacher Responses to the Teaching of Mathematics through Irish

Question: *Does the teaching of Mathematics through Irish have a negative effect?*

No. of I, II, & III, class teachers who responded: 641
No. of senior class teachers who responded: 329
Total no. of teachers who responded: 970
No. of teachers who responded Yes: 554

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p.35

The number of senior class teachers who responded to a question on the effects of teaching Mathematics through Irish was considerably smaller than the number of I, II, and III class teachers. This was an indication that fewer teachers taught Mathematics through Irish in senior classes. Again it is noteworthy that a large number, almost forty-three per cent, did not give an affirmative response. The response to a question on the teaching of History through Irish was much more clear cut, with a much smaller number, twelve per cent, giving an affirmative response.

Table 6.8: Teacher Responses to the Teaching of History through Irish in V- VIII Classes

Question: *Is the benefit from teaching History through Irish equal to the benefit from teaching History through English?*

No. of teachers who responded: 440
No. of teachers who responded No: 382
No. of teachers who responded Yes: 55

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p. 42

Commenting on this response, the writers of the report noted judiciously:

> The concentration in History teaching should be on the story even when the language is the vernacular. Therefore it is more difficult when it is not the vernacular. The teacher has to explain some linguistic difficulties and the thread of the narrative is broken, the

> pupils' interest flags and the value of the lesson from a history point of view is lost.[139]

In dealing with Geography, the report pointed to the importance of language in the new 'relational and interpretative method' of teaching Geography, as compared with the old method which dealt mainly with facts and figures.

Table 6.9: Teacher Responses to the Teaching of Geography through Irish

Question: *Is the benefit from teaching Geography through Irish equal to the benefit from teaching Geography through English?*

No. of teacher responses: 477
No. of teachers against teaching through Irish: 403
No. of teachers in favour of teaching through Irish: 51.

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p. 52

According to the report: 'Some knowledge of Geography is acquired, but progress is slow, when instruction is not in the vernacular.'[140] Again the wisdom of such comments, as in the observations regarding the teaching of History through Irish, is obvious. Where the pupils' vocabulary was limited, the teacher was forced to teach this element of the lesson before he could teach the lesson proper.

Table 6.10; Teacher Responses to the Teaching of Music through Irish

Question: *Are the same results achieved through English and Irish?*

No. of teacher responses: 394
No. of teachers who responded Yes: 308
No. of teachers who responded No: 86

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p. 53

One of the few subjects which teachers felt was unaffected by being taught through Irish was Music, where the majority of teachers believed that the same results were achieved through either English or Irish. As Singing was taught by constant repetition, it would not have been as demanding to teach as other subjects.

Table 6.11: Teacher Responses to the Teaching of Needlework through Irish

Question: *Do pupils derive the same benefit from the teaching of Needlework through Irish as through English?*

No. of teacher responses: 206 teachers of classes 11 - V111

No. of teachers who responded Yes: 165
No. of teachers who responded that pupils derived benefit
from teaching Needlework through Irish: 20
No. of teachers who responded that pupils derived very little benefit
from teaching through Irish: 20

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p. 54

In addition to Music, the report noted that Needlework was a subject which could be taught effectively through Irish. This is easy to understand as it was an activity-based subject. The number of responses to this question, however, was the lowest recorded.

Of considerable significance was Section V1, where teachers were asked whether instruction in Religion was given through the medium of Irish. The responses showed that in the vast majority of schools instruction was given in the home language. This was not surprising as children had to be word-perfect at Catechism and other religious exercises. In addition it indicates the lack of Church support for the gaelicisation policy. Had the Hierarchy given their whole-hearted commitment to the Irish language, all aspects of religious teaching would have been through Irish.

Table 6.12: Teacher Responses to the Teaching of Religion through Irish

No. of teachers who taught Religion through Irish: 211
No. of teachers who used Irish for Prayers solely: 142
No. of teachers who used Irish for Prayers and Catechism: 44
No. of teachers who used Irish for Prayers, Catechism,
Church History and Bible History: 20

Source: *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) p. 56

In a general observation on the gaelicisation policy, the report stressed that for compulsory Irish to be successful, support and encouragement from both the home and society at large were necessary, and pointed out with considerable realism that the school could not overcome such influences. [141] Referring to the role of parents, the report claimed:

> The school is failing in its purpose. It is divorced from home and society. Out of 168 hours in a week the child sleeps seventy. Of the ninety-eight remaining, thirty are spent in schools that is 1:4. We believe that the majority of parents are anxious for Irish to be known and understood by their children but according to replies a very considerable minority, if not antagonistic, are certainly apathetic. The attitude of parents does not seem to have been adverted to by those directing the Irish revival.[142]

The report's main conclusions were summarised as follows:[143]

> Firstly: Greater cognisance must be taken of parents and their attitude.
>
> Secondly: In infant standards lessons in Irish and in the home language should alternate and greater use of the home language to explain the second language should be allowed.
>
> Thirdly: There should be a return to the vernacular as the medium of teaching subjects other than Irish, accompanied by the extension of the time devoted to Irish conversation lessons as conversation lessons only.

Fourthly: The standardisation of Irish spelling and the standardisation and simplification of Irish grammar should be undertaken.

Fifthly: The school leaving age should be raised to fifteen and there should be greater concentration on oral Irish for the first six years.

The Department, however, refused to listen to the teachers' views; instead Derrig criticised teachers for not using Irish for ordinary conversation between themselves and complained that the standard of work in senior classes was too narrow. Why did Derrig react in this way? As far back as 1935, he had stated that the State could not depend on the schools alone to revive the language.[144] Indeed in its annual report[145] in 1932/33, the Department had acknowledged that the policy was not succeeding: 'Have to admit that the schools are not succeeding in making Irish speakers of pupils. It is more than ten years trying and we have failed.' In 1934, Derrig also expressed doubts about the wisdom of having only Irish in infant classes:

> I will be very glad if, from time to time, our inspectors and teachers could come together - or teachers on their own - to see whether the question of having only Irish in the infant school from the first day, or whether a little English should be allowed, until the child becomes accustomed to the new atmosphere.'[146]

Furthermore Derrig himself had pointed to the need for support for the language outside the school if the policy was to succeed:

> Unless there is a corresponding development in the use of Irish outside the school it is clear that much of the toil of the past ten years will have been in vain.[147]

Yet paradoxically, it was during Derrig's first year as Minister, that *Notes for Teachers*[148] were published with the stated aim of making Irish speakers of the children of the Galltacht, so that by the age of fourteen, they would be able 'to express themselves freely,

fully, and correctly, in the native language.'[149] Derrig was also the Minister who introduced the *Revised Programme of Primary Instruction*[150] in 1934, which insisted that only Irish be used in teaching infants and which strengthened the Irish programme for higher classes, by modifying requirements in other subjects.[151]

By 1942 Derrig's doubts had disappeared, and he dismissed the findings of the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish*[152] as propaganda, criticising the small numbers in the survey. Looked at objectively, it has to be admitted that the number of respondents was quite small. An example of the low response rate was the number of infant teachers, 422, who filled in the questionnaire. Yet questionnaires were sent to 9,000 teachers. This raises questions about the whole process. Why did so few teachers respond to the questionnaires? Did the teachers misunderstand the questions? Teaching through Irish was an emotive issue, particularly in junior classes. While the number of All-Irish primary schools was not large, and fluctuated from year to year, there must have been more than 422 teachers outside the Gaeltacht who used only Irish in infant classes:[153]

Table 6. 13: Number of Schools where every subject except English was taught through Irish 1934 -1941

Year		Year	
1934	386	1938	641
1935	570	1939	704
1936	612	1940	643
1937	645	1941	623

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education, 1934 - 41*

The number of All-Irish schools was misleading. There were also schools where some classes were taught completely through Irish, and other schools where one or more subjects were taught through Irish:

Table 6.14: Irish teaching in Galltacht Primary Schools

Year	Total no.	A	B	C	D
1944	5,032	90	1,254	586	36
1945	5,009	99	1,266	509	37
1946	4,957	120	1,235	494	38
1947	4,946	31	1,223	532	28
1948	4,922	10	1,265	596	26

A = Schools with the odd class, or group of classes, taught completely through Irish

B = Schools with one or more subjects taught through Irish

C = Irish and English used together for some teaching

D = English only

Source: Antoine Ó Coileáin, *Bunoideachais Dátheangach Lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht Leirmheas Stairiúil 1922 – 84 agus Oideas don todhchaí*, unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Dublin, 1985, p. 59

A further question arising from the report was why did it take so long for it to be published? That the process took five years between collecting the data and its publication suggests that the INTO was holding the findings in reserve to be produced as a political bargaining counter whenever it felt it would be most advantageous to the organisation. Despite Derrig's dismissive attitude in public, the report was discussed by the Cabinet in 1943, when he presented a memo[154] on the language policy. In a section entitled: 'The Position of the Irish Language,' criticism of the language policy was examined, and divided into two categories: firstly, criticism of teaching methods, and

secondly, criticism of the amount of time and effort put into teaching children the language at school. Much of this teaching was acknowledged by Derrig as ineffective, because the children had no use for Irish once they left school. Nevertheless he stubbornly refused to consider establishing a committee to review the language policy.[155]

The Emergency created many administrative problems for the colleges, even for the new purpose built college at Ballyvourney, to which the Munster boys' college moved in 1940 and where in September that year under its new name, C. Íosagáin, it received its first students.[156] Entries in the De La Salle community diary, during the Emergency, noted its effects on the college. An example of how life was affected was an entry in January 1943, [157]which recorded: 'The monthly oil supply is often late; no light till 19th January and no heating for nine days.' Later another entry for the same month, noted that 'since 1941, damp has been developing in the floor, wall, and roof, and as the supply of crude oil is meagre, lights have to be out at 8.30 p.m. nightly.' Some of the colleges fared better than others for food. The three girls' colleges had farms, which supplied them with milk and vegetables, while the boys' colleges had vegetable gardens. Indeed C. Éinne had such a good supply that they were able to sell the surplus, but due to difficulties with transport, the principal had to request the Department for permission to hire a donkey and cart at a cost of ten pounds, to get the vegetables to market.[158]

The Emergency affected students' lives in different ways, but the Department showed little concern for their welfare. Despite the added transport problems caused by fuel shortages, it continued its practice of sending students to colleges with little regard for either distance or convenience for the students.[159] An example of the Department's lack of

concern for the students, was the case of a Cork student, who was sent to C. Bhríde. The unfortunate student started sleepwalking. This was diagnosed by the college doctor as due to anxiety at being so far from home and he recommended that she should be sent to a college nearer home.[160]

The students, however, were not the only ones affected by the Emergency. When recruitment to the preparatory colleges was resumed in 1942, there were difficulties for the colleges regarding staff, particularly where part-time teachers with specialist qualifications, such as Music, were required. From 1938, the Department had been trying to improve the musical education of students, and a specially designed course of piano, theory, voice training, ear tests, and singing, was introduced.[161] In addition each college had a choir, and concerts were frequently organised. At the beginning of the forties, principals of colleges where there was a qualified member of staff, were told to begin implementing the new programme. Four colleges: C. Mhuire, C. Bhríde, C. Íde, and C. Éinne, had qualified staff and were able to start, but C. Moibhí, and C. Íosagáin had difficulties and the Music inspectors had to make special arrangements for them. [162] It was not difficult to resolve the problem at C. Moibhí, where the inspectors agreed with the principal that there should be four hours tuition per week, [163] but coming to an arrangement for C. Íosagáin was much more problematic because of the remoteness of its location.[164]

In May 1944, the four principals of C. Íde, C. Bhríde, C. Íosagáin, and C. Mhuire, met to discuss their staff requirements, as teachers who had left had not been replaced. [165] A memo on the meeting illustrated the difficulties of principals and the unsympathetic

attitude of Finance to their plight. In order to provide teaching in certain subjects it had become necessary for some nuns to take on the post of matron in addition to a part-time teaching post. This occurred in C. Bhríde where the matron also taught for about fourteen hours [166] a day, while the matron in C. Mhuire also taught Music. Sr. Paschal had been a 'professor' from 1934 to 1940, and when student numbers declined, she became the matron. Subsequently, with the introduction of the new programme in Music, a vacancy arose for a teacher. She applied, was interviewed, and appointed to the post, for which she was paid eight shillings per hour. Meanwhile she continued to act as matron. A comment from Finance on the file, noted drily: 'Matron's duties can't be very onerous, if she can do thirteen hours per week Music teaching.'

During the early forties many of the recommendations of the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges* were implemented.[167] How did these changes affect the numbers applying for entrance? During the late thirties, the numbers applying to enter the preparatory colleges had begun to decline. This was probably due to the high level of unemployment among primary teachers, which resulted from over-recruitment in the thirties, though it should be noted that even before the cessation of recruitment to preparatory colleges in 1939, the numbers were still high, with well over one thousand students applying annually.

Table 6.15: Applications for Places in Preparatory Colleges 1936 - 1946

	Total	Boys	Girls
1936	1,443	474	949
1937	1,199	376	823
1938	1,163	372	791
1939	Cessation of recruitment		
1940			
1941	1,039		1,039
1942	1,434	509	923
1943	1,464	472	992
1944	892	290	602
1945	871	281	590
1946	833	285	548

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education, 1936 - 46*

With the resumption of recruitment in 1941, there was a large increase in the number of girls applying for entry. A likely explanation for the increase was that many of those who were unable to apply due to the cessation of recruitment, applied in 1941. A similar explanation is likely for the increase in the number of boys applying in 1942. It would appear from these figures that the changes in the conditions for entry resulted in a considerable decrease in the numbers applying in 1944, though it is difficult to say which particular change, or combination of changes, was responsible. It is possible that an increase in the number of scholarships awarded to Fíor-Ghaeltacht students may have had some influence on the matter. In 1939,[168] there were thirty-six scholarships on offer, and the winners could attend a school from a selected list, or a school selected by the Department. By 1944, the numbers competing for scholarships had risen to 170 girls and 116 boys: a total of 286. A more likely possibility is that the Department had become much less generous in its grants to students, and in the early forties there was a considerable increase in the number of students paying full fees with a corresponding decrease in the number paying no fees.

Table 6.16: Average Fees at Preparatory Colleges late 1930s and 1940s

	Average fee		
1937/38	£7 – 11s. – 0d.	1947/48	£15 – 9s. – 6d.
1938/39	£7 - 12s. – 1d.	1948/49	£17 – 13s. –3d.

Source: Department of Finance Papers, S25/15/34

The increase in fees began in the early forties following the resumption of recruitment to the preparatory colleges. In 1941 recruitment to the girls' colleges resumed and a year later recruitment to the boys' colleges began again. The registers of C. Mhuire and C. Íosagáin both show increases in the numbers paying full fees and a corresponding decline in the number of those paying no fees around this period:

Table 6.17: Fees paid at C. Mhuire and C. na Mumhan/C. Íosagáin 1938 - 1944

C. Mhuire

Year	No. in Class	Full Fees	Partial Fees	No Fees
1938	19	3 [15.7%]	4	12
1941	24	2 [8%]	15	7
1942	19	0 [0%]	8	11
1943	20	6 [30%]	8	6
1944	20	4 [20%]	6	10

C. na Mumhan/C. Íosagáin

Year	No. in Class	Full Fees	Partial Fees	No Fees
1938	25	0 [0%]	10	15
1942	24	7 [29%]	11	6
1943	23	7 [30%]	5	11
1944	19	4 [21%]	6	9

Source: Registers of C. Mhuire and C. na Mumhan/C. Íosagáin

The registers show that in both colleges the number paying full fees had risen to thirty per cent in 1943. This was a considerable increase on the numbers paying full fees in the thirties.[169]

THE PRIMARY TEACHERS' STRIKE

The end of this period was dominated by the primary teachers' strike, which was to have profound effects on primary education for many years. Teacher discontent, which had been simmering for a long time, finally erupted in the primary teachers' strike in 1946. For many years primary teachers had been striving for increased salaries, better conditions, and a say in policy-making. In the early forties, protracted negotiations went on between the INTO and the Department about salaries. The teachers' grievances, however, went back to 1922, when the Free State Government cut their salaries by ten per cent.[170] Reductions in the late 1920s, and the early 1930s, were bitterly resented by teachers and following long negotiations, Derrig gave them small increases in 1938, and in 1942[171] but with the higher cost of living, these were not sufficient, and teachers became angry as they watched civil servants and others of a similar professional status, receiving larger increases.

The salary issue was not the only factor in the increasing tensions between the teachers and the Department. Other factors included Derrig's prickly personality. According to T.J. O'Connell,[172] he was inclined to take criticism 'directed to his administration as being personal to himself' and at times, when relationships between the INTO and the Department were strained he refused to attend Congress. Secondly, Derrig's response to the INTO's *Inquiry into the Use of Irish*[173] exacerbated existing poor relationships. A

third factor was the Department's criticism[174] that teachers were not doing enough to promote the standard of Irish in senior classes. The INTO's response was to angrily denounce such criticism:

> It is difficult to keep patience with this kind of criticism....The Department would lose nothing in dignity if it made it clear, that the present language programme in schools is necessarily an experiment, since the problem it is intended to solve, is one for which no clear solution yet exists.[175]

In 1943, the Department added to the teachers' grievances by making the Primary School Certificate Examination compulsory for all pupils in sixth standard. This innovation was viewed by the Department as a success, as the examination was held in the majority of schools, and approximately seventy per cent of pupils passed.[176] The INTO, however, had opposed the Primary Certificate Examination from the time it was first introduced in 1929 on the advice of the Reverend Fr. Timothy Corcoran,[177] claiming that it forced teachers to concentrate on three subjects, Irish, English and Arithmetic, instead of on the broad range of the curriculum. This criticism proved well founded. A further significant effect of making the examination compulsory, was to change the emphasis from oral to written work in the schools. The over-emphasis on written work was later acknowledged to have been a mistake by the Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language.[178]

In October 1945, the INTO decided to take strike action.[179] Two factors influenced this decision: firstly, public opinion was with the teachers, and secondly, they had the support of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, and particularly of the influential Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. John Charles McQuaid.[180] His role in the teachers' strike was crucial, because of his power over the priests who were the school managers. Throughout the negotiations

he kept in close touch with the INTO and Derrig. A confidential letter from Derrig to McQuaid, in February 1946, gives some insights into the minister's stern attitude to the teachers:

> I told the teachers that the new salary scales cannot come into force until after the Emergency. I told the INTO that a strike will do no good and may do untold harm. Most of them admit this. But they are bent on challenging the Government's authority. I have done all I can. If it becomes a question of asserting the Government's authority I must make up my mind to face the new situation. [181]

Despite an attempt at mediation by McQuaid, the strike began on 20th March 1946, and lasted almost eight months. Only the Dublin schools were closed, and McQuaid, by allowing a letter of his to be published at the beginning of the strike swayed waverers to join it and strengthened public support for the teachers. Their powerful ally wrote:

> Your organisation must have no doubt that the clerical managers of this city and religious superiors have full sympathy with the ideal of a salary in keeping with the dignity and responsibility of your profession as teachers..... You will as Catholics, at once understand that clerical managers and religious superiors, by reason of their religious status, may not adopt strike action. For the same reason they may not refuse to comply with the lawful commands of the civil authority in what concerns the keeping open, and operating their schools. Neither may they penalise a teacher, now or later, for the mere fact that he or she has chosen to accept the direction of the Central Executive Committee of the INTO[182]

Despite McQuaid's support, however, the Government refused to come to an agreement with the teachers, and the strike dragged on and became increasingly bitter. The public continued to support the teachers, a view that was reflected by the *Irish Times:*

> The strike is now nine weeks old. Deadlock is complete. The next step lies with the Government. Mr. Derrig said he offered the teachers the highest scales which the country could afford and in effect that the strike could only be terminated by their unconditional surrender. This is rank folly.[183]

McQuaid made several attempts to persuade de Valera of the justice of the teachers' claim, but he was unsuccessful in bringing about negotiations for a settlement. With widespread public support for the teachers, the strike continued, but the Government refused to consider arbitration. Eventually, the strike ended with the teachers' surrender on 31st October, when the Central Executive Committee of the INTO 'in deference to the wish expressed by the Archbishop of Dublin, as the spiritual authority for the education of the children of the diocese of Dublin,' decided to accept an invitation from McQuaid, to direct the teachers to return to work 'without prejudice to their natural rights, or to their just and equitable rights.'[184] This obsequious statement typified the attitude of teachers, and the general public, to the all-powerful role of McQuaid, and his Church in education at that time. Moreover, the absence of any reference to children or teachers of other denominations, was typical of that period, when the monolithic Roman Catholic Church dominated Irish society. For the INTO the strike assumed a major significance, and the spirit of the strike became embedded in the organisation's psyche, with its memory invoked frequently over the following three decades.[185] Despite being forced to give in, however, the organisation made considerable gains. It achieved a higher profile, and brought the importance of education to the attention of the public, who accepted that the teachers were entitled to pay increases. Protracted salary negotiations were in progress, when a general election was held early in 1948. A significant result of the strike was that Fianna Fáil lost support amongst the public, and many teachers joined Clann na Poblachta, a newly-formed party with a radical manifesto on social issues. This transfer of support was seen as a contributory factor in the defeat of Fianna Fáil, and the formation of the First Inter-party Government in 1948.

How did the strike affect recruitment to primary teaching? The strike had little effect on recruitment, and large numbers continued to seek entry to the profession, through the preparatory colleges, and through Open Competition.[186] In the late forties, numbers seeking entry to the preparatory colleges began to decline, while numbers seeking entry to training by Open Competition showed an increase. Three factors may have influenced this trend. Firstly, fees at preparatory colleges were increased from forty to fifty pounds per annum at this time. Secondly, there was a greater availability of second-level education and therefore less need for the preparatory colleges. A third factor was the increase in salaries gained by the teachers as part of the strike settlement in 1949, which gave an added impetus to recruitment by Open Competition in the following years. However, only a percentage of those who passed the entrance examination for the training colleges obtained places.

Table 6.18: Numbers applying for entry by Open Competition 1948 - 51

	Entered	Passed	Awarded Places	
1948	734	339	154	45%
1949	784	404	195	48%
1950	942	535	132	24.7%
1951	1087	not given	196	---

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education, 1948 - 51*

Similarly, only a fraction of those who passed the entrance examination to the preparatory colleges actually gained a place.

Table 6.19: Preparatory College Entrance Examinations 1947 - 50

	Entered	Entered		Passed		Awarded Places			
	Total	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1947	864	274	590	84	264	47	72	56%	27%
1948	745	263	482	91	197	47	91	51.6%	46%
1949	738	282	456	118	236	48	72	40.6%	30.5%
1950	773	258	515	126	236	38	72	30%	30.5%

Source: Compiled from *Reports of the Department of Education, 1948 – 50.*

These tables show that after 1949, over fifty per cent of students entering by Open Competition passed, while the proportion of those who were successful at the preparatory entrance examination varied.

As the Emergency ended, Ireland emerged from its isolation to a post-war Europe, where change was endemic. Radical changes were taking place in society, with an impetus on social and economic reform. Furthermore in education, second-level schooling became a right for all; school-leaving ages were extended, and the liberalisation of discipline, curricula, and teaching methods, began to transform education. In addition far-reaching changes were introduced in England with the 1944 Education Act, and its implementation in Northern Ireland three years later, greatly altered education there. There was a similar desire for change in the Irish Free State, where teachers looked on in envy at their English colleagues' gains. Much of the desire for change was due to the ending of the Emergency, and the desire for change generally, as a new decade approached. In addition it was accentuated by Fianna Fáil's long period in Government.

It is possible, however, that similar educational reforms might have been effected in Ireland, but for the general election in 1948. Some months before the election, a

Departmental Committee on Educational Provision, which had been established by Derrig in 1945, presented a comprehensive plan, recommending far-reaching changes.[187] Among measures proposed, were the raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen; the provision of second-level education for all pupils, and a widening of the curriculum, in both primary and second-level schools. It also proposed that the State would establish a new type of school, the Senior School, to provide free education for all children. The committee also proposed that the curriculum in the new schools should be suitable for all children, from twelve-plus to fifteen or sixteen years. In the early stages, it was envisaged that it would provide, mainly, for continuation work in the subjects, taught in the Junior School, and that it would also include Manual Training, and General Science (or Rural Science) for boys, and Craftwork, and Domestic Science for girls, with the emphasis laid, increasingly on the practical subjects in the later stages of the course. In addition to this radical plan, Derrig had earlier drawn up a comprehensive programme of school building to be undertaken during the post-war period. Moreover, an outline of this had been sent to Archbishop McQuaid,[188] in 1942, to ensure his support, and that of the Hierarchy. [189]

THE INTO'S *PLAN FOR EDUCATION* 1947

The Department, however, was not the only body considering change in the educational system. In March 1947, *A Plan for Education*, a document containing wide-ranging proposals for Irish education, was published by the INTO. In the preface, T.J. O'Connell, the organisation's general secretary,[190] explained that the genesis of the document was a direction from the Central Executive Committee, that an integrated system of education should be planned for the country, if Ireland was not to be left behind in the post-war world. He described the plan as a discussion document, not just for primary education,

but for vocational and secondary levels as well.[191] Areas dealt with included a Council of Education; Recruitment of Teachers; the Language Revival; the Curriculum up to sixteen; Modern Teaching Aids; Secondary and Vocational Education; Arts and Crafts; the Health of the School Child; School Buildings and Adult Education Many of its proposals were very radical for the times, particularly the section on the recruitment and training of primary teachers, where it described the prevailing methods of recruitment, as 'leaving very much to be desired,' particularly the preparatory system, which it criticised severely:

> The entrance to the preparatory college examination is not strictly speaking an open competition. It is designed to give preference to students from Irish-speaking districts. Preference is operated on a system of regional quotas and is not framed to secure the best material available in Irish-speaking districts as a whole and in some areas involves strictly local competition. The system cannot be defended; it has not proved successful in practice.[192]

Condemning the system for segregating candidate teachers at fourteen years of age, it called for its abolition, proposing instead a common system of training for all primary, and secondary teachers. The Plan envisaged that students would be educated at university for the first three years, followed by a one-year training course, concentrating on teaching practice. This was a radical proposal for the times, though the INTO had been advocating university education for primary teachers since the twenties.[193]Furthermore the organisation believed that such a system of recruitment would attract the best candidates to teaching, and consequently fewer candidates would leave training or teaching.[194] The INTO advocated the following conditions for recruitment:

1. Candidate teachers should be selected on a competitive basis subject to certain safeguards and qualifying tests.

2. Candidates for teaching should do their secondary course in the ordinary way and should not be segregated in preparatory colleges at the age of thirteen or fourteen

3. There should be a common basic training for all teachers, with the exception perhaps of teachers of technology or specific traditional courses in vocational and technical schools. These teachers must, of necessity, generally be recruited from industry.

4. The training course should extend over four years. The first three years of the course leading to a university degree and entitling attendance at university lectures, while the fourth year should be devoted completely to professional training.

5. The training college work should be done in conjunction with the university.

6. Teachers in training should not merely attend lectures at university but should have academic contact there, with young people preparing for other professions, and should play their part in the social, athletic and cultural activities of the student body.

In addition the Plan reiterated the INTO's call for higher salaries for teachers, to give them financial parity with other professions, something the organisation had been demanding for decades. To ensure that candidates were not just entering the profession for monetary rewards, it proposed that there should be 'an interview to safeguard character, and aptitude.'[195] It also proposed that secondary schools should give special confidential reports on the candidates, which was somewhat unfair, as no other profession made such demands. The INTO stressed that the following conditions should be taken into account for recruitment to training college: firstly, a candidate's results in the Leaving Certificate Examination, where a high mark in oral Irish would be necessary. Secondly, his performance at interview should be considered. Furthermore it believed that some knowledge of Music, and a 'good ear' were required.[196]

A frequent complaint about the preparatory colleges, was the way in which they were funded; critics believed that many students used the system to obtain cheap secondary education, and were not interested in becoming teachers. To prevent this happening, the

INTO proposed that in order to keep fees low, the four-year training course should be heavily subsidised by the State and recommended that students should be required to guarantee repayment of their fees, if they did not become teachers. This was similar to the way in which the preparatory system operated. The writers also expressed the view, that good salaries would mean that fewer students would leave their chosen career. This view was surprising, because it implied that it was acceptable for people to stay in the teaching profession, simply for the money:

> If the salaries are good there will be fewer defectors. There is a distinction between students seeking free education and those who discover that they are not likely to make successful teachers.[197]

The achievement of graduate status for primary teachers was a long cherished ambition of the INTO and as early as the First National Programme Conference in 1920,[198] it had been under discussion. The Plan laid down certain criteria for academic achievement, emphasising the importance of candidates obtaining a university degree. In addition it stressed that students should participate fully in the cultural and social life of the university. But it did not advocate abandoning the training colleges entirely, though it was a little uncertain as to how they could be integrated in the new university system. It did, however, stress that it wanted to ensure that the training colleges did not just become dormitories, or refectories, and to avoid this, it came up with the vague proposal that 'maybe some lectures could be given in first year' in the colleges.[199] It also attempted to increase the teaching authority of the colleges, by giving them discretionary power to dismiss students, who were likely to be poor teachers. This part of the Plan was not well thought out, for if student-teachers were treated like other university students, there was no need for the training colleges. One of the prime factors in primary teacher training,

since it first began, was the stress on character formation, and with that in mind, students resided in training colleges, where their characters could be moulded for their vocation. The INTO must have been well aware that the training colleges were managed by the Churches, and run strictly in accordance with rules laid down by them. Furthermore it knew very well, that the possibility of the Roman Catholic Church, agreeing to such proposals was remote, for under the new proposals, students would have gained considerable freedom to make decisions about their personal lifestyle and behaviour, including their religious belief and observance, matters over which that Church wanted total control.

In its discussion of the all-important area of teaching practice, the Plan stressed that it should not be undertaken until the fourth year, and emphasised quite sensibly that it should be based on the realistic expectations of school life:

> Continuous teaching practice is more valuable than elaborately prepared lessons in artificial conditions unlike conditions that obtain in ordinary workaday schools.' [200]

The writers also emphasised the need for educational research, pointing out that the only research undertaken in the previous twenty years, had been the INTO's *Inquiry into the use of Irish*.[201] A further example of the radical thinking contained in the Plan, was a proposal that there should be teacher exchanges, a somewhat advanced idea for the late 1940s.

In the section dealing with the Language Revival, the writers examined the place of Irish in the primary school.[202] They emphasised that it should be taught as 'a living language,'

pointing out that: 'We should make a child fluent years before we expect him to be fluent on paper,' and concluded with the following sensible observations:

> Much of the drudgery arises at present with Irish composition. This could be avoided, or at least lessened, if one regarded composition as self-expression and not as a sub heading, which occurs in one language programme, and is duplicated in the other. If we postponed written Irish until pupils have some practice in written English we should rob it of half its terror.[203]

The publication of the Plan, however, came at the end of Fianna Fail's period in office. Whether that party would have been more receptive to the views it expressed, than the First Inter-party Government was, is a matter for conjecture. The Plan itself contained many exciting proposals for recruitment, which received little attention from either Government.

Another group, which continuously castigated Fianna Fail, over the gaelicisation policy was the Gaelic League, though for most of this period, 1939 – 48, this erstwhile powerful organisation was in decline. Nevertheless, it occasionally sparked into life. An example of this was the League's golden jubilee celebrations in 1943, which gave its membership a temporary boost.[204] Moreover, those who favoured the gaelicisation policy were not without influence, and, in 1946, Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge was established as a co-ordinating body for a number of Irish organisations, including the League. In addition the new movement received the approval of Archbishop McQuaid,[205] which led to hopes that its foundation would bring 'new life to the Gaelic revival,'[206] and Comhdháil was not slow in instituting a more aggressive policy. A typical example of its robust approach was a demand that the Government do more to save the language:

> Never was a language saved that was so close to death as Irish. Comhdháil Náisiúnta believes that Irish can be saved and that the public wants to save it. There is a need for a long-term policy. A fight to save the soul of Ireland.[207]

In a memo to the Government in 1947, Comhdháil called for three initiatives to be undertaken immediately. Firstly, it demanded that greater efforts be made to keep native speakers in Ireland. Secondly, it urged that a board to stop the decline of the Gaeltacht be established, and thirdly, it called for no appointments in the public service to be made in the Gaeltacht, unless the appointee could speak Irish. It also wanted large sums of money spent on language development, including the production of short films in Irish to be shown at every cinema show, and the publication of modern Irish books.

Typical of Comhdháil's militant approach to Government, was its belief that 'every organisation and institution that gets public money, or help from the State, should be made use Irish as much as possible,' and its attitude was clearly demonstrated in its call for greater emphasis on spoken Irish, and for oral tests in all school and public examinations. In addition it called for universities and third-level institutions, 'to be told, that they must have a plan to gaelicise themselves, as they were destroying the work of the secondary schools.' [208] Throughout the forties, however, opposition to the gaelicisation policy continued to increase. An example of this was an editorial in *The Leader*, which declared:

> It is foolish to ignore the substantial opposition which arises in private conversation.... that the effort to save Irish is too late and therefore doomed to failure.[209]

FIANNA FÁIL AND THE GAELICISATION POLICY

How justified were attacks by groups like Comhdháil on Fianna Fáil? When the party first came to power in 1932, much of the language policy which had been formulated by Blythe,[210] and the Cumann na nGael Government, particularly regarding education, had been in operation for almost ten years, and an assessment of the progress of the gaelicisation policy would have been opportune, but with the change of Government this did not happen. It is a matter for speculation, whether a Cumann na nGael/Fine Gael Government, with a renewed mandate from the people, would have found it easier, to review and modify the policy in 1932. Whether Blythe would have realised that the aims of the language policy were too ambitious, and consequently, been pragmatic enough to modify the policy, is difficult to say. It was, unfortunate, that on assuming office, Fianna Fáil did not institute a reappraisal of the policy and set more realistic and attainable goals. This was due to certain factors. Firstly, the restoration of the language and the re-unification of the island, were the party's much vaunted twin aspirations. Secondly, this was the party's first time in office, and it was pre-occupied with assuming control of the affairs of the nation. Thirdly, the wounds of the Civil War were still raw, and Fianna Fáil was not going to give the opposition an opportunity to accuse it of being less than committed to the gaelicisation policy initiated by the Cumann na nGael Government. Moreover, Fianna Fáil believed that it could do better and it began its first term in office by implementing the gaelicisation policy with renewed vigour. In education it introduced the *Revised Primary Programme* in 1934,[211] while its increased emphasis on Irish in the public service made it impossible for those, without fluent Irish, to gain promotion.[212]

The adamant refusal of successive Fianna Fáil Governments to consider any assessment of the progress of the gaelicisation policy in the education system, contrasted with their attitude to the civil service, where a number of assessments took place during this period. Why was there such a contrast between education and the civil service? There were several reasons for this. Firstly, there was no wide divergence of views in the Cabinet, as had developed between Finance and Education, over the preparatory colleges. Secondly, there was no overt opposition to the policy in the civil service, where the attitude was one of apathy, whereas the gaelicisation of the education system developed into a major conflict between the INTO and Derrig. Moreover, the assessments gave the appearance that action was being taken to implement the gaelicisation policy.

Typical of such assessments was the establishment, in 1934, of an inter-departmental committee to examine the use of Irish in the civil service.[213] Other efforts to assess progress included the conducting of an occasional census of the number of civil servants able to speak Irish.

Table 6. 20: Number of Irish speakers in the Civil Service

	Total no. of civil servants	Fluent at Irish
1935	20,984	2,603 = 12.4%
1925 – 1935	increase from 6.4% to 12.4%	
1935 – 1948	increase from 12.4% to 20.8%	

Source: UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P/24/927 and P/24/928

These figures show that by 1948, the number of civil servants fluent in Irish had increased to twenty per cent. [214] A more significant finding, however, was that of a census taken, in 1944, which revealed that the number of civil servants in Finance able to speak Irish was as low as seven per cent, which helps to explain their dogged antipathy to the preparatory system. [215] Moreover, a confidential *Report on the Use of Irish in the Civil Service* in 1948[216] revealed that incentives[217] to encourage the learning of Irish were not greatly availed of. It also noted that the decline in the number of native speakers in the Gaeltacht was continuing, and drew attention to a census that year, which had shown that less than half of the Gaeltacht population were Irish speakers. [218] Indeed these inquiries showed that the policy of gaelicising the civil service had failed in all but one respect. It had succeeded in giving the State an appearance of gaelicisation, which satisfied those who, suffering from the trauma of post-colonial stress, hungered for a new cultural identity. In addition it fulfilled their need to emphasise how much the new State differed from the old regime. Despite the failure of the policy revealed by the various inquiries, however, the pretence was kept up that the country was bilingual, and it was in keeping with this aspiration, that the place accorded to the language in the First Constitution was up-graded by de Valera in the 1937 Constitution.[219] This was De Valera's main contribution to the gaelicisation policy, though he could also claim some success with regard to the language itself, where considerable progress was made in standardising the grammar, vocabulary, and spelling of the language, and this resulted in the publication of *Litriú na Gaeilge: An Caighdeán Oifigiúl*, in 1945.[220] Some progress could also be claimed in the production of reading material, where a number of books and periodicals were produced each year.[221]

A major difficulty for Fianna Fáil throughout this period was its relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. On a number of occasions the Government found itself in disagreement with the Hierarchy and when this occurred, the Government gave way to the bishops. Indeed according to one commentator, 'reform proposals were abandoned once de Valera detected signs of episcopal opposition.'[222] An example of this, which was of considerable significance for the gaelicisation policy, was the provision of second-level schools in the Gaeltacht, [223] where once the Hierarchy had expressed its disapproval, the Government abandoned its proposals. Had the Government's proposals been implemented the whole history of the preparatory system would have been different, for fewer Gaeltacht students would have entered the colleges. The provision of second-level schools in the Gaeltacht was an issue about which Derrig had shown genuine commitment, but the failure of de Valera to support him meant the collapse of the proposals. Another example of Fianna Fáil giving way to the Hierarchy, which had much more significance for the preparatory colleges, was the dispute over Waterford Training College[224]which resulted in the closure of one of the most successful preparatory colleges, C. Chaoimhín.[225] A further example of the power of the Hierarchy was the take-over of C. Éinne by the Army in 1942,[226] when for over a year the Bishop of Galway delayed the college's move to Dublin. Furthermore the fear of offending individual bishops prevented Finance forcing the amalgamation of preparatory colleges in the early forties. [227] These episodes clearly demonstrated, that throughout its sixteen years in Fail Government, Fianna Fáil bowed to the Hierarchy's wishes even though, on occasions, it meant giving way on its cherished gaelicisation policy.

A further factor which contributed to de Valera's failure to pursue the gaelicisation policy with any great vigour was the lack of concensus in the Cabinet, which included such

strong-willed individuals as Lemass[228] and MacEntee,[229] neither of whom greatly favoured the language policy, while there were others, such as Frank Aiken,[230] who, in February 1946, made the extravagant prediction, that the majority of people in the country would be speaking Irish in twenty years.[231] The continuous disagreements in the Cabinet, between Finance and Education, must also have made progress difficult.

Moreover, de Valera was aware that attempts to gaelicise the nation, through the schools, [232] had failed:

> By June 1940 de Valera had changed his position especially in relation to the use of the language as the sole medium of instruction in the infant school. Reflecting perhaps the doubts about the policy expressed in the interim report of the INTO survey, he indicated in his estimate speech, as Minister for Education, that he did not agree with the language policy as introduced in 1922; he had grave doubts about the wisdom of using the language as the medium of instruction in the early stages; had he been in charge of policy then he would have concentrated first on increasing mastery of the language itself.[233]

It is difficult to understand why de Valera did not make changes during his sixteen years as Taoiseach, or during the period from September 1939 to June 1940, when he was Minister for Education. In 1941 de Valera offered to set up a commission of Dail deputies to examine the language issue but nothing came of it.[234] There has been much debate as to why de Valera appointed Derrig Minister for Education in 1932. It had been expected that Frank Fahy,[235] who had shown himself to be a capable shadow minister would have been appointed. It has been suggested that by appointing Derrig de Valera was in a better position to influence policy in a department where there was much scope for Church-State conflict.[236] Moreover, de Valera's failure to change Derrig's Cabinet post when relationships with the INTO became strained, is difficult to understand and may have

been due to strains within the Cabinet itself.[237] Derrig was deeply committed to the language policy and at the beginning of his period, as minister, made determined efforts to assist its progress, though in his early years as Minister he expressed doubts about the gaelicisation policy.[238] At primary level, he increased the emphasis on Irish in the schools, with the introduction of the *Revised Programme for Primary Schools,*[239] and made the Primary Certificate Examination compulsory,[240] while at second-level he made the award of the Leaving and Intermediate Certificates contingent on obtaining a pass in Irish. In addition he increased the number of university scholarships for Gaeltacht students and tried to provide second-level educational facilities in the Gaeltacht.[241]

CONCLUSION

The preparatory system was a major part of Derrig's strategy for the gaelicisation of education, and he believed that by recruiting larger numbers of native speakers to the colleges, greater success would be achieved.[242] Indeed he was to become the system's champion, and it was due to his robust defence that it lasted into the fifties, for without his strenuous efforts it is likely that both C. Moibhí,[243] and C. Éinne,[244] which were taken over by the Defence Forces during the Emergency, would have closed. One of Derrig's greatest failure as minister, however, was his inability to estimate recruitment requirements, and the over-recruitment of candidates for primary teaching was a major characteristic of education in the thirties.[245] It was not until the surplus of primary teachers reached crisis level, that he accepted that recruitment to the preparatory colleges would have to cease. Moreover, the temporary cessation of recruitment during the period 1939 to 1941, provided Derrig with an opportunity to radically alter the system, particularly, as it came so soon after the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the*

Preparatory Colleges, in 1938,[246] confirmed that there were major deficiencies in the system, and that the aspirations, behind its establishment, were not being fulfilled. Nevertheless he refused to make radical changes for fear it would be seen as an admission that the whole gaelicisation policy had failed for by this time the system had come to symbolise the policy.

Throughout this period the situation was further compounded for Derrig, by his on-going battle with the INTO over salaries and the gaelicisation policy. His rejection of the findings of the *Inquiry into the use of Irish,*[247] was a factor in increasing teacher militancy which eventually culminated in the 1946 strike. These factors combined to make Derrig's role as minister increasingly difficult and his attention during his final years in charge of the Department was almost completely focussed on his struggle with the INTO.

Though humiliated by the Government in the 1946 strike, that organisation gained considerably in the public's estimation, and began to assume a more powerful role in education. Moreover, the publication of the *Plan for Education,*[248] in 1947, showed that it was capable of creative and imaginative proposals for reforming Irish education. It also showed that the strength of the organisation's opposition to the preparatory colleges was undiminished.

As Derrig's period as minister drew to a close the increase in the birthrate, which commenced in 1942, [249] began to affect primary schooling with increased enrolments and demands for more teachers. However, as statistical information of this kind took so long to work its way through the Department's bureaucratic system, it was the 1950s before

the increases began to have serious effects on recruitment, with significant consequences for the preparatory colleges. Thus the system gained a respite which enabled it to continue into the next decade.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1] *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish as a Teaching Medium to Children whose Home Language is English,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941) See pp. 384 - 392
[2] *Report of Department of Education,* 1937 - 38, p. 8
[3] *Ibid.*, 1941 - 45, p. 97
[4] See pp. 277 - 279
[5] It was not until 1947 that enrolments began to increase
[6] See p. 327
[7] From 8th September until 27th September 1939 Sean T. O'Kelly was Minister for Education, while de Valera held the post from 27 September 1939 until 18th June 1940.
[8] See pp. 329 - 341
[9] DF Papers, S25/4/34
[10] See pp. 248 - 252
[11] DF Papers, S20/8/35
[12] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1936 - 37, p.7
[13] See pp. 324 - 329
[14] DF Papers, S20/35/38
[15] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307
[16] O'Connell, p. 209
[17] See p. 243
[18] See pp. 284 - 285
[19] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307.
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.* See also p. 317
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] See p. 329 - 341
[24] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S10577
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] See p. 329
[27] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S10577
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] See p. 314
[30] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] See p. 254
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1940 - 41, p. 11
[37] *Report of the Department of Education Committee on Future Requirements with regard to Recruitment for the Teaching Profession,* Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307
[38] See p. 281
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] The panel was a system whereby redundant teachers had to be offered the next available post within the diocese.
[41] See p. 281

[42] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307
[43] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1950 - 51, p. 4
[44] An example of this was that an average of ninety-five pupils had to be on rolls for a fixed period, usually two quarters, in a two-teacher school before a third teacher would be appointed. However, once the appointment was made, the average had to fall to below seventy-five for a fixed period, before recognition of the post would be withdrawn. *Rules for National Schools*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, nd), pp. 47 - 64
[45] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S10577
[46] *Ibid.*, S12307
[47] Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh, (1882 – 1966). Revolutionary, politician and second President of Ireland. A native of Dublin, he was educated at O'Connell CBS. As a young man he joined the Gaelic League and the IRB and was a founder member of Sinn Féin in 1905. He took part in the 1916 Rising and was later interned. He was first elected to parliament as an MP for Dublin in 1918 and, subsequently, represented a Dublin constituency as a TD until 1945. From 1919 – 1922, he was an envoy of Dáil Éireann to the Peace Conference in Paris, and to Rome and Washington. A close associate of deValera, he strongly opposed the Treaty, In 1926 he was one of the founders of Fianna Fáil. He held a number of Cabinet posts and was Minister for Local Government and Public Health, from 1932 – 39, when he was appointed Minister for Finance, a post he held until his election as President in 1945. In 1952 he was re-elected for a second term.
[48] C. Éinne began in 1928 in temporary premises in Furbough House, near Spiddal. From there it moved in January 1931 to Talbot House, Dublin. Finally, in October 1937, it returned to Galway to the reconstructed premises in Salthill
[49] See p. 191
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *The Irish Times*, 9th May, 1934
[52] See p. 177
[53] V. Jones, 'Recruitment and Formation into the Church of Ireland Training College, 1922 – 1961,' unpublished M.Litt. thesis, University of Dublin, 1989, p. 157
[54] DF Papers, S25/15/34
[55] 'Recruitment and Formation,' p. 179
[56] See p. 68
[57] DF Papers, S25/15/34
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] Lil Nic Dhonnchadha, or Lil Duncan, became the third Principal of C. Moibhí in 1934. Born in Belfast in 1891, she was one of the first women to graduate from TCD in 1914 when she obtained a first-class honours degree in Celtic Studies. An ardent member of the Gaelic League and a founder member of Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise (The Irish Guild of the Church) she played a major role in translating the Church of Ireland liturgy into Irish.
[60] See p. 343, n. 8
[61] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S13905
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] Dr. Dorothy Price, (nee Stopford), a niece of Alice Stopford Green, was a Protestant, who as a member of Cumann na mBan acted as a medical doctor to the IRA during the

War of Independence. She was involved with Dr. Kathleen Lynn in running St. Ultan's Children Hospital. Both Dorothy Price and her husband, Judge Liam (William George) Price, were committed nationalists, who came from unionist backgrounds.

[66] Letter from Derrig to MacEntee, 31st July, 1946, and seen by the Taoiseach on 3/8/1946 Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S123909

[67] The Department made some exceptions to assist C. Moibhí with recruitment. After 1944 it was the only college allowed to accept candidates who had completed the Intermediate Certificate Examination. A further exemption was that the upper age limit for entrants was kept at fifteen and a half when it was reduced in 1946 for the other colleges. In addition separate entrance examination papers for the college were published in English.

[68] See p. 270, n. 96

[69] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12807

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] See p. 317

[72] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12807

[73] The Committee on the Provision of Hospitals in the West of Ireland

[74] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12807.

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] The students included sixteen scholarship holders

[78] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12807

[79] See p. 333

[80] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12807.

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] *Ibid.*

[83] See p. 270, n. 96

[84] The Most Revd. Dr. Arthur Barton succeeded Archbishop John Gregg as Archbishop of Dublin in 1939, and continued in that post until 1956.Though he spent his early years working in parishes in Dublin, from 1904 – 1912, the greater part of his pastoral life was spent in Northern Ireland, where he worked from 1912 – 1930 when he was elected Bishop of Kilmore, a post he held for nine years before being elected Archbishop of Dublin.

[85] Memo to the Cabinet, 21April 1942, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12653

[86] *Ibid.*

[87] See p. 63, n. 130

[88] Memo to the Cabinet, 28 April 1942, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12653

[89] DF Papers, S22/4/34

[90] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1942 - 43, p. 13

[91] Letter from O'Neill, secretary of the Department of Education to Bishop Browne, 7th April, 1943, Galway Diocesan Archives

[92] See p. 93

[93] See p. 422, n. 125

[94] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1940 – 41, p. 12

[95] Letter from Bishop Browne to Department of Education, 7th August 1944, Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[96] Letter from Department of Education to Bishop Browne, 11th August 1944, *Ibid.*

[97] See pp. 248 - 252
[98] C. Éinne PPA, *C. Einde 1928 – 78*, p. 17
[99] See p. 372 - 373
[100] Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers
[101] *Ibid.*, Letter from McQuaid to Browne, 3rd September 1944,
[102] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[103] See p. 182
[104] See p. 369
[105] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[106] Fr. Denis Hynes, or Dr. Donnchadh Ó hEidhin, was appointed vice-principal when the college opened in 1928. One of four teachers appointed at the time, he was known for his commitment to Irish nationalism and his devotion to the Irish language. A scholarly man, he became Principal in 1939, following the untimely death of the college's first principal, Fr. Andrew Sexton, (Fr. Aindrias Ó Seisneáin)
[107] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers.
[108] *Ibid.*
[109] *Ibid.*
[110] *Ibid.*
[111] See p. 483 - 492
[112] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[113] *Ibid.*
[114] *The Irish Independent*, 1st September 1944
[115] See p. 215
[116] *The Irish Independent*, 1st September 1944
[117] See pp. 277 - 279
[118] *The Irish Independent*, 1st September 1944
[119] The Commission on Vocational Organisation was established by de Valera in 1937 to inquire into vocational organisation. The chairman of the twenty-five member body was the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Michael Browne. In 1943, it presented its report, which was published the following year. As it contained many criticisms of the structure of the State and recommended far-reaching reforms, it was not well received by the Fianna Fáil Government, which ignored it.
[120] See p. 98
[121] See p. 270, n. 96
[122] See p. 96 and 285
[123] See p. 96
[124] Letter from Séamus Fenton to Bishop Michael Browne, 1st September, 1944, Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Paper
[125] Noel Browne, (1915 – 1997). Radical reformer and politician. He was born in Waterford and educated at the Marist College, Athlone; CBS, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo; Beaumont College, Windsor, and TCD, where he studied Medicine. He was deeply committed to the campaign to eradicate the disease of tuberculosis, which was widespread in Ireland at that time. Both his parents, and two siblings, died from TB and he himself was diagnosed with it as a student. A member of Clann na Poblachta, he was appointed Minister for Health on his first day in the Dáil. As minister, he carried out a successful campaign against the disease, assisted by the development of more effective drugs, and the introduction of a programme of mass radiography. In 1950, he proposed

the introduction of a free medical care scheme for mothers and children. This met strong opposition from the medical profession and the Roman Catholic Church, which resulted in Browne's resignation and the defeat of the First Inter-Party Government in May 1951. He continued in politics as a member of different parties, or none, until his retirement in 1962. His radical political career was marked by his outspoken criticism of the Roman Catholic Church and by his championing of the underprivileged. His biography, *Against the Tide*, was a best-seller.

[126] DF Papers, S22/5/44

[127] See p. 333

[128] Quoted in *The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish as a Teaching Medium to Children whose Home Language is English*, (Dublin: INTO, 1941), p. 12

[129] *Ibid.*

[130] *Ibid.*, p. 14

[131] O'Connell, p. 366

[132] *Ibid.*, p. 375

[133] *Ibid.*, p. 368

[134] *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish*, p. 5

[135] O'Connell, p. 371

[136] *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the use of Irish*, p. 12

[137] *Ibid.*, p. 24

[138] *Ibid.*, p. 25

[139] *Ibid.*, p. 43

[140] *Ibid.*, p. 52

[141] *Ibid.*, p. 21

[142] *Ibid.*, p. 60

[143] *The Irish Times*, 27th April 1942

[144] *Dail Reports*, 4th April 1935

[145] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1932 - 33, p. 22

[146] *Dáil Reports*, 11th April 1934

[147] *Ibid.*, 4th April 1935

[148] *Notes for Teachers*, (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 1933)

[149] *Ibid.*, p. 1

[150] *Revised Programme of Primary Instruction* (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 1934),

[151] See p. 304

[152] See pp. 389 - 390

[153] O'Connell, p. 375

[154] Memo on the Position of the Irish Language, 1943, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S13180

[155] *Ibid.*, See also Ó Buachalla, p. 351

[156] See p. 252

[157] *History of Ballyvourney*, 15th October 1940, De La Salle Archives

[158] DF Papers S22/4/34

[159] See p. 254

[160] DF Papers, S25/6/39

[161] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1945 - 46, p. 15

[162] See p. 260

[163] DF Papers, S25/5/38

[164] See p. 260
[165] *Ibid.*, S20/37/27
[166] *Ibid.*
[167] See pp. 305 - 329
[168] Circular 4/39 on Fíor-Ghaeltacht Scholarships
[169] See p. 300
[170] O'Connell, p. 200
[171] *Ibid.*, p. 204
[172] See p. 64, n. 141
[173] See p. 390
[174] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1941 - 42, p. 16
[175] *The Irish School Weekly*, vol. XLV, 9th and 16th October, 1943
[176] Letter to Archbishop McQuaid, 14th January 1944, Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers,
[177] See pp. 46 - 48
[178] The Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language, *Summary of the Final Report*, 1963, p. 67
[179] O'Connell, p. 210
[180] See pp. 372 - 373
[181] Letter from Derrig to McQuaid, 8th February, 1946, Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers
[182] *The Irish Times*, 20nd March, 1946
[183] *Ibid.*, 22nd May 1946
[184] O'Connell, p. 231
[185] Ó Buachalla, p. 95
[186] See p. 281
[187] Ó Buachalla, p. 67
[188] See pp. 372 - 373
[189] Letter from Derrig to McQuaid, 19th November 1942, Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers
[190] See p. 64, n. 141
[191] *A Plan for Education*, (Dublin: INTO, 1947), p. 3
[192] *Ibid.*, p. 23
[193] See p. 51
[194] *A Plan for Education*, p. 26
[195] *Ibid.*
[196] *Ibid.*, p. 27
[197] *Ibid.*
[198] See pp. 44 - 45
[199] *A Plan for Education* , p. 29
[200] *Ibid.*
[201] *Ibid.*, p. 30
[202] *Ibid.*, p. 41
[203] *Ibid.*, p. 42
[204] Pádraig Ó Fearail, *The Story of Conradh na Gaeilge, A History of the Gaelic League*, (Dublin: Clódanna Teo, 1975) p. 50
[205] See pp. 372 - 73

[206] Letter from Dr. Magean, Bishop of Down and Dromore, 29th October 1943, Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers
[207] Memo in Irish from Comhdhail Naisiunta na Gaeilge, UCD Archives, Blythe Papers
[208] *Ibid.*
[209] *The Leader*, 14 October 1944
[210] See p. 60, n. 50
[211] See p. 288
[212] Confidential memo, The use of Irish in the Civil Service, UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P/24/928
[213] See p. 131
[214] UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P/24/928
[215] *Ibid.*
[216] *Report on the Use of Irish in the Civil Service,* UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P/24/928
[217] *Ibid.*
[218] *Ibid.*
[219] *Bunreacht na hÉireann, (Constitution of Ireland)* (Dublin: Government Publications Office, 1937), Article 8
[220] Seán Ó Riain, *Pleanáil Teanga in Éirinn 1919 – 1985,* (Baile Átha Cliath: Carbad, 1994), p. 74
[221] This was due to the work of An Gúm, the branch of the Department established in 1926 to oversee the publication of books and periodicals in Irish. See p. 96
[222] Ó Buachalla, p. 199
[223] See pp. 294 - 296
[224] See pp. 248 - 252
[225] See pp. 329 - 341
[226] See pp. 367 - 378
[227] See p. 351
[228] See p. 476, n. 3
[229] See p. 343, n. 8
[230] Frank Aiken, (1898 – 1983). Revolutionary and politician. A farmer's son from South Armagh, he was educated at St. Colman's College, Newry. A member of Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers he was imprisoned in 1918. He took part in the War of Independence and, subsequently, took the Republican side in the Civil War. He was chief of staff of the IRA until 1925. He was first elected to the Dail in 1927, as a TD for Louth, a constituency he continued to represent until his retirement in 1973. He held a number of Cabinet posts, including Defence: 1932 – 45, Finance: 1945 – 48, External Affairs: 1951 - 54, 1957 – 69, and Tanaiste: 1959 – 69. A dedicated Gaeilgeoir, Irish was the language of his home.
[231] *Scéala Éireann,* 24th April 1946
[232] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1932 - 33, p. 22
[233] Ó Buachalla, p. 200
[234] *Ibid.*, p. 351
[235] See p. 62, n. 89
[236] Ó Buachalla, p. 65
[237] See p. 301
[238] *Dáil Reports,* 11April 1934 See p. 390
[239] See p. 391

[240] See p. 399
[241] See pp. 294 - 296
[242] *Dáil Reports*, 21st March 1934
[243] See pp. 361 - 366
[244] See pp. 367 - 372
[245] See p. 285
[246] See pp. 305 - 329
[247] See pp. 382 - 390
[248] See pp. 404 - 409
[249] See p. 441

SECTION 1V

DECLINE

DECLINE

Overview

In this section the decline of the preparatory system is traced. The thesis will argue that the need for more trained teachers to cope with expanding enrolments in the late forties and early fifties highlighted its inadequacies as a recruitment system: it was a long and costly method of producing teachers. But successive Governments were afraid to end the system for fear of incurring the wrath of the Roman Catholic Church. The thesis will demonstrate that it was only after an episode at C. Éinne, in 1956, which resulted in the expulsion of twenty pupils, that the Hierarchy became aware of the weaknesses of the system and, subsequently, through negotiations with the Bishop of Galway, the Government came up with a plan, in November 1959, to end the system and to continue the colleges as 'A' schools.

In Chapter V11, Part (i), *1948 – 1957: Coping with Expanding Enrolments,* the role of Richard Mulcahy,[1] Minister for Education in the First and Second Inter-party Governments, will be explored. It will be argued that he was a disappointment to teachers because in opposition he had raised expectations that he would be a reforming minister. The thesis contends that he was a cautious, conservative minister. It examines the *Revised Programme for Infants,*[2] which he introduced and analyses the work of the Council of Education,[3] which he established in 1950.

The thesis argues that the Department's failure to cope with the situation regarding expanding enrolments, was due to its inability to forecast accurately the number of trained teachers needed, and its on-going poor relationships with Finance, which were

discussed in chapter VI. Finance's solution to the problem was to remove the Marriage Ban while Education wanted to produce more teachers by turning C. Éinne into a training college. The chapter also includes an analysis of the role of Sean Molyan,[4] who was Fianna Fail Minister for Education from 1951 – 1954. It will suggest that Fianna Fáil's determination to avoid disagreement with the Hierarchy, was reinforced by the debacle over the Mother and Child Health Scheme[5] and that this was a major factor in the continuation of the preparatory system in the fifties.

In Chapter VII, Part (ii), *1957 – 1961: Facing an Increasingly Precarious Future,* an analysis is made of why it was possible to decide to close the preparatory colleges in 1959. The thesis will argue that a number of factors which occurred at this time, including the retirement of de Valera, the appointment of younger ministers to the Cabinet, changes in the public's attitude to the Irish language, and the Hierarchy's awareness of the weaknesses in the system, gave the Government the opportunity to end the system. The thesis will analyse the manner in which the colleges were disposed of and will argue that once it was announced that the colleges were to become 'A' schools much of the opposition to the closure decision disappeared.

In Chapter V111, *The Preparatory Colleges – Success or Failure?* an assessment is made of the strengths and weaknesses of the system in the light of the objectives set for it at its establishment. The thesis will discuss the experiences of those who were involved in the system, either as teachers or students. It will argue that the system was a success as

it accomplished what it was intended to do – to produce primary teachers fluent in Irish, able and willing to teach the language in the schools and to teach through Irish.

In Chapter IX, *Conclusion,* the thesis examines the role of the Irish language in Irish education today and its condition at the end of the twentieth century. It acknowledges that the standard of Irish in primary schools has declined since the closure of the preparatory colleges, though with the ending of the gaelicisation policy there is a much healthier attitude towards the language. It concludes that it is mainly due to the contribution of the preparatory system and its former students, that the Irish language has survived and adapted to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

FOOTNOTES

[1] See p. 107
[2] Department of Education, *Revised Programme for Infants*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1948). It was introduced by Mulcahy in 1948. See p. 436
[3] Council of Education, *Report of the Council of Education on the Function and the Curriculum of the Primary School*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1954). See pp. 454 - 462
[4] See p. 476, n. 4
[5] See p. 444

CHAPTER V11

1948 - 61: A PERIOD OF STAGNATION ENDING IN SWIFT DEMISE

Part (i) : 1948 – 57 COPING WITH EXPANDING ENROLMENTS

For much of this period, 1948 – 1957, life in Ireland differed little from the previous decade. The slow recovery of the post-war period continued though the rate of economic and industrial growth was not sufficient to overcome the nation's two main problems: unemployment and emigration, and a pall of gloom overhung society. Nevertheless, there were some exciting political changes: after sixteen years of Fianna Fáil rule, a desire for change, heightened by the approach of a new decade, saw the election of the First Inter-party Government in 1948. It lasted until 1951, when the debacle over the Mother and Child Health Scheme,[1] and the ensuing confrontation between the Minister for Health, Dr. Noel Browne,[2] and the Hierarchy, contributed to its collapse and the return of Fianna Fáil to power for a further three years. Despite the unseemly end to the First Inter-party Government, the electorate was willing to entrust the affairs of the nation to a second coalition Government in 1954.

Throughout the period 1948 – 57, there was little difference between the policies pursued by Richard Mulcahy,[3] who was Minister for Education in the two Inter-party Governments, and his Fianna Fáil counterpart: Seán Moylan.[4] During Mulcahy's first term as Minister, recruitment was to become an important issue as rising enrolments resulting from increases in the birthrate led to demands for more trained teachers with

disputes between Education and Finance as to how this could be achieved. Finance's solution was the abolition of the Marriage Ban[5] while Education advocated the establishment of an additional training college. For much of this period: 1948 – 1957, the preparatory system stagnated, as Finance persisted in its efforts to end the system, while Education continued to defend it, though the ease with which Education proposed converting C. Éinne into a training college in 1951, was ominous.

In the early part of this period, the morale of primary teachers was low, following the humiliating end to the 1946 strike,[6] and the Government's rejection, the following year, of the INTO's innovative *Plan for Education.*[7] The election of the First Inter-party Government led to increased expectations that their protracted salary negotiations would be speedily completed, but it was the beginning of the fifties before they achieved their salary objectives. These gains made primary teaching a highly regarded career, and there was no shortage of candidates seeking to enter the training colleges.

However, a major characteristic of Mulcahy as Minister for Education was his slowness to make radical change in any area. In opposition he had showed exciting signs of new thinking and a document on Fine Gael educational policy,[8] written by him in 1947, proposed a number of far-reaching changes. These included a reduction in class sizes; an end to the building of enormous primary schools in cities; the provision of secondary tops to national schools in rural areas; curricular emphasis on the local environment; the development of adult education, and raising the school-leaving age to sixteen:

> The great majority of children leave school at fourteen. They depend entirely on the primary schools. Therefore primary schools are all-important. At present the school-leaving age is fourteen..... We advocate that no child should go to work before sixteen, though part-time work for apprentices, before sixteen, maybe necessary.[9]

In addition for primary teachers, he raised exciting prospects of political support for their campaign for university education, and increased salaries:

> We must pay teachers, primary, secondary, and university, or they will emigrate like domestic servants to England. The training and education of teachers is all important. Primary teachers should receive a university degree.

While he had this to say about school buildings:

> Classes should not be too large. Buildings are of secondary importance. The present building scheme is good though there are complaints about heating and maintenance. In Dublin enormous schools have been erected with ninety teachers and 3,000 pupils. This is economic for building but very objectionable from the educational angle. The head should know the teachers. The teachers should know the pupils. Very large schools prevent this.[10]

Furthermore he acknowledged the need for a Council of Education, an objective dear to the INTO, to 'bring fresh air to pigeon holes in the Department,' and promised an inquiry into one of the most controversial issues in Irish education, the use of Irish as a teaching medium:

> We have suggested more than once an enquiry by people, who are generally in favour of Irish, especially into Irish as a teaching medium. The question needs hard educational reflection, rather than political speech-making.

The memo continued:

> At the beginning the study of Irish gave students, who loved it a living interest outside their ordinary work. It is not a road to a job, or a collection of nouns and verbs but something alive with a background which belonged to the people, cherished for its own sake. Until that spirit is regained, Irish cannot be made to take its proper place in schools and in the country. That is not to say, that I am against compulsory Irish or even against making a real knowledge of Irish essential for certain positions or against teaching, through Irish, in certain conditions. We need to sit down and see where we want to go and if we are following the right path to get there.

Moreover, Mulcahy's views on the Department's operations were refreshing:

> Inspectors spend too much time on form-filling, and reports etc. Officials are smothered in paper. No one has time to think of the educational future the way others are doing. We need some officials free for this and for visits to schools which do not entail paper work.[11]

Such stimulating views led to increased teacher expectations that Mulcahy, who had supported them in the strike, would be a reforming Minister for Education. However, his first period in this office was a severe disappointment to primary teachers. The main improvements gained by them were changes in teachers' ratings in 1948,[12] while the introduction of a more favourable teacher-pupil ratio was achieved the following year, when it was agreed that the basis for calculating appointments, and retention of staff, should be based on the average daily attendance[13] instead of on school enrolments. Mulcahy, however, disappointed teachers by failing to fully implement the findings of the Roe Committee on salaries.

The eighteen-member committee, chaired by Judge P.J. Roe, was established 'to consider salaries and other grants, including provision on retirement to be paid to teachers in national schools, and to report thereon, ' and in the *Report of the Committee on National*

Teachers' Salaries[14] in 1949, it stressed that teachers' salaries should 'reflect the importance of teaching and the necessity of attracting the best possible type of person to the profession.' It also emphasised that its proposals were 'not out-of-line with salaries paid to State or semi-State employees.' However, there was disagreement amongst the committee over its recommendation that there should be a common salary scale for women and single men. This was a cherished objective of the INTO, which for many years sought to remove discrimination on gender grounds in the teaching profession. This recommendation was not accepted by the five representatives of Finance and Education. In a Minority Report, the establishment representatives argued that 'the levelling up of the pay of women to that of single men raised important general principles affecting the status of women, which must be decided before it is applied to any one profession.' They objected to the common scale on the grounds that it did not take cognisance of the fact that the ratio of women to single men in the teaching service was five to one. Moreover, in the officials' view, the quality of candidates for the profession was satisfactory, and so further incentives were unnecessary.

They also criticised the proposed new scales, as being far in excess of comparable increases granted to civil servants, and for being higher than teachers' salaries in the United Kingdom. They argued that the new scales would give teachers a disproportionately high income in relation to the rural communities in which the vast majority worked. This excuse was similar to that given by the Department when it was imposing the Marriage Ban in the thirties,[15] and it shows how little the thinking in the Department had advanced in the intervening years. In addition it gives a flavour of the

context in which the INTO was struggling, in the early fifties, to advance the standing of the primary teacher. The lack of agreement amongst the committee was important for it allowed the Government to plead that, in the economic circumstances of the time, it could not afford to pay the increases recommended in the majority report, and the matter was not resolved until 1951.[16]

Another area where Mulcahy disappointed teachers was his failure to fulfil his promises about the language policy. Shortly after his appointment, he set up a committee of primary inspectors to examine the issue. Their report resulted in some modification of the language programme, in 1948, with the introduction of the *Revised Programme for Infants*,[17] which allowed the teaching of English, as an optional subject, for infants, and first class, for half an hour daily. He then left the matter to the proposed Council for Education,[18] which he established in 1950.

Unfortunately, the changes made by Mulcahy were small compared to the teachers' expectations. However, he justified his stand in a speech in the Dail in April 1949:

> First of all I made a verbal change, the effect of which would be to modify the injunction that Irish should be used exclusively from the first day of the infants' attendance. I substituted a recommendation that the aim should be to reach, as soon as possible, a stage at which Irish can be exclusively used as the language of instruction, and communication, in the infant classes. Work done in the infant classes is of a kindergarten nature and the use of the Irish language in those classes is for the purpose of giving the child, at the earliest possible age, the opportunity of hearing the Irish language used simply and naturally as it were in ordinary day to day use. English may now, at the discretion of the manager, be taught in infants' classes for a half-hour a day. I gave the most careful consideration

> to the inspectors' reports and I came to the conclusion that no further changes were either desirable or necessary.[19]

Though Mulcahy's failure to make radical changes was due to his innate conservatism, it must also be seen in the context of the late forties, when the Irish language was an issue which was capable of arousing great depths of passion, and controversy, among people of contrasting views. An example of this was the conflict, which erupted over views expressed by the President of UCD, Dr. Michael Tierney:[20]

> This Government and no Government before it believed in the revival. Ministers say so privately. No one can point anywhere to a dead language being revived. Only a few cranks believe in the revival and inside fifteen years a Government will be in power agus ruaigfidh an Ghaeilge as na scoileanna. (and Irish will be driven out of the schools)[21]

The publication of Dr. Tierney's comments, made in an interview with the Irish language magazine, *Comhar*, led to questions in the Dáil, and the banning of the magazine in UCD. One of those who continuously castigated the Government for neglecting the language was Ernest Blythe.[22] Typical of Blythe's criticisms were these comments in his presidential address to Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge in 1949:

> The State has not begun to take its responsibilities seriously. There are very few, active and influential people in politics who realise the immensity of the difficulties to be overcome. The Gaeltacht cannot be stabilised. Ireland as a nation will disappear if the language is lost.... The State must do its best to ensure that the mass of ordinary people (who of course, will never be burningly enthusiastic about anything except for a short period) will, without any resort to self-sacrifice, retain throughout their lives most of the Irish they learned at school. [23]

It was to avoid such controversy that Mulcahy passed the issue to the Council of Education for consideration. Nevertheless the lack of progress with regard to the gaelicisation policy

should have been a cause for concern to him as there was increasing evidence that the policy was failing in three main areas. Firstly, the number of native speakers in the Gaeltacht continued to decline.[24] Secondly, the number of schools teaching all subjects, except English, through Irish was decreasing.

Table 7.1: No. of Schools where all subjects except English were taught through Irish 1948 – 1956

1948	588	**1951**	523	**1954**	378
1949	534	**1952**	490	**1955**	393
1950	509	**1953**	486	**1956**	389

Source: Compiled from *Reports of the Department of Education, 1948 - 56*

Thirdly, it was obvious that efforts to gaelicise the civil service were failing. As a result of the *Report on the Use of Irish in the Civil Service*, in 1948, [25] yet another committee, composed of three civil servants,[26] was established to investigate the use of Irish in the civil service. An examination of each Department confirmed the dismal findings, that there had been 'no advance in the use of Irish in the civil service in the last decade.' [27] The committee found that after almost thirty years of effort at gaelicising the public service, approximately twenty per cent of officials in the Department of the Taoiseach, could conduct business in Irish. Some improvements, however, were noted. These included Finance, where the number had risen from seven and a half per cent, in 1944, to seventeen per cent, and Education, where the Primary Education and the Technical Branches showed improvements. Worst of all, however, were the Houses of the Oireachtas, where the committee reported that only a small percentage of members used Irish.

With such a poor example set by the legislators, it was little wonder that the public attitude to the language policy was one of cynicism and ridicule. Moreover, the requirement that Irish be essential for State examinations became a live issue from 1949. As the numbers doing the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate Examinations increased and greater numbers failed due to the Irish requirement, growing public disenchantment with the language policy led to increased calls for an inquiry into the teaching of Irish in the schools.

Table 7.2: **Leaving Certificate Examination Results in Irish 1951**

Honours paper

Entered		Pass+hons	pass	fail
Boys	2052	1203	2029	23
Girls	2142	1379	2136	6

Pass paper

Entered		Pass	Fail	
Boys	1430	1213	217	15%
Girls	2142	834	193	18.7%
Total	2457	2047	410	16.6%

Source: *Report of the Department of Education,* 1950-51, p. 91

In addition public disillusionment with compulsory Irish was reflected in the *Report of the Commission on Youth Unemployment,*[28] in 1951:

> In view of criticism received by the Commission there is a grave need to examine the content of primary education, more particularly the content of Irish and the treatment of that language.[29]

Despite the public's attitude to the gaelicisation policy there were a number of imaginative initiatives during this period which affected the language and Irish culture,

including the establishment of Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann in 1951,[30] Gael-Linn in 1953,[31] and the Department of the Gaeltacht in 1956. There was also a remarkable growth in modern Irish literature, with works of international stature by Ó Cadhain,[32] Ó Direáin,[33] and Ó Riordáin.[34] In addition, the Gaelic League prospered during this period and the number of branches grew from 100, to a peak of 198, in 1958.[35]

The reform of recruitment was another issue Mulcahy passed to the Council of Education for consideration. Over the years his attitude to the preparatory colleges had changed. In the twenties, he had been an ardent supporter of the system, but by the forties, he had joined the ranks of its critics. In 1944, he had made this criticism of his predecessor, Derrig:[36]

> The Minister is continuing to look to the Irish-speaking districts for a large part of his primary school-teachers for the future, in spite of the fact that he knows that material has been criticised to some extent by both the educationists there, through whose hands they have passed, and by others connected with the professional side of education.[37]

Mulcahy's views were notable because, heretofore, criticism of the preparatory system had been confined to the INTO, and some politicians, such as T.J. O'Connell[38] and T.J. Johnston.[39] By the forties, it had become increasingly widespread. In his attack on Derrig, Mulcahy said that any Minister, 'with any kind of imagination,' would have used the period, when the training and preparatory colleges had been temporarily closed, to conduct 'a major and systematic review of what was going on in these colleges.'[40]

However, as minister, he was slow to make changes to recruitment excusing his inaction on the grounds, that it could not be treated in isolation:

> Over a rather wide sphere a considerable number of changes may be desirable, all dovetailing into one another, and I want to see that when these changes are proposed by myself or proposed by anybody outside they will not be decided on a narrow personal or narrow Departmental issue, that I will have the satisfaction of knowing that either my proposals or any other person's proposals are being reviewed by a body competent to discuss the matter with me and to advise me generally with regard to them.[41]

Mulcahy's failure to reform recruitment was to have serious consequences for one of the main features of primary education during his period as minister was the increasing shortage of trained primary teachers. This was mainly due to an increase in the birth rate which had begun in 1942.[42] Other factors were the increase in the number of women teachers retiring voluntarily, and the introduction of a more favourable pupil-teacher ratio.[43] A further significant factor was the Marriage Ban,[44] whereby female teachers had to resign their teaching posts on marriage. These factors made it increasingly difficult for managers to secure trained teachers.

The need for more trained teachers contributed to tension between Finance and Education. This had been a characteristic of the two departments' relationships in the thirties and forties,[45] and it was to continue during the fifties, despite the change of parties in Government. Finance believed that the shortage of teachers could be overcome by ending the Marriage Ban while Education's solution was to produce more teachers. As the training colleges were full to capacity Education proposed that an additional training college should be established.

Moreover, the situation was compounded by the failure of the Department to estimate, accurately, the number of pupils in schools, and the Department underestimated enrolments during this period by 30,000.[46] As early as 1947, a shortage of primary teachers was forecast, yet the Department failed to take decisive action to adapt recruitment accordingly. Instead of implementing a strategy to deal with the situation, it depended on *ad hoc* measures, such as the recruitment of an additional forty students to Carysfort Training College, in 1947, and 1948.[47] Such measures were ineffective, however, and the shortage of trained teachers continued, as was noted in the Department's annual report for 1948/1949:

> Existing facilities for Roman Catholic students are being utilised to the fullest extent. There are rather more vacancies for teachers in National Schools in 1948/49 than were trained teachers available to fill them.[48]

The report warned that 'if present trends continue' arrangements for increasing numbers in training would have to be considered. Never a body to take precipitate action, the Department postponed decision-making, until 'future patterns are confirmed.' [49]Unfortunately for the Department, the trend continued, and in another effort to alleviate the recruitment problem, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, was allowed to recruit an extra twenty students in 1951.[50] The increase in enrolments, however, accelerated, and while the Department's annual report noted an increase, of 10,131 on rolls, in the three years from 1947-1950,[51] a memo to the Cabinet, in February 1952, showed that enrolments had actually risen by 17,000, between 1949 – 1951.[52] In the same memo Education reported that at least fifty-five more trained teachers were needed per year. These figures show clearly the

inability of Department officials to keep accurate statistics as they do not agree with the statistics given in the annual reports.

Table 7.3: Enrolments and Attendances at National Schools 1947-56

	No. on rolls	Average enrolment	Daily Attendance	
1947	453,428	397,307	307,705	81.1%
1948	457,050	380,301	322,185	84.2%
1949	458,999	381,433	323,864	85.3%
1950	464,703	383,660	328,127	85.5%
1951	467,593	385,522	324,249	84.1%
1952	476,051	390,996	334,917	85.7%
1953	484,364	398,806	344,041	86.2%
1954	490,157	407,194	352,061	86.5%
1955	495,163	414,355	354,688	85.6%
1956	500,894	421,416	365,036	86.6%

Source: *Compiled from Reports of the Department of Education*, 1948 - 56

Meanwhile the number of untrained teachers continued to increase and the Department was forced 'as a temporary expedient' to accept the services of JAMs in posts for assistant teachers for a short period to 30th June 1951. [53]

Table 7.4: Number of Untrained Teachers in 1951

1951	Trained men	Untrained men	Trained women	Untrained women
Principals	2,626	9	1,628	146
Assistants	896	23	2,656	475
Lay assistants	195	7	534	67
	3,717	39	4,818	688

Total No. of teachers: 9,262 Total No. of untrained teachers: 727 or 7.8%

Source: *Report of the Department of Education*, 1950 - 51, p. 84

To cope with the problem of untrained teachers Education planned to turn C. Éinne into a training college, and the ease with which Mulcahy made the proposal did not bode well for the future of the preparatory system. However, in February 1951, this plan was rejected by Finance, which proposed that the Marriage Ban should be rescinded.[54] Moreover, a memo from Finance noted that the Ban had been modified in 1944, to allow for the employment, in exceptional circumstances, of married female teachers, where no other qualified teacher was available.[55] Finance further urged that the question of a new training college be deferred until 1952, by which time the peak of the birth rate might have passed. Finance also pointed out that should a new college be established, new teachers would not graduate from it until 1955.

Meanwhile Education persisted in pressing for the establishment of an additional training college and continued to do so, despite the change of party in Government in 1951. This unexpected change was brought about by the debacle over the .Mother and Child Health Scheme. In the early fifties the power of the Roman Catholic Church was at its greatest and the Hierarchy strongly opposed plans by the Minister for Health, Dr. Noel Browne,[56] to introduce a free medical care scheme for mothers and children, on the grounds that it was contrary to Catholic social teaching. Browne, however, refused to abandon it, and when his Cabinet colleagues failed to support him, he resigned in April 1951. Subsequently, he published the correspondence between himself and the bishops and the matter became a *cause célèbre.*

Shortly after Browne's resignation the Government fell.[57] Following a general election Fianna Fail formed the Government and, in June 1951, Seán Moylan[58] became Minister for Education. Despite the change of Government there was little change in the Department's attitude to recruitment, or in Finance's response to Education's proposals, which was not surprising as Seán MacEntee[59] was once again Minister for Finance. In the following October, Education again proposed that C. Éinne be adapted as a training college for women, and gave these reasons to support its proposal. Firstly, it forecast that the number of female teachers needed each year would be 220, and pointed out that the two Roman Catholic women's colleges had accommodation for only 340, with an average annual output of 165.[60] Secondly, it reminded the Cabinet that C. Éinne had originally been planned as a training college for girls, following the increased demand for teachers, resulting from the School Attendance Act in 1926. Thirdly, it pointed out that due to the building's layout, it could easily be adapted to provide accommodation for 120 students, and with the addition of an extra wing or storey, a further forty students could be trained. Education further claimed that the large number of untrained teachers was arousing public anxiety, and that seventy teachers were required per annum to replace untrained JAMS. This memo gives an indication of how Education's attitude to the preparatory system had changed. Hithertofore, it had argued that two preparatory colleges had to be maintained for Gaeltacht boys: C. Éinne for those from Donegal and Galway, and C. Íosagáin for boys, from Cork, Kerry, and Waterford. Now it claimed that if the proportion of places reserved for Gaeltacht, and Fíor-Ghaeltacht pupils in the remaining college, was increased, they would still have the same number of places reserved for boys, while the

ratio of students in the three preparatory colleges for girls, would remain unaffected at one in four.

In response Finance insisted that increased numbers of teachers were unnecessary, and asserted that the economic climate could not afford them. It also dismissed Education's effort to reduce large class sizes, with the contemptuous inference that it was not based on educational grounds, but rather on an attempt to keep up with the situation in Northern Ireland:

> Increased enrolments may not continue. The number of teachers retiring early will be temporary. Education wants to improve the pupil-teacher ratio to make it like the Six Counties. Out of the question. The British are paying for Northern Ireland.[61]

Moreover, Finance refused to consider sanctioning a new training college on the grounds that a college of 120 - 160 students was not viable economically. As there were only 165 students in St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra, in 1950, and a hundred students in Mary Immaculate Training College, Limerick, it was surprising that Finance's views were accepted.[62]

Meanwhile the take-over of C. Éinne began to concern the manager of the college, the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Browne. [63] In November 1951, however, the secretary of the Department of Education gave him this reassurance:

> There has been no development in the matter and it is not likely to become a live issue during the school year. We really do need a training college but we must wait till the financial outlook is brighter if it ever going to be so [64]

As the matter continued unresolved, Finance proposed in October 1952,[65] that university graduates be accepted into the training colleges, and that graduates, who had obtained the Higher Diploma in Education, be given special courses to equip them as primary teachers. It also reiterated its demand that the Marriage Ban[66] be modified. With such opposing views, held so trenchantly, de Valera avoided a confrontation between Moylan and MacEntee on the issue by postponing a Cabinet decision.

The fact that a Fianna Fáil minister was now proposing to turn a preparatory college into a training college does not seem to have caused de Valera any great anxiety. Moreover, by 1952, even de Valera was confessing to reservations about the gaelicisation policy and in a major review of the policy, he spoke of the necessity to examine it dispassionately:

> It is time to take stock and to examine standards and methods dispassionately. For some years I have felt stocktaking necessary. But I hesitated, feared..... would be hailed by those who dislike the language as a defeat for the language cause and an occasion for a massed attack by its enemies.[67]

He still, however, emphasised the role of the schools:

> Ways to make better use of radio and Irish periodicals are being considered but they will not of themselves bring about a decisive advance in the general use of the language. That can only come from the schools. Unless children in school can be got to love the language, as the language of their country, and try to use it in every day conversation. The language must be held in esteem by teachers and parents.

However, he was less sure about how the schools should implement the gaelicisation policy:

> Purely written tests in examinations give a completely wrong bias to teaching. The early years are the best for language learning. There are two conflicting schools of thought. How can this fact be

best used in our conditions? A compromise may be found.[68]

On the question of recruitment, however, the new Government was unwilling to compromise between Education and Finance. The increased enrolments and the subsequent shortage of teachers were of considerable significance for the preparatory system, for it was obvious that the quickest, cheapest, and easiest method of recruitment was through the Open Competition[69] system, a fact pointed out by Finance. Education, however, was adamant in its refusal to consider changes in recruitment, and Moylan,[70] though he accepted the proposal that C. Éinne should become a training college, would not consider any further changes to recruitment. Indeed Education's willingness to defend the preparatory system allowed it to continue unchanged for most of the early fifties. Meanwhile the increased need for teachers saw the preparatory colleges full, though the numbers entering the entrance examinations, had declined considerably from the early days of the system.

Table 7.5: Comparison of numbers applying for entrance to the Preparatory Colleges in the late 1940s with the 1920s

	entered	awarded places		entered	awarded places
1927	1,226	159	**1947**	864	119
1928	1,392	107	**1948**	745	138
1929	1,749	157	**1949**	738	120
1930	1,345	201	**1950**	773	110

Source: Compiled from *Reports of the Department of Education*, 1927–30, and 1947 - 50

Why was there such a decline in numbers applying for entrance to the preparatory colleges? This was due to a number of factors. Firstly, there was a greater availability of

second-level education generally. Secondly, the growth in the number of 'A' schools meant that candidates intending to enter training could obtain the desired level of fluency in them. Thirdly, the level of grants to students had dropped.[71] In addition the Department raised the fees at preparatory colleges from forty to fifty pounds in 1948.

Table 7.6: No. of Secondary 'A' Schools and Pupil Enrolments 1948

	No. of schools	No. of pupils	No. of pupils in Mixed schools	Total
boys	37	4,287	119	4,406
girls	59	6,386	149	6,535
mixed	6	10,673	268	10,941

Source: *Report of the Department of Education*, 1947 – 48, p. 128

The recruitment question continued to be an issue of importance for the Government and, in February 1953, it came before the Cabinet again, when Education presented a memo to the Cabinet listing the following reasons for the retention of the Marriage Ban:

(1) A married woman should be at home; doing two jobs would be a strain.

(2) A substitute would have to be employed for two months' maternity leave

(3) It would create unhealthy curiosity about pregnancy

(4) Two incomes in one house would cause jealousy in the community.

(5) There are plenty of candidates for teaching

(6) Civil Servants have a marriage ban[72]

This memo gives insights into the thinking of the period and reflects a similar philosophy regarding the role of women as that which inspired the 1937 Constitution.[73] In addition it shows how prurient Irish society had become, a characteristic which had been reinforced by the country's isolation during the Emergency. It is worth noting that married women had been acceptable as teachers in the twenties and early thirties. Moreover, the attitude displayed towards pregnancy: that 'curiosity was unhealthy', was typical of the times, and reflected the conservative nature of Irish society. However, the plea, that a married woman should be at home, because doing two jobs would be a strain, was not credible in a society, where many widows with children had no choice but to work outside the home to support their families.

As the two departments continued to disagree, the matter dragged on, without resolution, until the Government eventually decided on a compromise in October 1953.[74] The Marriage Ban would continue, but Moylan,[75] the Minister for Education, could modify it in certain circumstances: where no other trained teacher was available, a qualified married female teacher could be employed, for up to six months, and this could be extended, if necessary. The Cabinet also sanctioned the employment of university graduates in national schools, and the relaxation of the rules with regard to the appointment of teachers, in remote areas, where it was not possible to get fully qualified teachers. Moreover, from 1953, the Department started a scheme allowing teachers, aged sixty-five, to put off retirement from year to year, up to a total of three years altogether. [76]

These measures satisfied Education at first, but not for long. Indeed a comment on the file noted: 'Education took C. Éinne off the Government agenda. Put it back on 27/11/53.' Once

more the issue came before the Cabinet and again a decision on a new training college was postponed. However, Moylan was instructed to arrange for the training of women university graduates as day students in existing training colleges.[77] The way in which the decision was made was unusual, for it was made by the Cabinet without consulting that most influential body, the Hierarchy, a fact noted anxiously by Education a week later. As noted in chapter 1[78] it had always been Education's policy, from the earliest days of the State, to inform and discuss any proposed change with the Roman Catholic Church, and to ensure that body's approval before going ahead with any change. Furthermore in view of the debacle over the Mother and Child Health Scheme, in 1951,[79] and the Church's insistence, that it would only appoint teachers to its schools, whose formation and training in residential colleges had been according to its criteria, this was a serious matter.[80] A memo from Education set out the minister's difficulties:

> Can't discuss matter with the Archbishop of Dublin unless he can tell him the new training college is being provided and that extern students are only an interim matter. The Ecclesiastical Authorities regard training under their control in residential training colleges as absolutely essential. In the case of national teachers it is of vital importance not to give the Ecclesiastical Authorities any reason to fear intention of departing from the traditional method of training teachers. Might get them to accept interim measure. [81]

So to avert a confrontation with the Church authorities, the Cabinet reversed its earlier decision and agreed at the end of 1953, that C. Éinne should be adapted as a training college for Roman Catholic women teachers. [82]

Education's victory was short-lived, however. Early in January, 1954, Moylan sent the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. McQuaid,[83] a three-page document outlining the background to

the proposal, and requesting an appointment to discuss the proposed training college in Galway. [84] In the document he was careful to say that the proposal was subject to the approval, in principle, of the Ecclesiastical Authorities:

> Should such approval be forthcoming the Minister would hope without delay to be in a position to make specific proposals for discussion with the Ecclesiastical Authorities. In these circumstances the Minister proposes to seek the approval, in principle, of His Lordship, the Bishop of Galway, who is manager of C. Éinne, for the discontinuance of the Preparatory College there and its replacement by a Girls' Training College and he would be glad to know whether such a course commends itself to His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin.[85]

Such a course, however, did not commend itself to the archbishop. As the shortage of trained teachers was greatest in Dublin, where the greatest numbers of children were, McQuaid preferred to have the increased numbers trained in his diocese, where he could satisfy himself that they were being trained in accordance with his wishes. A crestfallen Moylan later reported to the Cabinet on his negotiations with the archbishop:

> Minister wanted to get McQuaid to accept temporary arrangement
> (1) graduates as trained teachers
> (2) extern students in training colleges. Spoke to the Archbishop of Dublin, manager of two training colleges. McQuaid asked for time to consider. McQuaid had discussions with the nuns at Carysfort about extra accommodation at Carysfort. [86]

Instead the archbishop came up with an alternative proposal that extra students could be accommodated at Carysfort College:

> I saw Mother Imelda and Sr M. Teresita. They could take twenty-five to thirty-five at once, and with some small re-arrangement up to one hundred extra students, in September this year. This

> satisfactory result would seem to eliminate the undesirable necessity of transferring the training college to another town or city.[87]

Faced with this proposal from the formidable McQuaid, Moylan agreed that by adding an extra storey for a dormitory to a new one-storey assembly hall under construction at Carysfort, accommodation for 100 - 120 extra students could be provided.[88] The difficulty was financing the project. A memo from Finance summarised the problem:

> Cost about £40,000. Community can't lend the college money. Could get a bank loan if repaid by State grants. Need agreement. Cheaper than Einne. Cheaper to run. Could fall back on Einne.[89]

Despite these difficulties, however, this costly extension received Government approval within a week, and C. Éinne gained a further reprieve. Meanwhile Moylan was left to explain the decision to Bishop Browne:[90]

> The proposal for the training of additional women teachers has taken a turn, I had not anticipated, which would allow training of extra teachers without the necessity of providing another training college. With the making of some structural alterations and additions to Our Lady of Mercy College accommodation can be provided for 100 – 120 students more than at present, and possibly, to admit fifty to fifty-five of them in September next.[91]

So through McQuaid's intervention Carysfort College, a private institution, was enabled in 1954 to finance an extension costing £40,000. This was a considerable sum at a time, when the salary for female and single male teachers was finally agreed, after protracted negotiations in December 1955, at £340 per annum, rising by twenty increments to £640. Through providing extra residential accommodation at Carysfort College, the necessity for accepting graduate students as day students was avoided, and the Church was able to retain

its tight control over student intake and formation. Moreover, in its anxiety to avoid a Church-State disagreement, the Fianna Fáil Government arrived at a costly compromise, which showed the shallowness of its commitment to the gaelicisation policy. When £40,000 had to be found to finance McQuaid's proposal there was neither difficulty, nor delay, but cost was continually the excuse for wanting an end to the preparatory system. Throughout the negotiations, however, it is worth noting that there was no evidence to suggest that the Government was unhappy with the Church's role in controlling the training colleges. It is also worth noting that there was little difference between Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael in relation to the Church's control of education. The deferential attitude of the politicians to the Church's role in education has to be seen in the context of the times. Throughout the fifties, few in Irish society objected publicly to the dominating role of the Hierarchy in Irish life generally.

THE COUNCIL OF EDUCATION

One of Mulcahy's major achievements during his first term as minister, was the establishment of a Council of Education. This had been one of the INTO's demands from as far back as 1926,[92] a demand repeated in *A Plan for Education*, in 1947.[93] In opposition Mulcahy had advocated the establishment of such a body, [94] and in his first address as minister to the INTO Congress, in 1948, he reaffirmed this commitment. [95] Progress, however, was slow and it was not until 4th April, 1950,[96] that he formally announced its establishment and nominated the twenty-nine members. Though representative of many aspects of Irish life: religion, industry, agriculture and the trade unions, there were only three primary teachers: Miss Brigid Bergin, President of the INTO; Mr. Liam Forde, a past

President of the INTO; and Mr. Séamus Gilheaney, principal of Drumcave National School, Co. Cavan. This was a small proportion in a body charged with the examination of primary education. Amongst other educationists were representatives of the managers and the Department. One of the largest groups was of religious representatives with seven from different Roman Catholic educational interests, as well as representatives of other denominations.

The Council's terms of reference were: to 'advise the Minister in so far as it pertains to the powers, duties, and functions, of the State upon such matters relating to education theory and practice as they think fit, and upon any educational questions and problems referred to them by him.'[97] From the beginning, Mulcahy, who was a devout member of his Church, made it clear that no restrictions would be placed on the role of the Churches in the management of the schools. In his inaugural address he made this pious declaration:

> The State accepts that the foundation and crown of youth's entire training is religious. It is its desire that its teachers, syllabuses and textbooks in every branch be informed by the spirit underlying this concept of education and it is determined to see that such facilities as the Ecclesiastical Authorities consider necessary shall be provided in the schools for the carrying on of the work of religious education.[98]

The Council was instructed to examine the function of the primary school, and the curriculum to be pursued in it, from infants to twelve years. Its first meeting took place in May 1950, and thereafter it met regularly, under the chairmanship of the Reverend Canon Denis O'Keefe, Professor of Ethics and Politics in UCD.[99] As part of its work, the Council published notices in national newspapers, in February 1951, requesting submissions from

interested groups.[100] Though established by Mulcahy, it continued during the 1951 - 54 Fianna Fail administration, and presented its report immediately after the general election of 1954, which brought the Second Inter-party Government into office, with Mulcahy beginning his second term as Minister for Education.

The long-awaited *Report of the Council of Education on the Function and Curriculum of the Primary School*[101] was disappointing, however, as it proposed few fundamental changes. The 300-page document included a majority report, signed by twenty-five members, and two minority reports. The first minority report was signed by three members, whose views differed from the others on the teaching of Irish,[102] and the second was signed by Liam Forde, [103] of the INTO. The main recommendations were: firstly, that the curriculum should be extended by the addition of Physical Training, Nature Study, and Drawing. Secondly, that the Primary School Certificate Examination should be compulsory for V1 class. Thirdly, that primary education should finish on completion of Class V1, and that subsequent education should be designated, 'post-primary,' irrespective of its type, or the school, in which it was given.[104]

In view of Mulcahy's inaugural address, and the composition of the council, it was not surprising that the report contained little that was critical of the Churches' role in education. Instead it emphasised the importance of the school in the religious, and moral formation of the pupil and stressed the conventional view:

> The school exists to assist and supplement the values of parents in the rearing of their children. The first duty of parents is to train their children in the fear and love of God. This is also the first purpose of primary schools.[105]

Moreover, to highlight the significance of the Churches' role in the management of the schools the report recommended that first level schools should no longer be designated as 'national schools,' but henceforth should be called 'primary schools' to emphasise that they 'are really parochial, and not State institutions.'

In the report the Council asserted that it had 'found it necessary to look also' at areas outside its remit, including facilities for further education beyond primary school, and the general framework of education. It also acknowledged its failure to examine certain areas, such as the building, design, and equipment of primary schools, education for the mentally retarded, and the selection of primary teachers.[106]

The report began by outlining in chapter one the history of Irish education from earliest times to 1950, while three subsequent chapters dealt with the definition, function, and other aspects of the primary school. Chapters five to nine contained discussion on the different subjects of the curriculum, while the rest of the report was devoted to matters such as staffing, control, homework, and the Primary School Certificate.[107] In keeping with the context of the times, there was little mention of the role of parents. The report advocated few changes, however, and its conservative nature was demonstrated by its support for the existing practice of compulsory school attendance, from the age of six[108] to fourteen, and its failure to call for an extension of the school-leaving age. This failure is all the more striking, as the report acknowledged that primary schooling was 'maybe the child's only school training.'[109] The Council's failure to recommend changing the school-leaving age is difficult

to understand as the Commission on Youth Unemployment,[110] had called for the raising of the school-leaving age 'ultimately to sixteen years (and) as a first step ... to fifteen years,' [111] in its report in 1951.

Similarly in its recommendation that the Primary School Certificate Examination be retained on the grounds that it 'sets a standard, and helps to co-ordinate primary and post-primary education,' the Council failed to take cognisance of the failure rate at the examination, which was as high as twenty-four per cent in 1951.[112] Furthermore in one of its few references to parents, the report asserted that they wished the examination to continue, though it gave no evidence for this claim.

In its consideration of the function of the primary school, in Chapter 3, the Council attributed two traditional purposes to the primary school: firstly, to provide a basic education, and secondly, to prepare the child for further education 'should he receive it:'

> It provides a basic education and it prepares the child for further education should he receive it. It is not to be expected that the primary school can, within the range in which we have placed it, impart the full minimum education that is to-day regarded as necessary but it can provide such a foundation as will answer the common needs of all.[113]

The Council acknowledged, however, that Irish primary education had two major difficulties: firstly, the amount of time needed to assist schools to become bilingual, and secondly, the prevalence of a large number of small schools, which it attributed to the scattered nature of the population.[114] Despite these difficulties, however, the Council noted that the vast majority

of the country's children, ninety-six per cent, attended national schools, while only four per cent attended private primary schools[115] The report also acknowledged that there was much criticism of the present system, some of which it accepted was justified.[116]

In a detailed examination of the different subjects of the curriculum, the Council advocated broadening the curriculum by the addition of Drawing, Nature Study, and Physical Training, which it described as 'essential to the proper discharge of the function of the primary school.' These subjects had been part of the curriculum before efforts to gaelicise primary education had been introduced. As a result of the Second National Programme Conference in 1926,[117] both Drawing and Physical Training had become optional, and teachers could chose to teach either Rural Science or Nature Study. In addition the Council advocated that better teaching methods should be used to enhance existing subjects, such as English and Irish, where it recommended that plays should be produced, and that individual reading should be discussed. It also recommended that both social and local History should be taught, while experiment and exploration should be part of Geography lessons. In addition it advocated speech training and teaching in phonetics.

In its consideration of the position of the Irish language in chapter V11, the conservative nature of the report was again demonstrated. While showing itself aware of paradoxes in the public's attitude to the language, the Council readily accepted the *status quo* and was disappointingly short of new ideas. Indeed the Council's membership reflected the public's attitudes, which probably accounted for its own contradictory remarks on the subject. It had this to say of the position of the language in the Constitution:

> Its title as the national language goes back over thirty years. To hold, however, that in a nation politically free a language can continue to be regarded as the national language while altogether ceasing to be used as a vernacular would seem to be a contradiction in terms.[118]

While in the next paragraph it stated:

> It is often argued and with some force that in our geographic and economic position the effort to revive Irish is unrealistic.

Meanwhile a little further on it gave the opposite view, claiming that Irish was the national language for the majority of our people, though it gave no evidence to support this view:

> Few would deny that despite its recession in the last hundred years Irish still remains for at least the majority of our people the national language. The fact that another language is spoken by them requires that due regard be given to their needs in that language; it does not detract from the value and place of the traditional language.[119]

The report went on to refer to countries, such as Canada, Belgium, South Africa, and Wales, where similar difficulties regarding bilingualism existed, and there are notes of realism in paragraph 203, where it acknowledged that progress in Ireland had been slow, and in the succeeding paragraph, where it stressed that the revival was not just a matter for the schools. Despite these fine statements, however, it went on to give its approval to the current system, accepting without reservation, the necessity for the early introduction of Irish teaching in the primary school, and, grudgingly, allowing the introduction of English teaching, for thirty minutes daily, in infant classes, in schools outside the Gaeltacht:

> The majority see no valid reason why the process of language teaching in infant classes should not be employed to give young children from English-speaking homes a basic and vernacular command of Irish.[120]

Further on, however, it queried whether the teaching of two languages was detrimental, and while it acknowledged that no scientific research had been carried out in this area it concluded sanguinely:

> The majority of members conversant with post-primary education are of the opinion that the importance given to Irish in the primary school has not impaired the level of education of pupils entering post-primary school nor has it, on the whole, reduced the standard of the knowledge of English and other subjects.[121]

In giving this opinion, there is no sign that the Council took into consideration that those who went on to post-primary school were a minority from the more wealthy sections of society. There was no mention either of those who received only primary education and who subsequently, had little choice but to emigrate to England, or America, as domestic servants, or labourers. Here again the Council's view contrasted with that of the *Report of the Commission on Youth Unemployment,*[122] which called for an examination of 'the content of primary education, more particularly, the content of Irish and the treatment of that language.' The Council also ignored the findings of the INTO's *Inquiry into the use of Irish.*[123]

Though the report pointed out that it had not concerned itself with the selection of teachers,[124] it did examine the staffing of schools, and noted, that in some schools, classes were too large, while in small schools, teachers had too many classes. In addition the report

called optimistically for thirty to be the maximum number of pupils in a class, and emphasised that small schools should be closed, only as a last resort. It also urged that untrained teachers should be phased out as soon as possible. In view of the acute shortage of trained teachers, and the difficulties surrounding recruitment, these recommendations were unlikely to be acted upon. However, not all the Council's recommendations were so problematic. Positive recommendations worth noting, and easy to implement were that each school should have a library, and that children's books, and papers, should be published in Irish.[125]

As a result of its report, the Council was much criticised for its deference to the *status quo,* and its failure to view education in a wider social context. Particularly deplorable was its failure to call for greater pupil participation in secondary education, or to include proposals for altering an education system, where one-third of pupils left school, with only the Primary Certificate, while a similar number left without even that minimum qualification.[126] Nevertheless, Mulcahy, who was beginning his second term as Minister for Education, was satisfied with the Council's findings and, in November 1954, asked it to undertake an examination of secondary education.

One issue not examined by the Council was the provision of better facilities in primary schools. During the fifties, some progress was made in this area where less than half of the schools had piped water, and modern sanitation.[127] Both Mulcahy and Moylan claimed success in this area. In 1949, Mulcahy asserted that fifty to fifty-five new schools were being built annually[128] and the building programme accelerated during Moylan's period as

minister. Indeed one of Moylan's few achievements was the number of schools built.[129] In 1952, it was estimated that there were 600 schools 'wholly unfit for their purpose,' and he initiated a comprehensive programme aimed at building a hundred new schools annually for the following six years. Not only did the building of new schools accelerate, but numerous extensions, and improvements, were made to others.

Table 7.7: School Building Programme 1950 and 1956

	New schools	Extensions	Improvements
1950	38	4	155
1956	92	20	523

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education*, 1950 - 51, p. 3 and 1955 - 56, p. 84

As minister, Moylan was happy to continue with the *status quo* and made few changes. He was, however, responsible for one significant curricular reform: he introduced the innovative concept of a 'free' half day per week, whereby teachers could devote time to subjects, outside the programme. This was a surprising modification, which gave teachers some degree of welcome flexibility in the curriculum. Moylan was also the minister who implemented the recommendation of the Council of Education that all schools should have libraries.[130]

Moylan's attitude to the preparatory system, however, was paradoxical. He wanted to keep the colleges open, yet he was quite ready to support the proposal, first made by Mulcahy in 1951,[131] that C. Éinne become a training college. Furthermore Moylan seemed to have taken

a personal interest in the colleges and was one of the few Ministers recorded as having visited a preparatory college.[132] Another initiative during his time as minister, was a meeting of principals of all the preparatory colleges, called by the Department in January 1954. A minute in the Annals of C. Íosagáin noted:

> The director was called to a meeting of principals of the preparatory colleges in Dublin. The meeting was presided over by the Secretary, Mr. Murray. The principals' views on various issues were heard sympathetically. No big changes in policy were envisaged.

The writer concluded cynically: 'A report was to be drawn up, but I am afraid it will never be issued.'[133]

RISING COSTS OF PREPARATORY COLLEGES

The costs of the preparatory system rose sharply during the fifties, and were the subject of persistent arguments between Finance and Education, no matter which party was in power. Demands by Gerard Sweetman,[134] the Minister for Finance in the Second Inter-party Government, for the closure of another preparatory college differed little from those of his Fianna Fáil predecessor, MacEntee.[135] As a politician, Sweetman was noted for his very conservative outlook and his strenuous opposition to the social and liberal ideas, which were developing in the Fine Gael Party of that period. In Sweetman's view, the preparatory system was a highly expensive method of producing teachers, and in August 1954, he urged Mulcahy to reduce costs by closing two of the six colleges:

> Growth in the number of 'A' schools. Need for six preparatory colleges not clear. Highly expensive method of producing teachers. Must urge strongly reducing them by two. Pupils not

> provided for could go to 'A' schools. Scholarships for necessitous cases. Net saving on tuition, maintenance of pupils, upkeep of buildings etc. with an appreciable sum for disposal of properties.[136]

Sweetman also wanted fees at training and preparatory colleges increased, as they were 'no longer in keeping with realities or fees at secondary schools,' and in his view could easily be increaed by ten per cent. As the fees for preparatory colleges had been raised only once before, in 1948,[137] when they were increased from forty to fifty pounds, this was not an unreasonable demand, and in 1955, Education agreed with surprising ease that they should be increased to fifty-five pounds. The increase in fees, however, made little impact on the rising annual expenditure from public funds on the preparatory colleges in the fifties. Between 1950 and 1955, it rose by forty-five per cent, which explains why Education agreed so easily to a five per cent rise in fees.

Table 7.8: Expenditure from Public Funds on Preparatory Colleges 1950-1961

year	expenditure	year	expenditure	year	expenditure
1950	£53,627 – 10s. – 1d	1954	£75,615 –19s. –1d.	1958	£88,185 – 17s. – 4d.
1951	£59,283 – 9 – 10d	1955	£77,597 –16s. – 3d.	1959	£89,073 – 1s. – 11d.
1952	£68,166 – 5s. – 6d	1956	£76,283 – 5s. –11d.	1960	£92,072 – 5s. – 11d.
1953	£71,214 – 11s. – 6d	1957	£82,165 – 4s. – 6d.		

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education,* 1950 – 1961

This table shows clearly that the preparatory system was extremely costly. Yet nowhere is there any evidence that Education considered such large expenditure alarming, or had any plans for reducing costs. Indeed, throughout the history of the colleges, Education's attitude to public expenditure was cavalier. Much of this was probably a reaction to Finance, which from the very beginning had exhibited a stern attitude to spending on the system. Furthermore the financing of the preparatory system demonstrated clearly the casual, ill-thought-out approach of Governments to the gaelicisation policy. Nowhere was a specific budget set aside for this major policy. Instead different departments were expected to allow for it in their annual expenditure. Unfortunately for Education it was one of the departments most involved in implementing the gaelicisation policy, where a high proportion of outlay was due to the preparatory system. The high costs of the system in the fifties, fully justified Finance's demands. Indeed the ready acquiescence of Education to Sweetnam's demand for an increase in fees in 1955, was an indication that attitudes towards the system were changing, even in Education, which for so long had been the system's defender. As the costs continued to rise and with the return of Fianna Fail to power in 1957, Finance renewed its efforts to end the system, though while de Valera was Taoiseach, this was unlikely to happen. Typical of Finance's approach was the following memo, in 1957, querying whether the colleges were needed:

> All expenses are met from State funds (Education Votes, OPW Votes and Votes for Rates on Government Property) offset to a small extent by student fees, book fees, sale of livestock, farm produce etc.) Not unreasonable now to ask if the continuance of the preparatory colleges as special institutions dedicated to a particular purpose is now necessary. Circumstances have considerably changed. Now Irish teaching compulsory in all schools. Only twenty-five per cent in training colleges from preparatory colleges. Over 500 each year taken into training colleges; annual output of preparatory colleges about 120.

> If the Department of Education continue to argue that preparatory colleges are a kind of leavening group must find if there are cheaper ways of producing one.[138]

Finance included estimates of current expenditure on the colleges, which revealed considerable hidden costs, not included in the Department's reports.[139]

Table 7.9 : Estimated Current Expenditure on six Preparatory Colleges

Vote 39 (Office of Minister for Education)	
Headquarters and Inspectorial Staff	£5,000
Votes 8/9 Vote 40 Primary Education	£71,000
Fuel Furniture Light	£25,000
Maintenance Headquarters and other Staff	
Vote 17 Rates on Government property	£5,000
	£106,000

Source: Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S22/15/34

In addition to the financial outlay by Education, the Office of Public Works was responsible for other areas of expenditure.

Table 7.10 : Expenditure from Vote of Office of Public Works on six Preparatory Colleges excluding capital expenditure 1953 - 1956

subhead	1953/54	1954/55	1955/56
Maintenance and supplies	£ 5,294	£ 5,666	£ 5,724
Furniture, fittings utensils	2,219	1,760	2,224
Fuel, light etc.	9,008	12,025	13,232
	16,521	19,451	21,180

Source: Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S22/15/34

These tables show just how costly the preparatory system was as a method of producing primary teachers and that Finance was justified in seeking a reduction in expenditure on the colleges. But Finance was solely concerned with savings, and its total lack of interest in the Gaeltacht, and the Government's language policy, was clearly illustrated in the following memo, which was presented with the tables:

> If one or more preparatory college closed would it be necessary to fritter away a large portion of the direct savings on scholarships. Cost to the State £200 a year per student in a preparatory college. Average fee about £20. If scholarship given on same basis as Fíor Ghaeltacht scholarship cost £80. Therefore we should direct thoughts away from the provision of scholarships to all and confine them to a limited number for Gaeltacht candidates and necessitous candidates from elsewhere[140]

Moreover, its narrow view of educational provision in the State was clearly shown in the next part of the memo:

> If we do not succeed in closing one (college) should increase fees. The danger with closing a preparatory college Education might ask to use them as a training college. At present shortage of national teachers. Also Education wants to improve pupil/teacher ratio. Council of Education recommendation. Some years ago C. Éinne proposed as a training college. Instead Carysfort and MI got extensions.[141]

Nowhere does Finance seem to have considered that the demands by Education for more trained teachers, and for an improved teacher/pupil ratio were reasonable; rather Finance focussed all its energies on the costs of the preparatory system. Nowhere was the contribution of the colleges to the language policy assessed, or the cost of implementing the language policy in the civil service, and in other State agencies raised. Finance's ready acquiescence to the demands of the Hierarchy for graduates to spend a year in residential

training colleges, though this necessitated major expenditure on extensions to two colleges, was in stark contrast to its attitude to the preparatory colleges:

> Our aim must be savings. Can't be directed to other non-productive demands. Country can't afford training of more teachers. Cheaper alternative methods of training must be implemented. Hierarchy opposed proposal of university graduates being accepted into national teaching service without having to pass through training colleges. Hierarchy insisted on one year's tuition at a training college as a national teacher.[142]

One of the main contributory factors to the high costs of the system was the way in which students were subsidised,[143] though the numbers paying no fees had decreased considerably compared with those in the early days.[144] Furthermore the agreement[145]made by students before entering the preparatory system was a sensitive issue. From time to time, as a result of dissension between Education and Finance, this question came before the Cabinet. A memo from Education outlined how the system worked:

> Parents and students accepted to preparatory colleges and training colleges have signed an agreement to complete the course and to serve for five years as national teachers. Failing this, they will repay such sums as the Minister for Education may demand. The maximum fees for both colleges is £500, if training college only, £230. No instance has occurred in the type of case in question in which the maximum amount fell to be refunded.[146]

The memo went on to explain that sums to be refunded varied, according to the length of time a student had spent in a college, and the number of years, short of five, spent teaching: 'In general the amount refundable in cases, which have arisen, was between £100 and £200.' The memo also pointed out that the Minister for Education had agreed certain circumstances

in which a demand for a refund would not be made. These included:

a) the death of a student

b) the permanent illness of a student

c) failure at examination not due to culpable negligence or a lack of diligence

d) removal from college for causes not within the student's control e.g. sub-normal mentality, uncouthness, lack of ability or capacity to learn.

e) obtaining a university scholarship under one of the Department's schemes

f) general failure to secure employment as a teacher

g) compulsory retirement of women on marriage

h) appointment as an inspector with the Department or to a post in a preparatory or training college.

In October 1951, the question arose whether those entering religious life should have to repay their fees. This was a sensitive issue for it was a frequent occurrence.[147] Moreover, it involved the Roman Catholic Church, a body all Governments were careful not to offend. As usual Education and Finance took opposing views, with Education favouring exemption, while Finance opposed it. Furthermore Education recalled that under an arrangement made in July 1935, entry to Holy Orders or a Religious Community was exempt. Finance, however, would not agree, despite Education's pleading that its refusal had resulted in two, or three, cases being hindered from entering the priesthood, as 'Canon Law did not permit the acceptance of candidates under financial obligation.' Education cited two 'tragic cases, where teachers entered Orders, who did not fully appreciate their obligations to the Department,' and who, subsequently, had to leave the Orders, when the Department

proceeded to make demands for refunds. In addition Education pointed out that there was no legal issue involved, as repayment of fees was a matter for the Minister for Education, but he needed the approval of the Minister for Finance. The memo emphasised that the Minister, Seán Moylan,[148] took a serious view of the position:

> Feels that in the circumstances of this country the call to a religious vocation must be recognised as having a special urgency, and not of its nature, to be compared in any way with a desire to exchange the teaching profession for another secular vocation. Between sixteen to twenty-three desire to enter religion; the minimum, only in comfortable financial circumstances, acute problem of conscience; heavy burden on parents. Those already trained and who have to repay, postpone entry to religion for a number of years to earn remission. Unfortunate effects on individual; religious vocation has been lost..... No certainty that a novice will remain in religious life and after strain and anxiety of refund may return to teaching. [149]

The memo went on to point to an anomaly in the system, whereby university scholarship holders who received financial aid as students at preparatory colleges, and later at university, could become doctors, engineers, or architects, and on graduation, were free of all financial obligations, but candidates for religion were not. In an attempt to show that the Department was not unduly favouring one denomination, the memo instanced a case, some years previously of a trained teacher, who abandoned the teaching profession to enter the Church of Ireland ministry. The memo also noted, that while it was possible for those entering Orders of Brothers, which ran national schools in Ireland to continue as national teachers in the Order, this was not possible for clergymen or girls, whose vocation 'may be missionary or contemplative in character.'

Such pleading effected little change in Finance's attitude, which responded by pointing out that education, at both the preparatory and training colleges, was highly subsidised:

> The State has provided secondary education and/or training facilities at reduced costs. Fees at preparatory colleges are only £50 per year. Training college grants are £67 -10s to £115 a year and a student pays £40 a year for which he obtained full board and lodging with instruction. Those unable to pay £40, part, or all of the fee, is lent by the Department and must be repaid. If not teaching for five years, must repay grants to training college plus money lent. Reduction in amount for every year of service as a national teacher after the first two years.[150]

Moreover, Finance claimed that the agreement was freely entered into, and the obligation to repay was 'of long standing.' With regard to scholarships, Finance pointed out that there were two kinds: firstly, Fíor-Ghaeltacht scholarships, of which there were five per year, and secondly, scholarships for students doing a university course, through Irish, of which there were thirty per year. Finance reiterated the philosophy behind the scholarships:

> Scholarships were a special measure designed to assist the State policy for the revival of Irish by the provision of university graduates who were native speakers or who have acquired a mastery of the language. Essential if Irish is to gain a footing among the educated classes.[151]

Finance was quick to point out that the scholarship system for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students was not as generous as it seemed:

> Only a few Fíor-Ghaeltacht scholarship holders can go on to do courses in Medicine, Engineering, or Architecture. Most are, in practice, restricted to Arts, Commerce, or Science, as no other university courses through Irish are available.

In Finance's view Religious Orders gained by accepting candidates, who had been educated and trained as teachers, and it instanced a case in 1938, where it claimed, the Superior of a Religious Order offered to repay the cost of training for a novice.[152] Moreover, Finance asserted that the practice had been for each individual case to be considered on its merits, a practice the Minister for Finance wanted to continue. Nevertheless, when the two views were presented to the Cabinet in October 1951, Education's proposal was approved, [153] which was hardly surprising as the Government would not have wanted to risk upsetting the Hierarchy so soon after the debacle over the Mother and Child Health Scheme.[154]

This was a further example of the Government's deference to the Roman Catholic Church. The memo also shows that the numbers entering religious life at that time, Instead of continuing as teachers in national schools, were quite large: between sixteen and twenty-three. Indeed often the preparatory colleges were a recruiting ground for the Orders which ran them, particularly the girls' colleges, where almost every class at C. Íde, C. Mhuire, and C. Bhríde, had a number of girls who later became nuns.[155] The Cabinet's decision, however, was not without precedent for in 1941, an earlier Fianna Fáil Government had agreed to a demand from Bishop Browne of Galway[156] that the Fíor-Ghaeltacht scholarship scheme should be extended to include students studying for the priesthood at Maynooth. Browne's claim that such students were unable to undertake spiritual courses in Irish at UCG was accepted by the Cabinet, though not without some reservations as this comment shows:

> In view of the serious objections which have been raised by the Ecclesiastical Authorities we could not reasonably resist. I do not think it desirable to draw attention to it by making an amendment (in the circumstances).[157]

While the memo from Moylan showed that some students wanted to leave to enter the religious life, there is no mention of those who wanted to leave for other reasons, which should have been a cause of concern.

CONCLUSION

The election of the First Inter-party Government in 1948, and the appointment of Richard Mulcahy as Minister for Education, raised expectations amongst primary teachers that there would be radical changes in education, particularly regarding the gaelicisation policy. However, they were to be disappointed for though Mulcahy's speeches in opposition and his support for the teachers during their strike in 1946, had seemed to indicate that he would be a reforming minister, in Government he was cautious and slow to make changes. He did, however, introduce the *Revised Programme for Infants*[158] and he kept his promise to establish a Council of Education[159] but this too was a disappointment for its report contained little of a radical nature.

For most of this period, 1948 – 1957, primary education was dominated by an increasing shortage of trained teachers, due to expanding enrolments resulting from increases in the birthrate. This presented major difficulties for recruitment where the need to produce more teachers became increasingly urgent. In the late forties the Government depended on *ad hoc* measures to cope with the problem, rather than developing a definite strategy, and the

problem was compounded by Finance's refusal to accept that the matter was urgent. By the early fifties when the issue could no longer be gainsaid, there was persistent tension between Education and Finance over ways to resolve the shortage with Education seeking to establish an additional training college, while Finance wanted an end to the Marriage Ban.

Moreover, the need to produce more trained teachers, speedily, highlighted a fundamental weakness of the preparatory system, which took six years to produce a teacher whereas recruitment by the Open Competition process took only two years, and was much less costly. For the first time in the history of the colleges Education's support showed signs of weakening, with Mulcahy proposing to turn C. Éinne into a training college. Moreover, this proposal was acceptable to Mulcahy's successor, Moylan, and it is likely that it would have happened but for the intervention of Archbishop McQuaid. His proposal to extend Carysfort Training College was accepted by the Government, which was unwilling to risk a disagreement with the Hierarchy. So C. Éinne continued as a preparatory college. Nevertheless, the ease with which Mulcahy, and later Moylan, agreed to the proposal that C. Éinne become a training college did not bode well for the future of the preparatory system.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V11, Part (i)

[1]See p. 444
[2] See p. 422, n. 125
[3] See p. 107
[4] Seán Moylan, (1898 - 1957). Revolutionary and politician. A self-educated building contractor, he played an active role in the War of Independence as commandant of Cork No. 2 Brigade. He took the anti-Treaty side in the Civil War and had a leading part in a number of significant events. For many years he represented North Cork in the Dáil. A close friend of de Valera, he first became a minister after the 1943 election when he was appointed Minister for Lands. His interest in education stemmed from his family background, both his parents, and a brother, were primary teachers. His efforts to bring an end to the primary teachers' strike in 1946 earned him the respect of teachers, who welcomed his appointment as Minister for Education in the Fianna Fáil Government of 1951. In the 1957 general election he lost his seat but was appointed to the Senate and made Minister for Agriculture in May 1957. He died suddenly, in November 1957, only hours after handing in his resignation following a major policy disagreement.
[5] See p. 293
[6] See p. 398 - 401
[7] See p. 404 - 409
[8] Memo on Fine Gael Educational Policy, UCD Archives, Mulcahy Papers, P7/C/132
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] O'Connell, p. 242
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] Department of Education, *Report of the Committee on National Teachers' Salaries 1949,* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1949)
[15] See p. 293
[16] By this time a new Fianna Fáil Government was in office
[17] Department of Education, *The Revised Programme for Infants,* (Dublin: An Roinn Oideachais, 1948)
[18] See pp. 454 - 461
[19] *Dáil Reports,* 28th April, 1949
[20] Michael Tierney, (1894 – 1975). Politician and academic. From Co. Galway he was educated at St. Joseph's College, Ballinasloe, and UCD. He studied Classics at the Sorbonne, Athens and Berlin. He was Professor of Greek at UCD from 1923 – 1947, when he became President of the college. From 1925 – 1932 he was a Cumann na nGaedheal TD. Subsequently, he was a member of the Senate from 1938 until 1944, when he left politics. As President of UCD, he was responsible for the university's move to Belfield. His writings include *Eoin MacNeill, Scholar and man of action 1867 – 1945* (1980)
[21] *Comhar,* December, 1949
[22] See p. 60, n. 50
[23] Presidential Address of Ernest Blythe to Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge 3rd December 1949, UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P24/995
[24] By 1956, a census of the Gaeltacht reported the number of Gaeilgeoirí as low as 85,547

[25] *Confidential Report on the Use of Irish in the Civil Service*, UCD Archives, Blythe Papers, P/24/928. See also p. 413

[26] They were Séamus Ó Conaill, Sean Mac Gearailt and F.A. Hynes

[27] Out of 14,098 civil servants examined up to 1953, 12,393 passed, while 1,705 failed. Up to four attempts were allowed before discharge; eleven had been discharged

[28] The Commission on Youth Unemployment was set up by the de Valera Government in 1943 under the chairmanship of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. J. C. McQuaid. *The Report of the Commission on Youth Unemployment* was published, in 1951.

[29] Hyland and Milne, p. 27

[30] Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann was established to foster traditional Irish music in its purity

[31] Gael-Linn was founded to promote and gain recognition for the Irish language and culture throughout the country. As part of its work it produced newsreels and films, particularly the very successful *Mise Éire* and *Saoirse*. It also promoted business in the Gaeltacht.

[32] Máirtín Ó Cadhain, (1906 – 1970). Writer. A former primary teacher from Spiddal, Co. Galway, he was appointed a lecturer in Irish, in 1956, at Trinity College, Dublin, and Professor of Irish in 1969. He was considered the most outstanding writer in Irish of his generation. His most famous novel, *Cré na Cille*, (1949) was translated into several European languages. His other works include *Idir Shúgradh agus Dáirire*, (1939), *An Braon Brogach* (1948), *Cois Caolaire* (1953), *An tSraith ar Lár* (1967), *An tSraith dhá Tógáil* (1970) and *An tSraith Togtha* (1977)

[33] Máirtín Ó Direáin, (1910 – 1988). Poet. A native of the Aran Islands, he was a poet of considerable stature. His most noted works are *Coinnle Geala*, (1942), *Dánta Aniar* (1943) and *Ó Morna agus Dánta Eile* (1957)

[34] Seán Ó Riordáin, (1917 – 1977). Poet. A native of the Ballyvourney Gaeltacht, he gained recognition as a unique and controversial poet in the fifties. His works include *Eireaball Spideoige* (1952), *Brosna* (1964), *Líonta Liombó* (1971) and *Tar éis mo Bháis* (1978)

[35] Pádraig Ó Fearail, *A history of the Gaelic League*, (Dublin: Clodanna Teo, 1975), p. 51

[36] See p. 240

[37] *Dáil Reports*, 13th June, 1944

[38] See p. 64, n. 141

[39] Thomas Ryder Johnston, (1872 – 1963). Trade unionist and politician. A native of Liverpool, as a young man he was greatly influenced by James Larkin, and in 1913, he moved to Dublin to work with James Connolly and Larkin in the Irish Trade Union movement. He was president of the Irish Trade Union Congress from 1914 –16. He was first elected to the Dáil, as TD for South Dublin in 1922, and was leader of Labour deputies in the Dail until the 1927 election. He lost his seat in the second election of that year. Though no longer a member of the Dáil, he remained politically active until the 1961 general election.

[40] *Dáil Reports*, 13th June, 1944

[41] Seán Ó hEilí, 'The Preparatory Colleges,' *Oideas*, 28, p. 47

[42] Memo on new training college for Catholic women teachers, 11th October 1952, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369

[43] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1952 - 53, p. 3

[44] See pp. 293

[45] See pp. 292 and 330

[46] *The Irish Times Educational Supplement*, 13th July, 1956

[47] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1946 - 47, p. 2
[48] *Ibid.*, 1948 - 49, p. 3
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*, 1950 - 51, p. 6
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 4
[52] Memo on new training college for Catholic women, 11th October, 1952 DT Papers, S6369
[53] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1950 - 51, p. 84
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] It was also modified for Protestant schools where the shortage of qualified teachers was acute in the 1940s
[56] See p. 422, n. 125
[57] The Government fell over the price of milk, when three rural deputies refused to vote with the Government.
[58] See p. 476, n. 4
[59] See p. 343, n. 8
[60] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1950 - 51, p. 88
[63] See p. 270, n. 96
[64] Letter from M. Breathnach, secretary, Department of Education to Bishop Browne, 17th November, 1951, Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] See p. 293
[67] Memo on Irish Language Policy, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S13180A
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] See p. 281
[70] See p. 476, n. 4
[71] See p. 397
[72] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[73] *The Constitution of the Irish Free State,* (Saorstat Eireann) (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1937)
[74] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[75] See p. 444
[76] *Report of Department of Education,* 1953 - 54, p.5
[77] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[78] See p. 69
[79] See p. 444
[80] See p. 109
[81] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] See pp. 372 - 373
[84] Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers
[85] *Ibid.*
[86] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[87] Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers

[88] Subsequently temporary arrangements were made for fifty to fifty-five extern students at Carysfort College from September 1954 with sixty to sixty-five the following year.
[89] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S6369
[90] See p. 270, n. 96
[91] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[92] O'Connell, p. 450
[93] INTO, *A Plan for Education,* (Dublin: INTO, 1947), p. 18
[94] Memo on Fine Gael education policy, UCD Archives, Mulcahy Papers, P7/C/132
[95] O'Connell, p. 451
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1950 - 51, p. 49
[98] John Mescal, *Religion in the Irish System of Education,,* (Clonmore & Reynolds, Dublin: 1957) p. 137
[99] On the death of Canon O'Keefe in 1952, the Right Revd. Mgr. Martin Brenan became chairperson.
[100] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1950 - 51, p. 49
[101]The Council of Education, *Report of the Council of Education on the Function and the Curriculum of the Primary School,* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1954), p. 94
[102] The three members were the Revd. Canon W. Nesbitt Harvey, who represented the Protestant School Managers' Association, Henry Kennedy, The Irish Agricultural Organisation, and Dr. Patrick Moran of Meath. Their report dealt with the teaching of Irish in infant classes. See also O'Connell, p. 451
[103] Mr Forde opposed the proposals recommending that the curriculum be extended.
[104] Hyland and Milne, p. 24
[105] *Report of the Council of Education,* p. 94
[106] *Ibid.*, p. 2
[107] Hyland and Milne, p. 119
[108] Optional attendance was possible from the age of four
[109] *Report of the Council of Education,* p. 88
[110] See p. 477, n. 28
[111] Hyland and Milne, p. 27
[112] 23,403 out of 30,726 passed. *Report of the Department of Education,* 1950 - 51, p. 10
[113] *Report of the Council of Education,* p. 92
[114] *Ibid.*, p. 110
[115] *Ibid.*, p. 86
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 112. Out of 4,876 schools, 820 were one-teacher schools, 1,174 two-teacher, 1,556 principal + assistant, which amounted to 73%
[117] See pp. 137 - 156
[118] *Report of the Council of Education,* par. 197
[119] *Ibid.*, par. 200
[120] *Ibid.*, par. 216
[121] *Ibid.* par. 213
[122] See p. 404 and 422
[123] See p. 345
[124] *Report of the Council of Education,* p. 2
[125] *Ibid.*, p. 220

[126] J. Coolahan, *Irish Education history and structure*, p. 45
[127] John Sheehan, 'Education and Society in Ireland 1945 - 70,' in *Ireland 1948 - 69*, ed. J.J. Lee, p. 63
[128] *Dáil Reports*, 28th April, 1949,
[129] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1952 - 53, p. 3
[130] See p. 462
[131] See p. 444
[132] Diary of C. Íosagáin, 26th October,1952. In May 1955, Mulcahy, who was in his second term as minister visited C. Íosagáin to present *fáinní*.
[133] *Ibid.*, 18th January, 1954
[134] Gerard Sweetman, (1908 - 1970). Politician. Educated at Downside and TCD he qualified as a solicitor, and at the age of twenty-four, stood as a Cumann na nGaedheal candidate for the Dáil but failed to be elected. In 1943, he tried again and failed, but, subsequently, was elected to the Senate. After that, his political career took off and he was elected to the Dáil, in 1948, and in all subsequent elections until his untimely death in a car crash in 1970. Prominent as an organisational figure in Fine Gael, he was chief whip in the First Inter-party Government, and Minister for Finance, from 1954 – 57, in the Second Inter-party Government.
[135] Seán MacEntee was Minister for Finance from 1951 - 1954
[136] Letter from Sweetman to Mulcahy, 18 August, 1954, UCD Archives, Mulcahy Papers, P7/C/154
[137] Registers of colleges
[138] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S22/15/34
[139] See p. 465
[140] *Ibid.*
[141] *Ibid.*
[142] See p. 201
[143] *Ibid.*
[144] See p. 92
[145] DT Papers, S14787
[146] Almost every class at C. Mhuire and C. Íde had students who became nuns. There were also a number of students from the boys' colleges, who went on to become members of Religious Orders, or to join the priesthood.
[147] See p. 476, n. 4
[148] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S14787
[149] *Ibid.*
[150] *Ibid.*
[151] *Ibid.*
[152] *Ibid.*
[153] See p. 476.
[154] Registers of C. Mhuire and C. Bhríde
[155] See p. 270, n. 96
[156] Department of Finance Papers, S19/1/31
[157] See p. 436
[158] See pp. 454 - 462

CHAPTER VII

1948 – 61: A PERIOD OF STAGNATION ENDING IN SWIFT DEMISE

Part (ii) : 1957 – 1961 FACING AN INCREASINGLY PRECARIOUS FUTURE

The year 1957 marked a turning point with the return to power of Fianna Fail. Despite high levels of unemployment and emigration, the new Government, reinvigorated by its three years in opposition, soon showed itself to be possessed of the vision and drive necessary to tackle the nation's problems. Two major changes soon followed. In 1958, *The First Programme for Economic Expansion*[1] was published. The fore-runner of many changes, it helped to disperse the defeatist gloom which had covered the country for much of the fifties. It was followed a year later by a further significant change: the retirement of de Valera[2] from the office of Taoiseach, and the assumption at last of the role of leadership by Seán Lemass,[3] who had been heir apparent for so long. This meant that the country was led by a number of dynamic ministers, eager to change things and to make a name for themselves. It also meant that the portfolio of Education was up-graded: new policies were formulated, and more resources allocated to it, reflecting the politicians' realisation that the education system had a significant role to play in the economic and social development of the country.

Furthermore the rate of change in education accelerated in the period from 1957-61. Two changes, which were particularly significant for recruitment, were the introduction of an

oral Irish examination as part of the Leaving Certificate Examination and a reform of entry regulations to training colleges. These changes were to greatly affect the preparatory system, and its future looked increasingly precarious from 1957 on. Two years later, the decision was finally taken to end the system.[4] Once taken, the Government tried to divest itself of the colleges as quickly as possible with little effort to recoup the large amounts of public money spent on them.

How was it possible to end the preparatory system at this time? During the late fifties there were a number of factors in Irish life, which coming together at that time, ensured the end of the preparatory system. The main factors were firstly, an improvement in the country's economic condition. Secondly, opposition to the gaelicisation policy increased. Thirdly, the greater availability of second-level education made the preparatory system unnecessary. The most significant factor, however, was the attitude of the Hierarchy, which at its mid-summer general meeting in June 1959 decided:

> The time has now come when all places in these colleges should be allocated on a competitive basis and the policy of reserving a number of places for natives of the Gaeltacht discontinued. The Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishop of Elphin were asked to make this proposal to the Minister on behalf of the Hierarchy.[5]

How did this change in the Hierarchy's attitude come about? Throughout the history of the preparatory colleges, there was nothing to indicate that the bishops were unhappy with the way in which the system operated. Indeed the strong religious ethos of the colleges[6] and the strict control exercised by the Religious Orders who ran them, would have given the Hierarchy few grounds for complaint. However, in 1956, an episode

which resulted in the expulsion of twenty students from C. Éinne, brought the system to the attention of the bishops. As the students concerned were from the Donegal Gaeltacht, it focussed attention on the entrance examination which gave preference to Gaeltacht students.[7] The controversy aroused the wrath of the manager of the college, Bishop Browne of Galway,[8] who decided that it was time for C. Einne to become a diocesan college, and his efforts to effect this brought about the end of the system.

The affair came to notice in the early months of 1956, when staff at the college became aware that pilfering of foodstuffs and other materials was going on. An investigation began, which led to the discovery that a number of senior boys were leaving their dormitories at night, and going to the maids' quarters, where they indulged in various forms of sexual activity. Much of the ensuing controversy arose from the principal's[9] inept handling of the affair, though it is obvious from the evidence, that the pupils took advantage of poor supervision in the college. Moreover, the principal, in a misguided effort to minimise the situation, and to curtail damage to the college's reputation, compounded a difficult situation by his failure to immediately inform the parents, and the manager, of what had been going on.

According to the principal, he began an investigation on 15 February 1956, by interviewing the maids, one of whom admitted her own involvement and implicated the others. Subsequently, all but one of the maids, who had refused to get involved in the nocturnal activities were dismissed.[10] Armed with the maids' admissions, there followed lengthy interrogations, lasting two days, of all the senior students, first by the principal,

and then by the vice-principal, Fr. Patrick Lee,[11] in an effort to find out which pupils were involved:

> We pretended that it was to do with discipline. Three classes were interviewed, one by one, during the two days of interrogation. We interrogated all students to avoid causing scandal to the junior boys, to avoid singling anyone out and to obtain information.[12]

In this way it was discovered that fourteen boys were involved. A written form of admission was offered to each student, who was told to sign it, if true. Eleven did, but three, who admitted their involvement, refused to sign. The statements were then read to them, in the presence of the vice-principal, and a second teacher, Fr. Jennings, who signed as witnesses. Subsequently reports, giving the minimum of details, were sent to the students' parents and guardians. The principal's explanation for this was that he feared that the students involved might leave the country, without their parents' consent.

The principal reported the matter to the Department and it was investigated by three senior civil servants,[13] on 22nd and 28th February. The resulting expulsions caused consternation and an angry five-person deputation from County Donegal visited the Department on Friday 9th March 1956. Four were primary teachers, two of whom were also parents. Accompanied by their solicitor, they saw the Department secretary. The deputation alleged that there was poor discipline in C. Éinne, and that such behaviour had been going on for years.[14] Two boys were not allowed to go forward to training in 1953, for the same misdemeanour. They further alleged that large numbers of boys were roaming around at night, playing cards at 1.00 am in the dining room, and pilfering foodstuffs and alcohol from the staff dining room. [15] Such behaviour, they contended was

proof of poor discipline. They also demanded clarification on certain points, as other parents in County Donegal were worried, as to whether their sons were to be expelled:

> Would the expelled boys be allowed to sit their examinations? Could they enter training? Would they receive grants in other schools if they got into such? Could the Department send them to C. Íosagáin?[16]

In response, the secretary pointed out that it was a matter for the parents whether the boys were sent to other schools, but he was adamant that the Department would not pay grants towards their fees. While they would not be debarred from examinations, he explained that their entry to training was a matter for the training college authorities, who must satisfy themselves as to the character of their entrants. He reiterated that the Minister could not change the decision.

Defending the pupils, the deputation contended that had only one or two individuals been involved, a deputation would not have been necessary, but that the 'wholesale nature of the case' with fourteen, or twenty boys, involved, raised very serious questions. Furthermore they pointed out that the parents had given their children to the State, in *loco parentis*, and they believed that the large number expelled demonstrated the lack of supervision. They also claimed that the affair began in September and was discovered only by accident. Excusing the boys' behaviour, they blamed the college for employing young girls as maids, and for 'doing nothing to prevent the boys being tempted.'

Defending the college, the secretary reminded the deputation that C. Éinne was a secondary school, established for 'a special purpose,' under the management of the

Bishop of Galway, and staffed by three priests of long experience, assisted by lay teachers. He supported the staff's actions and the exhaustive inquiries they had made, once the matter came to their knowledge, and referred the deputation to the boys' statements, 'admitting guilt of a most serious nature.' Declaring that it was a serious moral question, he emphasised that the Minister fully concurred in the decisions taken by the college. Furthermore he stressed that the principal had been 'as considerate, as possible, for the parents' sake, and had allowed them the opportunity of withdrawing the boys before expulsion.'[17] He strongly defended the college's system of supervision, pointing out that no college could provide an all-night guard. Moreover, the offences had occurred between 2.00 am and 4.00 am when there should be no question of a guard. He was forthright in his condemnation of the pupils:

> The boys in question must bear their guilt. They and the parents admitted it. The moral tone and discipline of the college were matters for its authorities.[18]

The allegation that the boys' transgressions had been due to their Donegal background, was raised by the deputation, who pointed out that the affair could jeopardise the supply of Donegal pupils to C. Éinne, as parents would not wish to leave their sons at the college. They insinuated that Donegal schools would cease to act as feeder schools for the college, as new entrants would be discouraged from going to it. The deputation also queried what was being done to reassure parents, insisting that the problem would not have occurred, had the college been in Donegal, where the parents would have been more in touch.

During the interview, the deputation referred to rumours that C. Éinne was to be closed, but this was denied by the secretary, who advised them that it was in their own interests, and that of their children, that the matter should be forgotten. This response, however, did little to calm the deputation, who threatened legal action, informing the secretary that the matter had been referred to senior counsel, even though this might result in a stigma being placed on the system. It was their contention that the Department and the college were responsible for lax supervision. The meeting concluded with the secretary's assurances that the matter would be brought to the minister's attention

Following the deputation's visit, Mulcahy immediately requested the Bishop of Galway[19] to come to Dublin to discuss the matter. The subsequent correspondence between Browne and Mulcahy reveals that Browne first heard of the affair when he received the Minister's letter. [20] Not surprisingly, he replied to Mulcahy on 14th March, that he was unable to go to Dublin, pleading a heavy programme of diocesan business: 'I am extremely busy with diocesan business and Holy Week. It is very inconvenient for me to get away.'[21] As Easter Day 1956 was 1st April, this was just an excuse to cover his lack of knowledge of the matter. However, he assured the minister that he had asked the principal for a full report as he wanted 'to ascertain the certainty of the facts, the justice of the punishment, and the causes of this most lamentable disorder, and/or remedies to be adopted.'[22]In addition he informed the Minister that he had visited and inspected the college the previous day. He pointed out that the principal had been to the Department twice, on 22nd and 28th February, and had given a full account to three civil servants,[23] and had shown them the students' admissions. Browne ended by assuring the Minister that he would be

'glad to confer with him,' as he took 'a very serious view' of the whole case, for he feared that 'the spirit and discipline of college had been poisoned.'

The immediacy of Mulcahy's response - by return of post - showed the urgency with which he, and the Department, viewed the matter. As Browne would not come to Dublin, and Mulcahy was unable to travel to Galway, due to illness, he requested Browne to meet the secretary of the Department, and one of the three officials,[24] involved in the matter, in Galway. In addition Mulcahy tried to disarm Browne by assuring him that the three officials, who had investigated the matter, accepted the principal's account of the affair and that the actions taken were fully justified.

Why the principal did not inform the bishop sooner is a matter for speculation. It not until 17th March, three days after Mulcahy had written to Browne that the principal wrote a lengthy report on the matter for the bishop. In it he explained that he had been 'awaiting an opportunity to make a preliminary report to his Lordship, the bishop, but could not get an appointment earlier than the 23rd March.' Meanwhile he pointed out that he had been to Dublin, twice, and discussed the matter fully with Department officials. There is no explanation as to why the bishop could not be contacted sooner, or why he was not informed sooner, particularly as his official residence at Taylor's Hill, was close to the college. A possible explanation given by a past pupil, was that Browne resented the presence of the preparatory college in his diocese, and so never visited the place, 'although he lived a mere half mile away, down the slope of Taylor's Hill.'[25]

In addition the principal wrote that he was 'grateful to God, the matter was discovered before it had worked even greater havoc,' and he informed the bishop, rather naively, that the 'senior classes had voluntarily undertaken forms of self-denial.' The letter is notable for the sarcastic comments, written by the bishop, alongside the priest's statements. When the theft of alcohol from the priests' dining room was discovered, the maids came under suspicion, and to prevent further pilfering, the priests put an extra lock on the door. The boys, however, took the keys from the priests' room. It was during efforts to catch the pilferers that the nocturnal visits were discovered:

> On two separate nights we were in ambush for hours at what we considered a vital point. We also searched the personal belongings of every pupil's cubicle and study hall desks etc.[26]

At one point, the principal wrote that the priests sat up all night, and Browne commented: 'until 3.00 am but the boys went as usual at 4.00 am.' The references by Fr. Hynes to the parents' deputation are marked with big question marks, and the comment: 'Didn't send the bishop a report first.' The principal's later remarks, 'In the course of the interview Department officials were fully informed of the mind of the higher authorities in Galway on the happenings, and on how the students concerned should be dealt with,' bear the comment, 'Too late!'[27]

At the end of the investigations, the principal concluded that the problem had started in the infirmary sometime after 1st November 1955. Boys, who were unwell and 'could not reasonably be sent to a general hospital,' were not allowed to remain in the dormitory because of pilfering. So they were sent to the infirmary, which was supervised by the matron. With regard to the card playing, the principal claimed that it began on 21st

January 1956, and was discovered the following month and dealt with. The pilfering, which he alleged, had occurred only three times and involved six boys, began with two groups raiding the food supplies. Hynes admitted that the affair had been 'a severe shock' to the priests, who were 'watchful and attentive,' as there were no 'definite portents of such a serious moral breakdown.' In addition he had these comments about the students:

> The students could not be considered of a high standard. Third year students in particular had the least desirable among them. They were an average body such as in an average secondary school. The standard of devotion to religion was good. There were no marked undesirable groupings of students and no evidence that such behaviour was going on. The only unhealthy sign was that a number of students who had been energetic and active in games seemed to lose interest and had to be 'rounded up' for practice.[28]

Fr. Hynes gave this simplistic explanation for the failure in discipline:

> One of the prefects failed us. He misled us in other matters of discipline leading up to this - if he had been a free agent and in a position to give information and to give it promptly. A senior prefect was involved – not prepared to act and thus handicapped his fellow prefects.(!! bishop)

The principal also declared that he was forced to take young girls from the Gaeltacht as maids because of a shortage of money to pay higher wages to more experienced staff.[29]

The whole episode revealed a sorry state of affairs in the college, particularly the easy acceptance of pilfering as part of the college's life. In addition the large number of students involved in the episodes and the brazen way in which they took the teachers' keys showed that the college's code of discipline had completely broken down and that drastic action was called for.

Not surprisingly, the bishop's reaction was to consider closing the college, and notes on the letter in his handwriting list the following possibilities:

1. Change rooms of maids to dormitory
2. Change infirmary elsewhere
3. Proper matron
4. Definite rules.
5. Different system of selection
6 Close down

One can only speculate as to whether Browne saw these remedies, as a progression leading to the closure of the college, some time after interest in the matter had died down. It is not possible to say whether he discussed these recommendations with the minister. Past students, however, believed that the bishop threatened to close the college, something no Minister would have wanted in such circumstances.[30] Certainly Mulcahy went out of his way to please Browne at this time, at one stage going as far as lending him his ministerial car.[31] Browne's inclusion of the need for a different system of selection was an indication, that it was due to his efforts, that the Hierarchy passed its resolution of June 1959.[32]

Subsequently, Browne wrote to Mulcahy on 26th March 1956, informing him of changes to be made in C. Éinne. These included firstly, structural changes to the maids' quarters. Secondly, a young priest was to be appointed dean with responsibility for discipline. Thirdly, new rules and regulations were to be drafted, in fulfilment of the agreement entered into by students. Browne also raised the possibility of getting nuns to do the domestic work in the college.[33] Browne gave Mulcahy this warning:

> The whole background and conduct of students during vacation should receive careful consideration... a very serious matter of schools in Donegal developing a proprietory interest in sending

> pupils for training irrespective of their suitability for teaching. That is a matter on which managers and bishops have a vital interest and already I know opinions are being formed at the quality of teachers who have passed through the training colleges.[34]

The relationship between primary schools in Co. Donegal and C. Éinne was of concern, not only to Browne, but also to many in that county, and shortly afterwards, the Bishop of Raphoe [35] wrote to Browne seeking details of boys from his diocese, who were involved in the affair, as there was anxiety about its effect on summer colleges, and special classes of preparation for the preparatory colleges in that county. According to the Bishop of Raphoe, there was 'a bad drop' in the culprits, who were from Gweedore, an area from which boys had been in trouble with the seminary authorities, some years earlier.[36]

Shortly after the beginning of the new school year, strict new disciplinary rules drawn up by Browne, were implemented:[37]

1. Pupils may not go outside the college grounds without the permission of the Principal or his representative.
2. It is strictly forbidden to enter the servants' quarters or to hold a conversation with the servants.
3. Silence must be maintained in chapel, the study-hall, the library and in the classroom during class periods and in the dormitories after 10.15 pm
4. Students are not allowed to the dormitories after breakfast
5. Students may only read books, periodicals, and newspapers, as approved by the college authorities and in the library.
6. Students are forbidden to receive messages, to drink alcohol, to smoke, or to copy.

Subsequently a number of pupils were expelled for fairly trivial matters.[38] In addition the stricter regime resulted in a number of students, whom the principal considered to be unsuitable for teaching, being advised to apply for the civil service.

This episode at C. Éinne was a key factor in the demise of the preparatory system, for the Bishop of Galway became convinced that the colleges should be closed, and began to use his not inconsiderable influence to achieve that aim. Subsequent correspondence between Browne and the secretary of the Department, indicates that in pursuing this aim, Browne kept in close touch with the Department. In addition the episode awakened the Hierarchy to the need for greater vigilance in accepting students into the training colleges, and their decision that preference should no longer be given to Gaeltacht students.[39] Once the bishops agreed on this point, the Department knew it could end the system.

De Valera's return to power in 1957, marked a turning point in the life of the country and signalled the approaching end of an era in Irish life. Aged seventy-five, and almost blind, his final years as leader of Fianna Fáil, were marked by two significant developments: the launch in 1958 of *The First Programme for Economic Expansion,* [40] and the establishment, that same year, of the Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language.[41] Furthermore as the end of the decade approached, it was obvious that major changes were taking place in Irish society and they were reflected in the 1960 Broadcasting Act, and the establishment, in 1961, of a national television service, which was to be a major agent in hastening the pace of change. Moreover, education gained a higher profile as greater resources became available, and parental expectations rose, with

a growing public awareness of its importance. The necessity for educational planning, and the promotion of equality of opportunity and wider access to education, became major elements of Government policy, and were reflected in the decision to initiate the *Investment in Education* study in 1962.[42]

A further factor contributing to the demise of the preparatory system was growing evidence of public disquiet with compulsory Irish, which was reflected in a low priority for programmes in Irish on Teilifís Éireann,[43] and an increasing number of comments in the press, expressing concern about falling educational standards, particularly about the number of children leaving school illiterate. Typical of the newspapers' coverage, was an editorial in a Sunday newspaper, in December 1957, entitled *Your children have to suffer*:

> Facts are beyond controversy. These children face the world as semi-illiterate..... Can scarcely read or write. Arithmetic, Geography, History and other elementary subjects are little more than names to them..... 50,000 Irish boys and girls who finish their education - save the mark - at the age of fourteen are destined for the emigrant ship.[44]

Similar concern was expressed in a denunciation of the language policy, in January 1958, by a leading academic, Professor E.F. O'Doherty,[45] who pointed out that all available research on bilingualism recommended that children should be taught their native language, and other subjects through its medium:

> However the words 'native language' or 'mother tongue' are conventionally used in this country by many people to refer to the ancestral language rather than to the language of the primary society into which the child is born.[46]

The public's concern was also reflected in a motion in the Dáil, in October 1959, calling for a referendum on the subject.[47] The public's readiness to accept changes in the language policy was demonstrated by Fine Gael's election manifesto, which in 1961 proposed the abolition of compulsory Irish and promised that Irish would no longer be necessary to pass the Leaving Certificate Examination, or to obtain entrance to the professions, but would be regarded in the same way as other subjects. As a sop to language enthusiasts, the manifesto promised to provide assistance for language organisations, such as the Gaelic League,[48] and Gael-Linn,[49] and to increase the number of Gaeltacht scholarships.[50] That a major political party felt able to make these proposals was an indication of how far public opinion had changed, and marked another phase in the dismantling of the language policy.

Further evidence of a new approach to the gaelicisation policy by Fine Gael was the establishment of the Department of the Gaeltacht by the Second Inter-party Government in 1956. This was a significant development, which resulted in the setting up of the semi-State body, Gaeltarra Éireann, to bring industries to Gaeltacht areas. This policy highlighted the ambivalence of the Government towards the Gaeltacht, and showed its lack of concern that increasing tourism and industrial development would hasten the demise of the language by encouraging the spread of English.[51] In addition the establishment of the Department brought increased pressures for the preparatory colleges, as people in the Gaeltacht began campaigning for them to accept pupils from the surrounding areas.

An area of particular concern was Tourmakeady, where there were five primary schools, but the only secondary school was C. Mhuire. That secondary education was not available in this Irish-speaking stronghold, shows the disregard of successive Governments for native speakers. In August 1957, a meeting of local people requested that girls from the area be accepted as pupils of C. Mhuire and the Department of the Gaeltacht was asked to take the matter up with Education.[52] At a subsequent meeting Education reiterated its position that there was no possibility of local pupils being admitted to the preparatory colleges.

A memo from the Department of the Gaeltacht in March 1958 noted:

> From time to time requests over the years from local students to attend preparatory colleges. Request to go to C. .Mhuire
> Answers
> 1. Not an ordinary secondary school.
> 2. Have to do an examination
> 3. Intermediate in two years
> 4. Irish the usual method of communication and the fostering of a Gaelic outlook
> 5. Never intended to take ordinary pupils except those who passed the examination
> 6. C. Mhuire is full at present and for the foreseeable future[53]

While these answers seemed definite enough, a paragraph in a report of the meeting, indicated that this position could change:

> Nuair a luíodh an colaíste ullmhúchaín ag Tuar Mhic Éadaigh go specialta dúradh go mb'fheidir gurbh é a dhúnadh ar fad a caithfidh a dheanamh. (When the preparatory college at Tourmakeady was particularly mentioned it was said that perhaps it would have to be closed altogether.)[54]

Furthermore as changed attitudes to the language became more pronounced, there was less need for the preparatory colleges whose main function was to produce students who

were fluent in the Irish language. The appointment of Jack Lynch as Minister for Education, in March 1957, hastened the demise of the system as he was from a different generation to de Valera[55] and other senior Fianna Fáil personnel and his approach to the Irish language was untinged by participation in revolutionary activity. Born in Cork, in 1917, Lynch was educated at the North Monastery School, and King's Inns, where he qualified as a barrister, while working as a civil servant in Dublin. An outstanding athlete, he first came to public notice as a champion hurler. The public acclaim won by his sporting prowess was to be useful in assisting his election to the Dáil in 1948 and in all subsequent elections until his retirement in 1981. His ministerial posts included Education, 1957-59; Industry and Commerce, 1959-65; and Finance, 1965-66. In 1966, he was elected leader of Fianna Fáil, and began his first period as Taoiseach, a post he was to hold again from 1969 – 73, and from 1977 - 79. As Taoiseach, he had the unenviable experience in 1970 of having to dismiss two of his most powerful ministers, Neil Blaney and Charles Haughey, for their failure to support Government policy on Northern Ireland. In the subsequent struggle for control of Fianna Fáil, Lynch won out against Haughey, who was to continue 'as a thorn in his side' for the rest of Lynch's political career.

CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

A major concern for Lynch, as Minister for Education, was recruitment where the shortage of trained teachers was acute. In an effort to increase the number of trained teachers and to reduce class size, Lynch made three important changes, which were to be of particular significance for the preparatory system. Firstly, he announced, in March

1958, the introduction of an oral Irish examination as part of the Leaving Certificate Examination from 1960 on.[56] Secondly, it was decided in May 1958, that all candidates entering training colleges would have to be successful at personal suitability interviews, as well as at oral tests in English, and Irish, conducted by Department inspectors.[57] Thirdly, he announced the rescinding of the Marriage Ban from 1st July 1958.[58]

The introduction of an oral Irish examination resulted in a significant change of emphasis in the teaching of Irish, as Lynch explained to the Dáil, in 1958:

> I decided shortly after assuming office that an examination should be made of how we might pay attention to the oral aspect of Irish. Therefore I have decided to introduce an oral examination at the Leaving Certificate.[59]

With one-sixth of the marks at the Leaving Certificate Examination allocated to oral Irish, it meant that candidates from ordinary secondary schools would have to reach a high standard of fluency in the language, and to cater for that need, a new Gaeltacht industry soon developed: Irish colleges providing summer courses, where students could learn the language by the 'total immersion' method. It also spelled the deathknell of the preparatory colleges, for it meant that fluency at oral Irish would no longer be their prerogative. Moreover, by the 1950s, the insistence on student-teachers having some preliminary teaching experience before being accepted into training colleges was finally discarded. This had been a requirement of training systems since their earliest days, and had been a significant feature of the monitorial and pupil-teacher systems.[60]

A further indication that their days were numbered was the reform of recruitment procedures. Lynch's announcement that all candidates entering training colleges would have to be successful at personal suitability interviews, and oral tests in English, and Irish, was an effort to improve the quality of candidates entering the teaching profession, and meant that for the first time in the history of the colleges, preparatory students would have to compete for places and would not automatically continue on to training college. This had become a cause of considerable resentment as it prevented many better qualified candidates from entering the profession.

Lynch's decision to rescind the Marriage Ban was significant, because Education had opposed this decision for many years.[61] According to Lynch, it had led to the appointment of untrained teachers to schools, particularly in remote areas; a practice he denounced as 'unjustified and intolerable.' He calculated that approximately 105 trained teachers, with on average eleven years' service, were affected by it each year, while a further 235 trained married women teachers were teaching in temporary capacities.[62] This change in policy should have effected major changes in recruitment, resulting eventually in a reduced number of students required by the training colleges. Yet there was no protest from Finance that the change of policy was made so soon after the large expenditure on an extension to Carysfort in 1955.[63] A further important change, made during Lynch's period as minister, was the appointment by Archbishop McQuaid,[64] of the Very Revd. Dr. Donal Cregan, CM, as President of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.[65]This appointment was significant for Fr. Cregan was opposed to the preparatory system.[66]

Lynch, however, was not to stay long in Education, and when de Valera eventually retired in June 1959, he became Minister for Industry and Commerce. De Valera's successor, Seán Lemass,[67] though a veteran of 1916, was a totally different kind of leader. Lemass's first Government included a number of bright, young, ambitious, ministers anxious to make their mark politically; few of whom had the old sentimental allegiances of de Valera, and his older colleagues, but rather were well aware of the need for a more realistic attitude to the language policy, which was almost forty years in operation. Typical of them was Dr. Patrick Hillery, who was appointed Minister for Education on 24 June 1959. From Milltown Malbay, Co. Clare, he was educated at Rockwell College, and UCD, where he qualified as a medical doctor. He was first elected to the Dail in 1951, and became Minister for Education eight years later. As minister he introduced much new thinking: comprehensive schools, regional technical colleges, and higher technical education. His later portfolios included Industry and Commerce, 1965 - 66; Labour, 1966-69, and Foreign Affairs, 1969-73. In addition he led the negotiations for Ireland's entry into the EEC and was the country's first commissioner from 1973-76. Following the unexpected resignation of Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, as President of Ireland in 1976, Dr. Hillery was chosen by all-party agreement to succeed him to that office in which he served two terms.

With the departure of de Valera, and others of his age and mentality from active politics,[68] the closure of the preparatory colleges was inevitable. Furthermore for the first time in their history the colleges had no Minister for Education to champion their cause. The momentous decision to end the system was taken at a Cabinet meeting, on 13

November 1959, and once taken, the Government was quick to dispose of the properties.

A memo from Education to the Government outlined the reasons for their establishment:

a. To provide secondary education for Gaeltacht young people whose parents could not provide secondary education for them to prepare them to become teachers and to ensure native speakers of Irish as national teachers.

b. To provide secondary education through Irish for young people aged 13 -15 who want to enter the training colleges.[69]

The memo enclosed an analysis of the students currently in the training colleges:

Table 7.11 Analysis of recruitment to Training Colleges 1959

Total no. of students	760	
No. from preparatory colleges	220	
No. of native speakers	88	11.5% OF TOTAL

	Men	Women
Total no. of students	210	550
Preparatory colleges	85 =40%	135 = 25%
Native speakers	35 = 17% of total	53 = 9.6% of total

Source: Cabinet minutes, 9 November 1959, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307.

These figures showed that while the number of male students from preparatory colleges was forty per cent, the number of female students was as low as twenty-five per cent, but of far greater significance were the figures for native speakers, which showed that male students were seventeen per cent of the total intake for the year, while the number of female students from the Gaeltacht was less than one in ten, and that overall the number

of native speakers was just over eleven per cent.[70] Clearly the system was failing to achieve the first aim outlined in the memo. With regard to the second aim once the oral Irish examination was introduced at the Leaving Certificate Examination the emphasis in teaching the language changed and there was no longer a need for the preparatory colleges.

The memo stressed three factors: firstly, closure had been 'under consideration for some time.' This was probably a reference to the episode at C. Éinne, [71]which was an important factor in bringing about the demise of the system, though to avoid public controversy, the Government had waited until the matter had been forgotten, before taking the closure decision. Secondly, the introduction of an oral Irish test would 'guarantee continuity and improvement.' Thirdly, considerable savings would be made, not just by closing the colleges, but also through the sale of the premises and the farms attached to C. Íde, C. Bhríde, and C. Mhuire. It also asserted that as secondary education through Irish was available in a large number of schools, the money saved would be better spent providing more scholarships for Gaeltacht students.

According to the memo, the main objections to the system were firstly: that students chose their future careers at too early an age. Secondly, the question of fees meant 'pressure of a most compelling nature on a student to proceed to a career for which he may have a positive distaste.' Thirdly, specialising began too early, resulting 'in segregation at fourteen, which was bad educationally.' In addition the memo noted that the age of selection had been condemned by the INTO in *A Plan for Education*.[72] This was an interesting reference, in view of the fact that at the time of its publication in 1947,

it was rejected by the Department and the minister, Derrig.[73] A further factor given in the memo, was the 'undesirability of a number of secondary schools being owned by the Government and by the Minister. It is no longer justifiable for the State to do this,' a comment which reflected a narrow view of the State's role in education.

The memo was significant for an important factor, which went unmentioned: the decline in academic standards in the colleges, particularly a deterioration at Leaving Certificate Examinations, where pupils no longer obtained the high results achieved in the early years of the system.

Table 7.12 Leaving Certificate Results 1930-35 and 1954 –59

Year	No. entered	Honours	Pass	Fail	% Honours
1930	96	94	2	--	97.9%
1931	159	142	15	2	89.3%
1932	147	142	4	1	96.5%
1933	13	107	6	--	94.6%
1934	149	144	5	--	96.6%
1935	179	171	5	3	95.5%

Year	No. entered	Honours	Pass	Fail	% Honours
1954	119	85	33	1	71.4%
1955	117	89	27	1	76%
1956	120	78	42	--	65%
1957	128	92	35	1	71.8%
1958	132	105	21	6	79.5%
1959	116	80	21	5	68.9%

Source: *Reports of the Department of Education,* 1930 – 36, 1953 - 59

While these statistics show that the numbers failing the Leaving Certificate Examination were still quite small, and that high percentages were still obtaining honours at Leaving Certificate, the growth in the numbers obtaining only a pass, was quite large. These statistics do not give a breakdown of the number of honours obtained by those obtaining honours certificates, where the criterion was three honours or more. Indeed, a further analysis of these figures shows that between 1957–59, 376 students entered training from the preparatory colleges. Seventy-four had just three honours while seventy-seven students had obtained only a pass at the Leaving Certificate Examination.

Table 7.13: Leaving Certificate Results at Preparatory Colleges 1957 – 59

		Pass +2 honours		Pass + 3 honours		Pass + 4 honours	
	Total	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
1957	128	14	8	17	7	46	22
1958	132	10	3	15	10	52	27
1959	116	7	10	16	9	51	13
Total	376	31	21	48	26	149	62
		52		76		211	

Less than 2 honours = 35

Source: *Dáil Reports*, 28th April 1960

These figures show that just over one-third of preparatory students were unlikely to have obtained places had they been in competition with other students and as every preparatory student would have easily obtained honours at Irish, they show a marked decline in academic standards in the colleges. A further factor worth noticing is the gender difference, particularly in the category of four or more honours, where there were twice as many girls as boys. Obviously aware of such results the Department had begun

to pursue a more rigorous policy with regard to preparatory students, and an example of this was in C. Íosagáin,[74] where an inspector interviewed students, who were not studying satisfactorily. In addition as a result of the interview system for entry to training college, three students had not been called to training while two others had not been allowed to continue their course at the college.[75]

The timing of the closure decision, coming so soon after de Valera's retirement, is an indication that his support had been a factor in their continuation. A further significant factor in the closure decision was the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church. [76] Indeed the role of the Hierarchy in the closure was not inconsiderable, and the traditional practice of ensuring the bishops' approval before making a major decision, was carefully adhered to. A letter from the secretary of the Department, Tarlach Ó Raifeartaigh,[77] to Bishop Browne of Galway,[78] shortly after the Cabinet decision in November 1959, indicates that Browne had been influential in bringing it about, and in proposing that the colleges should become 'A' schools. On 22 December 1959, the secretary wrote to Browne:

> The Minister wishes me to thank your Lordship sincerely, on his behalf, for your ready willingness to use your good offices towards the solution of the problem. The reason for my delay in writing accordingly to you was that it seemed better to defer doing so until he had taken a final decision.
>
> I can now tell you in confidence that it has been definitely decided to bring the preparatory college system to an end.[79]

Obviously Browne had used his influence at meetings of the Hierarchy to impress on the other bishops the need for such a change:

> I informed the Minister that in the event of C. Einne coming to an end as a preparatory college, you would be favourably disposed towards the building being transferred to you by lease or in some such way, for use as a boys' day and boarding 'A' school and that you would have in mind also to retain the present teaching staff, but that by reason of heavy financial commitments the sum you would be able to let him have for it would necessarily be limited.[80]

Ó Raifeartaigh informed Browne that the Minster had intended to begin the process by the immediate cessation of recruitment to the colleges, but on full consideration, he had decided this would be undesirable, until his plans for an extended scheme of secondary school scholarships for Gaeltacht pupils had been drawn up. There would, therefore, be one more competitive entrance examination to the colleges. Meanwhile the Minister was waiting to avail himself at an early date, of some suitable occasion, to announce the ending of the system, its replacement by an extended scholarship scheme, and the intention to use the college buildings for purposes connected with the promotion of the Irish language, including, where possible, their use as secondary ' A' schools. Ó Raifeartaigh ended with this assurance for Browne:

> When the air has been cleared in that way, I hope to be in a position to discuss in more detail the question of the disposal of the C. Éinne building.[81]

The Government's decision to increase the number of scholarships for Gaeltacht students at second and third-level was important, for it immediately reduced the strength of opposition to the closure. Moreover, the Minister promised to increase the number of secondary school scholarships to eighty, to treble the number of university scholarships to fifteen, and to double the number of places in Domestic Science Training Colleges.[82] In the Department's view, this would have a number of beneficial effects. Firstly, it would

help oral Irish in secondary schools, where there would ultimately be about four hundred native speakers. Secondly, it would give greater numbers of native speakers an opportunity for wider education, and allow them to mix with pupils from other parts of the country. Thirdly, they would have better choice of entry to other professions, and to the civil service, and they could still become teachers if they wanted to.

Referring to the disposal of the buildings, the memo noted that they were worth one million pounds,[83] and while compensation would have to be paid to the staff, the ending of the system would result in savings of £50,000 per annum. What finally sealed the fate of the system, however, was that the closure proposal came from the Minister for Education, and the accompanying note: 'the Minister for Finance approves,' was ironic. The closure decision must have been one of the few occasions in the history of the colleges when the two departments, Finance and Education, were in agreement. According to the memo, the minister envisaged that closure would be 'gradually affected' over four years. Indeed, a further touch of irony to the closure was the speed with which it was accomplished, and the system, which had been dogged by bureaucratic delays throughout its history, ended in less than two years.

An indication that the matter was to be dealt with promptly came two days later, on 13th November, 1959, when the decision to close the five Roman Catholic colleges was approved in principle by the Cabinet, and the Minister for Education authorised to investigate turning the colleges into 'A' schools, and extending the scholarship scheme

for Gaeltacht students to secondary schools and universities.[84] A further prompt decision was made three weeks later, on 7 December 1959, when the Cabinet decided that an entrance examination to the preparatory colleges, for 1960, would be held and the Minister was authorised to announce the decisions.[85]

However, the Minister delayed making a public announcement and news of the impending decisions was first broken by the Irish language weekly newspaper, *Inniu,* which in March 1960,[86] carried rumours of a new scholarship scheme to replace the preparatory system. This resulted in considerable opposition to the closure. The following week, the writer, Breandán Ó hEithir, a past pupil of C. Éinne, denounced the closure in a passionate letter[87] in which he wrote of 'the death sentence having been passed on the colleges,' and queried if any evidence had been given in their defence. Amongst questions, he asked were: 'Is the Department going to explain the closure?' and 'Is anyone going to force the Department to explain it?' Not surprisingly, the closure was condemned by Blythe,[88] in an article in the *Sunday Independent* in March 1960.[89] The following month the magazine, *Comhar*,[90] devoted much of its April edition to the issue. A sharply critical leading article noted, that the rumour had not been denied by the Department, and implored the Minister to change his mind. The editor informed readers that he had invited the Minister for Education, Dr. Hillery,[91] the Gaelic League,[92] Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge,[93] and the INTO to discuss the system in its columns. Only the Minister refused. In its contribution, the Gaelic League outlined the history of the system, and, not unexpectedly, praised the academic standards, and sporting achievements of the colleges, and recalled the contribution of past pupils to the language

movement. It ended with a complaint that the League had not been consulted about the decision.

A similar stance was taken by Comhdháil, which pleaded that the colleges should not be closed, until there were more ordinary Irish-speaking boarding schools to replace them. It also wanted measures to ensure that the standard of Irish among primary teachers would not decline, and requested a meeting with Dr. Hillery to put its views to him. Unlike the other two groups, the INTO had never favoured the system,[94] and its contribution outlined its original opposition to the system: selection at too early an age, and the method of selection, whereby students from certain areas of the country were favoured. The INTO further complained about the narrowness of the students' formation, living and learning, for four years, within a college where all the students were intended for the same profession:

> An fhaid a bhíonn siad istigh, múnlaítear a n-aigne, dirítear a smaointe agus a ndearcadh i dtreo an chuspóra sin amháin. Ní bhíonn aon deis acu bualadh le micléinn a mbíonn cuspóirí eile rompu, nó tuairimí a mhalartú leo. Sa chaoi sin fágtar easnaimh ar a gcuid oideachais agus ar an oiliúnt a thugtar dóibh - bíonn siad araon cúng, caol, agus an-neamhlibearálach
>
> While they are in the colleges, their minds are formed, and their thoughts and outlooks are directed towards one objective only. They have no chance to meet students with other objectives or different opinions. Because of this there is a weakness in the education and training they receive – both are narrow and ill-liberal.[95]

Comhar invited Blythe,[96] and past pupils from four of the colleges to write about their experiences. Blythe's piece is noteworthy, because he revealed that he had been unhappy with the way in which the system developed. He believed that the curriculum should have

been broadened to include modern languages, and the rules changed to allow for students, who did not want to become teachers to leave the system, quickly and easily. [97] Whether he would have made such improvements had he continued in Government is a matter for speculation. Not surprisingly, the four former students wrote in favour of the system and emphasised the ease with which students from the Galltacht became fluent in the language.

Opposition from other Irish language bodies, included a statement from the Gaelic League, which queried why a decision on the system had not awaited the report of the Commission for Restoration of Irish.[98] A resolution passed by the executive committee, in June 1960, called on the Minister to postpone his decision, until it had been examined by the Government in the light of whatever recommendations might be made by the Commission. A similar resolution from Comhairle Connacht of Muintir na Gaeltachta, [99] was sent to the Taoiseach in December 1960. Further criticism came from the Irish language newspaper, *Amárach,* which deplored the decision to close the colleges, particularly C. Íde, which the paper pointed out had outstanding results at the Leaving Certificate Examination in 1960.[100]

The growing opposition forced Hillery to make the decision public, and on 24 May 1960,[101] he explained in the Dáil, that while the preparatory colleges had been needed in the twenties, recent reforms in recruitment meant they were no longer necessary. An exception, however, was C. Moibhí, the college for Protestant students, which was to remain as a preparatory college.

> Nílim chun an coláiste sin do dhúnadh mar nílim sásta go bhfuil i gcumas meán-scoileanna Protastúnach go fóill doithin iarrathóirí oiriúnacha a chur ar fáil do choláiste oiliúna Eaglais na hÉireann.
>
> I am not going to close that college as I am not satisfied that the Protestant secondary schools are able to supply the Church of Ireland Training College with sufficient suitable candidates.[102]

According to Hillery, the Protestant secondary schools were 'still in the position, which obtained in 1926-29, when Roman Catholic schools were unable to provide candidates.' Once the Government's proposals to continue the colleges as 'A' schools, and to extend the scholarship scheme, became known, most of the opposition petered out.

As soon as the closure decision was taken by the Cabinet, the speed with which the Department reacted was remarkable. Arrangements for the transfer of the properties became a priority, and the minister quickly made approaches to the managers of the five colleges.[103] Favourable responses were received from each of the five bishops. Indeed it is worth noting that none of the bishops opposed the ending of the preparatory system.

So it was not surprising that in June 1960, the matter received the following cursory mention in the Hierarchy's minutes:

> As it was understood that those colleges would be handed over to the communities in charge of them to be conducted as secondary schools the Bishops did not think that any action on their part was asked for.[104]

About the same time the colleges received official notification of the closure decision:

> Official notification about closing of the preparatory colleges. Our Visitor went to see Department officials. At the moment nobody seems clear what will be done with the colleges. They are to be turned into 'A' secondary schools.[105]

Four of the five bishops accepted the proposal to turn the college in his diocese into an 'A' school. The exception was the Bishop of Raphoe, manager of C. Bhríde, who pointed out that there was no scope for another 'A' school in the area, as secondary education was well catered for. His letter revealed that he had been expecting the decision as the Mother Provincial of the Loreto Order had informed him that the Order had 'appreciated for some time that the preparatory system would, due to its fundamental faults, end shortly.' With only one college to dispose of, the Department suggested C. Bhríde could become a fosterage school, similar to Ring College, Co. Waterford.[106]

One can only speculate as to what would have happened had the bishops opposed the proposal, but the context of the times has to be remembered, and the Department would not have made the proposal unless it had been sure of the Hierarchy's agreement. Material presented to the Cabinet, included a memo recommending closure from the Revd. Dr. Donal Cregan,[107] President of St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra, who gave the following reasons for his opposition to the system:

> Boys should be free for as long as possible to choose a career. The preparatory college system forces choice at fourteen, before he can have a proper appreciation of the implications of the decision. This results always in a group of students from the preparatory colleges with no sense of vocation, completely bored, and uninterested in their work. The staff of the training college's opinion is based on many years' experience, that neither in personal qualities, nor in academic attainments are preparatory college students in general equal to Open Competition students.[108]

Cregan's view was in direct contradiction to that of the staff of C. Éinne, who in a memo, opposing the closure, pointed out that four of the six gold medals for excellence in St.

Patrick's Training College, in 1959, were obtained by past students of the Galway college.[109]

Rumours about the disposal of the properties soon spread and led to some unusual proposals: the Hon. F. Ross-de Moleyns, a son of Lord Ventry, the previous owner of C. Íde,[110] wrote to the Taoiseach, Seán Lemass, in September 1960, offering to turn Burnham into a centre for deep-sea angling and other sporting activities[111] while early in 1961 a newspaper[112] reported that Kerry County Council was to spend £54,000 on tourist amenities in Dingle and that Bord Fáilte wanted to turn the college into a 200-room hotel. Meanwhile in Galway, there was dismay about rumours that C. Éinne, 'one of the most imposing structures in Galway city,' was to become a Butlin's Holiday Camp.

The rumour about C. Éinne was without foundation, as the Department and the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Browne, had already reached an agreement about its future.[113] Furthermore Browne's proposed retention of the teaching staff made the proposal attractive, for it meant that expensive compensation would not have to be paid,[114] and that disputes in this area would be avoided. Moreover, the transition from preparatory college, to 'A' school would be less problematic. On 8th March 1961,[115] Browne announced that the Government had accepted his offer for the college and its lands including a site on Threadneedle Road for a boys' primary school, which he persuaded the Department to include. Later in May he obtained recognition for a temporary national school on the site. This was a shrewd move on Browne's part, for the primary school would ensure the

provision of future pupils for the new college. The skilful way in which Browne organised the change-over was noteworthy. By pleading that diocesan resources were limited, due to the construction of a new cathedral,[116] he persuaded the Department to come to special arrangements for capitation grants and teacher quotas for the new college. He also kept Hynes[117] on as principal, and used him to conduct negotiations with the four lay teachers, and to assist in making redundancy arrangements for domestic and clerical staff. His treatment of the teaching staff, however, was not so good and it was July before he considered their position and then it was due to prompting by the Department, that he offered them temporary appointments for twelve months, with a review at the end of the year. By that time, three of them had accepted appointments elsewhere. Moreover, the fact that he removed Hynes from the principalship after twelve months, showed that he wanted the college to have a new ethos, and to rid it of those connected with the 1956 scandal.[118] In September 1961, the college opened as an 'A' school with sixty-nine former pupils, eighteen scholarship students, sixteen new boarders, and ten day pupils, making a total enrolment of 113 pupils. On the question of financing the college Browne was not slow in charging realistic fees. Boarders were charged one hundred pounds per annum, while the fees for day boys were twenty pounds.

Once the closure decision had been approved by the Cabinet, the Department began negotiations with the existing conductors of the colleges. However, it was not until May 1961, that Hillery told the Dáil that negotiations with the existing conductors of four colleges were under way, while tenders would be invited for the fifth college: C. Bhríde.[119] This was a little disingenuous, as in February 1961, the Minister had been instructed to dispose of the colleges on the following terms:

C Éinne, estimated value £95,000: Bishop of Galway offered £40,000 in instalments of £2,000 per annum for the lands, buildings and all equipment

C Íosagáin, estimated value £50,000: Provincial of De La Salle Order offered £10,000 in annual instalments of £1,000 starting 1964/65

C. Mhuire, estimated value £35,000: Mother Superior of the Mercy Order, Tuam, offered £10,000 in instalments starting in 1964.

C. Íde, estimated value £35,000: The Mercy Order, Tralee, offered £10,000 in annual instalments.[120]

The Cabinet obviously felt that the Mercy Order was driving a hard bargain. Originally the nuns offered only £9,000[121] for C. Mhuire, and the Minister was given special instructions regarding the sale of C. Íde and C. Mhuire:

> In addition to such sums as he may be able to obtain from the Orders concerned, for the total effects of each college, but in the event of his failing to obtain any such additional sums he be authorised to accept £10,000 for the lands, premises and effects of each college.

A condition of sale was that each of the four colleges would be used as a Class 'A' secondary school for not less than twenty years, and this was emphasised by the Minister in a memo, in February 1961, which showed the Government's sensitivity to criticism over the closures:

> The Minister for Education regards it as of paramount importance that, where possible, they should be kept as Class 'A' Secondary Schools. It is essential to his policy of encouragement of the use of Irish in schools that no action of the Government should reduce the number of secondary schools in which Irish is the medium of instruction and general communication. It might be interpreted as showing a lack of interest in the revival of Irish and invite a charge that while exhorting others to forward the language by all ways

> possible the Government is suppressing schools under its own direct control in which Irish is the language.[122]

As the Bishop of Raphoe was not interested in acquiring C. Bhríde, its disposal was problematic. However, before it was put to tender, an offer of £20,000 was made by the Capuchin Order, which already had an establishment at Ards, in Co. Donegal, and wanted to obtain Falcarragh as a house of studies.[123] This offer was recommended for acceptance by Hillery on the following grounds:

> In view of (a) the great Franciscan tradition in the matter of Irish scholarship (b) the beneficial effect the introduction of an Order, such as the Capuchins, would have on the Gaeltacht area and (c) Falcarragh is amply catered for with secondary 'A' schools the offer of the Capuchin order be accepted.[124]

It is likely that the offer would have been accepted, but for some anxiety in the Cabinet over the low prices recommended by Hillery. Indeed they were so low that Lemass[125] was moved to refer the matter to the Attorney-General for advice, on whether 'the sale of State property in these five cases, at less than the estimated market value, could be regarded as an individual endowment to religion, and therefore a contravention of Article 44.2.2 of the Constitution.' The Attorney-General's considered opinion, however, was that it could be 'regarded as an endowment of education, and not of religion, in cases other than Falcarragh.' [126]

For that reason the Government decided not to accept the Capuchin offer for C. Bhríde.[127] Meanwhile efforts to sell the premises continued, without success, and a memo to the Government, in May 1961, reported that Fr. Vergilius had repeated his offer, though he pleaded that the Order 'would have to raise the money.' Despite the fact that a higher offer

had been received 'elsewhere' of which the Taoiseach had been informed,[128] Fr. Vergilius's offer was accepted. The secretive manner in which the properties were sold aroused concern, however, and the Federation of Catholic Lay Schools passed a resolution calling for a full investigation by the Comptroller and Auditor-General and by the Dáil Committee for Public Accounts into the matter in May 1961.[129]

A noteworthy feature of the sale of the properties was that Finance, which throughout the history of the system, had continuously asserted that it had to make savings, accepted such reduced offers for properties, estimated to be worth one million pounds when the closure decision was first cited in December 1959.[130] Finance's excuse was that the conditions attached to the sale of the colleges reduced their value.

> The Government should be aware that the possibility of selling at prices anywhere near the market value is further reduced by the disposal of properties to communities at present in occupation, or to alternative communities, nominated and appointed by the local bishop at a price which the community may be able and willing to pay.[131]

Indeed Finance's acceptance of the Office of Public Works' estimate of £250,000 as the properties' market value was remarkable and its failure to query how the value of the properties decreased from an estimated one million pounds[132] when the closure was first cited to this sum, was even more remarkable. Furthermore the prices recommended by the Minister for Education for acceptance, and agreed by the Cabinet in February 1961, amounted to a mere £80,000 in instalments over twenty years, for four of the colleges. Moreover, payment for C. Íosagáin and C. Mhuire would not start until 1964. Hillery's weak explanation for this vast difference was that they wanted the colleges to continue

'under altered arrangements,' so they had to deal with the existing conductors of the colleges and to settle with them: 'Every endeavour was being made to have them continue as 'A' schools.'[133]

As the preparatory system came to an end, the final act in the dismantling of the gaelicisation policy was announced. Newly-qualified teachers would no longer be required to obtain the Bilingual Certificate[134] before leaving training college. This had ensured that there was a high standard of fluency in the language in the training colleges. In 1961, the Bilingual Certificate was replaced by an oral examination, which teachers had to pass, within five years of qualifying.[135]

CONCLUSION

The ending of the preparatory system came at a time of rapid transformation in Irish society. The return of Fianna Fáil to power in 1957 brought an increased emphasis on economic planning. The realisation of the importance of education in society highlighted the need for a more realistic approach to the gaelicisation policy. The retirement of de Valera from politics, and the appointment of younger men to positions of leadership in Government, gave an added impetus to change, for the new leaders, who were a generation further removed from 1922, were more in tune with the public's attitude to the language question.

During the period 1957 - 1961 Education and Finance, whose disputes over the preparatory system had gone on for years, ended their disagreements and a number of significant changes took place in the education system. The introduction of an oral Irish test at the Leaving Certificate Examination, and the reform of recruitment selection procedures for training colleges, were part of the strategy to end the dominant role of Irish in the education system. With these changes, the preparatory system was no longer needed.

For much of the fifties, it had limped along. Indeed it probably would have been ended much earlier, but for de Valera's support as Taoiseach and the fear of successive Governments that the closure of the colleges would be opposed by the bishops. However, the squalid episode at C. Éinne, which resulted in the expulsion of twenty pupils in 1956,[136] ensured the approval of the Hierarchy.

That the Government desired to end the system, was obvious from the haste with which the properties were disposed of. Within less than two years, the colleges were sold off amidst little more than a whimper of opposition from Irish language enthusiasts. This was soon silenced by the Government's bold strategy of promising extra scholarships for Gaeltacht students, and the continuation of the colleges as 'A' schools. As the public's desire for a more realistic approach to the language had been growing for many years, there were few objections to the closure decision. Indeed its ready acceptance was an indication that the down-grading of the language's position in education would be

welcomed, and it gave encouragement to Fine Gael to promise an end to compulsory Irish in its election manifesto of 1961.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VII, Part (ii)

[1] *The First Programme for Economic Expansion,* (Dublin: The Stationery office, 1958) See also J.J. Lee, Ireland *1912–1985 Politics and Society,* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1989) p. 344

[2] See p. 61, n. 88

[3] Seán Lemass, (1899 – 1971). Revolutionary, politician and Taoiseach. A native of Ballybrack, Co. Dublin, he was educated at O'Connell School, which he left at fifteen to join de Valera's Company of Volunteers. His impeccable republican credentials included fighting in the GPO during Easter Week 1916, and internment at Ballykinlar, during the War of Independence. Moreover, he opposed the Treaty and fought on the anti-Treaty side during the Civil War. At one stage he was adjutant of the Four Courts garrison. In December 1922, he was captured, and imprisoned in Mountjoy Gaol and, later, in the Curragh Camp. His older brother, Noel, also saw action in 1916, and in the Civil War, during which he was kidnapped and killed.

Seán Lemass gradually moved away from militant republicanism and its sterile ideology, and developed a reputation as a politician for his organising ability, and his pragmatic approach to economic development. He was first elected a TD, for Dublin South, in 1924, but in line with the abstentionist policy, pursued by republicans, did not take his seat. A founder member of Fianna Fáil in 1926, he was appointed Minister for Industry and Commerce in the first Fianna Fáil administration of 1932. As minister, he energetically pursued a vigorous programme of protection for private enterprise, and the use of State resources to develop semi-State bodies. He is credited with the establishment and development of a number of successful bodies, including Bord na Móna, Aer Lingus, and Bord Fáilte.

During the Emergency, he served successfully in the crucial role of Minister of Supplies. One of the tragedies of his career was that he did not become leader of Fianna Fáil until he was sixty, and his best years were spent in the shadow of de Valera. A major feature of Lemass's time as Taoiseach, was his emphasis on economic planning, efficient administration, and his open approach to Northern Ireland. In 1965, he made an historic visit to Belfast to meet his northern counterpart: Captain Terence O'Neill. Lemass's vision of a modern Ireland encompassed such diverse elements as membership of the European Economic Community, national wage agreements with the trade unions, and free secondary education for all. In 1966, he retired as Taoiseach, and died five years later.

[4] The only college to continue as a preparatory college was C. Moibhí, the college for Protestant students.

[5] Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers

[6] See p. 191

[7] See pp. 200 - 215

[8] See p. 270, n. 96

[9] See p. 422, n. 106. Former students have differing recollections of Fr. Hynes. In *Coláiste Einde 1928-78,* p. 67, he is described as 'a kind effective priest. You would not find anyone more natural nor more understanding than him. It was no wonder that years earlier, the students nick-named him 'daddy.' He was like a father to every one of us.' A somewhat different view was given by Breandán Ó hEithir, in *Over the Bar,* p. 64: 'He

had a beautiful voice and the graceful walk of a dancer but he had no understanding at all of how to deal with growing boys apart from laying down endless rules and enforcing them rigorously.' As president of C. Einne, Hynes did not teach. In 1962, he became parish priest of Inis Guaire

[10] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[11] Fr. Pádraig Ó Laoi, From Co. Clare he taught Latin and was a keen sportsman, who often acted as referee at college games. He was appointed vice-principal in 1944, and in 1962 he succeeded Hynes as president of C. Éinne. Four years later, he was appointed parish priest of St. Patrick's Parish, Galway. Subsequently, he became parish priest of Ennistymon, Co. Clare. He published a biography of Nora Barnacle, and *The Annals of the GAA in Galway*. According to the Breandán Ó hEithir, in *Over the Bar*, p. 85, he was a quick-tempered but good humoured individual, who encouraged freedom of expression in debate.

[12] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[13] *Ibid.* The names of the three civil servants were Murray, Quirke, and O'Flaherty

[14] Ó hEithir, *Over the Bar*, (Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 1991) p. 87

[15] Wine and stout were amongst things taken

[16] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] See p. 270, n 96

[20] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Principal officer, O'Flathartaigh,

[25] Ó hEithir, *Over the Bar*, p. 66

[26] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Ó hEithir, *Over the Bar*, p. 88 Also interview with Liam Ó Mainín, a member of the Department's inspectorate and a past pupil of C. Éinne

[31] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[32] See p. 482

[33] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] *Ibid.*

[38] In December 1956, a second-year pupil who had been corresponding with girls outside the college, including a pen-pal in Dublin, was expelled. A 'dangerous association' had developed and his letters were sent to Browne for examination.

[39] See p. 482

[40] See p. 481

[41] Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language, *Summary of the Final Report*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1963)
[42] OECD Survey Team, *Investment in Education*, (1965)
[43] The Irish television station was known as Teilifis Eireann, when it was first established. Later its name was changed to Raidio Teilifis Eireann or RTE
[44] *The Sunday Independent*, 29th December, 1957
[45] Professor E.F. O'Doherty was a leading authority on bilingualism in education
[46] E.F. O'Doherty, 'Bilingual school policy,' in *Studies*, Autumn 1958, p. 268
[47] UCD Archives, Mulcahy Papers, P7/D/234
[48] See p. 20
[49] See p. 477, n. 31
[50] *Amárach, Guth na Gaeltachta*, 28 Mean Fomhair, 1961
[51] Terence Brown, Ireland, *A social and cultural history 1922 – 1985*, (Fontana Press, London: 1985) p. 268
[52] Roinn na Gaeltachta Papers R22
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] See p. 61, n. 88
[56] *Dáil Reports*, 11th June, 1958
[57] *Report of Department of Education*, 1958 - 59, p. 4
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] *Dáil Reports*, 11th June, 1959
[60] See pp. 79 - 80
[61] *Dáil Reports*, 11th June, 1958
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] See p. 453
[64] See pp. 372 - 373
[65] Fr. Donal Cregan CM, had succeeded Archbishop McQuaid as President of the Catholic Headmasters' Association in 1940. In 1957, McQuaid appointed him, with Lynch's approval, to the important post of President of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.
[66] See p. 512
[67] See p. 521, n. 3
[68] Two of de Valera's close associates died around this time: Derrig in 1956, and Moylan, in 1957, while another dedicated Gaeilgeoir, Mulcahy, retired from the leadership of Fine Gael in October 1959.
[69] Cabinet minutes, 9th November, 1959, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] See pp. 483 - 492
[72] See pp. 404 - 409
[73] See pp. 277 - 279
[74] Diary of C. Íosagáin, 24th March, 1958. See also p. 265
[75] *Ibid.*
[76] See p. 482
[77] Tarlach Ó Raifeartaigh, (1905 – 1984), Secretary of the Department, 1955 – 1968. From Co. Tyrone, he was educated at St. Patrick's College, Armagh, and UCD, where he

studied Modern and Early Irish. From 1925 – 31, he was a lecturer at St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and later entered the Department, as inspector of secondary schools. Subsequently, he held many important posts, including chief inspector, assistant secretary and secretary. He also served on a number of prestigious educational bodies, including the Higher Education Authority, of which he was the first chairman from 1968 – 75; the Advisory Committee for Cultural Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Committee for Higher Education and Research of the Council of Europe. He was a contributor to a number of academic journals, particularly, *Irish Historical Studies*, of which he was secretary for twenty years.

[78] See p. 270, n. 96

[79] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[80] *Ibid.*

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] Five university scholarships were awarded annually to Gaeltacht students and two places were reserved for female students in Domestic Science Training Colleges

[83] Cabinet minutes, 9th November, 1959, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307

[84] *Ibid.*

[85] *Ibid.*

[86] *Inniu*, 4 Márta, 1960

[87] *Ibid.*, 11 Márta, 1960

[88] See p. 60, n. 50

[89] *The Sunday Independent*, 13th March, 1960

[90] *Comhar*, Aibreán, 1960

[91] See p. 500

[92] See p. 20

[93] See p. 409 - 410

[94] See p. 94

[95] *Comhar*, Aibreán, 1960

[96] See p. 60, n. 50

[97] *Comhar*, Aibreán, 1960

[98] The Commission's report was not completed until 1963. Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language, *Summary of Report*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1963)

[99] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307B

[100] *Amarach*, 25 Bealtaine, 1961. The results of the 1960 Leaving Certificate Examination were 24 entered, 22 gained honours

[101] *Dáil Reports*, 24th May, 1960

[102] *Ibid.*

[103] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307

[104] Minutes of Hierarchy Meeting, 21st January, 1960, Dublin Diocesan Archives, McQuaid Papers

[105] Diary of C. Íosagáin, 3rd June, 1960

[106] See p. 228

[107] See p. 523, n. 65

[108] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307

[109] See p. 568. Memo from the staff of C. Einne on the closure of the college, Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[110] Lord Ventry sold the property, which was then known as Burnham House, to the Land Commission in 1922 for £7,000
[111] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307B.
[112] *The Irish Independent*, 12th January, 1961
[113] See p. 506
[114] See p. 327
[115] Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[116] Letter from Browne to Department, 6th May, 1961, *Ibid.*
[117] See p. 521, n. 9
[118] See pp. 483 - 492
[119] *Dáil Reports*, 16th May, 1961
[120] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307C/61
[121] Some idea of the value of money at this time can be gauged from the fact that the salary of a married male teacher in November 1961 was £505 per annum rising by twenty increments to £1,020
[122] Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307C/61
[123] *Ibid.*
[124] *Ibid.*
[125] See p. 521, n. 3
[126] Cabinet memo, 17th February, 1961, Department of the Taoiseach Papers, S12307
[127] *Ibid.* S12307C/61
[128] *Ibid.*
[129] *The Irish Independent*, 10th May, 1961
[130] See p. 507
[131] Department of the Taoiseach Papers S12307C/61
[132] See p. 507
[133] *Dáil Reports*, 16th May, 1961
[134] Since 1936 it had been compulsory for students leaving training college to obtain the Bilingual Certificate.
[135] *Comhar*, Liúl, 1961
[136] See pp. 483 - 492

CHAPTER VIII

THE PREPARATORY SYSTEM – SUCCESS OR FAILURE ?

In November 1959, the decision was taken to close the preparatory colleges and within less than two years the system ceased. This chapter will assess the contribution of the preparatory system as a method of recruitment to Irish education and its role in assisting the implementation of the State's gaelicisation policy. It will consider the performance of the preparatory system in the light of the expectations of the Cumann na nGaedhael Government which established it in the twenties, and of the demands imposed upon it by successive Governments in the following three decades. A major part of the research involved the gathering of information from former teachers and students. Though chosen on a fairly random basis, an effort was made to ensure that material[1] was obtained from students from each decade in each college. This chapter will examine the strengths and weaknesses of the system as seen in the light of their experiences. In using the material collected in this way, it has to be remembered that many of them were looking back over thirty, forty, fifty, and in the case of the early students and teachers, sixty years, and their reminiscences may not be uncoloured by time.

The 1959 decision to close the colleges indicated a significant change of direction in Irish education for the colleges had been a fundamental part of the State's recruitment policy for over thirty years. It was also a clear indication of the Government's intention to lessen the emphasis on the Irish language in the education system, which was one of the

few radical initiatives undertaken by the Irish State at its foundation in 1922. Moreover, the Government's decision to end the preparatory system was tantamount to acknowledging that efforts at gaelicising the education process had failed, for the preparatory system was one of the few successes in this area. Nevertheless despite the failure of efforts by successive Governments to gaelicise the country, the emphasis on cultural nationalism had effected sufficient change in the country at large, to ensure that the State had its own definite character, and separate identity.

In assessing the contribution of the preparatory system to Irish education, certain key points must be considered. These include firstly, the aims of those who set it up, secondly, the context in which it was set up, and thirdly, the changing political and educational background in which it operated from 1926 – 1961. Three key aims were laid down for the preparatory system when it was set up in the 1920s.[2] At that time there was a dearth of suitable material for primary teaching and it was envisaged that it would firstly: 'open up a new supply of candidates.'[3] Secondly, it would provide the pupils with a much better education and training than had been given by the existing recruitment systems: the monitorial system and the old pupil-teacher scheme. Thirdly, it was to assist the gaelicisation policy, by drawing 'as large a supply of teachers as possible from the Irish-speaking families of the western counties, who owing to their poverty, have not hitherto been able to give their children a sufficient education to fit them to be teachers.' [4]

Judged on these narrow criteria, the system was successful; it did provide a new supply of candidates, who were better educated than those who were recruited through the

monitorial and old pupil-teacher systems. Indeed the preparatory colleges replaced the older systems at the end of the 1920s, by which time it had become obvious that all candidates entering training college needed to have completed secondary education, and to have passed the Leaving Certificate Examination. Moreover, the colleges successfully provided sufficient candidates for training during a period of transition in recruitment, as the old pupil-teacher scheme and the monitorial system[5] came to an end and new forms of recruitment, the new pupil-teacher scheme and Open Competition,[6] were being developed. The emphasis on pre-training, which was central to both the older methods of recruitment, grew less important as time went by, and eventually came to be discarded. Allowance was made for it, however, when the preparatory colleges were established with the insistence that students undertake teaching experience in their third year.[7] But the observance of this condition, varied from college to college.

The third criterion that large numbers of pupils would come from the Gaeltacht was not immediately fulfilled, and it was in an endeavour to achieve this aim that Blythe,[8] misguidedly, changed the entry requirements to favour Gaeltacht entrants, and provided special courses to assist Gaeltacht students[9] to gain places in the colleges. By the mid-thirties the colleges were working successfully: preparatory students had excellent results at both the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate Examinations and the first preparatory students played a significant role in the gaelicisation of the training colleges. Indeed, as early as 1932, the Department could declare with some satisfaction, that 'practically all the work in the training colleges is done through the medium of Irish.' [10]

The Government could also assert that its main aim in establishing the preparatory system: the production of primary teachers fluent in the language, willing to teach Irish, and to teach through Irish, had been successfully achieved for within a short period the majority of primary teachers could claim that they were able to teach Irish, while there was also a growing number of schools where all subjects, except English, was taught through Irish. During the thirties the number increased from 228 in the school year 1930/31, to as many as 305 by 1938/39.[11]

In assessing the success of the system, however, the context in which the colleges were established must be considered. A major aim of the newly-established Irish Free State was to effect a cultural revolution, by emphasising the Irish language, history, and distinctive culture of the country, and the colleges were intended to play a significant part in the Government's strategy. The gaelicisation policy originated with the Gaelic League[12] and the development of its educational programme owed much to Patrick Pearse.[13] The idea for the preparatory system grew out of Pearse's belief,[14] which he put into effect at Scoil Eanna, that the best way to learn a language was by 'total immersion,' and the policies drawn up by the Ministry of Irish, and its efforts at establishing a scholarship system to a Scoil Ullmhuighthe,[15] were a continuation of this. Unfortunately, much of the planning was undertaken during the War of Independence, when involvement in military activities precluded lengthy debate, and the heady fervour of the times created unrealistic expectations, resulting in ambitious, and somewhat simplistic

plans for the gaelicisation of the new State. Nevertheless the language was to play a significant role in the new leaders' efforts to effect a cultural revolution.

These factors contributed to the failure of attempts to gaelicise the new State. The fanaticism of some revivalists led to a situation where the expression of doubts about the language policy was regarded almost as treason. Furthermore many of the leaders in the struggle for independence, including Pearse,[16] Blythe,[17] Fitzgerald,[18] Lynch,[19] Beaslaoi,[20] 'Sceilg,'[21] and Ó Caoimh,[22] were writers and journalists, who naively believed their own propaganda. The enthusiasm and zeal which they showed in learning the language made it an easy task for them to become fluent at Irish. This made it all the more difficult for them to comprehend the enormity of the task facing the new State.

Moreover, the originators of the gaelicisation policy reckoned without the effects of the Civil War, which was to be one of the most significant contributory factors to the failure to revive the language, and which doomed the revival policy almost before it began. The deaths of the most dynamic and committed leaders, Collins,[23] Griffith,[24] and Cathal Brugha,[25] occurred during this period and, added to the grievous losses already suffered after 1916, further reduced the number of leaders ardently committed to the language revival. The loss of idealism and the deep divisions between the Treaty and the anti-Treaty sides resulting from the brutality of the Civil War, meant that the language policy became a 'sacred cow;' any attempt to review, or change the policy, was avoided for fear that one's commitment to the new State would be challenged, and one would be labelled pro-British. The malignant hatreds which ensued were all the greater, because each side

saw itself betrayed by former comrades, friends, and even family members, a betrayal harder to endure than that by one's enemies. The cruel savagery inflicted by both sides also did considerable psychological damage to the cause of Irish nationalism and resulted in the disappearance of the 'vision splendid,' which had inspired the fight for freedom. Indeed so deep were the divisions, and bitterness, resulting from the Civil War that rational debate about it was not possible until the 1980s.

A further difficulty resulting from the Civil War was the weak economic state of the country's finances. Following so soon after the War for Independence, the Civil War almost ruined the country.[26] The precarious stability of the new State was weakened and, but for stern action by Cosgrave's Government in dealing with the anti-Treaty forces, might have disintegrated. For these reasons the gaelicisation policy was no longer given the same priority as in the pre-1922 days, and efforts at reviving the Irish language soon devolved on two bodies – the civil service and the education system, both under the control of the Government.

Moreover, the failure of the overall policy was due to three major factors: firstly, it was over-ambitious and ill-thought-out. Secondly, it lacked public support while its over dependence on the education system and the civil service was a third factor. In addition the failure of members of successive Governments to set an example by speaking the language, led to the policy becoming a cause of ridicule. A further notable feature of the new State's plans for the gaelicisation of the country was the lack of any budgetary planning, or programme of assessment.

Once the implementation of such a major policy was underway, it was to be expected that an assessment of its progress would have taken place at regular intervals, and the policy modified, where necessary, but this never happened. Indeed for almost forty years, successive Governments left the policy virtually untouched, and relied almost entirely on the education system, and the civil service, to carry the burden of gaelicising the nation.

The gaelicisation policy failed in both areas; by 1959, over one-third of the civil service had little or no Irish, while in the Gaeltacht almost half the public servants were incompetent in Irish.[27] In addition the gaelicisation policy damaged the education system by narrowing the curriculum with an over-concentration on one subject. After eight years of language teaching, few pupils were able to converse naturally in Irish, and for those who were, there was little opportunity or necessity to do so, outside the classroom. Outside these two areas, efforts at gaelicising the nation were more symbolic than real; pillar boxes changed from red to green; street signs became bilingual, and semi-State bodies were given Irish names.

Successive Governments failed to engage in regular assessment of the gaelicisation policy, and subsequently to modify it for fear of taunts from the opposition that they were less than committed to the language. The Gaelic League and other zealous Gaeilgeoirí, such as Blythe,[28] refused to countenance any change, for though the League's role underwent a dramatic transformation once independence was achieved, its influence lived on as many of the leaders of the new State had been nurtured by the League. Fianna Fáil had the added fear of its own language enthusiasts, who included de

Valera,[29] Derrig,[30] Moylan,[31] Seán T. O'Kelly,[32] and Aiken.[33] As long as they were still active in politics, the policy was allowed to continue. So the only assessment ever made of the progress of the gaelicisation policy was of the civil service, where a number of assessments took place during the period 1922 - 1961. For almost forty years successive Governments adamantly refused to consider any assessment of the impact of the gaelicisation policy on the education system, apart from the confidential Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges in the late thirties, the results of which were never published.[34] Indeed this report may have been a contributory factor to the refusal of successive Governments to assess the effects of the gaelicisation policy on the education system, or to consider the results of the INTO's research in this area.[35]

The one area where efforts to gaelicise education were successful was the preparatory system, and much of its success, was due to the fact that it was one of the few areas where the Government was willing to spend money in the early years. Its high costs, however, soon led to tensions between Finance and Education, and the history of the system was dogged by disputes between the two departments. A major contributory factor to the high costs of the system was the ill-conceived fee-paying system, where 'scholarships' were awarded to a very large proportion of the students. Finance's desire to reduce costs was not unreasonable, though its attitude to the system was marked by two characteristics – a lack of support for the Government's gaelicisation policy and an indifference to education generally.

Much of Finance's scepticism about the wisdom of the gaelicisation policy stemmed from the failure to reform the civil service at the foundation of the State. Whereas the Government insisted from the very beginning, that schools had to teach Irish from St. Patrick's Day 1922,[36] and immediately instituted a programme for teachers to learn the language, nothing was done concerning the civil service, where the vast majority of personnel stayed *in situ* as they had been under the old British regime. In addition the failure to reform the civil service left Finance in control of budgetary spending for the other departments. Many officials in Finance displayed a surprising ignorance of the education system. An example of this was the proposal[37] that the training college course be reduced to one year as students had been to preparatory college. In addition it was due to their position of supremacy in controlling the exchequer's expenditure that the preparatory college course was reduced from five to four years,[38] which resulted in difficulties over the teaching of Latin, and prevented the introduction of a modern language. Finance was also responsible for the introduction of the ill-conceived agreement,[39] whereby students had to promise to teach for five years in a national school or on failing to do so, to repay their fees.

Attempts by Finance to control Education's rising costs failed, and they continued to soar due to poor planning in Education. Much of this arose from the appointment of ardent Gaeilgeoirí, such as Ó Brolcháin,[40] and O'Neill,[41] to the highest posts in the Department, for which they had neither experience, nor expertise. The Department's poor planning was clearly demonstrated in a number of major areas, such as the futile efforts to build a training college in Galway in the twenties; the failure to make accurate

estimates regarding increased numbers attending school following the introduction of the School Attendance Act in 1926; the over-supply of trained teachers in the thirties, and the shortage of qualified teachers in the late forties and fifties. The early years of the preparatory system were dogged by the inability of the Department to estimate accurately the costs involved in establishing seven residential colleges, which eventually came to about three times the original estimate. There were also long delays in providing the colleges with permanent homes, due to endless bureaucracy and mismanagement. Examples of the Department's poor planning were clearly shown in the fact that five of the colleges started in temporary premises. Furthermore C. Bhríde had two campuses, over two hundred miles apart. Two colleges were moved about uncaringly. C. Moibhí had to endure six moves, while C. Einne had five, between their establishment in the late twenties and 1961. It also took twelve years to complete the building of C. Íosagáin at Ballyvourney.[42] In addition the preparatory system became embroiled in a battle between the two departments, with Finance doing its best to end the system, while Education strenuously defended it.

In its battles with Finance, Education frequently invoked the fear of offending the Hierarchy as a reason for opposing Finance. The history of this period shows that the Hierarchy played a major part in all educational decisions, and its authority was accepted without question, as almost all leading politicians were devout church members. Indeed few decisions were taken without its prior knowledge and agreement, for the failure to ensure the local bishop's approval could be costly, as was clearly the case in the proposal to build a training college for nuns in Galway,[43] in the late twenties. The disapproval of

the Hierarchy could end the most promising innovation, as was demonstrated by the way Derrig's proposals to provide second-level education in the Gaeltacht came to naught.[44] In addition, tensions, which arose over the closure of the De La Salle Training College at Waterford in 1939,[45] left the Fianna Fáil Government unwilling to risk incurring the bishops' wrath, and careful to avoid any hint of confrontation with the Hierarchy, and particularly, with such powerful characters, as Bishop Browne of Galway,[46] and Archbishop McQuaid of Dublin.[47] A further factor in accepting the Church's powerful role in the preparatory system was the context of the times. This was a period in Irish history when it was generally accepted that primary and secondary schools, hospitals, orphanages, and industrial schools, should be controlled by the Roman Catholic Church and managed by Religious Orders. Furthermore one of the first actions of the newly established Irish Free State Government was the closure of Marlborough Street Training College,[48] a clear indication that the new State intended the Church to have control of teacher training.

The Hierarchy was happy for the preparatory system to continue as long as it did, because it suited them. There were three reasons for this: firstly, the system gave the Church a powerful influence in the formation of future teachers, by educating them at residential colleges run by a Religious Order, chosen by the bishop in whose diocese each college was located. Secondly, one of the dominant features of the colleges was their emphasis on religion.[49] Thirdly: no teaching appointments were made without the approval of the bishops, who were the managers of the colleges. The colleges were an excellent nursery for candidates for the religious life, particularly the girls' colleges,

where several students from each class later became nuns. It was not until the episode at C. Éinne in 1956,[50] that the Hierarchy became aware of the system's weaknesses. By this time the Government wanted to end the system, and through negotiations with Bishop Browne of Galway, came to realise that the Hierarchy would not oppose the decision. Furthermore by offering the colleges at very low prices to the bishops in whose dioceses they were located, or to the Religious Orders which ran them, it removed any possibility of opposition from that quarter.

Despite the failure of efforts by successive Government to gaelicise the country, it can be claimed that the preparatory system greatly assisted efforts to revive the Irish language: firstly, large numbers of students from the Galltacht learned Irish easily and quickly. Secondly, as teachers they passed on a love of the language to successive generations of pupils, and thirdly, it succeeded in proving that Irish could be used to teach the Leaving Certificate course and led the way for the provision of courses taught through Irish at third-level institutions, practices which were unheard of until the establishment of the preparatory colleges. Indeed many educationists in the twenties, had asserted that Irish could not be used in this way. Amongst them was the unnamed adviser to Archbishop Byrne,[51] who had declared that the language was 'not a fit medium for the expression of higher educational thought, or the activities of modern life.' In addition he had forecast that sufficient numbers of teachers with the standard of Irish speech and cultural development would not be found to staff the colleges, and declared that the establishment of the colleges in several Gaeltacht areas, would 'tend to stereotype a variety of dialects, instead of leading to the gradual development of a unified cultivated

speech.' He was to be proved wrong on all his forecasts, as were members of the inspectorate, who expressed similar views in the twenties. [52]

Though they were proved wrong their forecasts were not unreasonable for the times in which they were made. At the establishment of the State there were many native speakers, but few of them were capable teachers.[53] Moreover, the language itself was in a precarious state. The number of native speakers was in decline. The size of the Gaeltacht was contracting, and Irish was spoken only in remote areas of the country. The structure of the language was somewhat problematic. Consisting of a number of dialects, it had no standardised spelling, grammar, or vocabulary.[54] Nevertheless sufficient numbers of teachers were found to staff the colleges. Many of the past students of the colleges went on to become teachers at a number of third-level institutions, and in this way helped the language to develop, so that today it can be used to express the most abstract intellectual thoughts. Pupils from different areas of the Gaeltacht were to be found in all the college

> There were 120 pupils in the college (C. Chaoimhín), the majority of them from the Gaeltacht. Every dialect was to be heard. They were there from Donegal, Kerry, Cúl Aodha and Ballingeary, Clear Island and the Déise. [55]

Moreover, by bringing students from different Gaeltacht areas to the same college a certain standardisation of the grammar and vocabulary of the language took place. The writer, Breandán Ó hEithir, described this experience in his autobiography:[56]

> During my four years in C. Éinne all the living dialects of Irish, with the exception of the Déise, were spoken there. There were also students from the non-Gaeltacht areas of Donegal, Mayo, and Galway, as well as boys from Cavan, Leitrim, Monaghan, Louth, Meath, Westmeath, Clare, and Tipperary. Linguistically it was like

> a vat into which almost all the dialects and regional accents were poured and out of which something close to a standard speech, based on the living language emerged. [57]

The preparatory colleges showed that technical and scientific subjects could be taught successfully through Irish. Of particular significance was the contribution of Liam Ó Lubaigh, who taught Science at C. Chaoimhín, and whose students achieved exceptional results at public examinations. [58] The following description is of one of his chemistry class:

> Mr Luby was teaching chemistry. He was explaining the difference between permanent and temporary hardness in water, and he had written on the blackboard the chemical formula that stood for what had been shown in an experiment with test-tubes and retorts, a few minutes earlier..... It was wonderful to hear the lecturer and the class discussing the chemical reaction here represented – all in Irish. Yet we are told by people who are as loudly assertive, as they are ignorant of their subject, that scientific subjects cannot be taught through the national language.[59]

The use of the Irish in this way, made it possible for the language to develop, and to extend its vocabulary, so that it is now possible to use Irish for the most sophisticated technological and scientific subjects.

Despite the successes of the preparatory system, however, it was not without its weaknesses. The main ones were: firstly, entry at too early an age, secondly, the segregation of students with everyone intended for the same profession, and thirdly, the fee system. These were fundamental faults in the system from its inception. In addition

certain other faults developed over time. These included firstly, the agreement to repay fees, if one failed to teach for five years in a primary school, which led to people becoming teachers, who had no interest in education. Secondly, the system became a very costly method of producing teachers, and thirdly, as preparatory students had a monopoly on places in training colleges, they kept better qualified students out of training, particularly in later years. Furthermore it was difficult to regulate the number of entrants to primary teaching to the number of teachers required, as students entering through the preparatory system took six years to qualify, whereas those, entering through Open Competition [60] took only two years. This was particularly problematic in the thirties, when there was a surplus of trained teachers[61] and in the fifties when there was an acute shortage of teachers.[62]

These were the main criticisms but other complaints included the failure to broaden the curriculum over the years, which meant that it was too narrow for student-teachers. In addition many students resented the failure to teach Latin to Leaving Certificate standard and the lack of a modern language. Furthermore though four of the colleges were in the Gaeltacht, students seldom met Gaeltacht people. Moreover, the failure to reform the system and the ill-judged changes made at Blythe's insistence, to ensure the entry of Gaeltacht students to teaching,[63] aroused the opposition of the INTO and brought the opprobrium of that organisation upon the system.

How fair was such censure? How did the past students regard the education they received in the preparatory colleges? As with any school or educational establishment, there are

bound to be varieties of opinions amongst former students, and so it was with the preparatory students. A further difficulty was that there were seven colleges involved, and while they were very similar in many respects, each was a separate entity. The majority of past pupils interviewed, or questioned, however, recalled their period at a preparatory college as happy. Typical of their comments were those of a student at C. Mhuire in the late thirties, who declared that she had loved teaching and taught happily for many years:

> I loved C. Mhuire. There was a wonderful feeling of security and happiness at C. Mhuire. I couldn't speak English when I got home.[64]

Furthermore many found the experience congenial, even stimulating, and described the preparatory colleges as fine for their times. Most of them made lifelong friendships. There were others, however, who pointed out that as they had no previous experience of being at a boarding school, they had nothing with which to compare their experience:

> I can only judge by my necessarily limited personal experience. At the time it was to me a completely new experience and I was not aware of any faults or drawbacks. As time went by I became aware that there were inherent weaknesses in the system.[65]

The replies of those who had previous second-level education varied. A student at C. Bhríde in the thirties recalled:

> I had been two years in Loreto in Letterkenny before I went to C. Bhríde. I liked it better. There was better food. I liked the teachers and I made very good friends there.[66]

A student at C. Mhuire in the forties, however, had a different experience:

> I had been to another convent and as a country girl I accepted things in C. Mhuire. There was, however, more freedom in the

> convent. While I was at C. Mhuire there was food rationing and we were only allowed two slices of bread. I was starving.[67]

Her experience, however, contrasted with that of a student at the same college in the fifties, who had spent two previous years at a convent in Tuam:

> I spent three happy years at C. Mhuire and I made lifelong friends there[68]

Most of those who had been to other second-level schools were teachers' children and their comments on the system were more perceptive:

> I had been to another school, which I found appalling. I enjoyed my time at C. Mhuire. I was happy there in the main but the challenge for those above average intelligence was inadequate.[69]

One criticism, accepted by all those questioned, was that the age of entry should have been older. It has to be remembered, however, that it was not unusual in those days for young people to chose their future career at the age of thirteen or fourteen. Indeed it was common practice for those entering certain Religious Orders to enter at twelve.[70] Furthermore the vast majority of children left school at fourteen and worked at whatever employment they could find; the more fortunate began apprenticeships at that age. Even those former students, who felt that the system should not have been ended, believed that the age of entry was too young:

> The system could have been retained with changes in the system of recruitment and in a widening of objectives – I felt the choice of the teaching profession had to be made too early in life.[71]

While a second student gave this view:

> As time went on, the secondary schools began to use the scholarship more and more as a cramming system and the calibre of students deteriorated. It was too early to set students on what was essentially a professional course. This led to early cramming. Moreover it was not sufficiently open to further educational advancements.[72]

While another student from C. Mhuire in the forties gave this view:

> The wrong people were in charge. It would not be a good idea to reopen them. The students were too young at thirteen and the system is fairer where all are picked on merit.[73]

A further criticism of the system was that all the students were intended for the same profession. Critics considered such segregation led to an unhealthy emphasis on one profession, and this was acknowledged by some students:

> Segregation of all potential primary teachers at second-level was undesirable for many reasons. There is little doubt that many not suited to teaching became teachers by default.[74]

While a student at C. Chaoimhín in the thirties recalled a strong emphasis on teaching as their future career:

> It was generally accepted that students would go on to training college and this was stressed repeatedly by those in charge. Any other calling was frowned upon.[75]

While according to another past pupil from a different college:

> It was understood completely that we were all student–teachers, that we were in the college for one purpose only, to become teachers.[76]

However, it was not a difficulty for others and the emphasis seemed to have varied from college to college:

> There was not much stress. They were four very happy years of my life. I got an education and training.[77]

A former teacher at C. Bhríde gave this view:

> It was a happy experience for me there was no pressure from parents and the majority of students were clever with no great 'tail' to a class. The weakness was that there was an 'inbreeding' – all students aiming to be teachers made it a kind of closed shop.[78]

Furthermore even the staff of C. Éinne, who opposed the ending of the system, showed an awareness of the system's weaknesses, particularly regarding the early age of entry and the effects of segregation. In a memo to the Department they wrote:

> The system holds an immediate attraction for parents and teachers to send the more intelligent children for this entrance examination, and thus get them "off their hands" once for all, with a future guaranteed. When they enter the college, their outlook is narrowed and confined, and they are hampered in their freedom of choice; and although they may have no real taste for the teaching profession, they follow the line of least resistance, they proceed to training college, and become, in many cases, only indifferent teachers, etc., etc.[79]

Critics also claimed that the preparatory system was used by students, as a means of obtaining cheap second-level education, and there is a certain amount of truth in this. Moreover, some past students admitted that they disliked teaching:

> We were the *crème de la crème.* I was a good teacher but I hated teaching and I left when I got married. Later I went into business.[80]

The tendency also developed for certain schools to enter a whole class for the annual entrance examination, regardless of whether the students were interested in becoming teachers, while in other areas the tradition grew up for the best pupils to sit the

examination. 'One entered the examination there wasn't a choice,' was how one past student explained his reason for entry,[81] while another former student recalled: 'It was the teacher's idea to help me to get a steady, pensionable job.'[82] Others replied that they wanted a secondary education and this was the only possibility:

> I entered the preparatory college simply because I was offered a scholarship - the only one available to me - as to many others, at that time. I was attending Stradbally National School and the scholarship offered the only chance of proceeding to a further level of education in the circumstances of the time. Secondary school educational facilities simply did not exist at the time in the area where I lived. The nearest secondary school (day pupils only) was more than ten miles away and travel facilities simply did not exist [83]

Indeed several former students acknowledged that had it not been for the preparatory colleges they would not have received secondary education. According to one: 'It was the only education my family could afford,' [84] while another past student said: 'I was offered a four-year scholarship (as a boarder) and my widowed mother who was finding it hard to make ends meet, thought it was a chance too good to miss.'[85] A third gave this explanation: 'I entered because I got a scholarship which I lost after the first term because of a means test.'[86] Sometimes, however, the lack of means and the desire to become a teacher were not incompatible, and a number of students claimed that they wanted to become teachers, though their family was of limited means. A former student at C. Moibhí asserted: 'I entered because of a desire to be a teacher. There was no convenient secondary school with fees suitable to the family's commitments' [87] while a past student of C. Bhríde asserted:

> It was wonderful for us poor people, from large families, who would not have had chance to be educated. It was great for those like me, who loved teaching. Others I don't know.[88]

In addition there were many students, who wanted to become teachers, and whose family incomes were not so limited. One of the first students in C. Bhríde[89] gave this reason for entering the college: 'I loved Irish and still do. It was the surest path to entry to Carysfort (Training College) for anyone wishing to teach in a primary school.' An almost identical reason was given by another former student,[90] who entered C. Moibhí in the late fifties:

> I entered because I wanted to teach and going to a preparatory college was a sure way at that time of getting into training college.

Moreover, in all the colleges there were a number of students from teaching families. Typical of such students were Sr. Columban, and Sr. Cillian Horgan, twin sisters, who were amongst the earliest students of C. Íde. They wished to follow their parents, whom they described as 'dedicated and very successful national teachers.'[91] Another student's father had been President of the INTO[92] while a fourth former student said:

> My parents were both teachers and my father was very anxious that, at least, one of the seven of us would follow him into teaching. Not being a native speaker it was difficult. However, I managed to get fifteenth place in Ireland and was called.[93]

It is clear from the comments of former students from teaching families, that their parents held the colleges in high esteem. One such former student recalled:

> My parents were national school teachers. My father was a native speaker. He considered that I would get the best education that was to be got at Tourmakeady.[94]

While a former student from C. Moibhí in the fifties recalled

> My mother had been an Open Competition student and she believed that preparatory students had an advantage due to their proficiency in Irish.[95]

A further criticism of the colleges was that the students had little freedom, and were all expected to conform to a rigid pattern, whereas student teachers needed to have their horizons broadened and developed through contact with others. A former student in C. Einne recalled the confined atmosphere in the college in the fifties :

> By today's standards there was practically no freedom. It was very narrow, with not enough contact with the outside world. There were no newspapers or radio.[96]

While this was true of most preparatory colleges an exception was C. Moibhí, where according to a former student in the forties:

> Teachers treated you as if you were mature! After class and at week-ends we could change out of uniform. Visits to relatives or friends were allowed on Sundays after church. Phoenix Park was a safe place for cycling and we enjoyed a spin at week-ends, with very little traffic.[97]

This relaxed attitude continued throughout the fifties, when the college moved to Shankill and students frequently visited the nearby town of Bray on afternoons when they were not engaged in sporting activities. In addition daily newspapers were provided in the students' dining-room. In the other colleges the lack of freedom was compounded by the emphasis on conforming. A student in C. Mhuire in the forties recalled:

> We were never encouraged to speak out nor allowed to mix with other schools or go out. We should not have been so deprived of contact with the outside world.[98]

Strict discipline was a feature of all the colleges with a strong emphasis on obedience, though the context of the times has to be remembered and most second-level boarding schools of the period would have had a similar regime.[99] Such conditions had their effect, however, and the system was successful in producing sound people devoted to their religion, happy to accept the *status quo*, and ready to mould the next generation in the same way. Sometimes, however, former students at a college during the same period viewed their experience differently. One former student at C. Chaoimhín from 1934 – 38 recalled:

> The discipline was rigid and tough. The place was spartan and it had the dark, gloomy appearance of a prison.[100]

While a class mate recalled:

> I was never happy there despite the fact that it was a beautiful building in a pleasant part of Glasnevin. The discipline, loneliness and unimaginative teaching contributed to my discomfort.[101]

A third student of the period had a different recollection: 'There was a friendly atmosphere, which helped me to settle down.'[102]

The emphasis on discipline, however, depended very much on the Order running the college. Both C. Íde and C. Mhuire were run by the Mercy Order and a similar atmosphere prevailed in both. A former student described C. Íde in the fifties:

> The college was at that time like the homes. Religious and moral behaviour was important There was an over-emphasis on modesty I thought. It was put in such a way that it would depend on us how men behaved. Discipline was very convent-like, with silence in the corridors and toilets. Fear prevailed throughout - the fear of being caught and being reprimanded verbally.[103]

While another former student described C. Íde in the late fifties:

> C. Íde was full of contradictions. We were told: ' Nuair a líonn gé síos líonn na géanna go léir síos,' and 'Ná téid leis an sruth.' (When one goose lies down all the geese lie down, and 'Don't go with the stream) but God help anybody who did have a mind of her own or questioned anything she got the works [104]

The same student gave this description of the atmosphere:

> There was a puritanical atmosphere in C. Íde. Anyone caught whispering was sent to the office of the head nun. It was very regimented. We had to go back after Christmas for a three-day retreat We were treated like novices. After Mass each Sunday there was a lecture on morals by the principal, Sr. Columban. [105]

Moreover, the confined atmosphere continued up to 1961. One of the last preparatory students in C. Íde recalled:

> I felt very lonely when I saw Mount Brandon, which was so near my home and I couldn't get to it. I wanted to go out and explore the woods and we weren't let. I was very happy though when taking part in plays and concerts in the hall. [106]

Nevertheless a number of students considered entering the Order: 'We all, at one time or another, thought about being a nun. About one or two entered every year.'[107]

Life in C. Mhuire was similar to that in C. Íde. A student at C. Mhuire in the forties described her time there:

> It was a grind, day in and day out. It was joyless and exam-orientated. It was compulsory to walk in file for a few miles as far as the waterfall, never daring to break rank, or to speak to anyone on the road. Once a year there was a hill climb with a picnic lunch. An extraordinary military barracks-style regimentation prevailed. Life was run by the clock Letters from home were opened and read. I got a letter from a medical student once and I was almost expelled.[108]

Nevertheless a student, who was at the college in the late forties recalled being very happy there, though looking back she felt that the colleges were so enclosed, that they

were out of step with modern trends in secondary education.[109] Other less sensitive students regarded their time at a preparatory college, as 'simply part of the growing-up process. Everyone went to boarding school.'[110]

The colleges run by the Mercy Order, however, contrasted with C. Bhríde, which was run by the Loreto Order, where a student from the thirties recalled appreciatively, how the friendliness and understanding of the bright young staff, helped her to settle down and to overcome the bewilderment, she endured as she changed from a town environment to the country, and became accustomed to the quietness, and the change of language.[111] In addition the nuns at C.Bhríde encouraged occasional visitors:

> The feast days of the nuns were special. We had visitors, family mostly. We also had a sale of work once a year when we sold our embroidery and craft work. It was the secondary school for students from the Donegal Gaeltacht. It had a lovely atmosphere. I still go back for reunions[112]

All the past pupils questioned described C. Bhríde as an excellent school, which gave them a very liberal education with many extra-curricular activities. The college seems to have been exceptional, in that it was staffed by teachers, lay and religious, of high intellectual calibre, interested in the arts and drama. A further indication of the affection and loyalty of the students for their former college, is the annual reunion, organised by past pupils and attended by former teachers.[113] Teaching there differed from the other girls' colleges. A student from the thirties recalled an outstanding teacher:

> Inín Uí Inse (Henchy)[114] was a brilliant History teacher. She insisted on us *reading the chapters* on the events we were studying before we came into class. She gave very few notes. But we had to be ready to give our opinions of how the events of the time

> influenced future incidents to tell what we approved of – disapproved of. We were always expected to get 'céad áit in Éirinn' – first place in Ireland and in our Intermediate Examination the youngest in the class got 110 per cent i.e. maximum marks plus the bonus for doing the examination through Irish.[115]

While a former teacher recalled the atmosphere in the college in the late forties and fifties:

> There was no need for strong-arm discipline The college had 100 pupils, who were well motivated So one could be relaxed and hold debates There was a very humane regime. Seniors studied on their own. Each year two or three girls went on to Galway University[116].

Furthermore from the beginning, the Loreto Order maintained that music should play a major part in the school and insisted on having a sister in charge of music, though she was not on the official staff at first. They also insisted that the Department supply them with musical instruments for a school orchestra.[117] A student from the thirties recalled:

> The young teaching sisters were highly qualified, cultured, and deeply religious. They insisted on having a sister in charge of music and native sisters assisted in running the house. One sister gave advice in a friendly way about politeness, even etiquette and dress, which many found helpful later on.[118]

A further criticism of the preparatory system was that the curriculum was too narrow for student teachers, and for many students this was problematic, and they regretted particularly the failure to teach a modern language.[119] When the colleges were established it was envisaged that French would be part of the curriculum, but this never happened. [120] French was taught in C. Bhríde[121] where according to a former student: 'We didn't do higher Mathematics at Leaving Certificate, because the nuns thought it

would narrow the curriculum too much.' Unusually for that period, higher Mathematics were taught in C. Mhuire, in the thirties, to those girls who were able for the course.[122] Botany, Chemistry and Physics were also studied in C. Mhuire at this time.[123] The colleges also had a distinctive attitude to study, although the standard of teaching, and the level at which certain subjects were taught, varied from college to college. Many former students expressed regret that only pass English was taught in C. Chaoimhín, because of the large number of Gaeltacht students. Others attributed it to the poor quality of the teacher, a native speaker from Galway.[124]

> When I compared my own standards and attainments in English and Latin after leaving preparatory college with those of my parents, both teachers, who got to training as a result of the King's Scholarship examination I feel that my end product was much inferior. Having graduated from UCD with a higher degree in later years, I can now look back dispassionately, and view the supreme effort that I and some of my fellow students had to make to attain the required standard for passing the Latin entrance tests, and to gain a pass in English in the first University examination. More than any other subject the teaching of English, even at the lower level, was abysmally lacking in any of the standards by which a modern language and its literature should have been treated. I am certain that the teacher contributed heavily to the failure.[125]

That the teaching of English at C. Chaoimhín was particularly poor, was confirmed by other students:

> There were different teachers of English. I was unfortunate to have one of the worst – a lay teacher who instilled in us an intense hatred of the subject. Only two of those, who spent the four years in C. Chaoimhín, opted for the higher course in English during our first year's training in St. Patrick's College[126]

The teaching of English in C. Éinne, in the forties, however, was of a high standard and according to the writer, Breandán Ó hEithir:

> I found the English course at UCG so dull and the History lectures so tedious for the quality of teaching in C Einne had prepared me for something more exciting.[127]

Unfortunately the quality of teaching, which Ó hEithir wrote about, had changed by the fifties, and according to a student of the period:

> C. Éinne was a boring place, where there was no *imagination in the teaching* and where students were never stretched. The pick of the country was amongst the pupils but they only did the bare minimum. They never developed their potential.[128]

Nevertheless, some former students defended the system on the grounds that it was similar to what was available in other schools at the time. According to a student of the fifties: 'Irish education in general was very narrow, though we weren't aware of it.'[129]

The teaching of Latin was particularly problematic. Many students did Latin for a short period, but were unable to study the subject to Leaving Certificate level:

> We did it for one year but not for an examination. So we didn't take it seriously. I regret now not having studied Latin seriously.[130]

The failure to teach Latin to examination level caused deep resentment among some of the students, who believed that it was a deliberate policy to discourage primary teachers from going to university.

> Latin was taught but we were not permitted to do it in the Intermediate or Leaving Certificate Examinations. We believed that it was deliberate policy by 'somebody' to discourage primary teachers from going to university.[131]

For students with means, however, Latin was not a problem and another student who did not continue with Latin after first year, pointed out that any student who wished to proceed to third-level took grinds for matriculation.[132]

A further criticism of the colleges was that they were too examination-oriented, and such critics attributed their excellent results to cramming. Outstanding examination results were frequently obtained, particularly, during their early years. An example of this was a student at C. Mhuire,[133] who got first place in Ireland in the Leaving Certificate Examination in Physiology and Hygiene, in 1936. Later in the thirties, another student at the college gained ten honours at the Leaving Certificate Examination, including Botany, Chemistry and Physics, as well as first place in Laois county council scholarship examination.[134] The following year, her sister[135] obtained full marks in five subjects in the Leaving Certificate Examination. The most outstanding results, however, were those obtained in 1938, by a class in C. Chaoimhín.[136] Good results were not unusual, as the majority of students were bright, clever, people, who had already demonstrated their ability, by passing a very difficult entrance examination to obtain a place. Moreover, to ensure students focussed on their studies, the threat that they would be sent home in disgrace, if they failed their examinations, provided added motivation to study.[137]

An important feature of the colleges was the emphasis on teaching practice, which was one of the justifications for the continuation of the preparatory system in the forties.[138] However, it varied from college to college. None of the students at C. Chaoimhín could

recall doing any, while in other colleges, it was little more than a charade. According to a student at C. Éinne in the thirties:

> A few boys were picked at random and given some instruction. We all sat in for it with the master teacher at the back. Afterwards there was a discussion about it. It wasn't done by all the students.[139]

While another student had this recollection:

> We did teaching practice in our final year. It was a harmless effort and of very little use. It was merely window dressing.[140]

By the forties, however, all students at C. Éinne took part in teaching practice. It was also undertaken in C. Mhuire once a year.

> There was nothing formal about it. Every so often perhaps once a year a teacher would call upon a student to take over a class.[141]

While another student at the same college had this recollection:

> Each student prepared a lesson and taught her own class with the teacher as supervisor and critic.[142]

Teaching practice seems to have made little impact on some students, though this may be due to the effects of the passage of time on their memories.[143] Moreover, opinions differed as to its value.

According to a former student at C. Bhríde in the thirties teaching practice served little purpose:

> We did teaching practice once a week with our own class as pupils. It meant that each one had a turn which did not come round very often. It really didn't serve any purpose. It was no help when we entered the training college.[144]

By the late fifties teaching practice was taken more seriously at the college:

> We were always aware that we'd probably become teachers. Once a year we had to take our own class and teach a chosen subject. The emphasis was on the good use of the blackboard and diagrams while still facing the class! It was taken seriously by both pupils and teachers.[145]

Each of the seven colleges made a distinctive contribution to the development of their students as people, and while each college had a particular ethos of its own, all the colleges were marked by certain features. These were mainly an emphasis on the Irish language, nationalism, religion,[146] and sport. While the emphasis on nationalism varied from college to college, all the colleges fulfilled the aspirations expressed for them by John Marcus O'Sullivan, Minister for Education, at the official opening of C. Chaoimhín in 1927:

> By these preparatory colleges we hope to get a large number of teachers to instill the Irish language into the very outlook of their pupils.[147]

Indeed one of the outstanding features of all the colleges was that they gave most students a love of the language, which continued with them for life:

> I developed a great love of Irish, which I have retained to this day. I sent all my children to Irish-speaking schools. I still meet some of my old C. Éinne colleagues with whom I have never spoken a word of English. [148]

Furthermore the colleges more than fulfilled the aspirations expressed for them by President Cosgrave[149] that they would be 'thoroughly Gaelic,' with the use of Irish not confined to the class-room, but permeating all activities so that the students lived 'in an Irish atmosphere':

> Inside the college gates nothing was heard day or night, early or late, Sunday or weekday, but Irish. The housekeeper spoke Irish, as did the cook, the maids, the workmen, the chaplain, Fr O'Dwyer, his successor, Fr. Denis Flynn, and the college doctor, Dr. O'Mahony.[150]

Moreover, learning a language by the 'total immersion' method was very successful as is shown by this recollection from a student in C. Chaoimhín in the thirties:

> I was entirely happy in C. Chaoimhín. Essentially I felt that students were engaged in a kind of missionary endeavour because of the feeling that as well as preparing for the profession of teaching, we were dedicated to the advancement of the Irish language. A certain idealism was basic to our teaching and training. That never entirely deserted my way of thinking in later life.[151]

In the early years of C. Chaoimhín it was not unusual for the boys to be heard speaking Irish in the local post office, or on the trams or buses, and one of the early teachers went so far as to make this claim:

> It was not long before Irish was spoken in the local post office, and on the trams and buses that went by the college and people in Dublin who had a love of the language used to go to Woolworths on a Saturday, to hear the boys chatting away in Irish – country boys loved to go to Woolworths with its great displays of goods.[152]

How much this recollection was exaggerated by time, is not possible to say, but the emphasis on the language brought its own rewards and there were few years when a pupil from the college did not receive a gold or silver medal for Irish composition. [153] In addition to the love of the Irish language cultivated in all the colleges, an interest in Irish culture was fostered through regular sessions devoted to Irish dancing, music and traditional singing.

While each college was a 'mini-Gaeltacht,' some of the colleges were more nationalistic than others. The most nationalistic was probably C. Chaoimhín, where a former student recalled that boys were reprimanded for wearing red, or blue ties.[154] Run by the Christian Brothers, the emphasis on nationalism was much in evidence in sport, where attendance at soccer, or rugby matches, was strictly forbidden and merited expulsion, though no one was ever caught. The emphasis on nationalism in C. Íde, however, was of a more gentle nature. According to a past student:

> In C. Íde, Pádraig MacPiarais was idolised and there was an emphasis on Irish culture in all its aspects but especially, the language was cherished.[155]

Students from the early days of the college recalled famous writers: Peig Sayers, Kruger Kavanagh, Muiris Ó Suilleabháin, Seán A Chóta Ó Caomhánaigh, Ó Guithín and File Ó Duinnsléibhe, visiting the college.[156] While a student of the same college in the fifties recalled:

> Sr Borgia (the Principal) went out of her way to help us to feel proud of our heritage. There was a lot of emphasis on culture – plays and music - not so much on books. It was a healthy nationalism with no apologies for the British being in the North and no bending over backwards to please spoilt unionists. It was very healthy. There was no hatred of the English in England either.[157]

Some former students recalled an increase in national feeling during the Emergency, particularly in C. Mhuire, where the outbreak of World War 11 had these effects:

> There was quite a good deal of anti-British bias, which was mainly due to the History teacher. Some of the others were imbued by her.[158]

The atmosphere in C. Bhríde was quite different:

> The atmosphere was cultural and not nationalistic. The college was as good as any secondary school today. They were the happiest years of my life.[159]

A former vice-principal at C. Íosagáin recalled his time there, from 1947 – 59, in similar terms:

> I can honestly say that they were the happiest years I spent anywhere. Conditions were near perfect. Not jingoistic but there was an ordinary enthusiasm for the language.[160]

One of the reasons for founding four of the colleges in the Gaeltacht was that the students would be able to meet native speakers in every day settings, such as out walking on the roads, going to Mass, or in the shops. Despite the large investment of effort and money to establish colleges in the Gaeltacht there was little contact between the students and the native speakers, and a former teacher, who taught at C. Mhuire for over thirty years, queried whether the colleges needed to have been in the Gaeltacht.

> Would the colleges not have done just as well in urban areas? Did they have to be in isolated places? Did they have to be in the Gaeltacht? Would they not have succeeded just as well in their objective as they were self-contained 'mini-Gaeltachts?'[161]

C. Bhríde, however, was an exception and a student from the thirties recalled that 'we often met Gaeltacht people on our walks to the strand and had conversations with them.'[162] From time to time the Department made efforts to try to use the Gaeltacht locations to better advantage, and paid for storytellers to visit the colleges.[163] The same student at C. Bhríde recalled:

> A *seanchaí* came to tell stories frequently. At first we understood very little as those of us from the south were not accustomed to Donegal Irish but we enjoyed joining in the *curfá* (repetitive parts).[164]

For students in the colleges outside the Gaeltacht, such as C. Éinne, little effort was made in this direction. A past student described the college as a 'closed shop - there were no anthropological expeditions into the Connemara hinterland.'[165] This was confirmed by another student, who said: 'We never met Gaeltacht people, except those in the college.'[166] There was a similar response from a student at C. Éinne in the fifties: 'We only met Gaeltacht people by accident.'[167]

One of the aspirations of the founders of the preparatory system was that the colleges would provide second-level education for Gaeltacht students and in this way large numbers of young native speakers would stay in Ireland instead of emigrating. How successful were they in achieving this aim? All the colleges had large numbers of Gaeltacht students, particularly C. Íde, where students came mainly from the Cork and Kerry Gaeltacht. According to Sr. Baiste, [168] a pupil from 1946 – 1950, and a teacher at the college during its final year as a preparatory college:

> One of the things in favour of C. Íde as a preparatory college was that it provided free education for girls from the Gaeltacht. This allowed them to find work in their own country instead of being servants abroad.[169]

It was believed that by having a large number of Gaeltacht students, Galltacht students would find it easier to learn the language, and to undertake their work through the

medium of Irish in the training colleges. While this aim was realised for Galltacht students, no effort was made to assist Gaeltacht students at English. A Gaeltacht student in C. Íde, in the late fifties, recalled being sad and unhappy as she found English very difficult, and while she was very good at Irish there was a negative image of the Gaeltacht among some of the staff:

> The appointment of a new principal brought a change. She was very nice. She used to praise my Irish. At C. Íde I hated Shakespeare we just read it. It was so different at Carysfort. I loved English there. [170]

Furthermore an unexpected result, which never occurred to those who founded the system, was that due to being in a totally Irish-speaking environment some students were not as good at English as they might have been:

> Because we spoke Irish only, we didn't become good English conversationalists and couldn't converse comfortably with other students about subjects, such as Science because of a lack of terminology![171]

Moreover, the success of C. Moibhí, where there were less than half a dozen Gaeltacht students throughout its history, showed that it was not necessary to have large numbers of Gaeltacht students for the colleges to be successful.

Furthermore, at times the two groups of students did not mix easily though this varied from college to college.[172] In some colleges there was little difference between them, though the research revealed that there was often considerable resentment among Galltacht students at the presence of Gaeltacht students. According to one student of the thirties:

> Gaeltacht students paid no fees, were dressed by the college, given travelling expenses and pocket money. We on the other hand were obliged to pay for everything, fees, travel etc.[173]

Differences in academic standards between the two groups were also problematic; the poor standard of English of Gaeltacht students caused some resentment, particularly as those who failed English at the Leaving Certificate Examination, were allowed on to training college. A student at C. Chaoimhín recalled:

> There was no difference between Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht students. Gaeltacht students had very poor English. Some of them never reached the standard to be teachers.[174]

While according to a former student at C. Éinne:

> We all went on to training college even Gaeltacht students who had poor English, and who failed English at the Leaving Certificate. They didn't do English at Training College. They were able to choose to major in one subject and most chose History. All the work in training college was in Irish.[175]

While the treatment of Gaeltacht students varied from college to college those at C. Mhuire, in the forties, did not find it a particularly welcoming place:

> There was only a handful of students from the Gaeltacht in C. Mhuire from 1943 to 1947. Their uniforms, ill-fitting and badly made, were provided for them. They were treated as second-class citizens, not by their peers, but by the nuns.[176]

This was confirmed by another past student of almost the same period:

> There was a negative attitude to Gaeltacht students because their Irish was better than the teachers. They thought Gaeltacht students should be eternally grateful for free education. Only four of us were from the Gaeltacht and we were made aware of it by the nuns[177]

How did the preparatory students mix with Open Competition students in the training colleges? While most students recalled that the two groups mixed well and this was a typical reply: 'We did not keep together as a group though, of course, we already had our own individual friends,' there was also this revealing comment from a former Gaeltacht student in C. Éinne in the late fifties: 'Open Competition students in training colleges would latch on to us to learn Irish.'[178]

Not surprisingly, there were many different opinions as to the quality of the education in the colleges. A student, who won a Fíor-Ghaeltacht scholarship to UCG, where she studied Arts and Commerce in the late forties, recalled:

> The preparatory college time stood me in good stead at university. It compared favourably with systems in other second level institutions. Perhaps better results at examinations were achieved in the preparatory colleges because of the hard grind of the four years spent there.[179]

According to a student at C. Éinne in the fifties:

> It was a liberal well-rounded education. We had excellent teachers, such as Aodh McDuane, who taught History and went on to be a lecturer at Carysfort Training College, and Michael Gaffney We had plays, weekly debates, music and drama.'[180]

For many students the random way in which they were sent to whichever college the Department selected, was a cause of resentment:

> Pupils were sent to any college. I was sent to Galway though I was from West Cork and the Munster college would have been more convenient for me.[181]

The Department showed little consideration for the students, who often had to travel long distances from their home to the college. A student recalled arriving at C. Éinne[182] at 3.00 am. 'It was dark and miserable.' In addition the Department often started students in one college and then transferred them to another college. Sometimes there was a reasonable explanation for the move, such as when the students in C. Bhríde's second campus in Talbot House[183] were moved to C. Íde when its new wing had been completed, but more often than not, it was just a ploy by the Department to adjust numbers, which it had failed to get right in the first place.

A student from Cork in the thirties, recalled being sent to C. Íde at first, and then being transferred to C. Mhuire:

> I started in C. Íde, where I stayed for a year. I was then moved to C. Mhuire for 1935/37. I had done the Intermediate Examination but I had to repeat it through Irish. I got the train in Cork. At Claremorris I got a train to Ballinrobe where a hired car brought us to the college. I loved C. Mhuire, especially at night when the full moon shone on the lake, the waterfall, the *cnoc* (hill) and the island. [184]

Her experience was not unusual, and several of those surveyed had a similar experience.[185] Typical of the way in which the Department treated students was the movement of six students from C. Mhuire to C. Bhríde in 1935. According to one of them, they were told to change college by the Department and no reason was given.[186] The sudden closure of C. Chaoimhín clearly demonstrated the uncaring attitude of the Department towards the students, when twenty-five students were moved from that college to C. Éinne for a year and, subsequently, moved to C. Íosagáin to finish their course. [187]

Not all students, however, were as accepting of the system as the Cork student. There were also a number, who were quite critical. A student at C. Chaoimhín in the thirties believed that the way in which Gaeltacht students were selected at entrance was unconstitutional, [188] while a student in the same class claimed that it resulted in the majority of student teachers coming from a few parishes in the west of Ireland[189] This former inspector wrote:

> The system was very satisfactory in so far as examination results were concerned. It also produced teachers who were proficient in Irish and students got a very good grounding in the various subjects of the curriculum But the system resulted in the majority of student-teachers coming from a few parishes in the West of Ireland. There was also a lack of variety since all (almost) pupils were embryo teachers. This lack continued in after-school life[190]

His perception that the majority of students came from a few parishes in the West of Ireland was not borne out by the research,[191] though it showed that often students came from the same schools and parishes, and that in some places a tradition of sending students to preparatory colleges developed over the years.

Part of the success of the colleges was due to the calibre of many of the teachers. The early teachers had a great enthusiasm for the language and taught it with missionary zeal. Amongst them was Mother Teresa Joseph O'Sullivan, a relative of the 1916 revolutionary, Austin Stack, who taught at C. Bhríde. A member of Cumann na mBan, she had been imprisoned for protesting during the Troubles. Other dedicated teachers were Aindrias Ó Muimhneachán, who taught in C. Chaoimhin from 1929 to 1933, a period he described as 'the happiest years of his life,'[192] and Micheál Ó Siochfhradha, who taught in C. Chaoimhín[193] and later in C. Moibhí. A native speaker from Co. Kerry,

he became an inspector in 1929. Another inspector who taught in a preparatory college was Seán Ó Cadhla, (J.A. Kyle) who was seconded from his work in the Department to act as principal of C. Moibhí[194] for six years. Other outstanding scholars, who taught in the colleges included Lil Nic Dhonnchadh,[195] who succeeded Ó Cadhla as principal of C. Moibhí, and Síle Ní Suilleabháin, later Dr. Dudley Edwards, who taught English at higher level at C. Íde in the thirties. She was remembered as an outstanding teacher.[196] Some of the teachers were highly qualified,[197] and it was not unusual for former preparatory students, or teachers, to become lecturers at third-level institutions. Amongst those who did, were Sr. Stella Fitzpatrick, a pupil at C. Bhríde from 1932 to 1936, who became a lecturer in Geography at Carysfort Training College; Maureen McGeehin, another past pupil of C. Bhríde, became a lecturer in History at UCD, while Sr Fidelis Shiel, who taught at C. Bhríde for a period, became principal of a training college in Kenya, in succession to a former Science teacher at C. Bhríde, who started the college.

The remoteness of some of the colleges made life for lay teachers problematic, as this perceptive comment from a member of the Loreto Order, a former teacher at C. Bhríde, noted:

> I think the lay teachers found C. Bhríde lonely. We knew that some of them visited Derry often. The nuns had the companionship of their community. There was about eleven of them. Then in holiday time they had visits from the Letterkeny community. At the time we never considered the fact that the place was so difficult to get at.[198]

Could the colleges have continued? As the preparatory system's success was due to its reliance on the 'total immersion' method of teaching a language, it would have been possible for the colleges to have continued as 'A' schools, with a Leaving Certificate section for those who wanted to become primary teachers. Entry to this section could have been according to merit, and an assessment of personal suitability for teaching, with funding by a genuine scholarship scheme, where the winners received free, or assisted education, with no pay back clauses, or conditions. Such a scheme would have removed many of the criticisms of the preparatory system, particularly its main defects.[199] Furthermore it would have reduced the costs of the colleges, and made it much easier to regulate the number of students, to suit the numbers of teachers required. In addition with entry open to all, the opposition of the INTO would have been diminished. Such a scheme would have forced the Government to provide facilities for second-level education in the Gaeltacht. Moreover, once the scheme was working successfully, the need for native speakers would have been reduced as those who learned Irish, through 'the total immersion' method, became fluent very quickly.

Many former students felt that the system could have survived, if certain changes had been made:

> It was a mistake to close them. I would have changed them. I would have kept the Irish language with the liberal education of C. Einne. There was a lot of merit in it. On the other hand some students didn't bother to work. They knew they had places in the training colleges. By and large however, the quality coming out of the training colleges was very high.[200]

Another change suggested was that the colleges should not have been run by Religious Orders:

> They did not teach social graces, crafts or skills. We were not taught how to handle life after college. The personal development of an individual was suppressed, not nurtured, or encouraged. It was the fault of the Religious, who were put in charge.[201]

Amongst those who believed that the system could have continued 'in a modified form' were the staff at C. Éinne, who drew up a memorandum opposing the closure of the college, in 1959. They proposed that entry to the colleges be deferred until after the Intermediate Certificate Examination, and that the results of that examination be used for selecting entrants:

> By that time, when pupils are at least fifteen or sixteen years of age, most serious-minded boys and girls have a good idea of what career they prefer, and the standard of ability, results and school reports would give authorities good grounds for judging their suitability as candidates for teaching. [202]

This was the way in which C. Moibhí operated from 1969 onwards. Up to then it had continued with the four-year course, as originally offered by all the colleges, when they were set up in the 1920s. It also accepted a small number of students each year, who had completed the Intermediate Certificate Examination elsewhere, a tradition which had begun at the college in 1943. Following the college's move from Shankill to the campus of the Church of Ireland Training College at Rathmines, in 1969, the four-year course was abolished and students entered after the Intermediate Certificate Examination only. The college continued to recruit students-teachers in this way for a further twenty-six years. The great advantage of the system was that the students gained fluency in the Irish language, an area of considerable weakness in second-level schools under Protestant management. There were, however, certain major weaknesses in running the college in this way. Firstly, the high costs meant that the college had to be heavily subsidised by the

Government. Secondly, the number of students was so small, that it was difficult to organise extra-curricular activities such as sport or choir. Thirdly, the presence of school-girls sharing their facilities led to tensions with the third-level students. Moreover, those students, who entered training from C. Moibhí, did not always enjoy spending a further three years in the same environment. In 1995, the Department closed the college following negotiations[203] with the manager of the college, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Donald Caird, and the Board of Governors of the Church of Ireland College of Education.

The proposals of the C. Éinne staff, however, went further than the model developed by C. Moibhí. They proposed that fifteen or twenty pupils, who had completed the Intermediate Certificate Examination with honours, should be accepted each year, and sponsored by the Department, as candidates for teaching in an ordinary Class 'A' secondary school. This proposal has resonances of the teacher-pupil scheme,[204] which was introduced at the same time as the preparatory system. The main difference, however, was that pupil-teachers had to undertook teaching practice in local primary schools. By the 1960s pre-training teaching experience had ceased to be a requirement for recruitment to training college. Furthermore they gave a very idealistic picture of teaching practice, which was quite different from that of the students' experience:[205]

> It (the preparatory system) provides an opportunity of practice in teaching, which has given a very useful indication as to who are likely to be successful in the technique of teaching, as well as showing weaknesses. This practice, short though it is, arouses surprising interest among the pupils themselves.[206]

How far did the closure of the preparatory colleges contribute to a decline in the standard of Irish in primary schools? Most of the former students accepted that the standard of Irish in primary schools had declined, though Ó hEithir recalled being told, optimistically, that standards would rise as a result of a broader system of recruitment.[207] Some former students[208] blamed the decline in Irish on their closure, while a former teacher stressed the need for teachers to be fluent at Irish if they were to teach the language well:

> Many teachers now are indifferent to Irish and can hardly carry on an ordinary conversation in Irish. They teach it just like French or German.[209]

While a former pupil commented:

> I would blame the decline in Irish on their closure but now with the advent of *Gaelscoileanna* this matter is being rectified in a healthier way.[210]

Others, however, believed that the closure of the colleges was a contributory factor, but not the cause of the decline, and that other factors, such as the influence of the media and foreign travel, had a greater effect. Some, such as this former student from the Donegal Gaeltacht, took a more reflective view:

> It is convenient to say that the closure of the colleges led to a falling in the standard of the teaching of Irish.....It has always been my view an ounce of goodwill is better than a ton of fluency. I am sorry to say I have come across students of my years who would have never have received second or third-level education were it not for their being native speakers. The same people would reply in English when addressed in Irish. The non-Gaeltacht students of my class, I have always found anxious and willing fifty years afterwards to carry on dialogue in Irish [211]

Others criticised the gaelicisation policy:

> I thought at all times that Irish might have done better had it not been the main accomplishment. I often thought that it was typical of a young country to push the language rather than to nurture it, to make it fashionable even. [212]

While another student made this realistic comment:

> We loved Irish but many inspectors put too much stress on Irish in the schools and in many cases turned the teachers against Irish. I have often said this to other teachers and they all felt the same. [213]

The question of reopening the colleges was discussed frequently by the inspectors. A former inspector recalled:

> The inspectors often discussed it privately. The Irish standard has dropped. There has been a terrible deterioration in the standard of Irish in the schools. Some inspectors wanted to start the preparatory colleges again. Others were against it. The great advantage of the system was that there was no pain in learning Irish.[214]

A more pragmatic assessment was given by a former teacher, who pointed to the high costs of running the preparatory system:

> It would not be economic to have preparatory colleges today. They had only a hundred students and it would not be possible to provide a wide enough range of subjects with that number.[215]

Any assessment of the contribution of the preparatory system to Irish education must include consideration of the role played by former preparatory students in primary education, and in education generally, since the late twenties. This role cannot be over estimated. The vast majority of them became primary teachers, who spent their whole careers teaching in schools throughout the country. Those who were in the colleges in

the late fifties and early sixties are still in the education system and could be until about 2005; others moved to secondary or vocational schools, where some specialised in teaching Irish. As teachers, their work in the classroom influenced generations of students.

In addition there were many former students, who influenced education in other ways, such as by writing text-books, or through their work as members of the inspectorate. Text-books writers included Micheál Mac Gabhna, a pupil at C. Éinne from 1928 to 1932, who later became a teacher in C. Éinne,[216] and Liam Mac Diarmadha, a pupil at C. Éinne from 1957 to 1961, who wrote a series of Maths books for primary schools. Winifred Bryan, a pupil at C. Moibhí, from 1951 to 1953, who became a lecturer in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, was another writer of Maths text-books.

Others effected education policy through their work as inspectors. Moreover, there are six inspectors currently in the Department, who went through the preparatory system. They include assistant chief inspector, Dr. Tony O'Gorman, a past pupil of C. Éinne, two divisional inspectors: Diarmaid Ó Seadaigh, and Tadgh Ó Siochfradha, and three district inspectors: Dr. Eoin Ó Suilleabháin, Breandán Ó Bric, and Seán Ó Ciarba, all past pupils of C. Íosagáin[217]

Indeed at one stage one third of the inspectorate were former preparatory students. A number of them rose to the most powerful positions in the Department, such as secretary, chief inspector, or deputy chief inspector. They included Dr. Tomás Ó Floinn, a pupil in

the first class of C. Chaoimhín, who became secretary of the Department. Others who also held that post, included Diaglán Ó Braonáin, a past pupil of C. Éinne,[216] and Micheál Breathnach from C. Chaoimhín. Others, who held important posts, included Micheál Ó Mhordha from C. Éinne, who became chief inspector, Dr. Domhnaill Ó Coileáin from C. Chaoimhín, who became deputy chief inspector, and Stiophán Ó Cathain from C. Éinne, who also held that post.

Past pupils from each of the boys' colleges became members of the inspectorate. Amongst those from C. Chaoimhín were Colm Ó Beoláin, Dermot Nash, Conchubhar Ó Suilleabháin, and Seán Mac Tighearnáin, while those from C. Éinne included Liam Ó Mainín, who recently retired, Tomás Ó Toibín, Seán Cremer, Eoghan Ó Baoighill, Tomás Ó Fiacháin, Cionnaith Mac Suibhne, and Micheál Ó Cuaig. In addition eighteen past pupils from C. na Mumhan and C. Íosagáin, [217] became inspectors, including Breandán Ó Croinín,[218] and Séamas de Buitléar,[219] who played a major role in the development of education in the sixties.

Other past pupils made their mark in third-level education, particularly those who were holders of Gaeltacht scholarships, many of whom did not enter training, but went on to university on Gaeltacht scholarships. Outstanding amongst them were the late Dr. Colm Ó hEochaidh,[220] a past pupil of C. Íosagáin, and Vincent McCabe, a past pupil of C. Éinne, who became Professor of Mechanical Engineering at UCD. Other past pupils from C. Éinne, who had careers in third-level education included Dr Breandán Ó

Cochlainn and Seámas Mac Giolla Uain, lecturers in Psychology at UCG, Fr Parthalán MacPhaidín, who became President of Stonehill University, USA, Breandán Mac Conghamhna, a lecturer in Sligo Regional Technical College, and Proinsias Ó Ceitheamaigh, who had a distinguished career at Dundalk Regional Technical College. Others became lecturers in training colleges. They included Mildred Fitzsimons, a past pupil of C. Moibhí, who was Vice-Principal of the Church of Ireland Training College from 1969 – 72, and Sr. Cillian and Sr. Columban Horgan, twin sisters, former students of C. Íde, who were lecturers in Carysfort Training College for many years. Amongst those from C. Chaoimhín were Donnchadh Ó Croinín, who lectured in Irish at Carysfort Training college, and Muiris Bodhlaeir, a past pupil of the three boys' colleges, who became a lecturer in Irish in Mary Immaculate Training College, Limerick, and, subsequently, in Carysfort Training College. Others from C. Chaoimhín, who taught at third-level, included Pádraig Mac Enrí, Murchadh Breathnach, and Seán Ó hAodha.

Many former preparatory pupils effected education through the INTO, where a number obtained high office. Former presidents included John J. Connolly, Michael McGarry, and Brendan Gilmore, all from C. Éinne, and Sally Shiels, from C Moibhí. Others, who were elected to the influential Central Executive Committee of the organisation, included: Liam McCluskey, Michael MacSuibhne, and Tadhg MacPhaidín, from C. Éinne

The love of the Irish language, which the colleges nurtured in their students, resulted in many of the former students making a considerable contribution to the language

movement. They included Donncha Ó Laoire, one of the first class in C. Chaoimhin in 1927, who became secretary of Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge,[223] while other students from that college, including Micheál Mac Carthaigh, Seán Mac Aodha, and Conall Ó Fearaigh, became president of the Gaelic League.[224] Other language organisations, where past students achieved high office, included Bord na Gaeilge, where Liam Ó Muircheartaigh from C. Éinne served for a period as president of Gael-linn[225] to which Muiris Bodhlaeir[226] made a substantial contribution, and Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise,[227] where a past pupil of C. Moibhí, Amy Phillips, played a major role. Indeed it was not an exaggeration to praise the contribution of former preparatory students to the language revival in these fulsome terms:

> From the very first day that they left the colleges they did their best for the language and the country and their commitment and dedication is no less today.[228]

Moreover, many former students, who had been imbued with a love of Gaelic games, did much to cultivate a fondness for sport in their pupils, and gave their free time after school hours coaching pupils in these games. Many of them went on to hold high office in the Gaelic Athletic Association. They included Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh,[229] the distinguished commentator on Gaelic games, from C. Íosagáin, and the late Seán Ó Síocháin, who was director-general of the GAA,[230] a past pupil of C. na Mumhan. Past pupils from C. Éinne, who achieved high office in the GAA, included Séamas Ó Riain, and Joe McDonagh who were elected president of the organisation, and Liam Ó Craobháin who served as secretary of Meath County Board. Amongst past pupils from C.

Éinne, who were distinguished sportsmen, was Paul Dolan, who took part in the 1948 and 1952 Olympic Games.

A number of former students joined Raidió Éireann, and later Raidió na Gaeltachta, and RTE, where their linguistic skills were useful. Amongst them were: Pádraig Ó Gaora, Liam Ó Muirthile, and Liam Mac Iomaire, all from C. Éinne. In addition others, who were gifted musicians joined Raidio Eireann and RTE. They included Breandán Mac Cnáimhsí, Caoimhín Mac Cnáimhsí, Seán Ó hAodha, and Peadar Ó hUallacháin, from C. Chaoimhín, and Aindrias Ó Gallchobhair from C. Éinne. Other students from C. Éinne, who were involved in broadcasting included actor, Eoin Ó Suilleabháin and Micheál Ó Conghaile.

Some past students made a number of career changes. The multi-talented Liam Develly, a past pupil of C. Einne, from 1947 to 1951, taught for a while, and later became well-known as a singer and compere. For a period he worked in RTE. Subsequently he was called to the Bar, and is now a Circuit Court judge. Similarly, Fachtna Ó hAnnracháin, a past pupil of C. Chaoimhín, from 1934 to 1938, started as a teacher. Later he took a Law degree, and for a time worked in the legal department of RTE. Subsequently he moved to the Music Department where eventually he became head. Another multi-talented past pupil of C. Chaoimhín, was Breandán MacCnáimshí, who taught for fifteen years and enjoyed teaching. He too, became involved with Raidió Éireann and was a frequent broadcaster. Later he obtained an MA degree in Celtic Studies, and became a lecturer in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, where he was much involved in the

production of a new lectionery in the vernacular for Mass. Subsequently, he worked as a translator in Leinster House, and for the European Union in Brussels, where as chief jurist linguist, his work entailed examining laws for translation.

Each college produced its own crop of distinguished past pupils. A number who started as teachers, later entered politics. They included past pupils of C. Éinne: Donnchadh Ó Gallchobair, and Pádraig Ó Tuathail, who held Cabinet posts as Minister for the Gaeltacht. Others from the same college, who entered politics, included the late Clem Coughlan, who represented a Co. Donegal constituency, and his brother, the late Cathal Coughlan, who succeeded him in the Dáil. Other past pupils of C. Éinne made a contribution to the arts, including Breandán Ó hEithir,[231] the writer and broadcaster, a pupil from 1944 to 1948. In the same class was Abbey actor, Peadar Lambe, while Capt Seán Ó Fiachain, a pupil from 1931 to 35, established the Mercier Press.

A number of former preparatory students, entered the civil service where many rose to high positions. Amongst them was Séamus MacGamhna, a student in C. Éinne from 1932 to 1936, who became secretary of the Department of the Public Service. He explained how this happened:

> I discovered in C. Phádraig that I had no talents for teaching. I had already done the civil service examination so I left the training college when offered an appointment in the civil service.[232]

Those who left teaching, or who did not become teachers, as they were Gaeltacht scholarship holders, entered a wide range of other professions. Amongst them was Seán

Ó Dufaigh, from Gweedore, a past pupil of C. Éinne, who was awarded a scholarship to UCG, and later became a cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic. A number of others from C. Éinne were successful in the world of commerce. They included bankers Pádraig Ó hAinnín, and Diarmaid Mac Aodhagáin, who became personnel manager of Allied Irish Bank; Joe McCabe, who became head of the Educational Building Society and later head of the IDA, Micheál Mac Mathghamhna became a partner in Haughey Bolands, while Dr Liam Ó Gormáin joined the Irish Management Institute. There were also a number of past pupils, who distinguished themselves abroad. They included Dr Peadar Ó Tuathail, and Dr Domhú Ó Cuinneagáin, who went to the United States and Seán Mac Seagháin, who qualified as an engineer and Dr Deasún MacConcoille, who emigrated to Canada. All were past pupils of C. Einne. A number of past students from C. na Mumhan and C. Íosagáin also distinguished themselves in different areas of life.[233] A former teacher explained why so many left teaching:

> Many gave up teaching after the required number of years as with their brains probably more money could be earned in the civil service and elsewhere.[234]

One of the notable features of the period is how the careers of the men contrasted with those of the women. A number of past students, however, both male and female, made a contribution to religious life, which was one of the few areas in which women were allowed to exercise leadership in those days. This was due to the times in which they lived, when it was generally accepted that a married woman's place was in the home. In addition because of the Marriage Ban,[235] which was in operation from 1936 until 1958, many married female teachers had to leave the profession. For those who did not, there

were few promotion prospects, except in small schools, as the larger schools were run by Religious Orders, and the posts of principal and vice-principal would have been held by members of the Order. Moreover, in schools staffed by lay teachers, such posts were usually held by men.

Past pupils, who rose to positions of importance in Religious Orders included Sr. Mairéad Ní Loinsigh, who became Mother Provincial of the Salesian Order, and Sr. Cora Ní Fhirtir, who became Mother Provincial of the Mercy Order. Both were past pupils of C. Íde. Moreover, Sr. Baiste, the last principal of C. Íde, while it was run by the Mercy Order, was a former pupil of the college. Furthermore the ordination of women to the priesthood in the Anglican Communion has allowed former students of C. Moibhí to be ordained in different parts of the world. Amongst them are the Revd. Canon Dr. Myrtle Langley, who serves in the Church of England, the Revd. Shirley Kingston, and the Revd. Doris Colhoun, who both minister in Ireland, and the Revd. Gladys Olsen, a rector in Canada. Men who entered the Church included Fr. Parthalán Mac Phaidín, and the Right Revd. Augustine O'Sullivan, who became Abbot of Glenstal, Br. A. Ó Gallchobhair, Fr. Pádraig Ó hÉalaidhe, Fr. Seán Ó Cannain CSSR Rome, and the Revd. Proinnsias de hÓra, who were all past pupils of C. Éinne, while the late Revd. Fred Phillips, a Church of Ireland rector, was a past pupil of C. Moibhí.

The contrast between the number of male past pupils and the very few female past pupils who rose to positions of eminence in the Department is noteworthy. Exceptions were Áine Uí Chonaill, a pupil of C. Íde from 1929 to 1933, and Mildred Fitzsimons, a pupil

of C. Moibhí at the same time, who became infant organisers. There were, however, a small number of outstanding women, who rose to positions of influence outside education. They included Ita Meehan, a former pupil of C. Mhuire, who became deputy secretary of the Department of Posts and Telegraphs, and a director of Telecom Éireann and the Bank of Ireland. She explained why she did not become a teacher:

> I did the civil service examination and when I had been three months in Carysfort Training College I was offered a job in the civil service. I took it, even though I enjoyed teaching.

Other notable former female students were the late Frances Condell, a student of C. Moibhí from 1932 to 1936, who distinguished herself as Mayor of Limerick in the 1960s, and Maura Roche, a student at C. Muire in the forties, now a district court judge. Amongst those, who entered C. Íde during its final years as a preparatory college, were broadcasters, Seosaimhín Ní Bheaghlaoich, and Dairíne Ní Cinneide, while the television personality, Bibi Baskin, was a pupil of C. Moibhí in the sixties.

While it may appear that a very large number of preparatory students did not continue on to primary teaching, or did not stay long in the profession, they were only a small proportion of the total number of students in the preparatory colleges, which totalled over four thousand. Moreover, as there were seven colleges involved each college had distinguished past pupils.

CONCLUSION

The closing of the preparatory colleges marked the end of an era in recruitment, and in education generally; the introduction of free second-level education for all, in 1967,

marked the beginning of a new period in the history of Irish education. For over thirty years the system was a successful method of recruitment and it made a major contribution to the gaelicisation of education.

Despite the failure to reform the system and to correct its inherent weaknesses, it was a successful educational experiment. From its establishment in the late twenties, it quickly produced well-educated students, able to complete the training college course successfully, at a time when the failure of existing recruiting methods was becoming more apparent. It also provided opportunities for Gaeltacht students to obtain second-level education. But its greatest success was that it produced teachers, who were fluent in Irish, competent to teach through Irish, and able to contribute to the new State's gaelicisation policy. The majority of them, in whom a love of the Irish language, and a desire to pass it on to succeeding generations, had been fostered in the preparatory colleges, spent their whole careers in primary teaching. That they were sound people, in whom respect for their Church, a love of their country, and a desire to inculcate these characteristics in succeeding generations, were ingrained was a bonus. With such results the preparatory system was indeed a successful educational experiment.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

[1] See p. 9
[2] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1924 – 25, p. 40
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] See pp. 79 - 80
[6] See p. 281
[7] See p. 210
[8] See p. 60, n. 50
[9] See p. 215
[10] *Report of the Department of Education,* 1931 - 32, p. 138
[11] Antoine Ó Coileáin, 'Bunoideachais Dátheangach lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht Leirmheas stairiúil 1922 – 1984 agus oideas don todhchaí,' unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Dublin 1985, p. 40
[12] See p. 20
[13] See pp. 22 - 25
[14] See p. 23
[15] See p. 83
[16] See pp. 22 - 25
[17] See p. 60, n. 50
[18] See p. 165, n. 113
[19] See p. 62, n. 90
[20] See p. 60, n. 51
[21] See p. 59, n. 47
[22] See p. 60, n. 52
[23] See p. 65, n. 148
[24] See p. 58, n. 25
[25] See p. 59, n. 49
[26] See pp. 51 - 52
[27] J.J. Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985 Politics and Society,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 673
[28] See p. 60, n. 50
[29] See p. 61, n. 88
[30] See pp. 277 - 279
[31] See p. 476, n. 4
[32] See p. 420, n. 47
[33] See p. 425, n. 230
[34] See pp. 305 - 329
[35] See pp. 384 - 390
[36] See p. 50
[37] See p. 292
[38] See p. 91
[39] See p. 92
[40] See p. 68
[41] See p. 63, n. 130

[42] See p. 252
[43] See pp. 286 - 290
[44] See p. 87
[45] See pp. 248 - 251
[46] See p. 270, n. 96
[47] See pp. 372 - 373
[48] See p. 69
[49] See p. 191
[50] See pp. 483 - 493
[51] See p. 93
[52] See p. 96
[53] See p. 97
[54] See p. 19
[55] An Br. Oir. M.S. Ó Flaitile, 'Colaíste Chaoimhín,' *An Réiltín,* Fómhar 1956, p. 6
[56] Breandán Ó hEithir, *Over the Bar,* (Poolbeg: Dublin, 1984)
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 41
[58] See p. 240
[59] *The Christian Brothers' Educational Record,* 1930, p. 483
[60] See p. 281
[61] See pp. 284 - 285
[62] See p. 441
[63] See pp. 215 - 216
[64] Sinéad Bradley, C. Mhuire, 1934 - 37
[65] Dr Tomás Ó Floinn, C. Chaoimhín, 1927 - 31
[66] Nóra Ní Chairbre, C. Bhríde, 1934 - 38
[67] Philomena Hurley, C. Mhuire, 1947 - 51
[68] Frances Hayes, C. Mhuire, 1953 - 57
[69] Ita Meehan, C. Mhuire 1937 - 41
[70] See p. 98
[71] Dómhnaill Ó Coileán, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 38
[72] Dr Tomás Ó Floinn, *Ibid.*, 1927 - 31
[73] Brid McHugh, C. Mhuire, 1942 - 46
[74] Ita Meehan, C. Mhuire, 1937-41,
[75] Breandán MacCnáimhsí, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 38
[76] Dr Tomás Ó Floinn, *Ibid.*, 1934 - 1938
[77] Nancy Duffy, C. Bhríde, 1933 - 1937
[78] Sr Camilla Roche, a former teacher at C. Bhríde.
[79] Memo on the closure of C. Éinne from the staff of the college, Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers
[80] Ann Lalor, C. Mhuire, 1942 - 46
[81] Seán MacTighearnáin, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 1938
[82] Liam Roycroft, *Ibid.*, 1934 - 1938
[83] Dr Tomás Ó Floinn, *Ibid.*, 1927 – 1931
[84] Tadgh Mac Phaidín, C. Éinne, 1954 - 1958
[85] Séamas Mac Gamhna, *Ibid.*, 1932 - 36

[86] Máire O'Donnell, C. Bhríde, 1955 - 59
[87] Maud Jamieson, C. Moibhí, 1942 - 46
[88] Nancy Duffy, C. Bhríde, 1933 - 37
[89] Sr Marie Anthony, C. Bhríde, 1928 - 1932
[90] Norma Veitch, C. Moibhí, 1957 – 1961
[91] Both were students at C. Íde from 1929 - 1933
[92] Sinéad Bradley, C. Mhuire, 1934 – 1937
[93] Nóra Ní Chairbre, C. Bhride, 1934 - 38
[94] Judge Maura Roche, C. Mhuire, 1943 - 1947
[95] Beryl Tilson, C. Moibhí 1953 - 57
[96] Charles Breslin, C. Éinne, 1951-55
[97] Emily Foxton 'Memories of Colaíste Moibhí 1945 – 49,' *PSA Newsletter*, 1999, p. 7
[98] Ann Lawlor, C. Mhuire, 1942 - 46
[99] Aodán Ó Gallchóir, C. Éinne, 1954 - 58
[100] Paddy Walsh, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 1938
[101] Seán Martin, *Ibid.*
[102] Fachtna Ó hAnnracháin, *Ibid.*
[103] Máire Ó Sé, C. Íde, 1958 - 62
[104] Eileen Loughnane, *Ibid.*, 1959 – 63
[105] *Ibid*
[106] Máire Ó Se, *Ibid.*, 1958 - 62
[107] *Ibid.*
[108] Maura Roche, C. Mhuire, 1943 - 47
[109] Philomena Hurley, *Ibid.*, 1947 - 51
[110] C. Breslin C. Éinne, C. Einne, 1950 - 54
[111] Sr. Teresita Shiels, C. Bhríde, 1932 - 36
[112] Mary McGowan, *Ibid.*, 1953 - 57
[113] Anna Deeney, *Ibid.*, 1948 - 52 See also *The Derry People & Donegal News*, 23 June 1990
[114] One of Miss Henchy's brothers was a judge, while another was Librarian at the National Library.
[115] Sr Teresita Shiels, C. Bhríde, 1932 - 36
[116] Sr Annunciata White, a former teacher at C. Bhríde.
[117] C. Bhríde Papers, Ballyconnell House, Falcarragh
[118] Sr. Teresita Shiels, C. Bhride, 1932 - 36
[119] Breandán Ó hEithir, *Over the bar*, p. 41
[120] Earnán de Blaghd, 'Na Colaístí Ullmhúcháin,' *Comhar*, Aibreán, 1960, p. 7. See p. 110.
[121] Sr Teresita Shiels
[122] Sinéad Bradley, C. Mhuire, 1934 - 37
[123] *Ibid.*
[124] Tomás Ó Loideáin
[125] Breandán MacCnaímhsí, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 1938
[126] Liam Roycroft, *Ibid.*
[127] Breandán Ó hEithir, *Over the bar*, p. 98

[128] Liam Ó Mainín, C. Éinne, 1947 - 51
[129] Iris Colhoun, C. Moibhí, 1957 - 61
[130] Liam MacGamhna, C. Chaoimhín, 1932 - 36
[131] A number of former students expressed this view, including Donal Desmond, C. Einne, 1936 – 39, Liam Ó Mainín, C. Éinne, 1947 – 51 and Liam Roycroft, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 38
[132] Tomás Tobín, C. Éinne, 1935 – 39. See also p. 261
[133] Sr. Fionnbarra, C. Mhuire,1935 – 37, C. Íde, 1933 – 35,
[134] Sinéad Bradley, C. Mhuire, 1934 - 37
[135] Ita Meehan, *Ibid.*, 1937 - 41. She obtained more if the bonus for doing the examination through Irish was taken into account.
[136] See p. 340. See also *The Irish Press*, 3rd November, 1938
[137] See p. 239
[138] See p. 367
[139] Tomás Toibin, C. Éinne, 1935 - 39
[140] Donal. Desmond, *Ibid.*, 1936 - 39
[141] Ann Lalor, C. Mhuire, 1942 - 46
[142] Maura Roche, *Ibid.*, 1943 - 47
[143] Maureen Bonar, *Ibid.*, 1934 – 35, C. Bhríde, 1935 - 38
[144] Nancy Duffy, C. Bhríde, 1933 - 37
[145] Máire O Donnell, *Ibid.*, 1955 - 59
[146] An exception was C. Moibhí where there was no great emphasis on religion
[147] *The Christian Brothers' Educational Record*, 1927, p. 285. See also *The Irish Times*, 21st March 1927
[148] Séamas MacGamhna, C. Chaoimhín, 1932 - 36
[149] See p. 56, n. 12
[150] Br. M. Ó Dochartaigh, *An Reiltín*, Fomhar, 1956, p. 6
[151] Tomás Ó Floinn, C. Chaoimhín, 1927 - 31
[152] An Br. Oir. M.S. Ó Flaitile, 'Coláiste Chaoimhín,' *An Reiltín*, Fómhar, 1956, p. 6
[153] *Ibid.*
[154] Dr Tomás Ó Floinn, C. Chaoimhín, 1927 - 31
[155] Máire Ní Chonaill, C. Íde, 1929 - 1933
[156] Sr Cillian, *Ibid.*, 1929 - 34
[157] Máire Ó Sé, *Ibid.*, 1958 - 62
[158] Ita Meehan, C. Mhuire, 1937 - 41
[159] Sr. Maria Anthony, C. Bhríde, 1928 - 32
[160] Br. Bernardine Doyle, vice-principal, C. Íosagáin, 1947 - 1959
[161] Sr. Pascal, a teacher at C. Mhuire from 1934 - 1970
[162] Sr. Teresita Shiels, C. Bhríde, 1932 - 36
[163] See p. 213
[164] Sr. Teresita Shiels, C. Bhríde, 1932 - 36
[165] Charles Breslin, C. Éinne, 1951 - 55
[166] Pádraig Ó Seaghdha, *Ibid.*, 1943 - 47
[167] Proinsias Ó Brodlaigh, *Ibid.*, 1958 - 62

[168] Sr Baiste later became principal of C. Íde, a post she held when the Mercy Order decided to leave the college.
[169] *Ibid*
[170] Eileen Loughnane, C. Íde, 1959 - 63
[171] Sinéad Bradley, C. Mhuire, 1934 - 37
[172] *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Preparatory Colleges*, 1938, p. 22
[173] Donal Desmond, C. Éinne, 1936 – 39. A teacher's son, he had been to Ring Irish College and later spent two years at the De La Salle College, Macroom, an all –Irish school, where he did the Intermediate Certificate Examination. At C. Éinne he had to repeat the examination through Irish. He taught for thirty years in a primary school before changing to teaching at second-level.
[174] Gerry Bradley, C. Chaoimhín, 1930 - 34
[175] Seán Martin, *Ibid.*, 1934 - 38
[176] Maura Roche, C. Mhuire, 1943 - 47
[177] Ann Lalor, *Ibid.*, 1942 - 46
[178] Proinsias Ó Brodlaigh, C Einne, 1958 - 62
[179] Maura Roche, C. Mhuire, 1943 - 47
[180] Tadhg MacPhaidín, C. Éinne, 1954 - 58
[181] Donal Desmond, *Ibid.*, 1936 – 39.
[182] Aodán Ó Gallchóir, *Ibid.*, 1954 - 58
[183] See p. 182
[184] Sr. Fionnbarra, C. Ide, 1933 – 35, C. Mhuire, 1935 – 37,
[185] Aine Hennessy, *Ibid.*
[186] Maureen Bonar, C. Mhuire 1934 – 35, C. Bhríde, 1935 - 38
[187] See p. 254
[188] Seán MacTighearnáin, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 - 38
[189] Dómhnaill Ó Coileán, *Ibid.*, 1934 - 38.
[190] *Ibid.* 26/4/91
[191] Registers of the colleges
[192] See p. 333
[193] An Br. Oir. M.S. Ó Flaitile, 'Coláiste Chaoimhín,' *An Réiltín*, Fómhar, 1956, p. 6
[194] Seán Ó Cadhla (John A. Kyle). A northern Presbyterian, he studied Classics at TCD, graduating in 1915 with an honours degree. He had a deep love for the Irish language and while an inspector in the Department he was seconded to act as principal of C. Moibhí. He was at the college for six years. Later he became chief inspector.
[195] See p. 490, n. 59
[196] Sr. Cillian Horgan, C. Íde, 1929 - 34
[197] Examples of highly qualified teachers were Mother Teresa and Mother Camilla, who taught General Science and Botany at C. Bhríde. Both had M.Sc. degrees.
[198] Sr. Teresita Shiels, C. Bhríde, 1932 - 36
[199] See pp. 539 - 540
[200] Tadhg MacPhaidín, C. Éinne,1954 – 58
[201] Maura Roche, C. Mhuire, 1943 - 47
[202] Memo from the staff of C. Éinne, Galway Diocesan Archives, Browne Papers

[203] It was agreed by the Department that a second full-time lecturer in Irish would be appointed to the college, with responsibility for helping students to develop their fluency in Irish and that first-year students would begin their training course with a month-long Irish induction course, including a stay in the Gaeltacht.
[204] See p. 280
[205] See pp. 554 - 556
[206] Memo from the staff of C. Éinne following the announcement that the Preparatory College system was to cease within a few years. Galway Diocesan Archives.
[207] Ó hEithir, *Over the bar*, p. 88
[208] Amongst those who held this view were Liam Roycroft, C. Chaoimhín, 1934 – 38, Charles Breslin, C. Éinne, 1951 – 55, and Anna Deeney, C. Bhride, 1948 - 52
[209] Br. Bernardine Doyle, vice-principal C. Íosagáin, 1947 - 1959
[210] Maíre Ó Sé, C. Íde, 1958 - 62
[211] Breandán MacCnáimhsí, C. Chaoimhín, 1932 - 36
[212] Nóra Ní Chairbre, C. Bhríde, 1934 - 38
[213] Aine Hennessy, C. Íde, 1933 –35, C. Mhuire, 1935 - 37
[214] Tomás Toibín, C. Éinne, 1935 - 39
[215] Sr Annunciata was a teacher in C. Bhríde in the late forties
[216] Breandán Ó hEithir, *Over the Bar*, p. 83
[217] See p. 267
[218] Diaglán Ó Braonáin 1943 - 47
[219] See p. 267
[220] *Ibid.*
[221] See p. 272, n. 176
[222] See p. 266
[223] See p. 409
[224] See p. 225
[225] See p. 574
[226] See p. 574
[227] The Irish Guild of the Church is a Church of Ireland organisation whose aim is to promote the use of the Irish language in that church's liturgy.
[228] An Br. Oir. M.S. Ó Flaitile, 'Colaíste Chaoimhín,' *An Reiltín*, Fómhar, 1956, p. 6
[229] See p. 266
[230] *Ibid.*
[231] Breandán Ó hEithir, (1930 – 1990). Writer and broadcaster. He grew up on the Aran Islands where his parents were primary teachers. He was a pupil at C. Einne from 1944 – 1948. He won a scholarship to UCG where he studied English, History and Philosophy. Later he worked as a travelling salesman before becoming a journalist. His writings include *Lig Sinn igCathu*, (translated as *Lead Us into Temptation*), *A Begrudger's Guide to Irish Politics, Sionnach ar mo dhuán* and *An Nollaig Thiar*. His autobiography *Over the Bar*, was published in 1984
[232] Reply to a questionnaire
[233] See pp. 266 - 267
[234] Br. Bernardine Doyle, vice-principal, C. Íosagáin, 1947 - 1959
[235] See p. 293

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

In the forty years since the decision to end the preparatory system there has been an unprecedented number of changes in Irish education, reflecting the growth of Government and public awareness of its importance. One of the areas of greatest change has been in the teaching of the Irish language. The decision to close the preparatory colleges heralded a downgrading of the dominant role of the Irish language in education generally, and transformed the work in the training colleges, which ceased to be entirely through Irish. Nevertheless the language continues to be part of the school curriculum, and it is still a core subject at primary level.

Moreover, this is reflected in recruitment, where regulations for entry to training include the requirement that students must have obtained Grade C or higher, at honours level Irish, in the Leaving Certificate Examination and a high standard of fluency in the language is necessary to obtain this result. Research in the area of language teaching, however, has shown that the best way to learn a language is by the 'total immersion' method.[1] It was to this that the preparatory system owed its success, as each preparatory college was a 'mini-Gaeltacht.'[2] Provision is still made today for students to learn Irish by this method though such learning is undertaken in more realistic conditions, and as part of their course student-teachers spend some time in the Gaeltacht. While this is the

best way to learn the Irish language the amount of time spent in the Gaeltacht cannot compare with a four-year course in a preparatory college.

In examining the work of the training colleges in the four decades since the preparatory system came to an end it is generally accepted that the standard of students at Irish on entry to the colleges has dropped considerably,[3] though by comparison with students entering training in the period, 1926 – 1961, considerable gains have been made in other areas. Students entering training in the nineties are more rounded people having undertaken a five or six-year Leaving Certificate course, and with the expansion of the curriculum at second-level, they are much better educated people. They have chosen of their own accord to enter training and have made their choice at a more mature age, though the way in which the points system operates primary teaching may not have been their first choice.

The teaching profession has seen considerable change and the status of the primary teacher has been much enhanced. Nowadays primary teachers undertake a three-year course, and graduate with a university degree. The provision of increased resources has transformed the primary school, where conditions have been considerably improved by reductions in the pupil-teacher ratio. Increased promotion prospects and improved salaries have made primary teaching a much sought after career and there is no shortage of candidates seeking to enter training. Unlike the past when primary teachers could have been expected to teach for approximately forty years until retirement, there are more career opportunities in education for qualified primary teachers. Now it is possible to

move to other areas of education, such as remedial, special, or adult education, which were unheard of in the early years of the State.

As the end of the twentieth century approaches, efforts to preserve and revive the Irish language have been in progress for over a hundred years. Since the foundation of the Gaelic League in 1893[4] the language has gone through many different stages and, at times, its condition has been so weak that pessimists have pronounced its death. Such pronouncements have been premature, however, and though the population of the Gaeltacht has shrunk to approximately 21,000,[5] it is estimated that outside the Gaeltacht about 50,000 adults speak Irish daily.[6] In addition Irish is now taught in all primary and second-level schools throughout the State and there are now few people in the country, who do not have some knowledge of the language. There is also a major difference in the way the Irish language is taught today, and the new emphasis on speaking the language has helped it to survive; the introduction of oral examinations at the Leaving Certificate Examination in 1958 led to the development of summer courses for students in the Gaeltacht. Based on 'the total immersion' method of language learning, they are greatly enjoyed by participants, some of whom gain an abiding interest in the language.

The development of Irish language radio and television stations, such as Teilifís na Gaeilge, Raidió na Gaeltachta and Raidió na Life, has enhanced the language's prestige and the fact that it is now possible to communicate in Irish using the most modern technology, shows its capacity to adapt and survive. The impact of membership of the

European Union, the improvement in the country's economy, and the approach of a new century have effected a change in the public's attitude and an increased awareness of the value of the language. In addition the growth in the use of Welsh, Scots Gaelic and other Celtic languages, has brought new interest in Irish, as has increased interest amongst the public in Northern Ireland. Furthermore the need to find a national identity in an increasingly bland world, has made many look at the language afresh with increased demand for classes. [7] Further evidence of increased interest is reflected throughout the education system, particularly in the growth of Naíonraí (All-Irish pre-schools)[8] and Gaelscoileanna[9] (All-Irish primary schools). In addition third-level institutions are providing an increased number of courses through Irish[10] and there have been calls for an all-Irish university. [11] Without the contribution of the preparatory colleges in the early years of the State, the language would be in a much weaker condition and unable to respond to the upsurge of interest, which has been a characteristic of the nineties.

Though the colleges ceased to function as preparatory colleges in 1961, some of them are still in use for educational purposes of different kinds. These include C. Mhuire, which continued as an all-Irish girls' boarding school run by the Mercy Order until 1990, when it was sold to the local community. Since then it has continued as a co-educational school, with a lay principal. Similarly, C. Íde is still an all-Irish girls' boarding school, though with the departure of the Mercy Order from the college in 1995 a parents' group has had to struggle hard to keep it open. C. Éinne also continued as an all-Irish boys' school in the sixties, catering mainly for boys from the Gaeltacht. However, with the introduction of the 'free education scheme' in 1967, the establishment of second-

level day schools in the Gaeltacht, and the growth of population in the area, greater numbers of day pupils were enrolled so that by the eighties, they out-numbered the boarders.

The other colleges had more chequered careers and two of them, C. Íosagáin and C. Bhríde, are no longer educational institutions though plans to use C. Iosagain as part of a third-level institution are under consideration. On ceasing to be a preparatory college, it continued as a boys' secondary school until 1988. Since then the building has been unused.[12] Proposals for its future use being considered include developing it in conjunction with UCC as an archive for Seán Ó Riada's music or a centre for educational resources.

When the Loreto Order left C. Bhríde in 1961, it became a secondary boarding school for boys, Holy Cross College. This, however, closed in 1985 and a local voluntary co-operative, Comharchumann Estáit Bhaile Uí Chonaill Teo., was founded, which with assistance from Udarás na Gaeltachta, and funds from the Regional Development Fund bought the house and lands. To cater for an increasing number of tourists Ballyconnell House is being refurbished, the gardens restored, and a theme park developed on the estate.

The sixth college, C. Chaoimhín,[13] which closed in 1939, was taken over by the Department of Defence for administrative purposes, and is still used in this way though it retains the name C. Chaoimhín. The final college, C. Moibhí, was the only one to

remain as a preparatory college, and as such, it continued unchanged at its premises in Shanganagh Castle, Shankill, until 1968, when it moved to the campus of the Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines. In 1995 it was closed mainly due to high costs.[14]

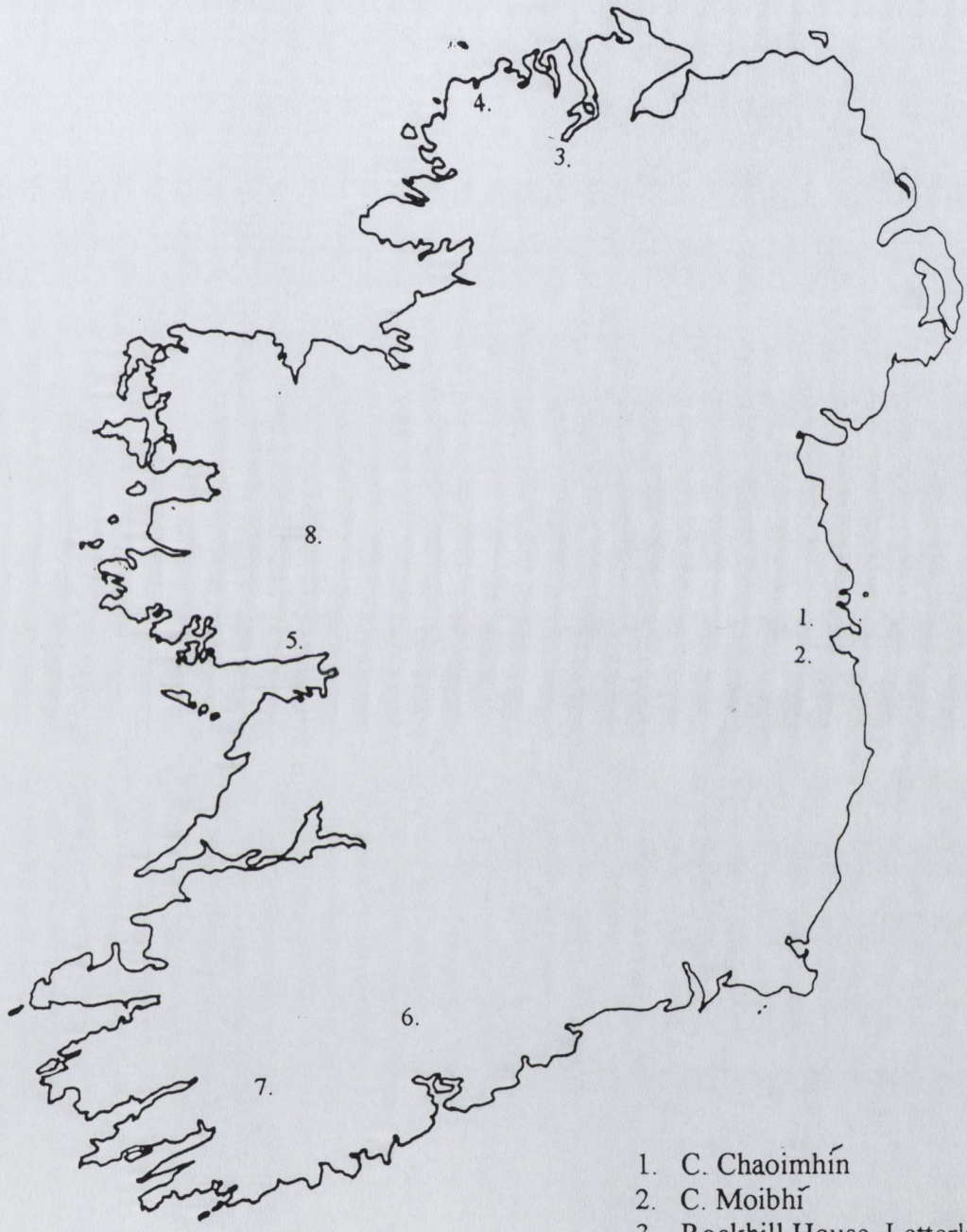
The imposing buildings, which housed the colleges, stand as a memorial to the preparatory system, which from 1926 until its demise in 1961, played an important role in the recruitment of primary teachers. But of far greater importance to the life of the Irish nation was the role played by their students in preserving the Irish language. That the language is in such a lively state at the end of the twentieth century is mainly due to them.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 1X

[1] Mairéad Ní Mhurchú, 'Canadian immersion education and its relevance to Gaelscoileanna,' *Oideas* 43, Samhradh, 1995, p. 62
[2] See p. 226
[3] Coolahan, *Irish Education history and structure*, p. 225
[4] See p. 20
[5] Uiseann Mac Dubghaill, 'Uair na cinniúna don Ghaeltacht,' *Cuisle*, Feabhra 1999, p. 10
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Since its inception in 1994, it has received over 10,000 calls.
[8] There are over eighty at present
[9] Presently there are approximately 250 Gaelscoileanna, sixty of which have begun in the last five years
[10] Typical of these is Dublin City University, from which the first batch of students, graduated in 1998 with B.Sc. degrees in Finance, Computing, Enterprise and European languages, after a four-year course taught through Irish.
[11] *The Irish Times*, 2nd November 1998
[12] Recently Udarás na Gaeltachta took possession of it.
[13] See p. 328
[14] See pp. 568 - 569

APPENDIX A:

MAP OF IRELAND SHOWING LOCATIONS OF THE PREPARATORY COLLEGES



1. C. Chaoimhín
2. C. Moibhí
3. Rockhill House, Letterkenny
4. C. Bhríde, Falcarragh
5. C. Éinne, Salthill
6. C. na Mumhan, Mallow
7. C. Íosagáin, Ballyvourney
8. C. Mhuire, Tourmakeady

APPENDIX B 1:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(1) **C. Chaoimhín** (a) history of the college
(b) aerial photo of the building
(c) Br. D. Hurley, the first principal
(d) newspaper report of closure

HISTORY OF C. CHAOIMHÍN

On 1st March 1927, the first boys' preparatory college, C. Chaoimhín, opened in Marlborough Hall, Glasnevin, Dublin, with 63 students. Built in 1908, Marlborough Hall had a chequered career. It was originally built as a residence for male students of the non-denominational Marlborough Street Training College, which was founded in 1834 under the direct control of the Commissioners of National Education. Female students resided in Talbot House and Marlborough House (now the site of the Metreological Centre).

Intended to be one of the finest training college residences in the United Kingdom, Marlborough Hall was designed by James Franklin Fuller, FRSA, FRIBA, FRIAI, a renowned architect from Kenmare, Co. Kerry. His other designs included Ashford Castle, Cong, Co. Mayo, and Kylemore Abbey, Co. Galway. Situated on the north bank of the river Tolka on a twenty-seven acre site, known as Bank Farm, its previous owner was Colonel Lindsay. An imposing Gothic structure, built with Co. Dublin granite, Marlborough Hall was formally opened on 24th August 1908 by the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Aberdeen. Its use as a residence for student-teachers was short-lived, however, as numbers entering Marlborough Street Training College reduced considerably in 1912, mainly due to the difficulty its graduates had in obtaining teaching posts in denominational schools and unattractive salaries. The outbreak of World War 1 hastened its demise and Marlborough Hall closed in 1917.

In April 1917, it was taken over by the British Army as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers. During 1919 - 21 British personnel wounded in the War of Independence were also treated there. In March 1922, the building transferred to the

newly-formed Irish Free State Army Medical Service who used it as a convalescent home for soldiers wounded in the Civil War. Later that year, from June to August, it was used by the Minister for Local Government to house refugees from the pogroms in Belfast.

In March 1924, the Irish Army left Marlborough Hall and the building was unoccupied for some time. During this period negotiations regarding the building, took place between the Christian Brothers and the Minister for Education, Eoin MacNeill. These ceased in August 1924, when the Minister's private secretary informed the Superior General of the Christian Brothers, Br. P.J. Hennessy, that it was intended to use the building for training primary teachers.

It was intended to open the first college there in September 1926. However, it was not until August that year that agreement was reached with Archbishop Byrne that the college in his diocese would be run by the Christian Brothers. The provision of a chapel and science laboratories delayed the opening until March 1927.

The first President was Brother Donal L. Hurley, and Brother Peter K. Ward was Vice-President. The first lay teachers were Michael Ó Siochfhradha, who taught Irish, Singing and Violin, Liam Ó Lubaigh, who taught Science and Botany, and Tomás Ó Loideáin, the History and Geography teacher. All three were native speakers. In October 1927, they were joined by three more teachers and a further intake of sixty students. C. Chaoimhín was one of the most successful preparatory colleges. Despite its success, however, it was suddenly closed on 31st August 1939 and the building taken over by the Department of Defence. For the past sixty years it has retained the name, C. Chaoimhín.

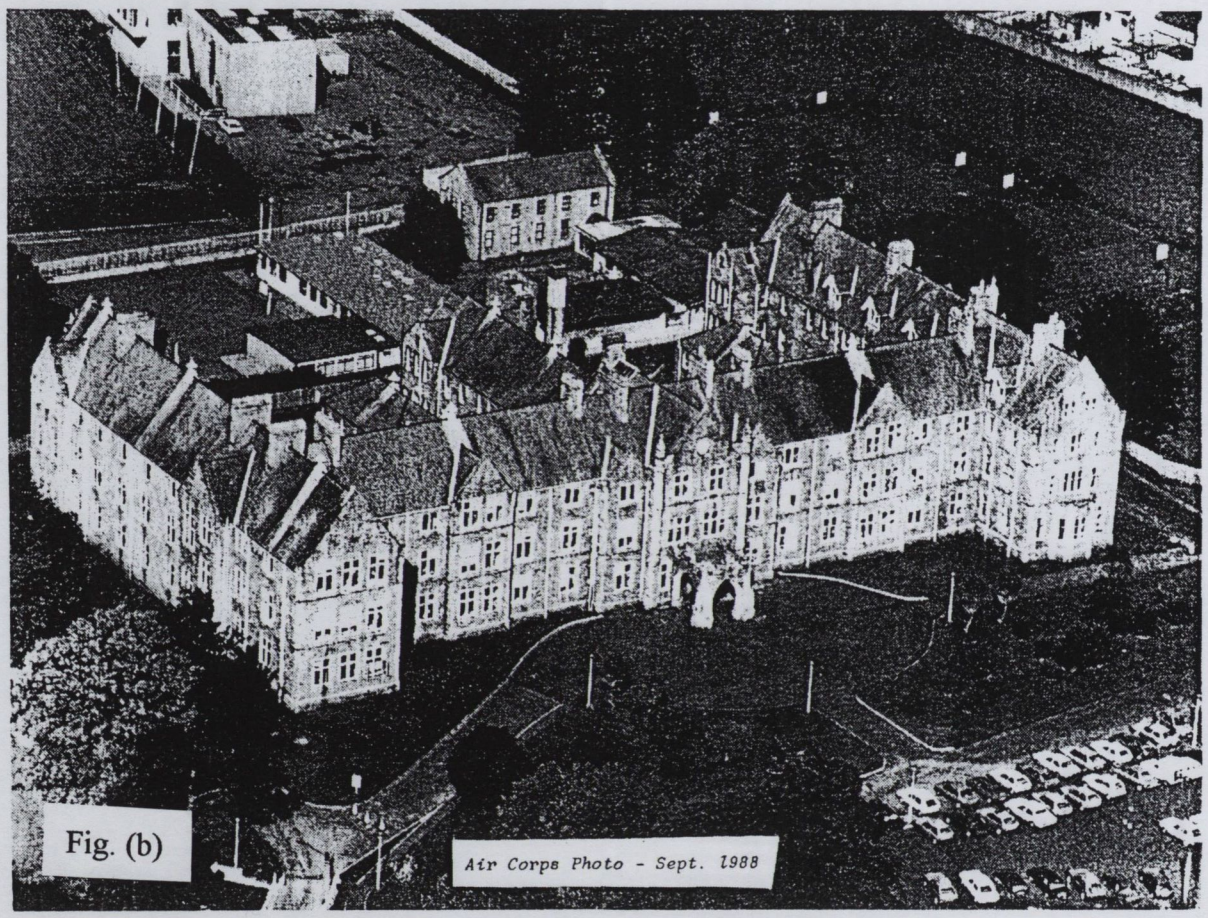


Fig. (b)

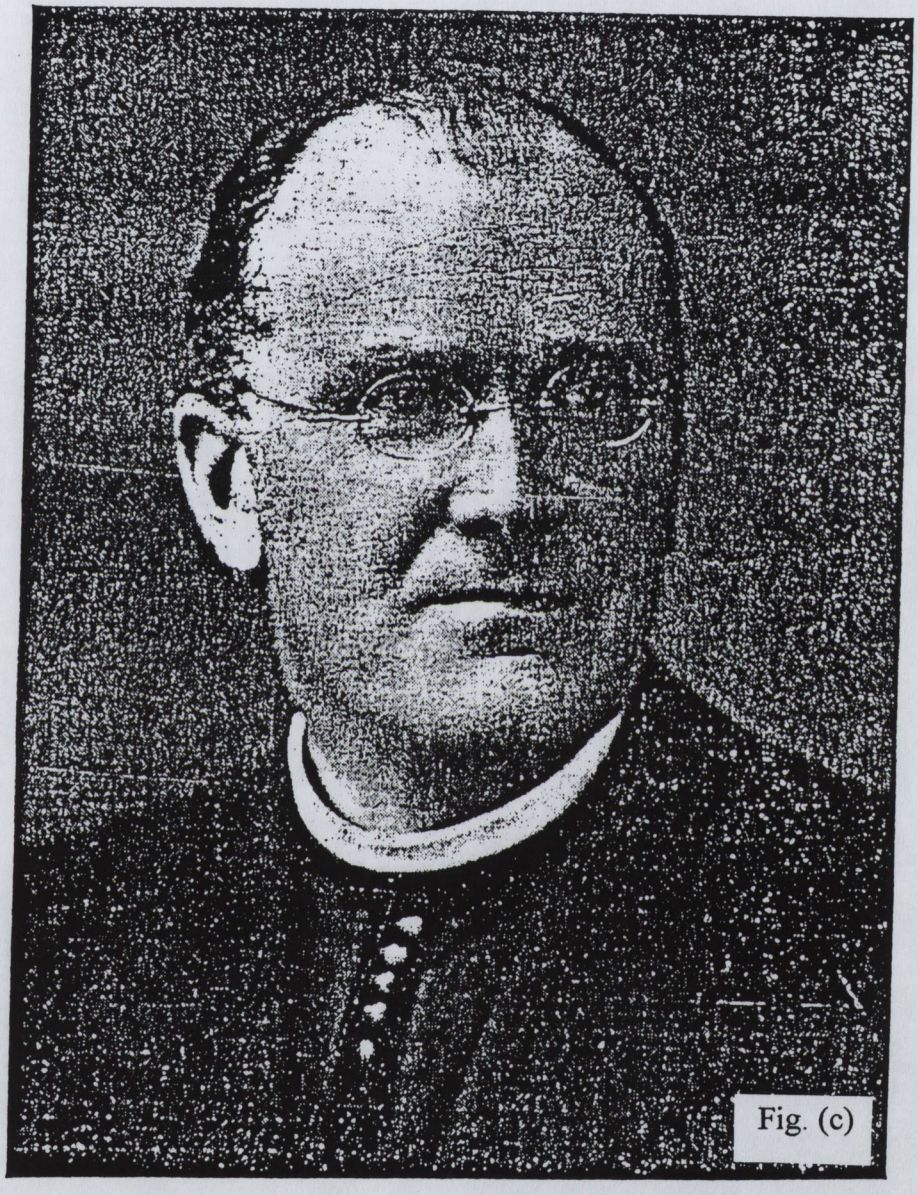


Fig. (c)

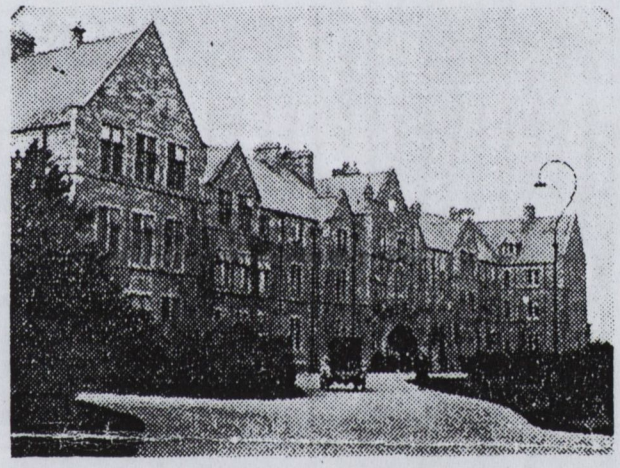
An Br. Oir. D. L. Ó Muirthile.

Irish Independent.

Luznar, 8 ao ta 1939.

CLOSING OF GAELIC COLLEGE

Dublin Surprise



Coláiste Caoimhín.

THE closing of Coláiste Caoimhin, Glasnevin, Dublin, by the Department of Education has caused much surprise in education and Irish language circles.

It was established by the Cosgrave Government about twelve years ago as an Irish preparatory college for boys, and during its brief existence had established a fine record in education, hurling, and Gaelic football.

COLLEGE'S FINE WORK.

Its work for Gaelic and Gaelic culture will long be remembered.

A wonderful Irish spirit permeated the institution, and there is much heart-burning among teachers and pupils, to many of whom news of the closing has come as a "bombshell."

The College accommodated ~~sixty~~ 120 120 pupils. In future pupils will probably be sent to Coláiste Einne, near Salthill, Co. Galway, a palatial building completed a few years ago.

When the Irish Preparatory College at Ballyvourney, Co. Cork, is ready for occupation, the Munster boys will likely be transferred there, while the Connacht and Ulster boys will remain in Coláiste Einne.

The future of the five lay teachers and four Christian Brothers who taught in the College has not been decided.

FOR ECONOMY.

Economy is said to be the reason for the closing of the College, which it is rumoured, may be turned into a museum. Recently it was visited by a prominent official of the National Museum.

Formerly the building was known as Marlboro' Hall, and was a training college for male teachers. During the Great War it was turned into a Red Cross hospital, and subsequently it was used as a hospital for National Army troops and as a training college for officers.

APPENDIX B 2:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(2) **C. Íde**
(a) history of the college
(b) photo of the building
(c) letter from Pádraig Ó Brolcháin re appointment of staff
(d) page from the college's annals

HISTORY OF C. ÍDE

The first girls' college was C. Íde, which opened in Burnham House, Ventry, in the Kerry Gaeltacht, on 1st March 1927. Burnham House was the former home of the Barons of Ventry, the De Moleyn family. Situated close to Ventry village (Baile Ghóilín) Burnham House, (Cúirt Bhaile Ghóilín) was an imposing building with an impressive entrance emblazoned with the family coat of arms. The house was sold to the Land Commission for £8,000 in 1922.

The De Moleyn family's ancestor was a butcher in Cromwell's army, Fred Mullins, one of a number of soldiers who received land in the Cromwellian plantation. Before the 1641 Rising the land was owned by a Norman family, named Rice, who were driven out. Mullins bought up land from those soldiers, who did not want to become farmers. In 1800, in return for voting for the Act of Union, the family received the title Lord Ventry, and changed their name to De Moleyns

While the original house was built in the eighteenth century, much of what is there today was constructed by the 4th Baron, De Rolles, who in a major restoration added the two wings and coach houses, the magnificent parlour ceiling, the dining room and the principal hall. Approached by a tree-lined avenue the spacious grounds included a number of unusual and exotic shrubs, planted by De Rolles and his sons, Fred, who succeeded him as the 5th Baron, in 1914, and Arthur William, who became the 6th Baron in 1918. There are also a number of stone-age monuments containing Ogham writing to be seen in the driveway.

The large amount of death duties incurred by the deaths of the 4th and 5th Barons so soon after each other forced the 6th Baron to sell the property, which was divided by the Land Commission between people from the surrounding areas, such as Dún Chaoin and Ballyferriter.

The first teachers appointed to C. Íde were Sr. Máire Columban, (principal) Sr. Maíre Borgia, (vice-principal) An Mháthair Carthach, and Sr. Rita. On 23rd February 1927, they went to Burnham House to get it ready for the first class of forty-eight students, who arrived on 1st March.

Despite its size the house had to be enlarged and a new wing was completed in October 1929. The two-year project included a chapel. Up to then Mass was celebrated daily in a little chapel and Sunday Mass in the Hobbies Hall. In all approximately 800 students attended C. Íde, amongst them 311 from Corca Dhuibhne, and forty from Dingle town.

In 1961 the Mercy Order bought the college from the Government and continued C. Íde as an all-Irish boarding school for girls until 1995. Since then Cairde Cholaíste Íde has been struggling to keep the school open.



Fig. (b)

OIFIG AN OIDEACHAIS NAISIUNTA,

BAILE ATHA CLIATH.

5th February, 1927.

COLAISTE IDE - BURNHAM HOUSE, DINGLE.

Madam,

I am to state for your information that the Minister for Education with the concurrence of His Lordship, the late Most Reverend Dr. O'Šullivan, Bishop of Kerry, has appointed the following as professors in Colaiste Ide:-

Caitlin M. Ni Bhuachalla, B.A., N.U.I. (First Class Honours and First place), Post-graduate scholar and winner of Donnellan Prize. (Secondary Teacher).

Loreto Hall,
St. Stephens Green,
Dublin.

Sile Ni Shuilleabhain, Trained Teacher. First place Easter Scholarship exam, 1924. First place Training College Examinations 1925 and 1926.

Ballybunion Convent,
Co. Kerry.

Maire C. Ni Chathasaigh, B.A. (Hons.) N.U.I. Secondary Teacher.

Marist Convent,
Tubbercurry.

I am, Madam,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) Patrick O'Brolchain

Sister Columbanus,
Convent of Our Lady of Mercy,
St. John's,
Tralee.

Preparatory College, Dingle. 1924-27

On the 23rd May, 1924, his Lordship, most Reverend Doctor O'Sullivan, paid a short, but momentous visit to St. John's. It was for no other purpose, than to acquaint Reverend Mother Mary Elizabeth Moynihan, that the Minister of Education proposed establishing Preparatory Colleges in the Gaedealtacht, to be conducted by Religious and run entirely through the Irish language. Furthermore, to request Reverend Mother, to provide Sisters to take charge of one such college in his diocese. The pros and cons were discussed, with the result, that Reverend Mother decided to undertake the new foundation. The St. Louis Sisters had been recommended to the Department of Education, as having wide experience of Secondary Boarding School but the Bishop's opinion prevailed, that the Tralee Sisters of Mercy were in a position to provide Sisters eminently fitted to undertake this branch of education. Later, Reverend Mother Elizabeth was asked to visit buildings, with a view to selecting one suitable for the proposed college. Reverend Mother and three Sisters visited Lord Ventry's mansion at Burnham also the abandoned coble buildings at Ballinskelligs. The former was in a good state of repair and not far distant from St. Elizabeth's, and for these reason was selected as being the most suitable.

Burnham House consisted of the middle portion only as signs The fourth Baron Ventry had this levelled, and rebuilt with the addition of the wings. The steward's father worked at it seventy years ago. He died in 1936. His eldest son is the author "an Seabac," and his second son, Michael, is Secondary School Inspector. Renovations to Burnham and the build of the first addition, occupied only six months; sixty men being employed, with the present steward as time keep

The supply of water, light and central-heating were main problems. The area of the land surrounding the college consists of ninety-five acres, thirty-seven of which is arable land, while the remainder is unfit for tillage, being wooded. House and lands cost £5,000

APPENDIX B 3:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(3) **C. Bhríde** (a) history of the college
(b) photos of the building
(i) chapel (ii) Ballyconnell House
(iii) a wing of the college
(c) the first class
(d) the school orchestra

HISTORY OF C. BHRÍDE

C. Bhríde opened with twenty-four pupils in temporary premises in Rockhill House near Letterkenny on 24th May 1927. It was the Department's intention that the college's permanent abode would be Ballyconnell House, a fine eighteenth century residence in the heart of a magnificently wooded park of five hundred acres, about a quarter of a mile from Falcarragh in the Donegal Gaeltacht. But as it was not ready for occupation the college started in Sir Charles Stewart's house, which was leased by the Department for eighteen months.

Ballyconnell House, on the Olphert Estate, was completed in 1800. The estate itself dated back to 1633, the year Sir John van Olphert, an English landlord of Dutch extraction bought the lands from Henry Harte, of Muff, Co. Donegal. At one stage the estate encompassed approximately 18,000 acres. The Olpherts were not very popular with their tenants who boycotted them during the Land War of the 1880s. In 1921, the Olpherts left and five years later the house was bought by the Irish Government. From the time the Olpherts left until the arrival of the Loreto nuns the house was uninhabited. To enable it to accommodate a hundred students and resident staff, three wings were added, a chapel, a large study and a science room. Mother Colmcille started a water garden and students used to help her to keep it.

The first principal was Sister Mary of Lourdes O'Dea. Sister Melissa Fahy, was vice-principal, and Sister Carmella Glynn and Sister Cecilia Duggan were the first teachers. As they were required to teach through Irish, they stayed in Gortahork from 6th September 1926 to 13th May 1927 familiarising themselves with the Donegal dialect

On 14th October 1927 C. Bhríde moved to Ballyconnell House. At the beginning of January 1928 two new lay teachers joined the staff, Ms. Roisín O Doherty and Ms. O'Rourke. Two months later work began on the extension to Ballyconnell House and some of the students and teachers moved to temporary accommodation in Talbot House in Dublin, where they stayed until August 1930.

When the Loreto Order left C. Bhríde in 1961 a secondary boarding school for boys, Holy Cross College, was founded. This, however, closed in 1985 and as the property belonged to the Diocese of Raphoe, the bishop offered it for sale. A local voluntary co-operative was founded and with assistance from Udarás na Gaeltachta and funds from the Regional Development Fund, it bought the house and lands. Olphert House is now run by Comharchumann Estáit Bhaile Uí Chonaill Teo on a thirty-five year tenure at an annual rent of £8,600. It is planned to cater for an increasing number of tourists, visiting the centre each year by refurbishing the house, restoring the gardens and developing a theme park on the estate.

On 14th October 1927 C. Bhríde moved to Ballyconnell House. At the beginning of January 1928 two new lay teachers joined the staff, Ms. Roisín O Doherty and Ms. O'Rourke. Two months later work began on the extension to Ballyconnell House and some of the students and teachers moved to temporary accommodation in Talbot House in Dublin, where they stayed until August 1930.

When the Loreto Order left C. Bhríde in 1961 a secondary boarding school for boys, Holy Cross College, was founded. This, however, closed in 1985 and as the property belonged to the Diocese of Raphoe, the bishop offered it for sale. A local voluntary co-operative was founded and with assistance from Udarás na Gaeltachta and funds from the Regional Development Fund, it bought the house and lands. Olphert House is now run by Comharchumann Estáit Bhaile Uí Chonaill Teo on a thirty-five year tenure at an annual rent of £8,600. It is planned to cater for an increasing number of tourists, visiting the centre each year by refurbishing the house, restoring the gardens and developing a theme park on the estate.

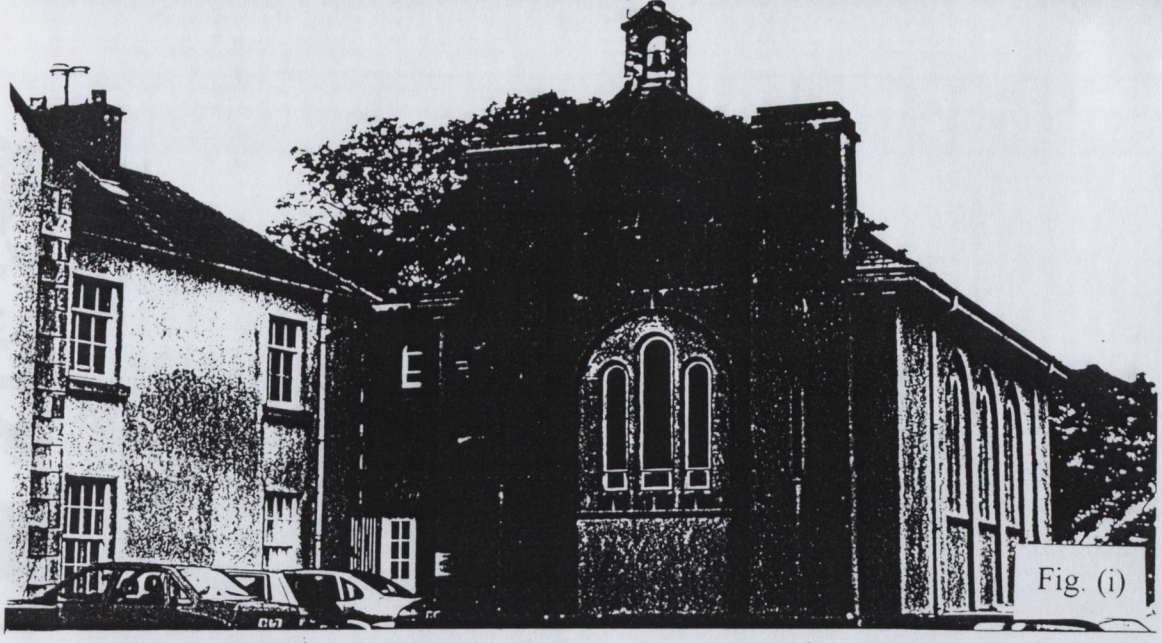


Fig. (i)



Fig. (ii)

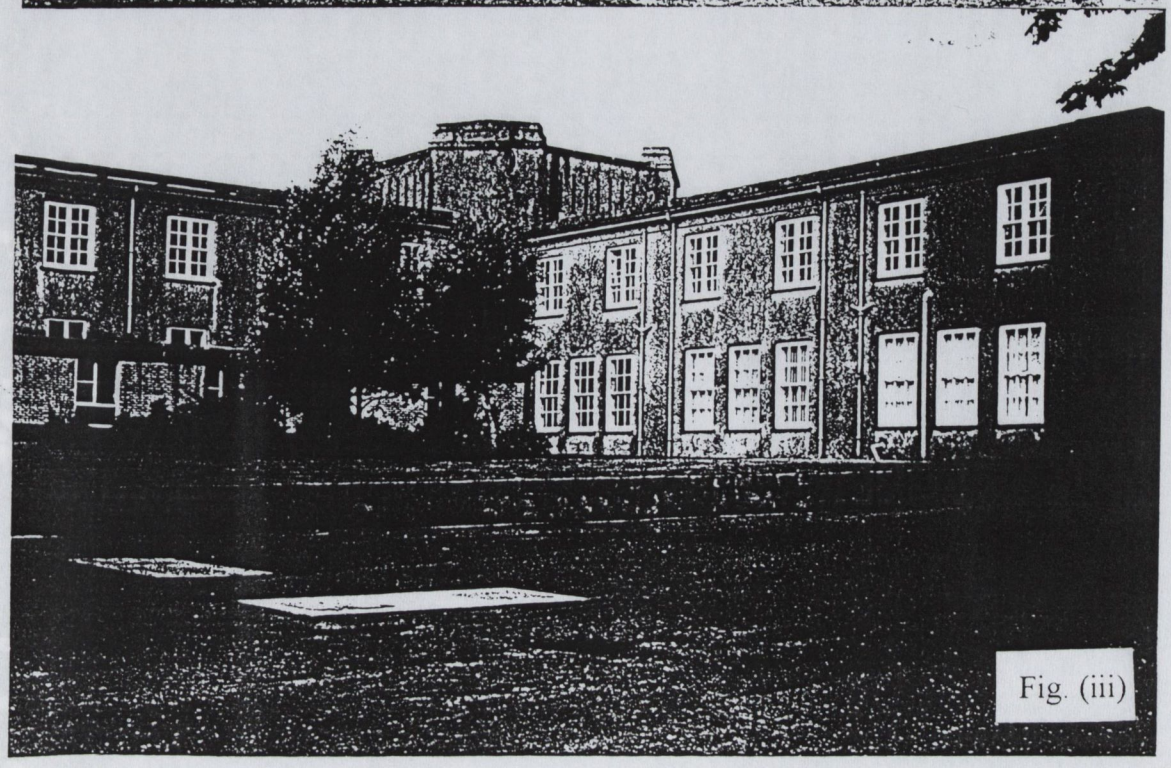


Fig. (iii)



Fig. (c)



Fig. (d)

APPENDIX B 4:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(4) **C. Moibhí**

(a) history of the college
(b) photo of building in the Phoenix Park, home of C. Moibhí: 1934 - 40
(c) photo of President de Valera at the official opening of the college: 1934
(d) Shanganagh Castle: 1948 – 1968
(e) Rathmines: 1968 – 95
(f) staff and students: 1961

HISTORY OF C. MOIBHÍ

C. Moibhí, the preparatory college for Protestant students, opened with six boys and fourteen girls, on 24th April, 1927, in temporary premises in Marborough House, Glasnevin. Unlike the other colleges it was co-educational and staffed entirely by lay teachers. Throughout its existence it was the only 'A' school under Protestant management, and its contribution to the development of the religious minority's acceptance of the new State was out of all proportion to its size. When the preparatory system ended in 1961, the college was kept open to provide facilities for Protestant students to learn Irish before entering the Church of Ireland Training College.

The college took its name from its location on St. Mobhi's (sic) Road, Glasnevin. It had two houses, Marlborough House for girls and Glasnevin House, the boys' residence. Because of the high standard of the entrance examination, particularly in Irish, it was difficult for Protestant candidates, who were from small one or two-teacher schools to obtain places and the Department introduced a device called 'eligible exceptionally,' which allowed a number of candidates to enter without having passed the examination.

While in Glasnevin the college was visited by many famous people, including Douglas Hyde, then a professor at UCD, and the writer, An Seabhac. The Department planned to provide the college with first-rate facilities at the former Royal Hibernian Military School in the Phoenix Park (now St. Mary's Hospital). In January 1934, the college moved to the Phoenix Park, and on May 8th, President de Valera was present for the official opening.

The college stayed in the Park until 1940 when its premises were taken over by the Army as a military hospital during the Emergency. From January to September 1941 C.

Moibhí was accommodated in the Church of Ireland Training College in Kildare Place and the following month it moved to 22 Upper Merrion Street, the former Orthopedic Hospital. In 1946 it returned to the Phoenix Park and in 1948 it moved to Shanganagh Castle in Shankill, Co. Dublin. C. Moibhí continued as a preparatory college until the late sixties when the Department wanted to close it and might have but for the intevention of the Principal, Gleadas Ní Alluín, who led a delegation which included An t-Athair (later Cardinal) Ó Fiaich, Canon Cosslett Ó Cuinn and Aindreas Ó Muineacháin to the Minister for Education. Following their representations the Department reconsidered its plans and, in 1968, C. Moibhí moved to its last site on the campus of the Church of Ireland College of Education at Rathmines. There it became known as the Juniorate of the College of Education and entry was restricted to After-Intermediate students only. In the early 1980s the Board of Governors of the College of Education proposed that C. Moibhí should be closed but the Department disagreed. In the next decade the Department changed its mind and the college was closed in June 1995.

The first Principal was George Ruth, (Seoirse de Rút) who was seconded from the Civil Service as temporary Principal to get the college started. As he had no teaching experience he was replaced in September 1928 by John Kyle, (Seán Ó Cadhla), an inspector in the Department of Education, who spent six years at C. Moibhí. Other Principals were Lil Nic Donnchadha, 1934 – 52, Gleadas Ní Alluín, 1952 – 84, and Rísteard Giltrap, 1984 – 95.

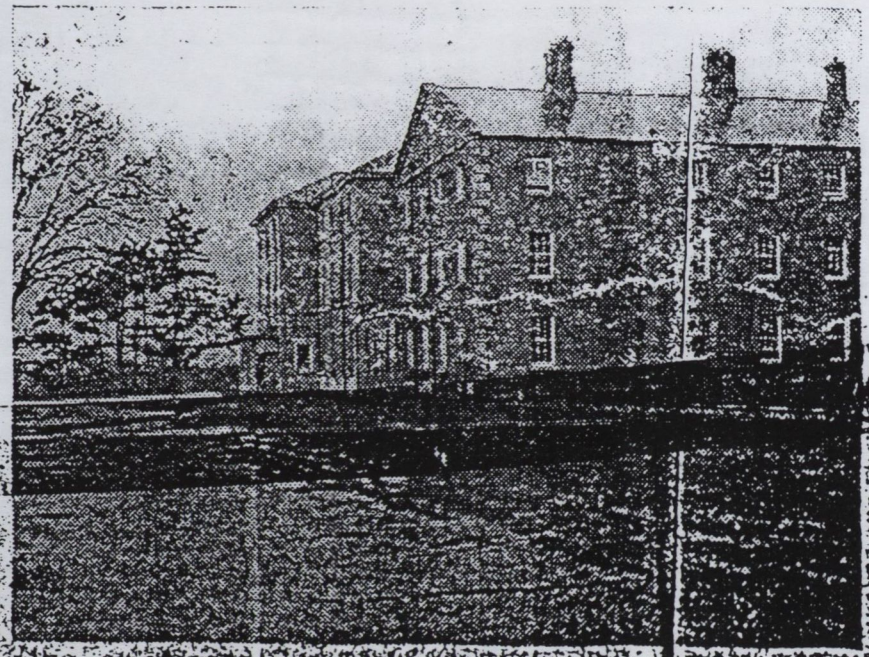
11. 14th Feb 1938

ST. MOIBHI'S COLLEGE

A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT

RECONCILING THE PAST AND PRESENT

PROTESTANT CLASSES AND BILINGUALISM



The west end of the old Royal Hibernian Milita[ry School]

ON the hill that is part of the Phœnix Park over against Chapelizod there stands one of the most interesting buildings in Ireland. Looking down on the Liffey valley and across to the Dublin Hills there is majesty and symbolism in the view of woods and heights, of park and plain, of village and city. In this building are students who, for the most part, are destined to a country life, into which they are to bring something of urban amenities, a wide outlook and a varied understanding. They are to be the Reconcilers of the Present and the Past, and, as such, are called to play an unusual part . . . a part of heroic responsibility and inspired courage. They defend and uphold the faith of their forefathers in a new spirit. All idea of this faith becoming a dominating force is gone . . . abandoned for ever. But Protestantism, no longer seeking ascendancy, will loyally contribute to the welfare of the country that shelters it. It accepts the hope that its existence may be useful, if not necessary to the new order of things. The continuance of its existence at all rests mainly with those who keep its lonely flame kindled in country districts. Great landed properties tend to disappear, the wealthy merchants who keep exchequers filled and the ball of riches rolling, pass in and out like players on a stage. But the country is the bone and sinews of the nation, not only supplying its daily needs, but feeding it with men to carry out its work.

Arts, professions, businesses, public services are filled with those [who] . . . foreign service is enhanced. The Protestant population of this island is supposed to be especially unwilling to learn Irish. If this is the truth it would be interesting to know the reason. For the Protestant population of any country long vaunted a freedom from all prejudice in education. Since the superiority of a bilingual nation is now universally admitted, we should expect to find the Protestant classes and masses in the forefront of the movement. But the truth is that the Protestant conscience is not yet fully awakened to its duty . . . its duty not to the powers that be, but to its own responsibility.

The Government of Eire has done all in its power to help the minority and to give them the opportunity of sending out teachers as fully equipped in all requirements as the largest and most famous Catholic college can supply. To begin with, £35,000 was spent on modernising part of the buildings of the old Royal Hibernian Military School for use as a Protestant Preparatory College, where candidates are prepared for the Church of Ireland Training College . . . baking, made [by] hundred cakes looked delicious . . . was not invited to taste them, for they are festive cakes, made for home. What fun unpacked! Great glass jars of the most delicious jam, gleaming from the shelves, all of fruit from the garden. The diningroom is hung with framed copies of Paul Henry's famous posters. They mean "home" to many a child here. The sewing room, with its cutting-out tables and sewing machines—one electrical—is a perfect *atelier*. Upstairs, shining corridors, with bathrooms on one side and bedrooms on the other. An hour quickly floated away.

There is no chapel here, but the religious instruction and worship of every pupil are carefully and generously provided for by visiting Catechists and in the local churches.

These happy, clever-looking girls, in their pretty uniform, and with their fine carriage, look at you straightly and independently. Do they know how much depends on them? At least they are

THE YOU[TH] DELINQ[UENT]

FIFTEEN [PROBATION] OFFICERS

PLEA FOR M[ORE] PROBATION

[There] should be [a] number of male probation [officers] was made by the Rev. F[ather] a broadcast talk [on] "The Delinquent."

Father Devane [said] four probation officers in [the] time women, and one part[-time] result of an increase in the female delinquent. [The] generously provided for [the] vision for men and boy[s] growing boys . . . [In the] years, 1933-37, inclusive [there] girls under 16 years [in] Dublin District Court—[for] boys for each girl. Of the girls were placed on [pro]boys for each girl 6[3] boys sent to reformatories, [for] each girl. In the same [period] 26 girls of 16-21 years of [age] seven boys for each [girl] probation, 278 were [males]. Taking the full number [of] there were 732 males [to] or a proportion of [3] female.

MORE OF[FICERS]

The number of [pro]bation officers ing the system should [be] to those figures, and [there] should be, according [to] number of male [pro]bation officers.

It was not desirable, growing girls up [to]



Fig. (e)

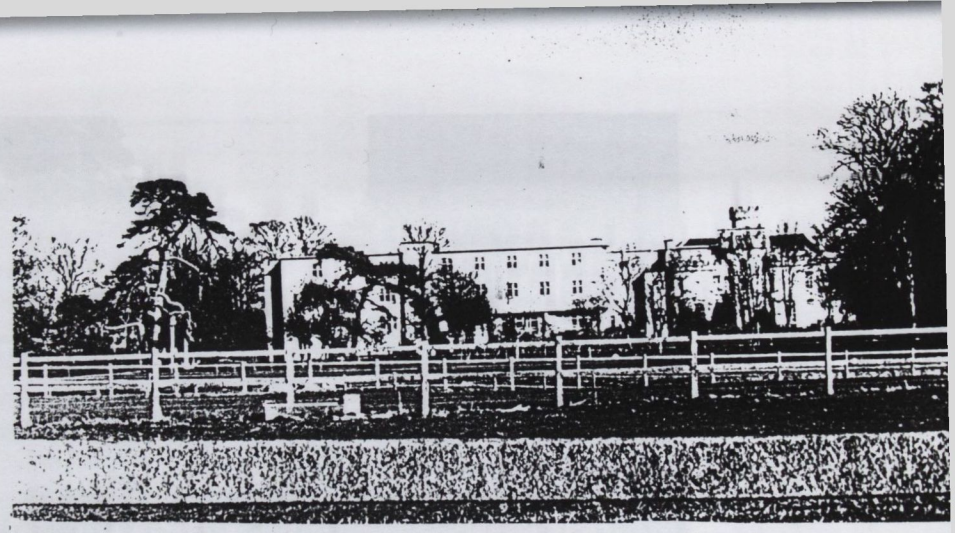


Fig. (d)

THE IRISH TIMES, WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 1934.

ST. MOIBHI'S COLLEGE OPENED



ST. MOIBHI'S COLLEGE OPENED.—A group taken at the College, Phœnix Park, Dublin, yesterday, when the opening ceremony was performed by Mr. T. Derrig, Free State Minister for Education. Left to right: The Rev. J. C. Breakey, Mr. P. Bradley, President de Valera, the Archbishop of Dublin, Mr. J. A. Kyle, M.A. (Principal), and Mr. Derrig.

Fig. (c)



Fig. (f)

APPENDIX B 5:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(5) **C. Mhuire** (a) history of the college
(b)photos of the building
(i) main entrance (ii) aerial view
(c) former teachers

HISTORY OF C. MHUIRE

On 24th October 1927 C. Mhuire, the Connacht girls' college, opened in temporary premises at Rockhill House, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. It was intended that the college would have a purpose-built school in the Connacht Gaeltacht but this took longer than anticipated to build. C. Mhuire started in Rockhill following the departure of C. Bhríde for Falcarragh. C. Mhuire's stay in Rockhill was longer than anticipated and in September 1930, it had to move to Talbot House in Dublin, while it awaited the completion of its new premises. Eventually they were ready and in February 1931, C. Mhuire opened in the Mayo Gaeltacht at Tourmakeady.

Situated on the shores of Lough Mask in the shadow of the Partry mountains it was one of the most picturesque parts of the country. Nevertheless, this remote area had seen much suffering during the previous century due to famine. In 1847, the parish priest, Fr. Peter Conway, in an effort to alleviate the suffering of his people and with the sanction of the Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Seán McHale, invited the Superior of Mount Bellew Monastery to send Franciscan brothers to the aid of the people; a request that was reinforced by a neighbouring landowner, Col. Maurice Moore of Moore Hall.

As a result two Franciscans monks came to Tourmakeady in 1848, where they were given a few acres of land which they started to farm. Later they were given thirty acres by Col. Moore. The Franciscans started a school and worked zealously to ensure that the people remained loyal to their faith during a period when Protestantism was spreading in the area.

The establishment of the National School system in 1831 was resisted by Archbishop McHale who refused to allow the schools in his diocese to come under the control of the National Board of Education. However, when he died in 1881 this changed. More schools were built and the numbers attending the Brothers' school declined. Eventually the land which belonged to the Franciscans was sold to the Land Commission. It was on this land that C. Mhuire was built.

The Sisters of Mercy were chosen to run C. Mhuire and this they did successfully until the preparatory system ceased in 1961. The college continued as a girls' 'A' school with boarders and day girls until 1990 when, due to the decline in vocations, the Mercy Order sold the premises to the local community. A Board of Directors was formed and a lay principal appointed to run the school which is now co-educational.

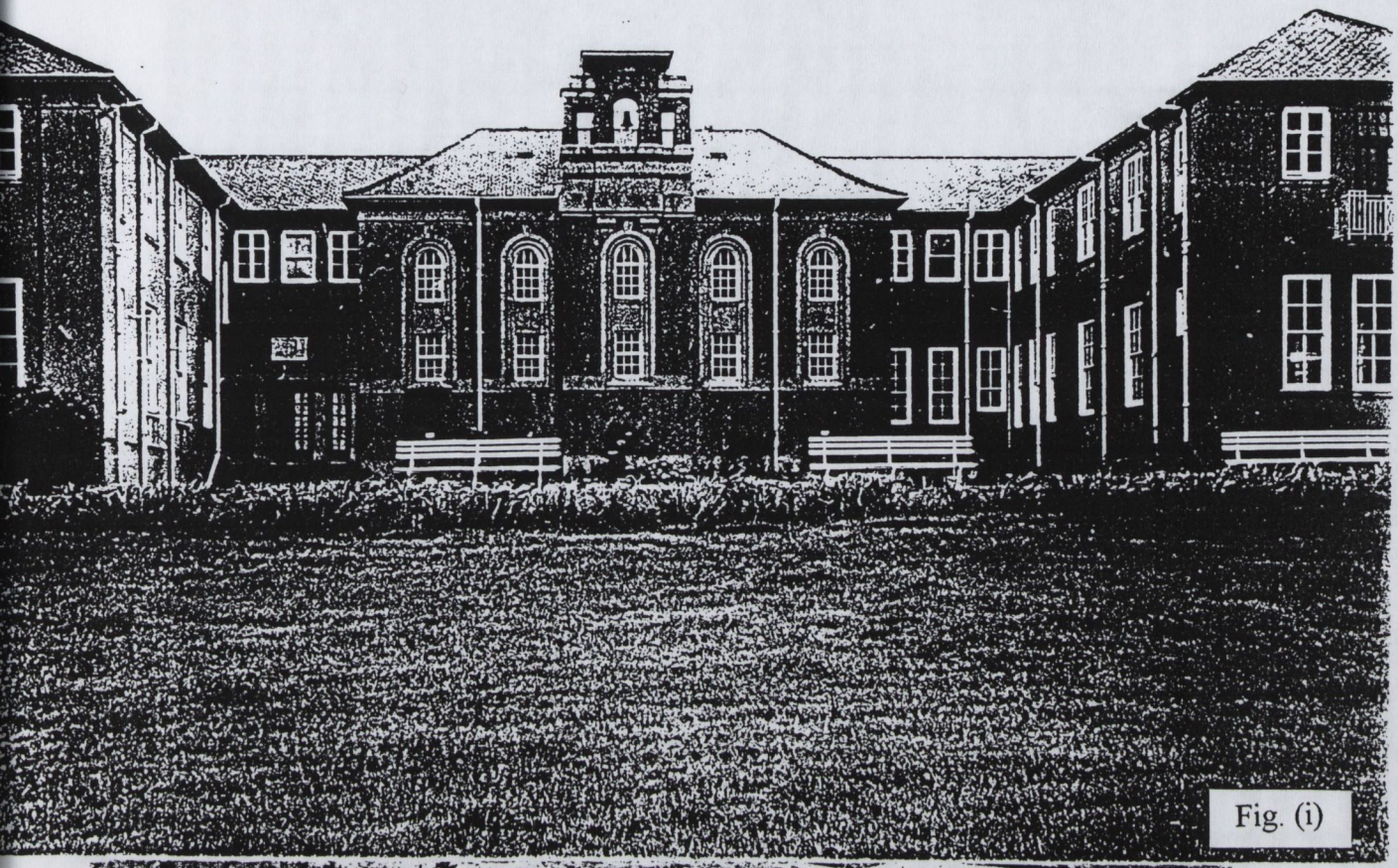


Fig. (i)

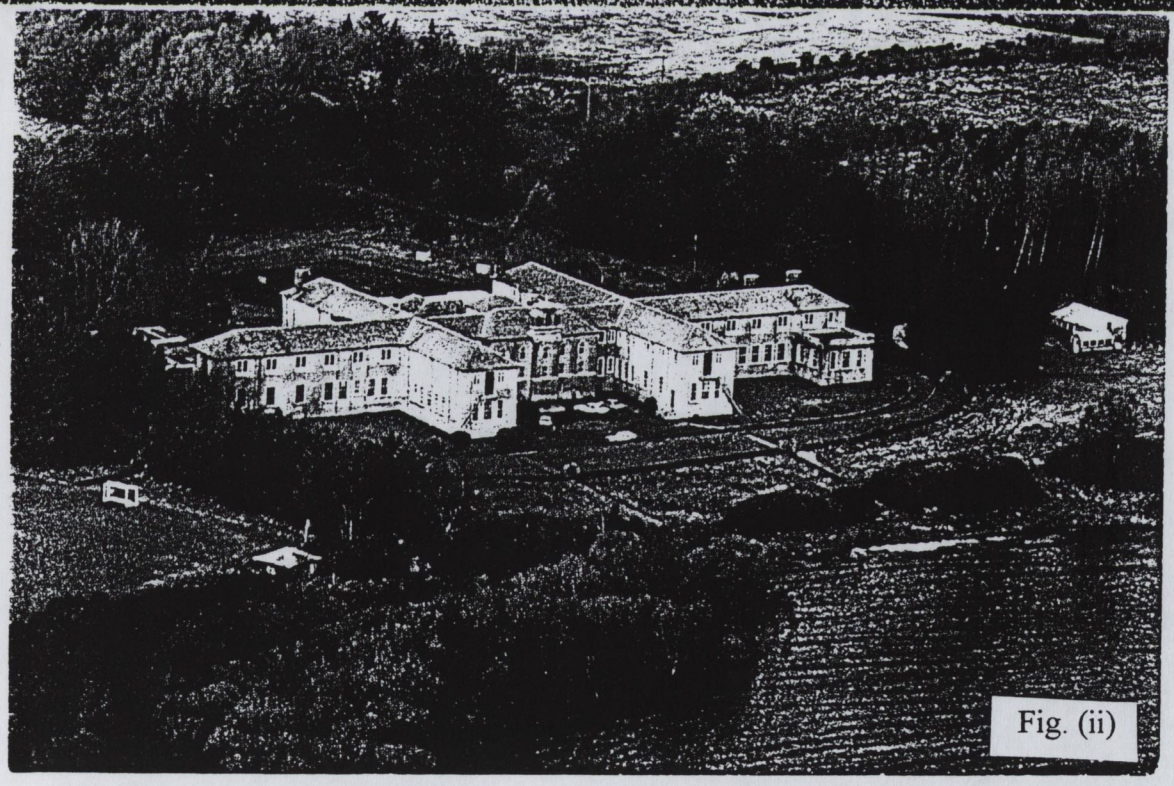


Fig. (ii)



Fig. (c)

Sr. Fionnbarra, a former student at C. Mhuire and C. Íde, and former teachers at C. Mhuire: Sr. Imelda, 1955 – 1971, Mother Mary Sacred Heart, 1927 – 1946 and Sr. Paschal, 1934 – 1970.

APPENDIX B 6:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(6) **C. Éinne** (a) history of the college
(b) photos of the building
(i) main entrance (ii) a wing
(c) the first class: 1928

HISTORY OF C. ÉINNE

C. Éinne, the Connacht boys' college, opened on 23rd October 1928, in temporary premises at Furbough House, belonging to a landlord named Blake. There were twenty-five boys in the first class. Fr Aindrias Ó Seisneáin (Sexton), a priest of Galway Diocese was the first president. The early staff comprised two priests and two lay teachers. The first class to enter the Leaving Certificate Examination was in 1930, when they obtained first place in History, Geography, Irish, and Science.

Blake's house was half a mile north of Furbough Bridge and had a grand entrance and drive up to it. At the rear were stables and a coach house, servants' quarters and a walled fruit and vegetable garden with a little stream. Despite these amenities it had neither electricity nor piped water. The house was heated by big fires and sanitary facilities consisted of dry toilets. It was the Department's intention to enlarge Blake's house but C. Éinne had to leave the house in December 1930 and to move to Talbot House in Dublin, in January 1931.

It was not until 1931 that the second class entered the college, by which time the first class had entered St. Patrick's Training College. When C. Moibhí moved to its new premises in the Phoenix Park C. Éinne moved to Marlborough Hall in Glasnevin where it stayed until 1937, when it moved to new premises in Galway. It had originally been planned that a training college for nuns would be built on the site and a three-storey structure was designed but because of difficulties over which Order would be in charge, the building was never finished. Eventually it was decided to convert it into premises for C. Éinne, which opened there on 10th October 1937.

1939 was a memorable year for the college for that year C. Chaoimhín was closed suddenly, and C. Éinne had to accommodate extra pupils for a year while the new college at Ballyvourney was completed. That same year the outbreak of hostilities in World War 11 brought some excitement to the college when the SS Athenia sank off the coast of Co. Galway and a small Norwegian boat the Knut Nielsen rescued hundreds from the Athenia and landed them in Galway. The Department made C. Éinne available for those who did not need medical care. They included about a hundred members of the crew and passengers from Europe, America and Canada. A hurried message was sent to the pupils not to return to the college for another fortnight. On 21 November that year the president, Fr. Ó Seisneáin died after an illness and the vice-president, Fr. Hynes became president.

In 1944 part of the college was taken over by the army and used for a military hospital. Later the whole premises taken over though the bishop insisted on keeping one room and the name on the gate. Meanwhile the college was accommodated in St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra which had no students due a ban on recruitment following the disastrous over- supply of the thirties. In 1946 C. Éinne returned to its Galway premises where it stayed until the ending of the preparatory system in 1961.

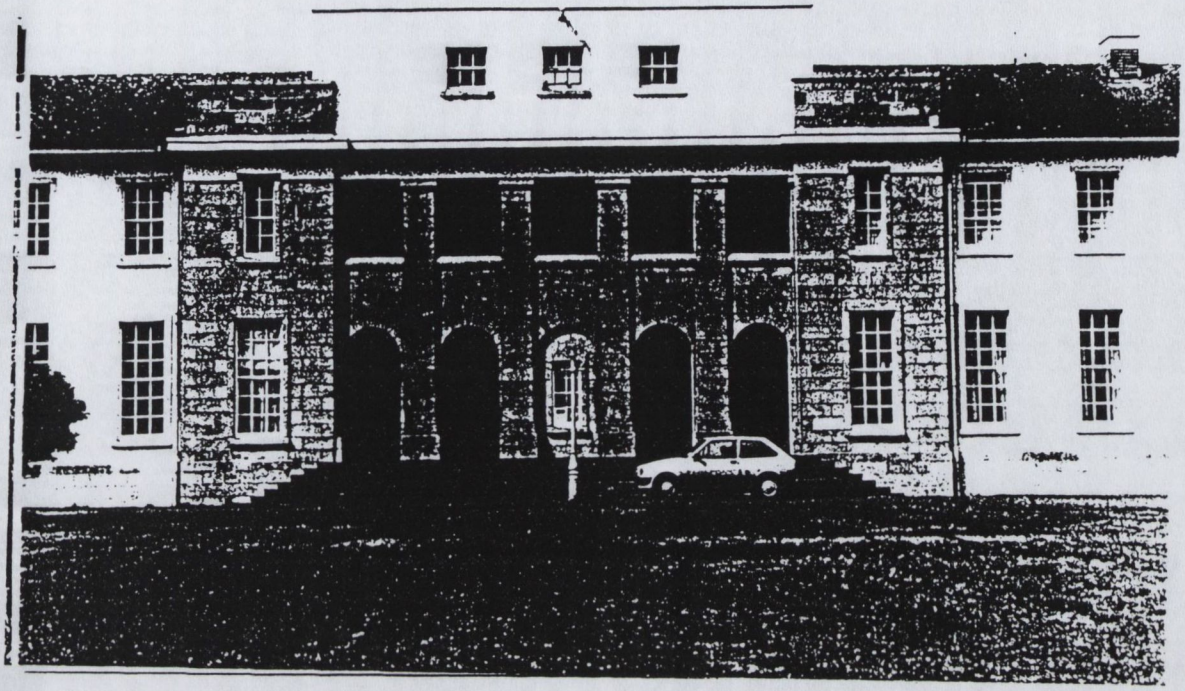


Fig. (i)

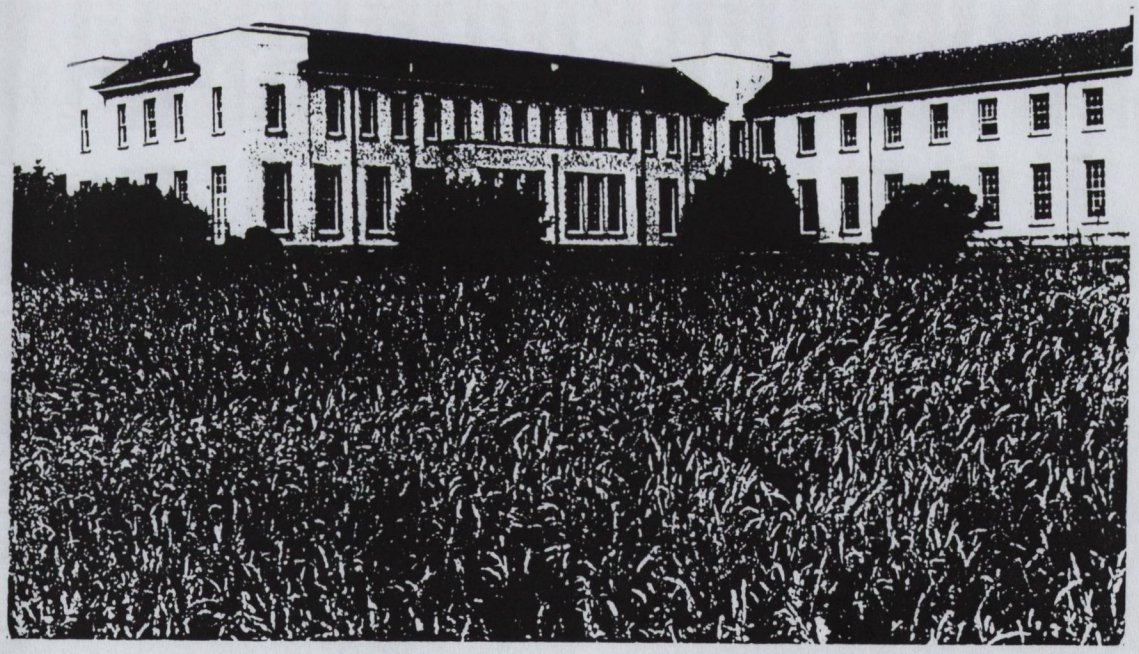


Fig. (ii)



Bun Sraith 1928

Fig. (c)

APPENDIX B 7:

PHOTOS OF COLLEGES AND SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS

(7) **C. na Mumhan/C. Íosagáin** (a) photos of C. Íosagáin
(i) a wing (ii) the entrance (iii) the chapel
(b) 1946 Frewen Cup team
(c) remains of Avondhu House



Fig. (i)



Fig. (ii)

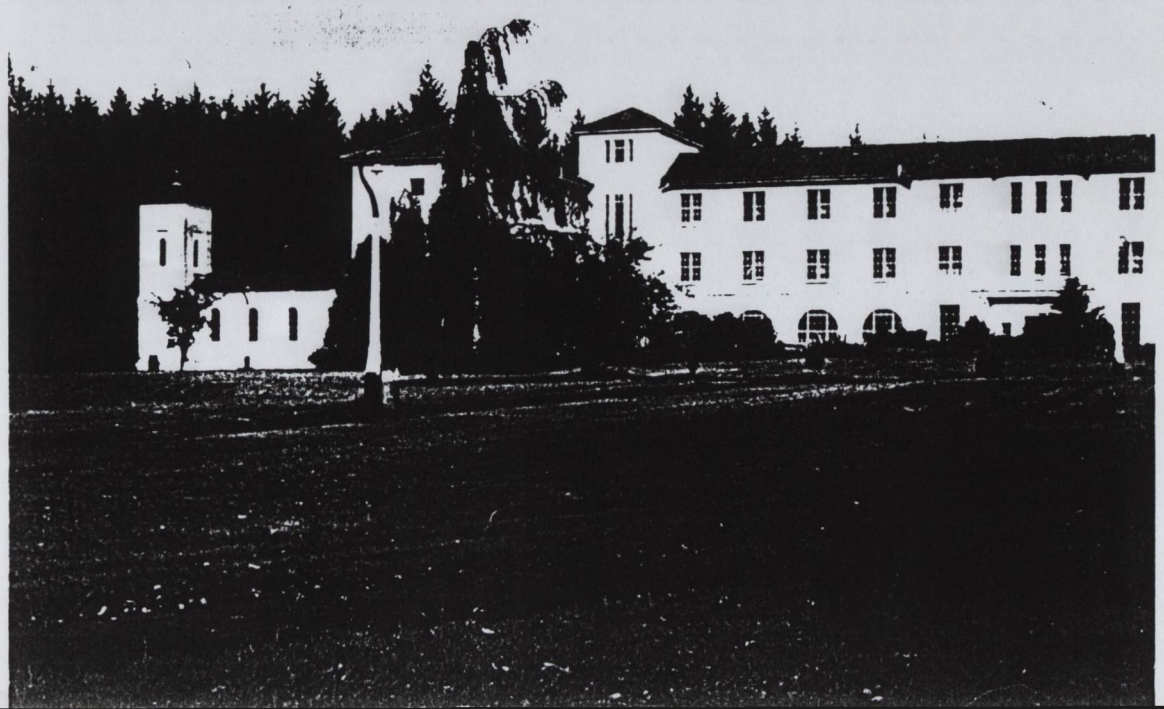


Fig. (iii)

Coláiste Íosagáin



Fig. (b)

Fuireann Choláiste Iosagáin a bhuaidh Corn Frewen i 1946. Ar chúl: S. Ó Reachtagáin, Néill Mór, B. Ó Lubhaing, S. Agnew. Tarna sraith: S Ó Muircheartaigh, B. Ó Cróinín, L. Ó Conchuir, — Ó Dúill. Tríú Sraith: Flann Ó Riain, M. Ó Conchuir, D Ó Ceallacháin, M. Ó Súilleabháin, L. Ó Mórain. Chun tosaigh: G. de Stac, B. Ó Muircheartaigh, S. Ó Luing, P Ó Sé, T. Ó Gairbhaí, Néill Meanach.

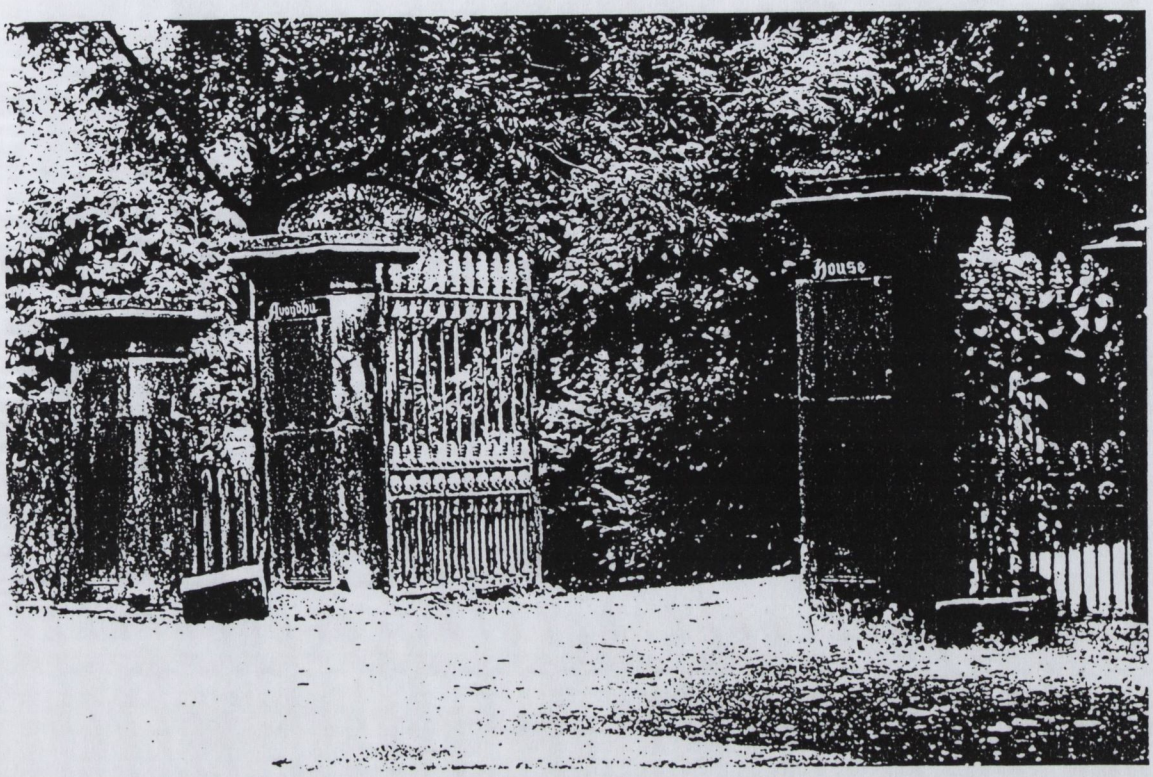




Fig. (c)

APPENDIX C:

COUNTY BACKGROUNDS OF STUDENTS

COUNTY BACKGROUNDS OF STUDENTS AT PREPARATORY COLLEGES 1927 - 1960

COUNTIES	C. BHRÍDE	C. ÍDE	C. MHUIRE	C. MOIBHÍ	C. na MUMHAN/ C. ÍOSAGÁIN
CAVAN	3	-	2	17	1
CLARE	5	12	33	-	37
CORK	57	112	42	53	156
DONEGAL	432	5	31	91	63
DUBLIN	27	5	19	27	14
GALWAY	17	12	248	8	10
KERRY	21	634	68	24	238
KILKENNY	10	2	12	7	18
LEITRIM	15	-	3	7	-
LIMERICK	12	15	20	7	20
MAYO	17	2	140	13	9
MONAGHAN	57	2	10	40	4
ROSCOMMON	24	1	15	4	-
SLIGO	7	-	18	17	-
TIPPERARY	45	7	22	15	25
TOTAL NO. OF STUDENTS IN COLLEGE	802	853	752*	451	691

* no figures for 1959 or 1960

DONEGAL:	622
KERRY:	985
CORK :	420
GALWAY:	295

The absence of material from C. Éinne and C. Chaoimhín has resulted in a lower number for Galway. As many Donegal students attended C. Éinne the number of students from that county would probably be higher also

APPENDIX D:

(I) NUMBER OF STUDENTS AT PREPARATORY COLLEGES 1927 – 61

(2) THE FIRST TEACHERS

NO. OF STUDENTS IN PREPARATORY COLLEGES 1927 - 1960

	C. Chaoimhín	C. Éinne	C. na Mumhan/ Íosagáin	C. Íde	C. Mhuire	C. Bhríde	C. Moibhí
1927	63 56+			47 1+	49	24 18+	20 12+
1928		25	34+5		9	29	16
1929			34+3	40	1	29	16
1930			-	59	48	1	12
1931		34	-	-	53	43	15
1932		32	28+8	21	21	31	15
1933			40	38	-	29	15
1934		28	-	43	31	18	14
1935			-	27	58	26	6
1936		25	30	24	24	34	13
1937		20	34	24	20	23	7
1938		26	25+2	22	20	20	12
1939	College closed	32	-	-	-	-	16
1940		13	-	-	-	-	8
1941			8	25	25	25	7
1942		23	24+3	26	20	21	12
1943		10	24	30	21	22	12+1
1944		18	19+4	20	22	30	10+4
1945			32+1	25	22	26	4+3
1946		30	17	21	24	25	7+2
1947		31	17+2	27	26	20	8
1948		26	20+4	25	24	23	8+6
1949		26	17+1	24	21	28	4+7
1950		18	21+5	21	22	27	13+2
1951		22	18+2	23	22	27	6+2
1952		17	21+2	28	21	24	11+2
1953		26	21+6	22	24	25	11+2
1954		29	13+4	26	26	21	14+3
1955		26	19+4	18	27	26	12+2
1956		21	22+2	26	23	21	12+4
1957		24	22	26	22	22	13+4
1958		24	26	30	29	19	13+5
1959		25	24	27	not given	21	10+1
1960		31	23	37	not given	24	12+5
Total	119	662#	691*	853#	752*	802*	451*

Total 4,330

From 1943 C. Moibhi was allowed to accept students after the Intermediate Certificate Examination. C. na Mumhan/C. Íosagáin also accepted students for a three-year course.

Source: *Registers of the colleges # Papers in the colleges

THE FIRST TEACHERS AT THE PREPARATORY COLLEGES

C. Chaoimhín

Br. Donal Lucius Hurley - President (1927 – 34)
Br. Peter Kiernan Ward - English
Br. Aodán. MacDonnchadha - Drawing & Latin
Br. Ciarán Ó Dochartaigh - Maths
Liam Ó Lubaigh - Science & Drawing
Tomás Ó Laoideain – History, Geography & English
Michéal Ó Siochfradha - Irish, Singing & Violin
Aindreas Ó Muimhneacháin - Singing & Irish
Anraoí Saidléir - Maths
Éamonn Mac Sitric – History & Geography

Cáit Ní Chinnéide – matron (bean an ti)
An Dr. Ó Mathúna – college doctor
An t-Ath. Seosamh Ó Daoirigh - chaplain until September 1928
An t-Ath Donnchadh Ó Floinn – chaplain from September 1928

C. Íde

Sr. Máire Columban, Principal, Needlework & Domestic Science
Sr. Borgia - Irish, Games & Drama
Sr Rosalia - Instrumental Music & Choir
Ms. Cuddihy - English & Irish
Ms. Quillinan - Geography & History
Ms. O'Rourke - Maths & Cookery
Ms. Boylan - Maths & Science
Ms. O'Sullivan - Singing & English

An Mháthair Carthach – matron (bean an tí)
Sr. Rita – assistant matron

C. Mhuire

Sr. Acuineas, Principal, Religious Education
Sr. Mary Sacred Heart - Maths & Drawing
Sr. Pascal - Maths & Music
Ms. Uí Lordáin - Domestic Science
Ms. Uí Cheafartaí - English
Ms. Uí Dhonnchadha - History & Geography
Ms. Uí Ghiollain - Science
Ms. Uí Fhearachair - Music

An t-Ath Ó Lochláin - chaplain

C. na Mumhan
Br. Basil McGeehan, President, Irish
Br. Stanilaus Barron - Maths & French
Br. Raphael Fitzsimons - Drawing & Games
Br. O'Connor - Maths
Mr. Edmund Murphy - English
Dómhnall Ó Ciobháin - History & Geography
Seámus Ó Cnáimhín - Rural Science & Latin

An t-Ath. Kelleher - chaplain

C. Moibhí
George Ruth, Principal, 1927 - 1928
John Kyle, 1928 – 34
William T.E. Condell - Maths
Eileen Penrose - English
Maebh Dennison - Irish & English
Hazel Campbell - Latin & English
Seán Mac Eachain - History & Geography until 1930
Oscar Willis - History & Geography
Enid Anderson - Domestic Science. Matron from 1928
Revd. T. Quigley – Religious Education

Mrs. May Ruth – matron until 1928

C. Éinne
An t-Ath. Aindrias Ó Seisneáin, President, English
An t-Ath. Donncha Ó hEidhin, Christian Doctrine & Church Music
An t-Ath. S. Mac Giolla Ruaidh – Maths
An t-Ath. S. Breathnach – Irish, Latin & Christian Doctrine
Éamonn de Bhaldraithe - English
Liam de Lása – Maths, Science and Art
Somhairle Mac Cana – Art
Aodh Mac Dubháin – Irish, History & Geography
P. Mac Gabhna – English, Drawing & Music

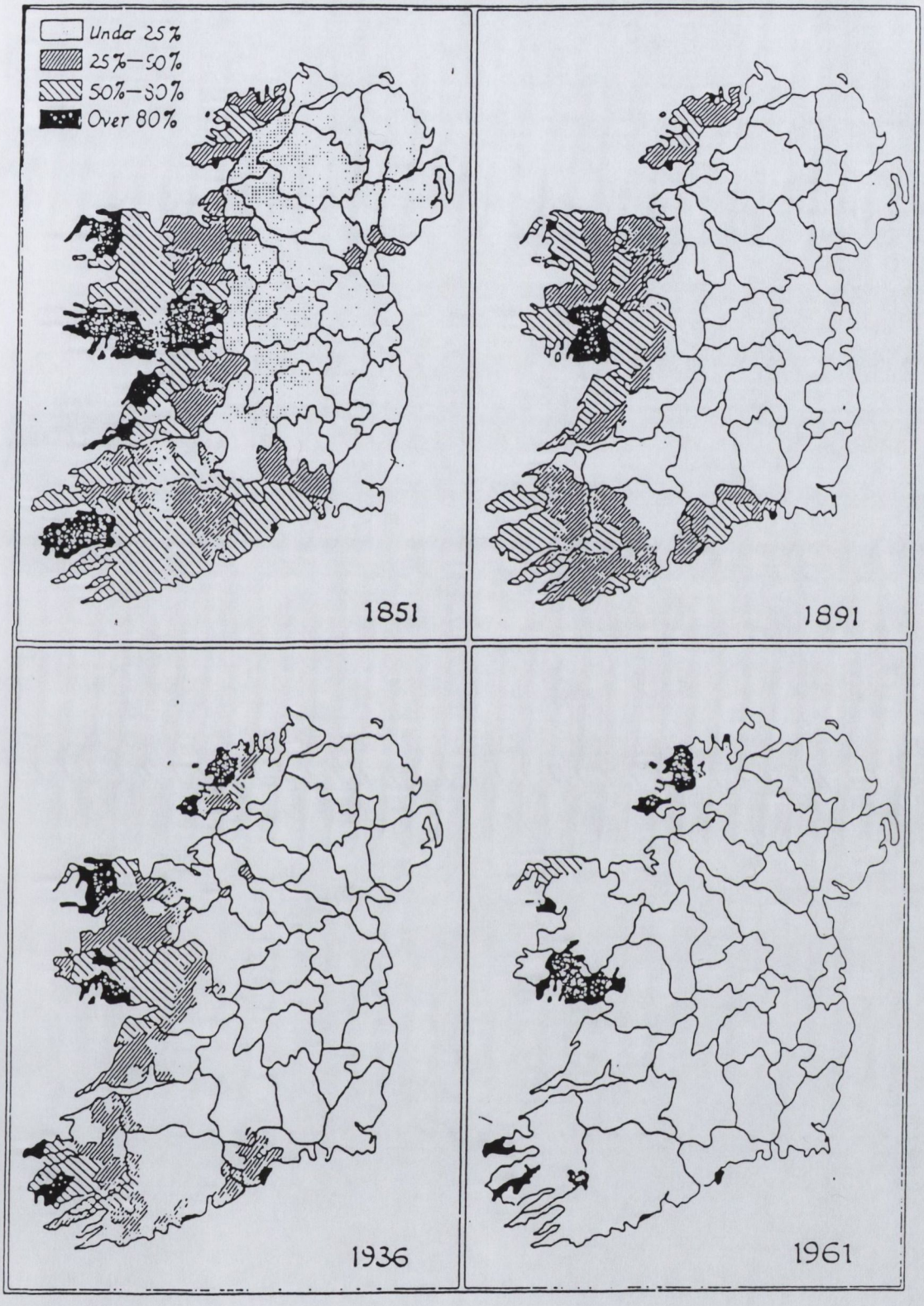
C. Bhríde
Sr. Mary de Lourdes - Principal
Sr. Melissa - Vice-principal
Sr. Carmella - Maths & Science
Sr. Cecilia - Drawing & Music
Fr. McGlynn - first chaplain
Bríd Henchy – History
Róisín O'Doherty

An t-Ath. Molloy, chaplain

APPENDIX E:

(1) AREAS WHERE IRISH WAS SPOKEN 1851 – 1961

(2) AREAS WHERE IRISH IS SPOKEN TODAY



Map 14: *Irish speakers 1851–1961.*

Source: R. Dudley Edwards, *An Atlas of Irish History.* (Based on maps in B. Ó Cuív, editor, *A View of the Irish Language.*)

Taken from R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600 – 1972,* (London: Penguin, 1988), p. 517

An Ghaeltacht



APPENDIX F : NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO OBTAINED ORDINARY AND BILINGUAL CERTIFICATES 1895 – 1922

The title reads: Statement showing the number of persons who obtained Ordinary Certificates or Bilingual Certificates prior to 30th June 1922 at examinations in Irish conducted by the Commissioners of national education and at Irish Colleges recognised by the Commissioners.

The note underneath reads: Many teachers sat for and obtained the same certificate more than once and those who obtained the Bilingual Certificate in practically all cases would have already obtained the Ordinary certificate so that a total of the above figures does not give any indication of the actual number of teachers who had Ordinary or Bilingual Certificates at any particular time.

Source: National Archives, Department of Education Papers, 17511, Box 367

Year	Ordinary Certificate			Bilingual Certificate			Total No. of Certificates Ordinary & Bilingual
	Nl. Boards	Irish Colleges	Total	Nl. Boards	Irish Colleges	Total	
1895	166	—	166	—	—	—	166
1896	30	—	30	—	—	—	30
1897	21	—	21	—	—	—	21
1898	43	—	43	—	—	—	43
1899	34	—	34	—	—	—	34
1900	73	—	73	—	—	—	73
1901	28	—	28	—	—	—	28
1902	101	—	101	—	—	—	101
1903	103	—	103	—	—	—	103
1904	482	—1	483	—	—	—	483
1905	175	—6	181	—	—	—	181
1906	~~8~~ 48	8	56	88	14	102	158
1907	~~76~~ 47	76	123	130	65	195	318
1908	~~123~~ 45	123	168	86	47	133	301
1909	~~120~~ 34	120	154	38	69	107	261
1910	~~165~~ 20	145	165	45	91	136	301
1911	~~205~~ 70	205	275	103	71	174	449
1912	~~245~~ 69	245	314	129	93	222	536
1913	~~249~~ 83	249	332	106	89	195	527
1914	~~195~~ 73	195	268	46	58	104	372
1915	~~215~~ 68	215	283	62	48	110	393
1916	~~190~~ 79	190	269	39	31	70	339
1917	~~213~~ 98	213	311	51	63	114	425
1918	~~226~~ 72	226	298	36	46	82	380
1919	~~235~~ 55	235	290	59	37	96	386
1920	~~276~~ 75	276	351	75	66	141	492
1921	~~311~~ 89	311	400	100	75	175	575
1922	~~265~~ 117	148	265	118	109	227	492
	2398	3187	5585	1311	1072	2383	7968

~~This Journal~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]

APPENDIX G:

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 4 CONCERNING THE TEACHING OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS 1922

RIALTAS SEALADACH NA hEIREANN.

(Irish Provisional Government.)

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

Concerning the Teaching of Irish Language in the National Schools.

PUBLIC NOTICE, No. 4.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION by virtue of the powers vested in him HEREBY ORDERS that the following regulations concerning the teaching of the Irish Language in all national schools shall come into force on St. Patrick's Day, the Seventeenth day of March, 1922, and shall remain in force until further notice :—

(1) The Irish Language shall be taught, or used as a medium of instruction, for not less than one full hour each day in all national schools where there is a Teacher competent to teach it ;

(2) The hour for the aforesaid instruction shall be divided in the following manner :—

(*a*) One half-hour not earlier than 10 o'clock in the forenoon ; and

(*b*) the remaining half-hour not later than 2.30 o'clock in the afternoon.

(3) That should it happen in any schools with more than one Teacher that all the Teachers of the school are not competent to give instruction in the Irish Language, then the division of the work in such school must be so readjusted as to enable such Teacher or Teachers in the school as are competent to give instruction in Irish to comply with the terms of this order ; provided, however, that in the carrying out of such readjustment, due regard shall be had to the amount of work which can reasonably be allocated to any teacher ;

(4) That in a school where the Teacher of a standard, though not certificated, is regarded by the principal teacher of the school and by the National School Inspector in charge of the school, as reasonably competent to give instruction in Irish in that standard, then the Principal Teacher will arrange for such teacher to give the instruction in Irish in that standard ;

(5) That all time-tables affected by the provisions of this Order should be revised and altered accordingly, and a copy of each time-table so revised and altered should be submitted without delay to the Inspector in charge of the school ;

(6) That in cases where there are any difficulties whatsoever in carrying out the regulations herein set forth, statements should be submitted as soon as possible to the Inspector of Irish Instruction, National Education Office, Dublin.

Given this 1st day of February, 1922.

DIARMUID Ó hÉIGCEARTUIGH,

Secretary to the Provisional Government.

APPENDIX H:

A LESSON FROM AN EARLY IRISH TEXT-BOOK

ceaċt a dó: an dara ceaċt.

1. Days of the Week:

	an Luan.
	an Máirt.
Indiu	an Céadaoin.
Inné	an Dardaoin.
Amárach	an Aoine.
	an Satarn.
	an Domnaċ.

2. At Mass:

Dí an eaglais in aice leo, agus cuadadar isteaċ san eaglais láiċreaċ. Dí pobal mór ann. Tar éis tamaill dig táinig an sagart agus na cléirig amaċ ar an áltóir. Aoudairt an sagart na paidreaca agus léig sé an cáifreann annsan. I lár an áifrinn tug sé seanmóin don pobal. Ar deiread aoudairt sé na paidreaca tar éis Aifrinn. Annsan táinig an pobal amaċ as an eaglais aris.

3. Invitation:

Seán: Tá an méid sin déanta.

Taidg: Tá, agus déanta go maiċ, le congnam Dé.

Kacht ü dó: Ün daru *Kacht*.

	ün Lúon.
	ün Várt.
Inüv	ün *Chía*Duín.
Iné	ün DarDuín.
Umárüch	ün Uíni.
	ün Sahurn.
	ün Dounuch.

Ví ün aguluish ün-aki *ló*, agus chúodur *ishd*ach sün aguluish *láh*ruch. *Ví* pobul múor aun. *Trésh* tamuil *vig hánig* ün sagurt agus nü *klérig* umach *er*-un-altór. Üdúert ün sagurt nü pa*dir*üchu agus *lég shé*N ta*fir*un ünson. Ü lár ün A*firing* hug *shé sh*anumón dün fobul. Er *der*i üdúert *shé* nü pa*dir*uchu *trésh* A*firing*. Ünson *hánig* ün pobul umach ass ün aguluish *irish*.

Shán: Tán *méd shin dí*antu.

TuyG: Tá, agus *dí*antu gümah, le cúnuv *Dé*.

LESSON TWO: THE SECOND LESSON.

	Monday.
	Tuesday.
To-day is	Wednesday.
Yesterday was	Thursday.
To-morrow will be	Friday.
	Saturday.
	Sunday.

The church was beside them and they went into the church immediately. There was a big congregation there. After a little while the priest and the clerks came out on the altar. The priest said the prayers and he said (read) (the) Mass then. In the middle of the Mass he gave a sermon to the congregation. At the end he said the prayers after Mass. Then the congregation came out of the church again.

Seán: That much is done.

Tadhg: It is, and done well, with God's help.

Seán: Da dreag an tseanmóin i sin a tug an tAtair Páraig duinn.

Taidg: Da dreag. Is iongantaċ an cainnteoir é, agus tugann sé cómairle maiċ i gcomnaide i ngaċ seanmóin.

Seán: Tugann, agus da ċeart duinn a cómairle do glacad.

Taidg: Is fíor duit.

Seán: Féaċ i leit. Aoudairt bean an tige liom a rád leat teaċt tugainn i gcomair an té um tráthnóna. Adéarfaid Eibhlín féin le Cáit é.

Taidg: Gura maiċ agaid. Deid áċas orainn dul tugaid.

Seán: Deid fáilte romhaid i gcómnaide.

4. The Lord's Prayer:

Ár nAtair atá ar neamh, go naomhuigtear t' ainm; go dtagaid do ríogaċt; go ndéantar do toil ar an dtalamh mar a déantar ar neamh. Ár n-arán laetheamhail tabair duinn indiu; maiċ duinn ár gcionta mar maitimid do ċáċ a ciontuigeann in ár n-agaid; agus ná léig sinn i gcataid, aċ saor sinn ó olc. Amen.

Shán: Bü-*vrá* ün *t*anümón *í shin* ü hug ün Ta*hir* Páduruig dúng.

TuyG: Bü-*vrá*. Iss úntuch ün coy*ntór é*, agus tugun *shé córli* vah ü gónuí üng-ach *sh*anumón.

Shán: Tugun, agus bü-*ch*art dúng ü chórli do ghlacu.

TuyG: Iss *fí*R ghot.

Shán: *Fí*ach-ü-*leh*. Adúert *b*aN-ü-*tí lum* ü *rá lat tacht* chúng ü-gór ün *té* um-práhnónu. Üdíarhuig Iylín *fén* le Cát é.

TuyG: Guru-ma-huguiv. *Beg* áhus oruing dul chúv.

Shán: *Beg fálti* róv ügónuí.

Ár na*hir* utá *er nav*, gu NæFuíhuR ta*nim*; gu dagu dü *rí*CHT; gü *né*Ntur du ho*l er* ün daluv mar ü *dé*Ntur *er nav*. Ár nurán læHúl túr dúng ünuv; mah túng ár guntu mar va*himíd* du chách ü *ch*unTuíN ün ár nuyg; agus ná *lég shing* ü ga*hív*, ach sæR *shing* ó olc. Amen.

Seán: That was a fine sermon Father Patrick gave to us.

Tadhg: It was fine. He is a wonderful speaker and he gives good advice always in every sermon.

Seán: He does, and we ought to accept his advice.

Tadhg: It is true for you.

Seán: Look here. The *bean an tighe* told me to tell you to come to us for the tea in the evening. Eibhlín herself will say it to Cáit.

Tadhg: Thank ye. We will be glad to go to ye.

Seán: Ye will be welcome always.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

APPENDIX I:

COPY OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

(1) Report of the Ministry for Irish, p. 1

(2) A page from the First National Programme

(3) Second National Programme Conference Report, p. 22

REPORT OF AIREACHT NA GAEDHILGE.

Owing to the arrest of the Secretary to the Ministry some days after the last session of the Dail and his imprisonment for three months, the Ministry of Irish, though decided upon at that session, came officially into existence only a couple of months ago. About that time the Governing Body of the Gaelic League appointed a sub-committee to co-operate with Aire na Gaedhilge; and from that body and from Irish-speaking representatives of the various national organisations a Committee, which meets weekly, has been formed to investigate the position of the language and recommend a scheme for its preservation. The Aire Cosanta and Aire Trachtala, Cathal Brugha and Earnan de Blaghd, kindly consented to act on the Committee of which Piaras Beaslaoi and Padraig O'Caoimh are also members. Care has been taken to make it, as far as feasible, representative of the whole country.

So far, the possible avenues for the spread of the language which have been surveyed in detail are:-

(1) The primary schools, especially in the Gaedhealtacht;
(2) Parish Committees to promote among other things rivalry in the use of the language between Irish-speaking families.

(3) Irish-speaking co-operative Societies; and
(4) The Public Boards and National Institutions generally.

In the matter of the primary schools in the Gaedhealtacht, the Committee adopted with slight modifications the "Gaelic League Educational Programme," as follows:-

IN PURELY GAELIC DISTRICTS

(1) All school subjects to be taught through the medium of Irish.

(2) Irish History to be taught to all pupils.

(3) Irish music to be taught in all music classes; the words of the old songs to be taught as poetry, and the music to which they are set to be taught in the music class.

(4) Irish dances to be taught as well as the ordinary drill exercises and teachers to be urged to encourage them.

IN SEMI-GAELIC DISTRICTS

(1) Irish to be the official school language, i.e. Irish to be used for roll-call, orders, prayers, and so on.

(2) A bilingual programme to be in use wherever possible.

(3) Irish history, Irish music and Irish dancing to be taught as in the purely Gaelic districts (above).

IN PURELY ENGLISH-SPEAKING DISTRICTS

(1) Irish to be the official school language as in the semi-Gaelic districts.

(2) Irish to be taught for vernacular use to each child for at least one hour per day, in every school having a competent Irish teacher, and in such other schools as can be provided with travelling teachers.

Programme for Infants

NOTE.—The work in the Infant Standards is to be entirely in Irish

JUNIOR INFANTS.

LANGUAGE.

To be taught to speak audibly and distinctly by means of conversation, object and picture lessons, story-telling and recitation.

DRAWING.

Drawing in sand, and afterwards in mass with chalks on small blackboards, or on other suitable surfaces.

NUMBERS.

To count up to 9 by means of kindergarten gifts and occupations.

KINDERGARTEN GIFTS AND OCCUPATIONS.

Colour sorting, building with bricks, threading large beads, arranging shells or tablets, &c. in twos, threes and higher numbers, fraying, stick-laying. Gifts I., II., III.

SONGS AND GAMES.

Nursery rhymes and simple songs connected with child's surroundings. Finger-plays. Colour and movement games with Gift I. Ring games with music and free play.

INFANTS.

NOTES.

1. The work in the Infants' classes between the hours of 10.30 and 2 o'clock is to be entirely in Irish where the teachers are sufficiently qualified.

All teachers holding bilingual or higher certificates are regarded as sufficiently qualified, but the possesssion of such certificates is not regarded as an essential qualification.

It is expected that the use of Irish for Infant teaching will be gradually extended until the stage is reached when, in all schools, the work of the Infant classes will be done entirely in Irish.

2. A teacher who is able to teach Irish, but is unable to use Irish as a medium of instruction, is to teach the language as a subject for one hour a day at least, and is to use Irish as much as possible as the school language.

INFANTS' SCHOOLS AND INFANTS' DEPARTMENTS OF SCHOOLS.

JUNIOR INFANTS.

LANGUAGE.

Conversation, object and picture lessons, story-telling, and recitation, all used for the purpose of training the children to understand Irish and to speak it distinctly and correctly as their natural language.

(The following details are merely suggested as a guide to teachers when drawing up their own plans. It is to be clearly understood that all the details below need not necessarily be included in each plan).

A. *Where all work between* 10.30 *and* 2 *is done in Irish* :—

1. Simple lessons identifying objects, and the asking and answering of simple questions as to their colour, location, etc. This to be alternated with the memorising of about half a dozen rhymes, dialogues, or short stories, such as can be wholly or very largely illustrated by actions or pictures, with a general (not word-for-word) understanding of their meaning, and ability to answer simple questions on them.

2. Pupils to know their Christian names, be able to ask and answer questions as to the location, colours, and other common properties of objects within view; to use and answer common salutations or to ask and answer questions about the weather, their health, their clothes, and the principal parts of the body. While no grammatical form required by the correct idiom of the expressions occurring in

APPENDIX J :

(1) 1926 ENTRANCE EXAMINATION TO PREPARATORY COLLEGES IRISH PAPER
(2) RESULTS OF ENTRANCE EXAMINATION
(3) HEALTH CERTIFICATE

roinn an oideacais.

dul isteach ins na colaistí ullamhúcháin.

Gaeilg.

Uain go leic do'n páipéar so.

1. Mion ceapadóireacht (i.e. ceist 8) do scríobhadh, agus ceithre ceisteanna eile do freagairt.

1. An sgéal so a leanas d'aithscríobh gan aimsir gháchla tríg. Tosuig le "Gac Satarn . . ." agus bain amach "ndé."

Fuaramar roimhe amhlaidh ndé, agus chuamar síos an tsráid go rabamar ag amharc isteach i gcuinneoga na siopaí bréagán. Chonnacamar rudaí deasa éigin iontu, agus cheannuigeamar iad. Rugamar orta agus thugamar linn a baile iad. Annsan d'itheamar ár séithe go sásta.

[16 marcanna].

2. Cuir isteach, ins an ngníomh so a leanas, na focla atá an iarraidh; focal amháin i ngach beárnain:—

"Abair . . . . an maighistear nach nacaidh Máirín . . . . na scoile indiú mar go bhfuil tinneas fiacal . . . . , agus iarr . . . . tú féin do teigint a baile go luath. Innis . . . go mbéidh tú ag teastáil . . . . d'athair sa tráthnóna.

Dhi an doctúir ag cainnt leis indé, agus d'fhiafruig sé . . . . and' fada go mbéadh a chuid féin bainte . . . . Mhol chuir d'athair suim an bhic . . . . a chuid cainnte, ac ag cainnt leis féin . . . . n-a fiacla."

[20 marcanna].

3. Scríobh trí h-ainmfocail de ghnáth-cainnt, agus bíodh cuid de'n bhriathar "tabair" i ngach ceann acu. Cuir an focal "an" in a diaidh sa chéad ainmfocal, "fá" (fé, faoi) sa dara ceann, agus "chun" sa tseas ceann.

[Tig leat an for-ainm réamh-focal do chur in ionad an réamh-focail féin, má's mian leat, c.g. "chugam" in ionad "chun."]

[20 marcanna].

4. Ceap ceisteanna a bheifeadh na freagraí seo chos dóibh:—

(a) Mionn' é; (b) Do b'eadh; (c) Ni mór; (d) Is sin; (e) Da mhac.

[30 marcanna].

"A (Phádraig Mac Néill), an cuala a chuis an donas i dtig Síle na Sceanc?"

"Ni mé; ni rabas in aice (an: bocán: beag). Dhi gaoithin éigin ag caitheamh clocha mór (an: cearca: dubh: an: sean-bean) dá lá ó shin." [30 marcanna].

6. Tóg cúig cinn de na ceisteanna so a leanas, agus innis i dtaobh gach focail acu cé an uain a deirtear é:—

(a) Dia annso isteach!
(b) Mo beannacht!
(c) Nár imthigh uainn as é!
(d) Ni ag do sháraigh é.
(e) Nár lagaidh Dia thú!
(f) Múchadh a's bádhadh orra!
(g) Sonas ort! [40 marc.]

7. Freagair ceist (f) agus trí cinn eile de na ceisteanna so chos:—

(a) Céard is cómhnaidhe (faire) ann?
(b) Canathaobh gur mhaith an rud teach do choimhéad glan?
(c) Cé an fáth go scaoileann tú bhróga?
(d) Cé an úsáid a ghníthear de (1) stampa puist; (2) chion; (3) eochair?
(e) Dá bhfeicfeá nóta cúig phúnt caillte an an tsráid, cathain bhéadh déanamh duit a théanamh?
(f) Cé mhéid tá i mbliain a dhá fhichid? (Scríobh a fhreagra so i bhfocla). [40 marc.]

8. Scríobh litir nó aiste gairid (leath-leathanach nó mar sin) an cheann amháin de na h-ábhair seo chos:—

(a) Tá sneachta an an talamh mar éis na h-oíche: scríobh an cainnt a déanfadh na leanbaí nuair eiridhis é.

(b) Tá buaicaill ag teacht a baile mar éis beith ag iascach: slat nua iascaig aige, agus í briste. Scríobh an scéal a d'innseochadh an buaicaill sin i dtaobh na slaite.

(c) Scríobh litir a chuirfeá go dtí uncail nó aintín, leat, fá inneall dó (di) go mbeadh mait leat do lacht saoithe do chaitheamh san áit a bhfuil seisean (sise) in a chómhnaidhe. [60 marc.]

Uimhir Scrúdúcháin	Adhbhair Riachtanacha									Adhbhair breise					Na Marcanna :—An t-Iomlán	Toradh an Scrúdúcháin
	Gaedhilg		Béarla							Gan thar trí cinn aca a ghlacadh. Ní h-áirmhtear acht na marcanna thar 30 per cent.						
	Tré Chainnt	Tré Scríbhinn	Tré Chainnt	Tré Scríbhinn	Uimhríocht	Stair	Tír-Eolas	Amhránfocht (Cailíní)	Adhbhair Riachtanacha Ant-Iomlán	Algébar	Céimseata	Líníocht	Tuath-Eoluíocht nó Eolas ar Nádúir	Obair Shnáthaide		
Maxima	200	200	80	120	200	100	100	100	1100	100	100	100	100	100		
Marcanna Chun "Pas"	200 (120 aralaighead sa chaint)		80		80			40	550		Féach an mínithuas					
8097	134	96	74	90	128B	54	40	52	668	18B	—	40	—	60B	708	D'éirigh
8098	130	76	74	37	127B	46	33B	78	601	28B	16B	—	—	28	601	D'éirigh
8099	150	58	64	50	113	36	23	52	546	24	4	—	—	52	—	Do theip
8100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	As láthair
8101	160	62	70	86	116	52	51	70	667	23	—	—	48B	42	697	D'éirigh
8102	120	24	53	44	105	20	11	60	437	9	3	—	—	56	—	Do theip
8103	160	60	64	68	108	32B	37	70	638	11	—	—	23	54	662	D'éirigh
8104	160	48	65	79	153B	38	54	50	647	17	24B	—	—	—	647	D'éirigh
8105	150	84	65	49	47B	27	31	50	503	0	4	—	—	—	—	Do theip
8106	135	92	69	61	94	48	55	67	621	0	—	—	4	22	621	D'éirigh
8107	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	As láthair
8108	130	68	64	65	81B	15B	28B	40	491	8	—	34	—	49	—	Do theip
8109	120	108	64	79	119B	61B	64B	45	660	28B	34B	—	—	—	664	D'éirigh
8110	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	As láthair
8111	130	44	75	92	106B	46	38	60	591	30B	24B	—	—	—	—	Do theip
8112	120	65	70	59	29B	13B	28B	43	427	4	—	13	—	77	—	Do theip
8113	130	29	70	60	116B	21B	41B	68	535	8	—	28	—	60	—	Do theip
8114	160	87	58	76	116B	39B	19	50	605	28B	—	14	—	67	642	D'éirigh
8115	160	47	63	58	133B	15B	20B	67	563	43B	—	56	—	38	610	D'éirigh
8120	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	As láthiar
8121	114	112	68	82	179	60	60	90	765	—	—	44	47	71	—	Do theip
8122	148	115	67	67	193	55	52	65	757	—	—	31	56	65	819	D'éirigh
8123	91	50	65	75	161	67	28	88	625	20	5	—	61	—	—	Do theip
8124	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	As láthair
8125	132	95	73	55	98	64	38	55	615	—	—	—	28	67	652	D'éirigh
8126	134	82	65	69	167	46	29	0	592	11	—	—	46	35	—	Do theip
8127	84	61	47	41	41	37	15	75	401	4	—	—	10	39	—	Do theip
8128	140	67	68	54	86	48	33	95	591	—	—	—	3	54	615	D'éirigh
8129	120	93	64	55	140	66	57	95	697	—	—	83	25	56	776	D'éirigh
8130	131	51	45	34	152	24	24	0	461	26	40	—	—	24	—	Do theip
8131	72	53	73	66	117	9	50	65	505	—	—	43	32	53	—	Do theip
8132	102	56	72	39	92	27	44	65	497	—	—	15	20	64	—	Do theip
8133	138	73	57	89	146	35	52	0	590	—	38	—	22	72	—	Do theip
8134	84	68	72	48	121	51	58	65	567	—	—	15	28	50	—	Do theip
8135	63	18	42	35	29	7	1	60	260	—	—	—	—	58	—	Do theip
8136	100	51	72	48	103	15	40	45	474	—	—	12	—	16	—	Do theip
8137	133	93	77	59	73	23	13	75	546	—	—	—	8	13	—	Do theip
8138	140	97	67	66	104	46	14	40	604	16	13	—	—	62	636	D'éirigh
8139	120	47	65	41	73	13	29	60	448	2	—	—	18	27	—	Do theip
8140	150	80	80	61	155	49	19	0	594	—	—	1	44	42	—	Do theip
8141	70	50	63	49	64	3	6	90	395	—	—	32	21	49	—	Do theip
8142	100	66	67	75	101	25	50	40	524	6	16	—	—	38	—	Do theip
8144	15	0	45	35	32	8	30	58	223	0	13	—	—	27	—	Do theip
8145	120	19	60	26	60	20	6	80	391	—	—	—	6	17	—	Do theip
8146	100	51	50	26	46	25	12	75	385	—	—	36	30	66	—	Do theip
8146	88	54	60	75	178	28	59	45	587	56	48	—	—	42	643	•
8147	87	101	67	82	113	33	53	50	586	27	19	—	—	8	586	•
8152	148	57	71	86	167	49	69	40	687	20	69	—	—	47	743	D'éirigh
8153	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	As láthair

COLÁISTE.....

.....

....

DEIMHNIÚ SLÁINTE

(Ní mór don tuismitheoir nó don chaoimhnóir an deimhniú seo a líonadh maidin an lae ar a mbeidh an scoláire ag dul go dtí an Coláiste.

Má bhí an scoláire i mbaol aon ghalair thógálaigh nó tadhlaigh dá luaitear thíos, CAITHFEAR DEIMHNIÚ DOCHTÚRA, Á RÁ GO BHFUIL AN SCOLÁIRE SAOR Ó BHAOL AN GHALAIR SIN, a sholáthar in ionad an deimhnithe seo.

CAITHFIDH an scoláire an deimhniú seo, nó deimhniú dochtúra ina áit, a thabhairt don Phríomh-Oide go díreach tar éis teacht dó/di go dtí an Coláiste.

Ní ghlacfar le haon scoláire nach mbeidh an deimhniú seo aige).

Dearbhaím leis seo nár tharlaigh, chomh fada agus is eol domsa é, do.....
a bheith, le linn na laethanta saoire seo caite, i mbaol aon ghalair thógálaigh nó tadhlaigh c.i.gc. Deilgneach, Diftéar, Bruitíneach, Bruitíneach Ghearmánach, Leicneach. Tine Dhia, Tochas, Fiabhras Dearg, Bolgach, Eitinn, Triuch nó eile - agus nár thug sé/sí cuairt ar aon tigh ina raibh a leithéid de ghalar ann.

Sínithe .....
Tuismitheoir nó Caomhnóir.

An dáta.....

APPENDIX K:

A PAGE FROM THE REGISTER OF C. BHRÍDE

CURSA CEITHRE mBLIAN, 19[illegible] go 1920

An Uimhir Tháirchéin	Bliain an Seródúcháin Iontrála	AINM	Dáta Beirthe	Uimhir san Seródúchán Iontrála	Ainm agus Seoladh Tuismitheora nó Caomhnóra
133	1926½	Mic Seáin, Máire M.	3/3/10	2024	George Johnston, Drumcliffe, Ballyhaise, Co Cav.
134	"	Ní Rógáin, Síla	21/4/11	2566	James Rogan, Bridge End House, Ballyhaise
135	"	Ní Chaomhsigh, Cáitlín	10/9/10	2621	Bridget Boner, Meenbrawn, Dunglue, Co.
136	"	Ní Gallchobhair, Maighréad	1/10/11	2631	Mrs Kate Gallagher, Gortahark, Swa
137	"	Mic Giolla Ceara, Maighr. A.	11/4/11	2634	James Kerr, Muneagh, Ballyheran Letter. Kerr A Ballyheran Barraghboy, Co Don.
138	"	Mic Parláin, Éimear	5/10/10	2636	Mrs Rod Eddison Charles Mc Fadden, Falcarragh, Co Don.
139	"	Mic Giolla Eáin, Éimear	10/12/12	2640	Sophia J. McLean, Carrow-cummer, Lifford
140	"	Ní Conmara, Éimear R.I.P.	6/10/10	2646	Sáirsha Ní Mhaolmhaigh, Shannonbridge, Co
141	"	Ní Sullebháin, Eibhlín	6/10/10	2659	Timothy O'Sullivan, Milford, Co Don.
142	"	Ní Mhóscáin, Gráinne	9/9/11	2702	Denis McHarg, Muckross, Kilcar, Co
144	"	Mic Cába, Ríca	4/7/11	2791	Thomas Mc Cabe, 4th Meenbeg, Dru
145	"	Ní Raghallaigh, Nóra	1/4/11	2836	Joseph O'Reilly, Straffelle, Cavan
146	"	Ní Dhoirbhneáin, Maighréad R.I.P.	4/10/11	2976	Michael O'Dorchy, Castle Find, Ardagh Co Long
147	"	Ní Dhonlainn, Máire R.I.P.	15/5/11	3516	Mrs M. Ní Dhonlainn, Finnbeagh, Co Leitrim Michael Loughlin, Drumrevistan, Dowra Co
148	"	Ní Sheanáin, Eibhlís C.	22/10/10	3523	Thomas Shannon, Killinade, Drumr
149	"	Mic Énrí, Máire E.	7/12/10	3784	Thomas Henry, Blowlaw, Belturbet, Co
150	"	Mic Tomáis, Bláthnaid	11/6/12	3803	Patrick Thompson, Cullen, Foxford, Co.
151	"	Ní Chuaigh, Caitlín E.	6/4/11	3804	Thomas Lowry, Bornaby, Ballaghaderreen
152	"	Ní Mhurchadha, Úna	9/10/10	3867	Christopher Murray, Stonestown, Dunsh
153	"	Ní Anmóir, Bríghid	24/2/11	3988	Martin Hammond, Knockavrad, Bo
154	"	Ní Mhaolghaela, Caitlín	5/3/11	4035	Cornelius Mullooly, Clonsalanor, Sl
155	1926½	Ní Aodha, Caitlín B.	4/2/12	4310	Kate McGee, Abbeystreet, Athlo

APPENDIX L:

(1) SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
(2) ACCOMPANYING LETTER

Questionnaire on Colaiste Einne

(I) Why did you enter a preparatory college?

(2) What age were you? Were the other students in your class the same age?

(3) What years were you there? Were students who had done the Intermediate at other schools accepted for a two-year course during your time?

(4) Was there any stress on your being student-teachers? Did all the students go on to become primary teachers?

(5) Did you do any teaching practice? If so can you tell me anything about it?

(6) Where did your class-mates come from? Were many of them from the Gaeltacht?

(7) Was there a very nationalistic atmosphere in the college?

(8) Did you find the curriculum a bit limited? Could you take Latin? Was English taught at Leaving Certificate Honours level?

(9) Looking back now how would you describe your time at Colaiste Einne?

(I0) Looking back at the preparatory system now how would you regard it? (a) fine for its time? (b) too narrow for teachers? (c) blame the decline in Irish on their closure? (d) ?

Any other comments you might like to add will be most appreciated.
Thank you very much for all your help.

12, Dargle Wood,
Knocklyon Road,
Templeogue,
Dublin 16.

A Chara,

I am at present doing research into the preparatory college system. I understand that you were a student at Coláiste and I write to seek your help in getting information about the college. I would be very grateful if you would fill up the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me.

Any help you can give me with this project will be most appreciated.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Valerie A. Jones

APPENDIX M:

(1) MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION 1919 - 1961
(2) MINISTERS FOR FINANCE 1919 - 1961

APPENDIX M 1

MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION 1919 - 1961

Pre-Treaty	**Date of appointment**
None appointed	January 1919 – August 1921
J.J. O'Kelly, ('Sceilg')	26 August 1921
Provisional Government	
Micheal Hayes and Fionan Lynch	10 January 1922
Eoin MacNeill	30 August 1922
Irish Free State	
Eoin MacNeill	6 December 1922
John Marcus O'Sullivan	28 January 1926
Thomas Derrig	9 March 1932
Seán T. O'Kelly	8 September 1939
Eamon de Valera	27 September 1939
Thomas Derrig	18 June 1940
Richard Mulcahy	18 February 1948
Republic of Ireland 1949	
Seán Moylan	13 June 1951
Richard Mulcahy	2 June 1954
John Lynch	20 March 1957
Patrick Hillery	24 June – 21 April 1965

APPENDIX M 2

MINISTERS FOR FINANCE 1919 – 1961

Pre-Treaty	**Date of appointment**
Eoin MacNeill	22 January 1919
Michael Collins	2 April 1919
Provisional Government	
William T. Cosgrave	26 August 1922
Irish Free State	
Ernest Blythe	6 December 1922
Seán MacEntee (1)	9 March 1932
Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh	16 September 1939
Frank Aiken	19 June 1945
Patrick McGilligan	18 February 1948
Republic of Ireland 1949	
Seán MacEntee (2)	14 June 1951
Gerard Sweetman	2 June 1954
James Ryan	20 March 1957
Jack Lynch	21 April 1965

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

1 MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

A. The National Archives

Department of the Taoiseach Papers

MS S14787	Repayment of fees at preparatory colleges
S123074/61	Disposal of C. Bhríde
S12307	Sale of preparatory colleges
S10577	Temporary closure of preparatory colleges 1941
S6369	Need for new training college in Galway 1954
S10999	Dáil questions re preparatory colleges 1943
S11339	Closure of de La Salle Training College Waterford 1939
S11258	Newspaper cuttings on Irish
S2512	Higher primary schools in the Gaeltacht
S1730	Training of teachers 1922
S4460	Teachers' training
S13905	C. Moibhí to be a sanatorium
S12807	Use of C.Éinne as a military hospital
S11239	Blythe on Irish newspapers and films
S4828	White Paper on establishment of the preparatory colleges
S855	Irish Provisional Government 1922
S1575	Higher primary schools for the Gaeltacht
S13180A	Irish language policy 1943, 1949 and 1950s
S13180B	Commission on Revival of Irish 1958
S6369	C. Éinne to be training college
S12307	1941 Refresher courses for teachers

Department of Finance Papers

S20/10/25	Summer Courses for national teachers 1925
S20/9/25	Beginning of the preparatory colleges
S7/18/25	Music in the preparatory colleges
S18/7/26	Appointment of principals, professors etc
S22/1/26	Library books
S60/21/28	Excess expenditure
S60/22/28	Expenditure on C. Moibhí
S20/4/28	Establishment of training college for national teachers at Galway
S25/11/28	Lease on Rockhill, Letterkenny
S25/8/28	Music at preparatory colleges
S25/5/28	The Munster College
S25/4/31	Special assistance for Fíor-Ghaeltacht students

S25/1/32 Use of preparatory colleges for Eucharistic Congress
S25/11/34 Staffing arrangements for C. Chaoimhín
S22/4/34 Purchase of Furbough House
S25/4/37 Department Committee of Inquiry into the preparatory colleges 1937
S25/5/38 Music at C. Moibhí and C. Chaoimhín
S22/5/44 Take-over of C. Éinne

Department of Education Papers

ED Central Registry
Box 44 History of Marlborough Hall and House
Box 457 20930 Parents against the teaching of Irish
Box 458 20983 Inspection of preparatory colleges
Box 409 19137 Appointments at C. Moibhí
Box 423 19701 Memo on the Gaeltacht
Box 370 17634 Talbot House
Box 417 19418 Review of Inspectors' Reports
Box 8830 History of Irish language teaching end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century

Roinn na Gaeltachta Papers

D89 Scéimeanna Scoláireachtaí Meánscoile sa Ghaeltacht 1957 – 61
D45 An Ghaeilge scoláireachtaí samhraidh
R22 C. Mhuire
R29 Scéim an Deontais £5 1958-59

B. UCD Archives

Blythe Papers

MS P24/15 Letter from Minister for Irish
MS P24/37 Blythe on the early preparatory colleges
MS P24/207 Map of Gaeltacht areas
MS P24/302 Special measures to help Fíor-Ghaeltacht students
MS P24/442 Assistance for Fíor-Gaeltacht students
MS P24/443 Plans to provide help for the Fíor-Ghaeltacht
MS P24/445 Gaeltacht boys and the army
MS P24/303 Fíor-Ghaeltacht scholarships
MS P24/304 Correspondence re the preparatory colleges 1931
MS P24/927 Irish in the civil service 1934
MS P24/928 Irish in the civil service 1951

Mulcahy Papers

MS P7/C/50 1934 Revised Programme
MS P7/C/70 Scheme for preparatory colleges

MS P7/C/71 The Gaelicising of Ireland
MS P/24/943 Circular re scholarships for the Fíor-Ghaeltacht 1959
MS P/24/979 Memo on Irish teaching from Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge 1947
MS P/24/995 Memo from Blythe on the Irish language 1949

MacNeill Papers

MS LAI/H/134 Teacher Training
MS LAI/H/137 Grant-Aid for Preparatory School
MS LAI/H/141 Inspection staffs and Irish
MS LAI/E/25-7 Summer Courses for teachers
MS LAI/E/25 Irish Teaching in primary and secondary schools
MS LAI/F/277 Irish in schools

McGilligan Papers

C. Dublin Diocesan Archives

McQuaid Papers
Byrne Papers

D. Galway Diocesan Archives

Browne Papers
C. Éinne Papers

E. Kerry Diocesan Archives

C. Íde Papers

F. Mercy Order Archives

Register of C. Mhuire

G. De La Salle Brothers' Archives

Annals of C. na Mhuman/C.Íosagáin

H. Christian Brothers' Archives

C. Chaoimhín Papers

I. In private possession

Register of C. na Mumhan/C. Íosagáin

11 UNPUBLISHED THESES

Doyle, K.R., 'The Irish Language as a curricular element in Irish Primary education in the period, 1831 – 1935,' M.Ed. thesis, University of Dublin, 1982

Jones, V.A. 'Recruitment and Formation of students into the Church of Ireland Training College, 1922 – 1961,' M.Litt. thesis, University of Dublin, 1989

Ó Coileán, Antoine, 'Bunoideachais Dátheangach Lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht, Leirmheas Stairiúil, 1922 – 1984 agus oideas don todchaí,' M.Ed. thesis, University of Dublin, 1985

Ó Murchú, Helen, 'Staidear ar Dhátheangas imeasc Daltaí Bunscoile,' M.Ed. thesis, University of Dublin, 1975

Lynch, Deborah, 'The Preparatory Colleges, 1926 – 1960,' M.Ed. thesis, University College, Galway, 1994

111 PRINTED SOURCES

A. Official Publications

Dáil Reports
Seanad Reports
National Programme Conference, *National Programme of Primary Instruction,* (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1922)
National Programme Conference *Report and Programme*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1926)
Coimisiún na Gaeltachta, *Report* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1926)
Department of Education, *Revised Programme of Primary Instruction*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1934)
Department of Education, *Rules for National Schools* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1955)
Report of the Council of Education on the Function of the Primary School and on the curriculum to be pursued in the Primary School from the infant age up to twelve years of age, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1954)

Report of the Council of Education on the curriculum of the secondary school, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1966)
OECD Survey Team, *Investment in education,* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1966)
Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language, *Summary of the final Report,* (Dublin: Stationery Office 1963)
Bunreacht na hEireann, (Constitution of Ireland) (Dublin: Government Publications Office, 1980)
Annual *Reports of the Department of Education*, 1922 - 1961

B. Newspapers and Magazines

Irish Times
Evening Mail
Irish Press
Irish Independent
Sunday Independent
The Kerryman
Derry Journal
Irish School Weekly
Oideas
Gaelic Churchman
Studies
An Réiltín
An Dréimire
Comhar
Inniu
Feasta
Anois

1V BOOKS, PAMPHLETS AND ARTICLES RELATING TO:

(a) Irish Education

Akenson, D. H., *The Irish education experience,* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1970)

Akenson, D. H., *A mirror to Kathleen's face, education in independent Ireland, 1922 –60* (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975)

Atkinson, N., *Irish education, a history of educational institutions,* (Dublin: Allen

Figgis, 1967)

Aughmuty J.J., *Irish education, an historical survey,* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1937)

Coolahan, J., *Irish education, history and structure,* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1981)

Dowling, P.J., *A history of Irish education: a study of conflicting loyalties*, (Cork: Mercier Press, 1972)

Dunn, S. and Morgan, V., *Recruits to teaching in Ireland, North – South*, (Coleraine: The New University of Ulster, 1978)

Fenton, Seamus, *It all happened,* (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son Ltd., 1949)

Irish National Teachers' Organisation, *A plan for education,* (Dublin: INTO, 1947)

Irish National Teachers' Organisation, *Report of Committee of Inquiry into the Use of Irish as a Teaching medium to Children whose Home Language is English,* (Dublin: INTO, 1941)

Hyland A. and Milne K., ed. *Irish educational Documents* Vol. 1 (Dublin: CICE, 1987)

Hyland A. and Milne K., ed. *Irish educational documents* Vol. 11 (Dublin: CICE, 1992)

Moore, H. Kingsmill, *Reminscences and reflections from some sixty years of life in Ireland,* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1938)

Ó Buachalla, S., *Education policy in twentieth century Ireland,* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1988)

O'Connell, T.J., *100 Years of Progress: The story of the Irish National Teachers Organisation 1868 –1968,* (Dublin: INTO, 1969)

McElligott, T.J., *Education in Ireland,* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1966)

McElligott, T.J., *This teaching life,* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1986)

O'Connor, A.V., and Parkes, S. M., *Gladly learn and gladly teach, a history of Alexandra College,* (Dublin: Blackwater Press, 1984)

Parkes, Susan M., *Kildare Place, the history of the Church of Ireland Training College, 1811- 1969,* (Dublin: CICE, 1984)

Titley, Brian E, *Church, state and the control of schooling in Ireland 1900 – 1944,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1984)

(b) Irish Language

Corkery, D., *The fortunes of the Irish language,* (Cork: Mercier Press, 1968, original ed., 1954)

Corkery, D., *The hidden Ireland. A study of Gaelic Munster in the eighteenth century,* (Dublin: Gill and Son, 1967, original ed., 1924)

de Blaghd, Earnán, *Trasna na Bóinne,* (Baile Átha Cliath: Sairséal agus Dill, 1957)

Gaelic League Pamphlets No. 12. *The Irish language and Irish Intermediate education,* (Dublin: Gaelic League, 1901)

MacNamara, J., *Bilingualism and primary education: a study of Irish experience,* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966)

Nic Craith, Maireád, 'The Irish Language in a comparative context,' in *Oideas* 42, Samhradh 1994

Iolscoil na Mumhan Coláiste na Rinne (Cork: Cló na Laoi Teo, 1987)

Ó Croiníń, Breandan, 'An Ghaeilge sa choras oideachais,' in *Oideas*, Fómhar, 1988

Ó Domhnaill, Micheál, *Iolscoil na Mumhan Coláiste na Rinne* (Cork: Cló na Laoi Teo, 1987)

O'Donoghue, Tom, 'Educational innovation in the Donegal Gaeltacht: the case of the bilingual programme of instruction 1904 – 1922,' in *Oideas,* Samhradh, 1994

O'Donoghue, Tom, 'Teacher-based curriculum development: the case of the bilingual programme of instruction, 1904 – 1922,' in *Oideas*, Fomhar, 1988

O'Doherty, E.F., 'Bilingual school policy,' in *Studies*, Autumn, 1958

Ó hEochadha Séumas agus Mac Craith Nioclás, *Scéalta Mhicil Uí Mhuirgheasa* (Rinn Ó gCuanach: Coláiste na Rinne, 1997)

Ó Glaisne, R., *Cosslett Ó Cuinn,* (Baile Átha Cliath: Coiscéim, 1996)

Ó Riain, S., *Pleanáil Teanga In Éirinn 1919 - 1985* (Baile Átha Cliath: Bord na Gaeilge, 1994)

Ó Tuama, Sean, (ed.) *The Gaelic League idea, The Thomas Davis Lectures* (Cork: Mercier Press, 1972)

Pearse, P., *The murder machine, in political writings and speeches,* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1966)

(c) Irish History and Politics

Beckett, J.C., The *making of modern Ireland,* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976)

Boylan, H., *A dictionary of Irish biography,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1998)

Brown, T., Ire*land: a social and cultural history, 1922 – 79,* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1982)

Browne, N., *Against the tide,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985)

Chubb, B., *The Constitution and constitutional Change in Ireland,* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1978)

Clarke, K., *Revolutionary woman Kathleen Clarke 1878 – 1972 an autobiography,* (Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 1991)

Collins, S., *The Cosgrave Legacy,* (Dublin: Blackwater Press, 1996)

Coogan, Tim Pat, *Ireland since the Rising,* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1980)

Dwyer, T. Ryle, *De Valera The man and the myths,* (Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 1991)

Edwards, Ruth Dudley, *Patrick Pearse the triumph of failure,* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1979)

Farrell, Brian, *Chairman or Chief: The role of Taoiseach in Irish Government,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1971)

Farrell, Brian, *Seán Lemass,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1983)

Fitzgerald, G., *Towards a new Ireland,* (Dublin: Torc Books edition, 1973)

Fitzgerald, G., *All in a life: an autobiography*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992)

Garvin, Thomas, *The evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972)

Horgan, John, *Seán Lemass The Enigmatic Patriot,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1997)

Keogh, D., *Twentieth century Ireland nation and state,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1994)

Lee, J.J., (ed.) *Ireland 1945 – 70,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1979)

Lee, J.J., *Ireland 1912 – 1985 Politics and society,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)

Lyons, F.S.L., *Ireland since the famine,* (London: Collins, Fontana, 1971)

Lyons, F.S.L., *Culture and anarchy in Ireland, 1890 – 1939,* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1982)

MacDonagh, O., *States of mind, a study of the Anglo-Irish Conflict,* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1985)

McRedmond Louis, (ed.) *Modern Irish lives Dictionary of 20th-century biography* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1996)

Moody, T.W., and Martin, F.X., (eds) *A new history of Ireland,* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1982)

Mitchell, A., *Revolutionary Government in Ireland Dail Eireann 1919 –1922,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1995)

Murphy, J.A., *Ireland in the twentieth century*, (Dublin; Gill and Macmillan, 1975)

Ó Broin, L., *Just like yesterday...*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, nd)

Ó Broin, L., *Michael Collins,* (Dublin; Gill and Macmillan, 1969)

O'Carroll, J.P. and John A. Murphy, *De Valera and his Times,* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1983)

O'Farrell, Padraic, *Who's Who in the Irish War of Independence and Civil War 1916 – 1923,* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1997)

O'Higgins, T.F., *A double life,* (Dublin: Town House, 1996)

O'Mahony, S., *Frongach university of revolution,* (Dublin: FDR Teo, 1987)

Valiulis Maryann Gialanella, *Portrait of a revolutionary,* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992)

White Terence de Vere, *Kevin O'Higgins,* (Dublin: Anvil Books, 1986)

Younger, Carlton, *Arthur Griffith,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1986)

(d) Church and State in Ireland

Clarke, D.M., *Church and State,* (Cork; Cork University Press, 1984)

Conway, W., *Catholic schools,* (Dublin: Veritas, 1970)

Cooney, J., *The crozier and the Dáil, church and state, 1922 – 86,* (Dublin and Cork: Mercier, 1986)

Feeney, John, *John Charles McQuaid: The man and the mask,* (Dublin and Cork: Mercier Press, 1974)

Keogh, Dermot, *The Vatican, the bishops and Irish politics, 1919 - 39,* (Cambridge, London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986)

Mescal, J., *Religion in the Irish system of education,* (London and Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1971)

Miller, D.W., *Church, state and nation in Ireland 1898 – 1921,* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1971)

McQuaid, J.C., *Catholic education, its function and scope,* (Dublin: Catholic Truth Society, 1942)

MacNamara, John, *Bilingualism and Primary Education: a study of Irish experience,* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966)

Seaver, G., *John Allen Fitzgerald Gregg, Archbishop*, (Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1963)

Titley, B.E., *Church, State and the control of schooling*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1984)

Whyte, J.H., *Church and state in modern Ireland, 1923 – 1970*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1970)