

**THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

**Memorandum Series No. 167 .**

**MACRO SOCIAL FACTORS AND RURAL MOBILISATION IN IRELAND  
MICEAL ROSS**

**April 1984**

**IR£2**

**Confidential: Not to be quoted  
until the permission of the Author  
and the Institute is obtained.**

# MACRO SOCIAL FACTORS AND RURAL MOBILISATION IN IRELAND\*

MICEAL ROSS\*\*

## INTRODUCTION

A demographic revolution has changed the face of Ireland beyond recognition. This resurgence has rejuvenated rural areas long stricken with decline and kindled new hope. To ensure that this change becomes a permanent feature of Irish demography policy makers will need to reconsider several strategies adopted in the past. Is the highly centralised nature of Irish administration and the emphasis on social engineering the most fruitful approach for the future? Can policies of agricultural efficiency and 'transplanted industrialisation' ensure vibrant rural economies? Can the theoretical debate on rural development provide new insights to enhance performance? This paper considers some of these issues and puts forward a model by Weintraub as a focus through which to view some recent Irish experience and some novel experiments in rural development. Drawing on these elements a four-fold system is proposed in the context of integrated rural development.

### The nature of the challenges in Ireland

Until recently Ireland featured in the demographic textbooks as a unique example of a national entity where the population has declined from six and one half millions in the mid-nineteenth century to less than three millions a century later. This phenomenon was associated with high emigration which drained off more than the natural increase. The latter was the product of a low marriage rate and a high fertility rate so that, in international terms, the natural increase itself was average. The aging society, which produced this outcome, was delineated by Arensberg and Kimball in the late thirties. This pioneering study of rural society was believed to represent a long standing traditional pattern of Irish rural life.

By 1960 this conventional wisdom about Ireland had become outmoded. The growth of serious native research by sociologists, such as Hannan, historians such as Connell and to a lesser extent economists, such as Walsh, revealed major deficiencies in our 'traditional' understanding of rural society. At the same time as our perceptions were changing, demographic behaviour altered spectacularly. During the sixties marriage rates increased by more than fifty per cent and fairly uniformly over the national space. Fertility levels began to decline but not so much as to prevent Ireland having the fastest growing and youngest population in Europe. Such a transformation was not even dreamt of when the Emigration Commission studied the demographic haemorrhage of the fifties. After 1969 return population flows were greater than outflows and this pattern persisted over much of the seventies. Gradually the realisation gathered momentum that the Irish population was growing again, was more youthful, was marrying earlier than before the Great Famine and that the countryside was being re-populated. The 1979 Census confirmed the visible evidence of rejuvenation and recorded return flows into most areas, even those where superficially there appeared to be little reason to expect people to relocate. Similar population trends were reported from other countries - e.g., by Vining and Kontuly (1979) - but nowhere were satisfactory explanations being offered by academic researchers.

---

\* A version of this paper was presented at Bäckaskog, Sweden in 1981 to an International Conference on "The University and Rural Resource Development: The Road between Theory and Practice.

\*\*Senior Research Officer, Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin 4

## Implications for development policy

Whatever about explanations, for administrators and society at large a new mentality was required. Gone was the depression fostered by decline, to be replaced by the difficulties of coping with hope and growth. New national programmes sought to consolidate the new trend by planning for full employment under conditions of zero net migration. These programmes were studied by Ross and Walsh (1979) to establish whether the targets set for manufacturing and farming would, if achieved, be adequate to ensure full employment in the regions and whether new dimensions were required in regional policy. Nationally a targeted annual increase in net manufacturing employment of 9,250 was projected to be offset by a decline of 4,250 in agriculture. Other employment was required to increase by 18,000 annually to reach the full employment goal. This was optimistic since past experience had shown that agricultural declines were considerably more than growth in manufacturing and other employment combined. Put in regional terms it was clear that only the Eastern Region (which contains Dublin) had a past performance which came anywhere near to the achievements that would be required in the future. In part this was due to less scope for labour shedding from the more rationalised agriculture in that region. In most regions agriculture employed a large share of the workforce. Job losses in farming were a multiple of job gains in manufacturing and generally speaking net gain in other employment was negligible. At the national level plans could refer loosely to multipliers which were expected to make up the difference. At local level the type of industrialisation occurring, underemployment in many service activities, and the dispersed rural nature of much of the regional space militated against strong local multipliers. (See Baker and Ross, 1975). Buoyancy in local economies could not be left to the mercy of vague concepts. Either more industrialisation had to occur or, if this was not feasible, more jobs in other employment had to be created. Better still, both strategies should be adopted simultaneously.

On the manufacturing front the Industrial Development Authority had been extremely successful by international standards in attracting 'footloose' international industry. However, increasing international competition had severely limited the prospects of greatly exceeding past achievements and the IDA has, to an increasing extent, been looking at internal resources to achieve its job targets. In manufacturing a complicating factor for the regions was the occurrence of large-scale redundancies in the older industrialised regions of the East and North East. These were due in part to the dismantling of protection under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Area agreement and later of accession to the EEC but were due also to the world recession. Hitherto IDA policy had tended to locate industry outside these regions; but now these redundancies caused a shift in its policy which diluted somewhat the commitment to rural industrialisation. Greater progress in promoting regional manufacturing calls for new initiatives to supplement the current IDA strategies.

On the services front writers like Bell (1973) forecast a post-industrial society. Their view of the future has been tellingly dissected by Kumar (1976). The latter sees the specialisation and bureaucratisation of services as an extension of Taylorism\*

---

\* Whelan (1980) writes: "Taylorism does not exist as a separate school because its fundamental teachings have become the bedrock of all work design. The principles of scientific management arose, not from a science of work but from a science of the management of other's work under capitalist conditions; the problem was how best to control labour power that is bought and sold. These principles are:

- (i) Dissociation of the labour process from the skills of the workers,
- (ii) Divorce of conception from execution,
- (iii) Use of monopoly over knowledge to control each step of the labour process and its mode of execution."

and an aspect of industrial society explicitly recognised by Saint Simon and Weber who also predicted the rise of technocracy. Whatever the merits of the debate all are agreed that service employment and bureaucratisation are increasing. If regional economies are to benefit from such a growth workable structures need to be evolved to facilitate local employment in these industries. The relocation of government offices alone is insufficient and does not alter the nature of the centralisation. Public employment is, none the less, important to the regional economy. Analysis of public expenditure (Ross 1978) showed that whereas social expenditure per capita was highest in the poorest region and promotional expenditure (farm and factory) was highest in the moderately prosperous South and East, total expenditure was highest in Dublin, the richest region, due to the size of the public wages bill. Such an outcome was contrary to the stated aim of regional balance.

Another reason for a change in service provision is the growing scarcity of public funds. A social engineering approach to planning frequently means the provision of services by increased public employment. In Ireland the prospects of taking that route are circumscribed by the growing level of net foreign borrowing by the government. Kennedy (1981) has shown that much of this borrowing has been devoted to civil service pay increases. Even so the option of relocating existing civil service posts has met with considerable resistance and high levels of compensation have been paid for quite short moves.

If public funds are scarce either social needs are left unfulfilled or other strategies must be adopted that are less demanding on public resources. For some the solution is to end government monopoly and foster an incentive system based on the market. Such a solution has clear merit in particular cases but presupposes certain conditions which may not prevail. A further worrying factor is the lack of concern of the sheltered occupations for the sacrifices of workers in exporting industries and for the plight of the growing numbers of unemployed. This lack of solidarity is demonstrated by the levels of pay claims made and conceded. Perhaps these strikes reflect the downgrading of professional status. They are certainly a threat to the social fabric which a return to a free-for-all will not cure. In summary then a rethink of social provision is needed which will ensure that all a locality's resources can be mobilised without undue call on state funds and in a manner which promotes solidarity. Workable structures are needed to enable rural areas to retain their populations and meet their own needs. Emphasis on agricultural rationalisation and IDA industrial promotion alone cannot guarantee this.

## THEORETICAL MODELS

### Political

Watson and Humphrey (1979) have claimed that the British Fabianism left social democracy with a planning ideology which cast economic rationality in the imperative even at the expenses of democratic decisionmaking. Kumar (1976) suggested that this tendency is inherent in industrialisation itself. The alliance of economic rationality and social engineering produced a model in which the goal of society was to maximise consumption and the role of popularly elected parliament was to legitimise the pursuit of this goal "efficiently" by public experts in alliance with professional managers through a hierarchically-disposed authority structure. The individual was primarily a passive consumer thereby ignoring those aspects of work which promoted self expression and social interaction. By treating economic rationality as scientific, i.e. neutral, concerned socialists failed to perceive its ideological nature. Those who were 'inefficient' were rejected and the increasing

tempo of competition ensured that ever more people were so classified and marginalised. The organised resistance of crafts and professions was outflanked by Taylorism by which specialisation increased dependence and compliance. Given the primacy of economics there was no autonomy admitted for social and political development. This position coincides with a conservative bias in respect of the structure of social and political relations and a tendency to denigrate political representation. Government becomes increasingly involved in dealings with non-representative interests with few advertng to the threat to the political processes of legitimacy and cohesion posed by the technocratic mode of 'representation'.

At the local level the remoteness of decisionmaking in the social engineering process weakens the local sense of community, especially if the rationale behind decisions is not clear and the decision poorly aligned with local needs. Within the centralised institutions themselves organisational continuity is often a primary aim. These bodies develop their own internal logic which is formed without there being necessarily any sense of partnership or agreement with either the organisations clientele, or with other agencies. In fact overlapping and competition between agencies often fragment efforts at nation building. A further source of alienation can arise in local communities if the professional training of officials leads them to believe that they can solve development problems and design programmes although their narrow specialisation within a discipline affords them only a partial view of reality. Local appreciation of wider issues may weaken local responsiveness to the "solution". Faced with this lack of enthusiasm by locals the officials concerned will often fail to reappraise the validity of their "solution" and instead regard local attitudes as evidence of local backwardness.

In their critique of British social democracy Watson and Humphrey (op.cit.) noted that planning ideology could have followed a more fruitful path - that espoused by Cole and Tawney which was popularised in recent times by Schumacher (1974). An important concept for rural development is that of subsidiarity which holds that responsibility for satisfying each human need should be vested in the smallest group competent to do so. For Cole (1917, 1935), the central planning authority was not to be given more power than needed for coordination. Decentralisation could cause tensions but these were creative in a democracy. Schumacher later illustrated how this tension could be resolved (cf. Chapter 16). For Tawney (1966) a new industrial constitution was needed and could come by asserting the priority of political over economic values in a society in which industry becomes a form of public service. The details of this integral democracy cannot delay us here. The idea is basically that economic rationality, which produces riches for some, also produces poverty, economic oppression and industrial strife, factors with which it cannot cope. Political rationality on the other hand deals with the ordering or regulating of power relationships, operationalised through the interlocking processes of legitimacy, responsibility and accountability which sustain authority as a continuing basis of such regulation. Only by giving primacy to a new politics can the social cohesion be created on which economic efficiency itself depends.

### Sociological

When we turn to sociology we find parallel developments to those in politics and a very rich model by which to order our analysis. This basic model was elaborated by Dov Weintraub, (1970) an Israeli sociologist and very fruitfully applied to Irish conditions by Hannan and O'Carroll (1976). This paper is heavily indebted to Hannan's insights and to the work of another Irish sociologist, P. Commins (1979), whose work

has an affinity with Hannan's.

Within sociology a succession of views on regional development can be traced in recent decades. The first "cultural" view deemed underdevelopment as due to the persistence of traditional cultural and social constraints combined with the relative poverty of economic resources within the region. The solution prescribed called for "change agents" to promote "modernisation".

Critics of this view objected to the passive role ascribed to regional inhabitants and sought to demonstrate that the sense people made out of life and their coping with their particular economic and social constraints was as rational as that of any "modern" person. Some of these constraints arose from the inequalities within traditional societies which provided incentives to power elites to resist change. The modified view was that people were not just helpless "captives" of tradition but were so enmeshed in a system of exploitative economic and social relationships that they behave as if they were.

A second "structural" view held that the division of labour and competition produced hierarchical structures which led to concentration of power, central coordinating functions and overall dominance in a central place. In economics this process was clarified by Myrdal's (1957) concept of 'cumulative causation' and developed by Friedman (1969) in his theory of polarised development. The view, modified to exclude the cruder ecological theories of competition and dominance, retains the concept of metropolitan dominance i.e. concentration of economic, political and socio-cultural power as well as innovative decisionmaking at the centre. The hinterland is viewed as a passive reacting subsystem whose few, if any, possibilities for autonomous action diminish as the division of labour proceeds.

Add a Neo-marxist perspective to the structural view and the 'dependence' view is obtained. This starts from an understanding of the structural position of underdeveloped countries within a world economic order i.e. types of products, terms of trade, elasticity of demand for imports and exports and the relative distribution of productivity gains in the centre and the periphery. Productivity gains at the centre lead to higher wages; for the periphery they spell declines in employment and price. This is so because the economies, typically of primary producers, are so conditioned that they can only expand as a reflection of the expansion of dominant countries. This dominance is maintained by the policies of foreign investment and aid pursued, by the brand of modernisation promoted and by alliance with a local elite who benefit from dependency.

Elliott (1975) considered the varying composition of elites in Third World countries, both socialist and capitalist, and posited a "confidence mechanism" by which the elite maintains credibility (e.g. token recruitment to the elite is shown to be the reward of hard work. Lack of upward mobility is internalised by the rest as a reflection of their personal shortcomings). Although the same factors are seen at work in Marxist regimes Marxist theorists view dependency as an inevitable consequence of capitalism. Translated to regional situations within a country the consolidation of the nation state and accidents of early industrial location produce a situation in which the peripheral primary producers cannot control the terms of trade and lose the possibilities of endogenous growth in the face of powerful monopolies at the centre which extend even to the cultural sphere through control of mass media. Exponents of this view see development as requiring direct intervention aimed at reversing the process through strengthening the political consciousness and power of the peripheral group.

## Weintraub's model

Clearly evidence can be presented for each of these interpretations. However the attraction of work by Weintraub (1970) lies in its power to integrate them as special cases within a more general model. Weintraub was struck by the paucity of studies in 1970 which integrated the problems and process of rural mobilisation with those of society as a whole. A book by Myrdal (1966) was one of a few exceptions. Some studies did link factors at farm level with overall conditions in the labour, goods and money markets but even these neglected the "no less important areas of exchange - the political, the social and the cultural". For Weintraub the excessive polarisation between micro- and macro-orientations meant that the interactions between society and the rural sector were omitted from both. Thus valuable micro studies in anthropology and rural sociology were vitiated as predictive studies since artificial assumptions about macro social factors led factors to be used which were not the most significant. Studies of society building on the other hand identified the wrong problems e.g. emphasising obstacles to land reform where provision of infrastructures, credit and market were more relevant.

"My basis hypothesis" wrote Weintraub (p. 369) "is that the characteristics of the national center and of the rural sectoral organisation and their interaction will influence the nature of rural development initiative or strategy and the flow of resources to it, thus shaping the scope and the focus of this development, the extent to which it is transformative, and the way in which it relates to changes in other areas. In other words, macro social factors not only determine actual policies and action programs but also may delimit, a priori, the extent of innovation, often irrespective of specific rural structures, needs, and aspirations and the potential of local modernizing elites; it is therefore the macro-social factors that determine many of the problems, successes and failures of rural reconstruction".

In place of the simplistic dichotomy of dependency Weintraub painted a richer canvas. He sought to characterise the centre (not necessarily a geographic concept) on two broad criteria: its orientation to rural reconstruction and its "inputs" in terms of policies and allocations. Three criteria were proposed for the rural sector based on the ability of groups and structures to outgrow particularistic orientations, frameworks and interests and promote broader frames of action and reference.

Common criteria can be applied to a delineation of some characteristics of both centre and periphery. For each we need to discover (A) its guiding image of the nature and future of rural society (B) its guiding image of its own position in society and (C) the extent of its ability to mobilise. For each question Weintraub proposes three aspects. For A (i) is rural society salient and autonomous? (ii) Is the aim to preserve, develop, adapt or innovate? (iii) Which areas are to be emphasised/held back in institutional and organisational development? B relates to participation in interaction. (i) Does it see itself as bound by societal guidance? (ii) Is its involvement passive, advisory, corrective or missionary? (iii) In weighing the costs and rewards of involvement is it self-centred, "philanthropic" or ready for 'give and take'? C examines the ability to carry out its aims in terms of decisionmaking, implementation, resources and leadership. (i) Is it rich i.e. has it or can it call on resources? (ii) Can it mobilise, organise and channel resources to its policies? (iii) Can it get adequate and realistic data for its policies?

For the centre its images of itself and of the future of rural society define the nature and extent of its commitment while question C defines its powerfulness. For the periphery its powerfulness and its image of the future of rural society define its mobilisation capacity while its image of itself defines its commitment to involvement. The third characteristic of the periphery seeks to measure its influence with the centre so that it participates in policymaking and the allocation of resources. Weintraub again specifies 3 aspects. (i) Its assets in the economic, political and symbolic market place: has it any scarce resources or monopoly power? can it hold the allegiance of local elites? (ii) Does it have two way channels of communication with the centre? (iii) What is its sectoral organisation for using its assets and its communicative potential?

Scoring positive or negative on these five criteria provides 32 simplistic profiles which Weintraub used to classify different societies at different points in time. It is a basic contention that this model provides a very powerful instrument for developing insights in how workable structures could be developed in Irish rural reconstruction. Insufficient material has accumulated to enable such a course to be followed. Instead the paper seeks to examine some of the intellectual modes and certain aspects of Irish rural development which would need to be taken into account in any attempt to use the model as an analytical tool.

### IRISH EXPERIENCE

Irish experience, however, should warn against any tendency towards a doctrinaire attachment to specific models. Debates on regional policy in Ireland in the sixties were similar to those in many countries. In general economists tended to favour urban concentration, growth poles, physical planning, social engineering, moving people to the jobs, all couched in the language of national and sectoral economic rationality. In Ireland official policy statements resisted the appeals of economists to plumb for these options. Recent research in Ireland has vindicated even on efficiency grounds the official decision to engage in dispersed industrialisation. The arguments for growth poles have proved faulty. People have freely chosen to return to 'uneconomic' locations. Multinationals did not have the predicted characteristics which disposed them to locate at growth poles. Export profits tax relief was optimal. In all these cases the consensus of professionals was faulty, (Ross 1981). Irish economists were not unique in their attachment to classical models predicting from poorly formulated assumptions as other European studies demonstrate. Economists need to become more involved in their support for those pioneering new approaches to regional development.

#### Manufacturing

Part of these new approaches relate to manufacturing employment. The national agency, IDA, has set targets for job creation by town and area. In the past redundancies from freeing trade have reduced the net impact of such promotion. In spite of fears of the damage to rural communities by 'implanted industrialisation' the programme has come to be appreciated even by its critics. The difficulty now is that by the most sanguine expectations concerning its considerable successes it is unlikely to prove sufficient to relieve more than a part of the demand. The EEC does not possess an industrial policy to complement its emphasis on agricultural rationalisation though it does support training. In fact its opposition to the IDA's Export Profit Tax Relief was not balanced by a recognition of the needs. As competition intensified for internationally footloose industry the IDA has shifted towards a greater reliance



on the expansion of established industry, to the development of local linkages and to a search for individuals with marketable ideas. The potential of such small-scale industry is being demonstrated increasingly.

The search is more intensively conducted by the Shannon Free Airport Development Company (SFADCo) which hitherto had executive responsibility for the Mid West region (the only region with such a body) and by Gaeltarra Éireann (now Udarás na Gaeltachta) which has the Irish speaking areas as its remit. SFADCo has relinquished its responsibility for general industrialisation in the Mid West to IDA to enable it to pursue small scale promotion. Initial reports indicate dramatic successes from this intensification but no detailed study is yet available. Whereas SFADCo's area is a fairly prosperous one, that of Gaeltarra is the poorest in the State. Its initiatives will be discussed later.

EEC interest in Irish rural industrialisation led to the sponsoring of a study by Conway and Higgins (1978) of the Agricultural Institute which presented an overview similar to that of Ross and Walsh (1978) but in greater detail. Apart from a brain-storming section on the scope for new employment, Conway and Higgins suggest that the dispersed nature of rural markets may prevent the extent of latent demand being registered. Without this information latent supplies are not forthcoming. Devices introduced to improve such market information would therefore improve both welfare and employment. Conway is currently being afforded an opportunity to operationalise this and other concepts in the field under the terms of yet another EEC contract. This contract seeks to identify the feasibility of integrated rural development in the context of the West of Ireland. This approach had been studied by Ross (1975) in the context of Pakistan.

A close-up study of needs in the spirit of Cole and Tawney will produce some proposals which call for intervention activities by the State. In other cases the proposals will call for a reduced public role. These arise where the costliness of public provision and monopoly powers have combined to restrict or prevent supply and where a more flexible approach based on private provision could have provided both a supply and employment. Some economists, notably Barrett have sought to identify such cases.

## Agriculture

At the end of the sixties the poor outlook for agricultural expansion, buoyant industrial production and a philosophy of economic rationalism combined in the Mansholt proposals of the EEC Commission. The "solution" was to be massive exodus from farming. In the absence of an EEC policy on rural industrialisation these proposals might have suited the Netherlands but would have been disastrous in the low densities of Ireland where most of the rural population live at a distance from even quite small towns. By 1973 the year of Ireland's accession to the EEC Mansholt's proposals were being forgotten as industry slumped and farm prices rose. Between 1970 and 1977 real per capita incomes on Irish farms doubled. This was partly due to a slower decline in the labour force (20 per cent). Growth in real output levels did not reflect the powerful price stimulus and much of the income increase came from a shift towards dairying and barley production which favoured the richer farmers. Ross (1979) has shown that the value of CAP supports in 1977 averaged £2,144 per family farm worker in County Cork where average incomes were £6,140 as compared with a support of £270 in Donegal where average incomes were only £1,735 (i.e., 80 per cent of the Cork subsidy). This in part reflected better structures in Cork, in part the choice of products to support. EEC price supports do not favour peripheral agricultures, e.g., the sheep, oats and potatoes of Donegal.

Much of the benefit arose from the depreciation of sterling. Membership of the European Monetary System since 1979 has blocked off that source of price rises to farmers. Continuing high rates of domestic inflation have not been balanced by exchange depreciation so that farmer incomes have declined

drastically (over 40 per cent in two years) bringing them back towards pre-EEC levels. In the process those who invested in expansion at high rates of interest as well as those who partook in the feverish land speculation have fared badly. The net result of these fairly extensive and not easily repeatable experiences in agriculture has been to show the limited power of price supports to retain farm employment, increase output or solve the inadequate income levels of the majority of farmers.

The EEC experience set off a land speculation responding to inflation which was unrelated to the productive capacity of the soil. This made structural reform and entry to farming prohibitively expensive and also rendered unattractive EEC farm retirement schemes. That the major EEC structural proposal - the Farm Modernisation scheme - was a relic of the old Mansholt proposals was shown by the fact that it afforded preferential treatment to 'development farmers', a category which 80 per cent of Irish applicants failed to reach (this fraction was higher in some regions) and compared unfavourably with the achievement of the pre-EEC pilot areas scheme and the small farm incentive bonus scheme. While EEC farm development policy has been increasingly deflected away from these 'other' farmers their poor circumstances has led the State to supplement their incomes by small holders' assistance. It is, perhaps, ironic, in terms of the previous discussion, that while marginal farmers gained little, the spin-off effects of the higher prices, as Attwood (1979) has shown, were greatly to the benefit of 'sheltered' employment in the professions and government service.

#### EEC Initiatives

On the EEC front recognition that price supports were inadequate led to the 1975 Disadvantaged Areas Scheme. This scheme has, however, been criticised by Cox (1977) because the bulk of the cost is Irish borne and could be used better elsewhere. More recently EEC voted £42 millions in a large scale package for Western drainage without evaluating existing land use or whether land mobility might not be a better objective as Commins (1979a) noted. Part of the problem is that all these fragmented schemes, both Irish and EEC, often act at cross-purposes. Commins, Cox and Curry (1978) instance the case where the Disadvantaged Area scheme conflicts with incentives to farm retirement. As Higgins (1977) reported, part is due to the lack of local organisational frameworks to implement development programmes. There is a growing demand for a total approach (see Ross 1978). At EEC level, for example, the French total approach based on *contrats* (see below) is included by the French socialist group in their proposals for a more effective Common Agricultural Policy. Awareness is also growing at Commission level with the launching of a Community-wide three-year study of the potentialities of Integrated Rural Development. The Irish programme as we have seen, will be led by Conway.

#### A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FRANCE

A study of theoretical models and Irish experience should logically lead to an examination of the applications of these models with a view to some proposals for future action. However, before formulating such proposals it would be instructive to look at parallel experiences in France where the strong 'etatist' tradition provides an impetus to great centralisation. Irish administration, perhaps as a legacy of a colonial past, is also very highly centralised. Even local bodies serve much larger areas than the European norm. Statutory bodies, it is alleged (Commings *et al* 1978) are neither innovative, performance - nor achievement -

oriented but paternalistic and usually expected to be so. Given the strictures on social engineering this attitude could be an asset. The French comparison is of interest, first, in showing whether the centralising trend can be countered successfully and, second, because French experience has a strong effect on policies adopted by the EEC. This experience, drawn from Watson (1978) appears to have influenced the proposals of the French socialists in relation to integrating CAP with the Social and Regional Funds.

In France a painful reappraisal of functional regionalism has raised the qualitative issue of 'whose development?', the question of control, prompted by CELIB's publication of a 'Livre Blanc' on 'A New Ambition for Brittany' in 1971. The lesson is that such a challenge is needed to prevent another functional 'solution' of regional problems, i.e., via depopulation and cultural assimilation. Prior to this, regional policy under DATAR (Delegation a l'Amenagement du Territoire et a l'Action Regionale) had shifted as a result of work on 'pilot sectors of rural development'. These had shown the traditional difficulties of inter-ministry co-ordination, the inadequate knowledge of local requirements and the need for 'animateurs'. They also revealed a need for the multisector approach set out in VI Plan 1970. The new developments continued the swing away from policies involving large scale capital investment and growth poles in a 'move from an elitist and uniform development conceived in terms of individualised aid to a comprehensive and diversified development of the "petit pays" giving absolute priority to collective projects'. In this 'animation' aimed at 'the creation of a new mentality', 'a future-oriented consciousness' and 'an intercommunal team spirit' through the sensibilisation of the partners (authorities and local interests) in the development process.

The vehicle for this new work was 'contrats d'aménagement' offered to middle sized cities (20-100,000) in 1972 and to 'pays' in 1975. These contracts for local development run for three years and can be bid for by a group of communes forming a 'pays'. Since the involvement of central government agencies or consultancy firms would weaken or subvert the exercise DATAR provided on the spot full-time 'animateurs' to help communes formulate a contract. These animateurs were required to be resource persons, encouraging initiatives, offering advice and liaising between groups and local authorities. DATAR would welcome it if the pays formed a syndicate to implement the contract. The activities of DATAR reveal the integrity of its commitment to decentralisation. Nevertheless, Watson has commented on an almost pathological reluctance to 'let go' for fear the pays will make mistakes (i.e., from a national viewpoint). Unless the centre sheds responsibility and expertise the danger of national rationalisation remains. The future of the regions depends on increased political autonomy by which the centre can be kept at a distance limited to a redistributive function. DATAR favours such a development but traditional ministries are not enthusiastic. Although annual expenditure on contrats is considerable resources for large scale investments are considerably greater still.

This summary of French experience is presented as a supplement to Irish work along similar lines and as an ingredient in the formulation of some proposals for rural development. Before making these proposals let us return to Irish studies which clarify some dimensions of Weintraub's model.

#### Mapping Weintraub's model

As we have seen the main thrust of the EEC's socio-economic policies in agriculture would declare 80 per cent of Irish farmers as unable to reach viability.

Hannan and O'Carroll (1976) found farmers adopted one of four stances to these developments. (i) Fully adapted to new order; (ii) unable to adapt; (iii) rejected farming; (iv) rejected new order. The authors hypothesised a relationship between land structure, demographic structure and enterprise choice from a study of these four responses. From this basis the Irish agricultural map could be subdivided in terms of Weintraub's categories to attempt a predictive model of the mobilisation courses for each area identified. The actual mapping was reported by O'Carroll, Van der Wusten and Passchier (1978). Joint monitoring of macro and micro processes on this basis was held to be 'immensely superior' to focussing on each one in isolation. Hannan and O'Carroll illustrated their approach for two regions in terms of their resource base, value systems and network types and included consideration of the urban sector.

Hannan and O'Carroll concluded that in all categories of farming dependency was increasing but where modernisation had de-legitimised the traditional, relatively autonomous sociocultural system, a sense of helplessness followed. Small to medium size farmers suffered a clear sense of 'declassment'. These trends, coupled with the extreme degree of representative delegation, had left Irish rural mobilisation "a rather sickly grandchild of the basically economically motivated mass political movement of the late nineteenth century".

The agencies of the centre were neither locally popularly representative nor linked to voluntary organisations. Official expertise dominated both decision making and problem definition and was opposed to differential strategies for different regions. The centre lacked mobilisation capacity and held a rather ambiguous moral commitment to maintaining traditional ruralistic values and structures alongside industrial modernisation. This essentially conservative "tinkering" philosophy was in the short run interest of certain sectors of the administrative elite. The centre showed no concern for structural reform by anticipating and coping with the inevitable social class, cultural and social structural consequences of economic and social change. In spite of this depressing summary the authors noted that where local executive power had been delegated, (i.e., in the cases of SFADCo and Gaeltarra) the ability and commitment displayed by these agencies were able to overcome the formal deficiencies of organisational forms by using a populist approach to achieve mobilisation. Otherwise the social climate favoured neither the emergence of private entrepreneurs or dynamic co-operatives. Dependency in the Irish context, therefore, was different to that studied elsewhere.

It is not clear whether the same conclusions would be penned as strongly today in the face of evidence of rural rejuvenation and of the efforts to find ways to overcome these deficiencies. This provocative article does, however, challenge others to pursue the analysis further.

#### Studies by Commins

In two valuable contributions Commins studies the promotion of socio-economic change in local communities at the micro-level by (a) co-operatives and (b) community development. Alternative methods would be private enterprise, social engineering by public agencies and social action. This paper will not study the first two alternatives. The social action approach is treated later. It is not suggested that these methods are mutually exclusive. In fact these categories can overlap or promote each other in any concrete situation. Frequently the approaches reflect different conceptions of the problem and different philosophies of how to tackle it. A priori it is believed that the social engineering approach has difficulty

in accommodating the other approaches. For example, although Local Authorities have permissive powers to delegate to community councils, these powers are rarely used.

Commins (1979a) has distinguished three types of co-operatives in Western Ireland. First are the co-operatives engaged in large scale agribusiness. These, marketing farm outputs, are becoming ever more corporate in form. The national body for co-operatives - Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS) - is almost exclusively devoted to the mechanics of marketing. Thus, no agency is accessible at the pre-formal stage to educate in competence and co-operative ideals and to mobilise. Nor has the commercial co-operative movement any banking group to help co-operatives. Commins's second category are groups co-operating on a joint scheme, such as water supplies, often sponsored by a Community Council. The third group sprang up in 1966 in Irish speaking areas as a spin-off of revitalisation and protest groups. These latter, inspired by societal decay, received added impetus from the Civil Rights groups of the late sixties. The twenty two co-operatives active in 1977 stressed the development of indigenous resources and community services and represent a return to the concepts of the former Congested Districts Board of the nineteenth century - which was abolished following independence. There is a difference, however, in area in that these co-operatives have the active encouragement of Gaeltarra whose remit does not extend outside Irish speaking areas. These small scale bodies are involved in land reclamation, crafts, tourism, lamb and fish farming and have collected much of their funds from their "extended communities" outside Ireland. Although their activities have been subsidised to the extent of £1,000 per employee per annum Commins reckoned that compared to CAP subsidies, and considering the experimental nature of their activities, that costs were not unreasonable. Gaeltarra had recognised that the formidable problems of innovation were compounded by remoteness and cultural difficulties of the areas and had evolved 'integrated projects'. This meant a package put together by identifying products and markets and by training personnel which could be handed over to co-operatives. This would use Gaeltarra's expertise effectively and remove these onerous tasks from local promoters. It would leave the latter free to develop their group and their management structures, formidable tasks in their own right. Commins likened this initiative to the Canadian method of "project and education".

#### Community Development

Commins (1979a) also studied community development in Western Ireland. This approach stressed 'process' goals of developing civic consciousness and competence to work co-operatively but also had 'task' goals. Partly as a result of the structure of the public service and partly arising from an accent on consensus very few economic tasks were undertaken. Activity centred on water supplies, community centres and the development of recreational and social infrastructures. However, some councils did go beyond this by extending the concept of credit unions to the community as a whole.

The major study of community development, however, reported the previous year (Commins, Katsiaouni and Sheridan 1978). This EEC contract commissioned the Agricultural Institute to evaluate an EEC sponsored pilot programme of community development by a voluntary organisation - Muintir na Tire.

Muintir na Tire, a rural organisation founded in the thirties, had 250 affiliated community councils and obtained EEC funding to develop a pilot scheme employing

seven Community Development Officers (CDO) over four years. The Agricultural Institute was asked to examine the experiment in terms of the methods and content of training of CDOs, the scope of their role and the integration of community development (CD) with national planning. Muintir's philosophy was based on consensus and drew its leadership from clergy, teachers, doctors and other professionals. A major aim was to extend the number of affiliated community councils and this created some difficulties for the CDOs seeking to satisfy the expectations of both Muintir and the EEC Social Fund. The research workers faced difficulties due to the changes in objectives defined as the research proceeded.

The training programme was a success in providing conceptual knowledge of principles and techniques of CD. It was less successful at first in developing the diagnostic and interactional skills essential at field level. Academic specialists found it difficult to relate their knowledge to practical situations and public officials tended to favour information cramming. Success stories would have been more inspiring than information in creating a sense of mission and a belief in the worth of the task.

The CDOs were professionals and, like all professionals, valued autonomy, discretion and peer evaluation. They therefore tended to be critical of organisations and administrators. This led to tension where their achieved competence and views on organisational change were not conceded by the Muintir administration. A critical self-appraisal of this source of friction could be valuable.

The experiment assumed that community self-help would require institutional support and would be conditioned by the degree of public (government) support for self-reliance and by the status accorded to voluntary work. The experiment demonstrated that amicable links could be forged with statutory bodies. However, where CD was successful in a project with a statutory backing the body concerned had no means to generalise this success to other situations or even to disseminate information about it. This was partly a consequence of the fragmentary nature of the local presence of state agencies. In developing collaboration the implicit model of CD is important. CD can neither operate divorced from the agencies nor merely as an extension of them. CD is not a substitute for government. The best situation is one in which the CD is able to challenge the agency and collaborate as it deems appropriate. Commins proposed that all voluntary bodies retain their own functions but have the facility to call on a special body for core training and service needs. This "community resource development and service agency" would provide an overall framework, separate from both statutory agencies and voluntary bodies and have functions relating to Community development, Community education and Social Services. It could be an extension of the existing National Social Service Council. This national framework would facilitate a flexible partnership of CD with the agencies at local level. Here Community development officers could be financed by local authorities on the lines of the successful county development officers or employed by a grouping of community councils. These proposals recall the French practice with animateurs.

Commins concluded that the pilot scheme, which ended for lack of finance in 1978, questioned the universal applicability of some hallowed concepts of CD orthodoxy, viz: (1) Non-directive roles are not always appropriate for CDOs; (2) surveys of felt needs require careful interpretation if a basis for action is to be defined; (3) participation can be expressed in ways other than the active involvement

of all. The pilot scheme proved that economic development could be successfully promoted. Nevertheless, Commins concluded that the greatest scope lay with giving people of industrialising societies a new sense of meaning and purpose in their own localities.

#### \* Combat Poverty

Another pilot scheme also supported by the EEC sought to develop innovative methods for combatting poverty, arguing that the continued existence of widespread poverty during the pre-1973 growth period had shown up the limitations of the old and tried methods. The scheme was run by a National Committee who saw their task as (i) identifying needs for social change by social analysis, (ii) launching a process of change by action-research and (iii) evolving structures to support the continuation of the change process. The National Committee adopted a pilot approach since it would enable their limited resources to be concentrated on carefully monitored experiments in selected areas. Such a focus would provide a better understanding of the inter-relationship of social problems and hopefully throw up ways to give the deprived greater autonomy, self-respect and some influence over the development of programmes intended to help them. The lessons learned would be a valuable input in the evolution of successful general policies. The premises on which the scheme was founded made the structural explanation of poverty the most acceptable candidate and also promoted an image of change which was in general not one of liberal optimism. Opposition was predicted to the attempts to change consciousness, social structures and the distribution of power.

The Final Report (1980) is a chronicle of the evolution of the programme but does not contain the field reports on social action (which to date have not been published). The final report details how ideology led to a polarisation within the staff, between the staff and the National Committee, as well as between the Committee and the government. Thus field activities varied with the outlook of the personnel assigned to individual projects. To meet all viewpoints a compromise package of four elements was adopted: a Community Action Research Project, A Welfare Rights Project, A Supplementary Welfare Allowance project and a Social Service Council Project. The latter two were fact-finding and their published reports have illuminated some dimensions of poverty in Ireland. The other two involved social action at three urban and three rural locations. Additional work was contracted out. A great variety of projects were attempted, some apparently with considerable success. It is difficult with the information provided in the Final Report to assess what was achieved. The project, as outlined above, was intended to have a research arm to monitor progress but the proclivity towards action precipitated programmes and research was minimal.

In part the problem was that the pilot nature of the experiment called for a local focus while the structural explanation of poverty called for a national campaign. In the given local context the appropriate solutions to the national problem were difficult to identify. Where political action was resorted to measures of success were not devised. Where opposition was encountered the mechanisms used to prevent challenges to traditional power groups were not elucidated. How local groups could best gain access to local decision-making processes was not reported.

By not drawing out adequately the lessons of the practical interventions the National Committee did not succeed in its other aims of raising people's awareness of the structural origins of poverty nor of contributing to national policies.

However, the work of both the Muintir na Tire and Combat Poverty pilot schemes were not without fruit. A follow-up to both schemes is a potentiality of the newly established Poverty Agency and the proposed National Community Development Agency.

\* This section has benefited from Sammon (1982).

## A PROPOSAL FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

In making proposals the framework proposed by Weintraub provides a useful means of relating the diverse topics covered in the paper. Weintraub's brief appraisal of different countries and the same country at different points in time led him to conclude that the ideal macro-social arrangement resulted from a situation in which (i) the centre was (a) powerful and (b) committed to national building based on inter alia a vibrant rural society and where (ii) the periphery (non-central groups) was also (c) powerful, (d) influential, (e) self-confident and participatory. The evaluation of any concrete situation would require a score for each of these five characteristics so that, at this level, a binary score would produce  $32 (2^5)$  archetypes. In reality each factor is capable of refinement so that an infinite variety of macro-social relationships can be identified. Once the situation has been clarified the second stage requires identifying means of influencing the characteristics in the desired direction or of compensating for deficiencies where change is difficult or impossible.

The powerfulness of the centre can be measured in several ways: First its command over, or access to, autonomous resources. The ability of the Irish government in this respect is circumscribed by the relative wealth of the country and its very open and small character. Nevertheless, Ireland is in the top thirty of countries on the basis of income per capita and has a good record as a borrower. Second, its power can be measured by the strength of its mobilisation system which affects not only its own resources but also its ability to induce others to support its policies. The scope for further borrowing by the Irish government is limited by the need to repay the funds from productive investment widely defined. The sources of further taxation are controlled by the rising tendency of taxpayers to by-pass the government via the black economy. Mobilisation is not merely gathering resources but also deploying them to maximum advantage using a variety of instruments including regulation and control, direct ownership and fiscal incentives. As Commins has noted, the models used can be any mixture of private enterprise, social engineering by public agencies, promotion of co-operatives, community development and social action. The exact combination chosen will depend on the nature of the centre's commitment to rural welfare and reconstruction. This, so we have seen, will be influenced by the centre's guiding image of the nature and future of local society, the centre's orientation towards change, e.g., conservative, adaptive, innovative, and the institutions, or decision-making processes, it is prepared to develop or retard. The centre's powerfulness will also depend on its ability to obtain adequate data for its policies - e.g., from State agencies, transnational firms, etc. Information will also play an important role in defining the commitment stance it adopts and its perceptions of the feasibility and desirability of institutional change.

The moderate success of Irish development to date indicates that the Irish government's command over resources and its ability to mobilise has not been negligible. The limitations arise because the resources, as currently deployed, are unlikely to prove adequate, given the challenges of the demographic transformation, and the prospect of large increases in funds are remote. In common with many countries seeking to promote the Welfare State Irish governments have built up an apparatus based on professional workers in public employment in alliance with professional managers of industry seeking to promote maximum consumption on a social engineering basis. Increasingly the meaning of maximised consumption for private welfare has been challenged, as has the value of a system which marginalises those who are inefficient, weakens social cohesion and denigrates political responsibility while deploring the symptoms of social stress, such as rising crime rates. Humphrey and Watson (op.cit.) have made the case for a return to political primacy and to the inspiration of concerned people, such as Cole and Tawney, who foresaw the consequences of economic rationality based on social



engineering. In the reassessment of the Welfare State the arguments of those favouring market solutions are not without force in many areas but are especially advantageous to the strong. Without a modified structure the market cannot be expected to succour the marginalised. The work of Commins and the experience of DATAR in France point to areas of institutional change where social needs can be provided on a local basis in a more fruitful alliance with central institutions and often at less cost and greater social control. Much of the reform relates to the peripheral side of Weintraub's model.

The powerfulness of a non-central group, which could be a rural, peripheral or a social fringe group, is an amalgam of three elements. First, there is its commitment to its own reconstruction which includes the role it sees for itself, its attitude to change and the models and institutions it believes will further its development. Second comes its command over, or access to, autonomous resources and finally its mobilisation capacity. The latter includes formal organisations of interest groups and marketing institutions as well as informal mechanisms, such as client-patron ties. Hannan and O'Carroll found considerable differences in Irish communities viewed along these dimensions. The existing system of local government does not have access to autonomous resources and local communities are frequently unaware of the untapped resources potentially at their disposal since the model of development they hold may be inappropriate. The task of the Muintir na Tire and Combat Poverty studies was to contribute to an altered appreciation of such potentials at the social and economic levels. Work at the Institute of Public Administration, e.g., Chubb et al (1971), sought to promote the restoration and development of political power eroded by the pressure for centralisation in both the British and modern Irish state.

For Weintraub the second dimension to measure at the periphery is its influence with the centre by which it can participate in both policy making and the allocation of resources. The assessment would reckon the overall economic, political and symbolic assets possessed by the peripheral society which would enable it to reward its elites for their commitment and loyalty. It would evaluate whether a two way system of dialogue exists between the periphery and the centre and also appraise how its mobilisation capacity enables it to exploit its assets and its channels of communication. In this connection Garvin<sup>(1974)</sup> has held that the populist basis of Irish nation building has afforded the rural areas such great political and symbolic assets as to enable the periphery to impose its values on the centre. Hannan and O'Carroll (op. cit) echo this theme where they referred to the centre's commitment to maintaining traditional ruralistic values and structures alongside industrial modernisation. In the precis of their work above, a populist approach by some executive agencies was shown to compensate for formal deficiencies in organisational forms in the limited regions where they operate.

Weintraub's third dimension sought to determine the self awareness and self confidence of peripheral societies and their willingness to participate in the national interaction of centre and peripheries.

That such a willingness exists is shown by Cearta Sibhialta na Gaeltachta - the Civil Rights movement of the Irish speaking areas - from which there springs the cooperative movements documented by Commins above. It is also shown by the attempt by ten parishes in North-West Clare to create their own planning arrangements. This promising initiative was studied with the help of another EEC contract (Katsiaouni 1975) It petered out, exhausted by the delaying tactics of elements of the state apparatus and by local political leaders who felt threatened by an initiative they did not control. Further evidence is furnished in the Combat Poverty experience, etc.

From this summary the outlines of what might constitute a strengthening of the local dimension in regional development and in social provision can be discerned. Ross (1978) proposed that it contain four constituents based on his experience in Pakistan (see Kervyn 1977)

1. A regional assembly popularly elected.
2. A council of community development organisations and other voluntary bodies.
3. An executive agency on the line of the existing agencies SFADCO and Udaras na Gaeltachta.
4. A regional conference of locally involved central Department officials.

1. A regional assembly is necessary to reassert the primacy of politics over economics. Such reaffirmation is only meaningful if the assembly has command over and access to autonomous resources and if the assembly can provide leadership in a local mobilisation system. Without significant powers the allegiance of local elites cannot be guaranteed. In the present system local elites often seek local office as a stepping stone to central power and so feel threatened by efforts by unelected groups to better their local conditions. The absence of real power held by local representatives means that to get benefits for their electorate they must kowtow to the county manager and his staff. Recent experience shows that the latter can go so far as to blacklist representatives who express concern over manifest corruption on the part of the staff. The oft exercised ability of the centre to suspend local councils who will not comply with the manager's wishes is a clear indication of the scope for local representatives and explains their reluctance to make a permanent commitment to local politics.

2. Political leadership provides the legitimacy for local strivings and a means of participation in decision-making for all seeking to promote some aspect of local welfare. The richness of such leadership depends on the existence of a network of interest groups willing to assume responsibility for those subsidiary functions which lie within their ambit of competence. These functions are already exercised to a considerable extent in Irish society where, for example, farmers provided marketing and insurance services to the agricultural community and religious communities provided education, health and welfare services. Inflation, centralisation and the increasing dominance of service provision by organised professionals has denigrated such voluntary effort and accounts for much of the growth of expenditure by central bureaucracy. Scarcity of public funds coupled with professional intransigence could mean that vital services will remain unprovided in the future which, under other institutional arrangements, would be well within local competence to run and finance. In many cases, as Commins suggests, the role of the groups would be to operate in fruitful association with official bodies, neither supplanting or subserving them. Combat Poverty suggests that in other cases power shifts will not occur without a rebellion of the exploited. The scope for organisation along the lines of subsidiary function needs clarifying and the potential for the new means of communications e.g., citizen band radio and television to simplify and cheapen some services, especially in sparsely populated areas, requires further exploration.

The advantage of a Council of Voluntary bodies is that it facilitates the identifying of needs, the search for solutions, the allocation of tasks, and the publicising of successes, both within the local area and between areas. A national federation of local councils could discharge the training functions for development officers identified by Commins and the accumulation of expertise on the role of voluntary groups in resource mobilisation. It would be influential enough to induce voluntary bodies, whose role has in the past been cast mainly in an adversary stance, to study the potential for national building. For example, examination of the Hasdramut activities in Israel might offer possibilities for a new role for

Irish Trade Unions. The success of novel approaches, such as housing cooperatives, worker managed firms, the Rural Housing Organisation etc. could be calculated and the scope for their activities enhanced in fruitful dialogue. Mechanisms for an enlarged voluntary role in crime control is another topic worthy of research and implementation.

3. The proposal to set up local development agencies is inspired by the success of SFADCO and Udaras na Gaeltachta in the limited areas over which they operate. Some other areas have obtained dedicated service from highly committed and motivated County Development Officers whose enthusiasm is often inversely related to the wealth of their areas. SFADCO is currently engaged in an experimental scheme of small industry promotion. It is likely that the lessons learned will enable the concept and structures to be extended to other regions.

The proposal is linked to the concept of contracts developed under French planning by which local areas develop a project proposal and tender for a contract with the central authorities. DATAR's experience with such contracts favours the community forming a syndicate to execute the contracts. Such syndicates would benefit from the help of the executive agencies or development officer provided the specific 'task' goal of the contract does not take precedence over the 'process' goal of developing civic self confidence and competence to tackle local needs. DATAR had this danger to the forefront when it defined the supportive role of 'animateurs' where local expertise proved deficient. Provided this requirement is safeguarded the syndicate could contract with the development agency for the discharge of the work. Alternatively the development agency could adopt, where necessary, the role of Gaeltarra discussed above by which the agency used its expertise to develop a product and a training package and left the operation of the project to the local group.

Some years ago local authorities were urged to become development corporations. An objection frequently heard then is that local bodies are ill equipped for the planning role which a policy of decentralisation and local development requires. The size of their operations, it is argued, does not permit them to attract and retain top calibre people. Acquaintance with local officials will quickly dispel any notion of their general lack of ability or commitment. Local bodies would have more resources if, instead of relocating sectors of central departments, policy preferred to contract back to local level many of the central government functions which have a local element. The local authority's economic role, however, might need redefining so that some of its tasks, e.g., roads, water and sewerage, housing, could constitute contract projects tendered for by the Development Agency or by local syndicates. This reorganisation could overcome the lack of spirit and verve associated with some forms of public works at present.

The administrative tasks of local bodies would remain and these are discussed below.

4. The final proposal is for a conference of centrally employed officials with a local base. This would provide a two-way channel of communications between the local community and central agencies and also between the agencies themselves. Such conferences already exist in the Central Development Committee of the Department of Finance which employs the county development officers. The Regional Development Organisation also serves this function. However the role envisaged is expected to be greater than heretofore.

Centrally based officials would keep their locally based departmental colleagues informed of any activities by the Department in the area and this information would be available across departments so that the fragmentation of existing practice would be repaired. The conference would serve as a resource centre for the development agency, the local voluntary groups and the local assembly in emulation at a higher level of Combat Poverty's successful resource centres. The contacts and interactions between the four groups would provide mobilisation systems for both local and central interests in national building. Through the conference a central agency, for example, could publicise its policies, receive local evaluation of their impact and call for public support in their implementation. The conference could have a key role as a go-between interposed between the regional and national assemblies. Freedom by local development agencies to pursue local goals requires some coordinating mechanism at national level to ensure an efficient interregional allocation of scarce national resources promoting overall national advantage. Schumacher (op cit) has proposed some methods by which large firms can afford considerable autonomy to their branches. Ross (1969) also showed how a situation in which regions bid for scarce national resources could be operationalised to achieve an integrated national result without detailed central knowledge of the local planning. The concept could be developed by which each region would contract to achieve defined results in return for an allocation of national resources. The costs calculations of any region could be based on nationally derived opportunity costs of the resources nationally supplied and leave the region free to mobilise its own internal resources and set its own development programme. In the exchange between the regions and the centre the conference proposed above could play a vital role of communication and control.

All four bodies will need back-up services and someone charged with the responsibility of maintaining liaison. This service could perhaps be supplied by the administrative section of existing local authorities who will have hived off their economic tasks to the development agency. Alternatively the function could be attached to the development agency and the existing local body activities located there in a restructured form designed to maximise efficiency, interaction and participation of the four bodies proposed. In the development of such a schema frictions are bound to occur, as Commins has noted. It is important to establish the sources of such friction and to design the allocation of power between the four bodies so that the system of checks and balances provides the dynamic tension at local level and between local and central levels which Weintraub found to be most conducive to successful nation building.

## References

1. Attwood, E.A., (1979), The consequences of participation in the Common Agricultural Policy to the Irish Economy. Seminar paper, Wye College, London.
2. Baker, T. J., and M. Ross (1975), Employment Relationships in Irish Counties. Dublin: ESRI Paper No. 81.
3. Bell, D., (1973), The Coming of post industrial Society, Basic Books: New York.
4. Chubb, F. B. et al. (1971), More Local Government, A programme for development. Institute of Public Administration: Dublin.
5. Cole, G.D.H., (1917), Self-Government in Industry. G. Bell and Sons: London.
6. Cole, G.D.H., (1935), The Principles of Economic Planning, Macmillan: London.
7. Combat Poverty (1980), Final Report, Dublin.
8. Commins, P., (1979a), Rural Renewal and Regional Development, Discussion Paper 11, London, Regional Studies Association.
9. Commins, P., (1979b), Co-operation and Community Development in the West of Ireland, Fifth International Seminar on Marginal Regions, Dublin.
10. Commins, P., P.G. Cox and J. Curry, 1978, Rural Areas: Change and Development, National Economic and Social Council Report No. 41.
11. Commins, P., L. Katsiaouni and P. Sheridan (1978b) EEC/Muintir na Tire Pilot Programme in Community Development, EEC Limited Circulation
12. Conway, A. and J. Higgins (1978), An Analysis of some alternative strategies for creating employment in rural areas, Dublin: Agricultural Institute.
13. Cox, P. G. (1977), EEC Directive 268 and Disadvantaged Areas, Dublin Agricultural Institute.
14. Elliott C., (1975), Patterns of Poverty in the Third World, London: Martin Robertson.
15. Friedman, J. R. (1969), A General Theory of Polarized Development, UCLA.
16. Garvin, T., (1974), Political Clearages, Party Politics and Urbanisation in Ireland: The case of the periphery-dominated centre, Amsterdam: European Journal of Political Research.
17. Hannan, D. and J. P. O'Carroll (1976), The sociology of regionalisation, Regional Studies Workshop, University College, Cork.
18. Higgins, T. (1977) Research Planning and Innovation, Dublin: Stationery Office.
19. Kennedy, K.A., (1981), The State of the Public Finances, Dundalk, Regional Technical College.

20. Kervyn, A., (1977), Towards an Employment Strategy in Pakistan, Geneva: ILO.
21. Kumar, K., (1976), Industrialism and Post-Industrialism: Reflections on a public transition, Sociological Review, August.
22. Myrdal, G., (1957), Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions, London: Duckworth.
23. Myrdal, G., (1966), Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations, New York, Pantheon Press.
24. O'Carroll, J. P., N. P. Passchier, H. H. Van der Wusten, (1978), "Regional Aspects of the Problem of Restructuring Use and Ownership of Agricultural Land in the Republic of Ireland", Economic and Social Review, No. 2, January.
25. Ross, M., (1969), 'Two level planning in the Irish context', London Papers in Regional Science, London: Pion Press.
26. Ross, M., (1978), "Comprehensiveness in Regional Policy" in B. R. Dowling and J. Durkan (eds), Irish Economic Policy: A Review of Major Issues, Dublin: ESRI.
27. Ross, M., (1979), The Regional Impact of the EEC. European Congress for Rural Sociology, Cordoba.
28. Ross, M. (1981), Regional Industrial Policies in the Republic of Ireland: A review of economic studies, Glasgow: Centre for the Study of Public Policy.
29. Ross, M., and B. Walsh (1979), Regional Policy and the Full-employment Target, Dublin: ESRI Policy Series No. 1.
30. Sammon, F., (1982), 'The Problem of Poverty in Ireland: Lessons from the Combat Poverty Programme', Dublin: Studies, Spring.
31. Schumacher, E. F. (1973) "Towards a theory of large scale organisation" in Small is Beautiful, London: Blond and Briggs
32. Tawney, R. H., (1966), 'The Conditions of Economic Liberty' in The Radical Tradition, Penguin, London.
33. Vining, D. R., and T. Kontuly (1978), "Population Dispersed from major metropolitan regions: An international comparison, International Regional Science Review, Vol. 3, No. 1.
34. Watson, M. (1978), "A critique of development from above. The lessons of French and Dutch experience of nationally-defined regional policy, Public Administration, Winter, London.
35. Watson, M., and D. Humphreys (1979), "Labour's Approach to Planning: Economics v. Politics, West European Politics, May, London.
36. Weintraub, D., (1970), Rural Periphery, societal center and their interaction in the process of agrarian development: A comparative framework", Rural Sociology, Vol. 35, No. 3.
37. Whelan, C. T., (1980), Employment Conditions and Job Satisfaction: The Distribution, Perception and Evaluation of Job Rewards, Paper No. 101, Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.