

**NIRSA**

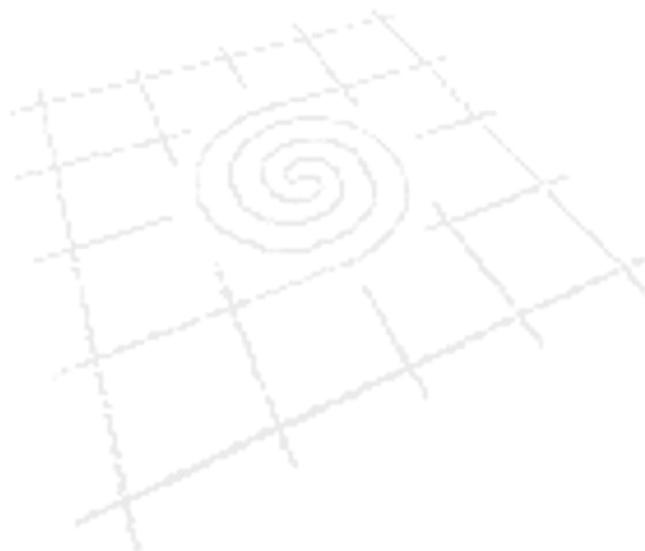
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR REGIONAL AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS  
AN INSTITIÚID NAISIÚNTA UM ANAILÍS RÉIGIÚNACH AGUS SPÁSÚIL



NUI MAYNOOTH  
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

# The Market for Sociological Ideas in Early 1960s Ireland: Civil Service Departments and the Limerick Rural Survey, 1961-64

**Peter Murray**  
**Maria Feeney**



John Hume Building, National University of Ireland, Maynooth,  
Maynooth, Co Kildare, Ireland.

Áras John Hume, Ollscoil na hÉireann, Má Nuad,  
Má Nuad, Co Chill Dara, Éire.

Tel: + 353 (0) 1 708 3350 Fax: + 353 (0) 1 7086456

Email: [nirsa@nuim.ie](mailto:nirsa@nuim.ie) Web: <http://www.nuim.ie/nirsa>

**HEA**

Higher Education Authority  
An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas

Funded under the  
Programme for Research  
in Third Level Institutions (PRTL),  
administered by the HEA



NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



**The Market for Sociological Ideas in Early 1960s Ireland:  
Civil Service Departments and the Limerick Rural Survey, 1961-64**

Peter Murray

*National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis/ Department of Sociology,  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland*

and

Maria Feeney

*Walsh Fellow, RERC Teagasc, Athenry, Co. Galway/ School of Sociology,  
University College Dublin, Ireland*

**Abstract**

Why, Joseph Lee asks, 'was the market for ideas in independent Ireland so small? Why was it so stagnant?' In attempting to answer these questions, Lee places most emphasis on demand side deficiencies, discussing in detail the ways in which the development of research in economics was stunted by the prevailing narrow-mindedness of the Department of Finance. Yet, he observes, 'slowly though economics developed as a research discipline, it was exceptionally advanced compared with cognate subjects' such as sociology. A prevalent disregard for research among government policy-makers and private entrepreneurs has more recently been noted by Tom Garvin who highlights 'a general syndrome of unintellectual or even anti-intellectual thinking' within which 'a common reaction to academic commentary was "sure we knew all that anyway"'..

Widely accepted and influential as such broad critiques are, the response of the higher echelons of the civil service to early research produced by Irish sociologists has not to date been examined in detail. Here we take the case of what is still a frequently cited study from the fledgling period of Irish sociological research, the Limerick Rural Survey, and we examine the manner in which its conduct and findings were appraised within government departments. Instead of the prevalence of a generalised hostility towards research-generated ideas, we find that the creation of multiple research providers from end of 1950s led to ideas being appraised within a context of institutional competition and conflict. In the appraisal of the Limerick Rural Survey, civil servants privileged some ideas and marginalised others through the selective attribution of 'practical' or 'policy-making' value. Advice that favoured the taking of a 'restrained line' on Limerick Rural Survey's 'merits' resulted in a book launching speech by the Taoiseach that dwelt on papal pronouncements at a time when clerical promoters of this pioneering rural sociology exercise were seeking to move the Irish discipline beyond a confinement to the regurgitation of encyclicals.

### *Introduction*

Why, Joseph Lee asks, 'was the market for ideas in independent Ireland so small? Why was it so stagnant?' In attempting to answer these questions, Lee (1989: 562-643) places most emphasis on demand side deficiencies, discussing in detail the ways in which the development of research in economics was stunted by the prevailing narrow-mindedness of the Department of Finance. Yet, he observes, 'slowly though economics developed as a research discipline, it was exceptionally advanced compared with cognate subjects' such as sociology (Lee 1989: 584). A prevalent disregard for research among government policy-makers and private entrepreneurs has more recently been noted by Tom Garvin who highlights 'a general syndrome of unintellectual or even anti-intellectual thinking' within which 'a common reaction to academic commentary was "sure we knew all that anyway"' (Garvin 2004: 220-221).

Widely accepted and influential as such broad critiques are, the response of the higher echelons of the civil service to early research produced by Irish sociologists has not to date been examined in detail. Here we take the case of what is still (see Share, Tovey and Corcoran 2007) a frequently cited study from the fledgling period of Irish sociological research, the Limerick Rural Survey (LRS), and we examine the manner in which its conduct and findings were appraised within government departments.

### *The Origins and Key Figures of the Limerick Rural Survey*

The LRS was initiated by Muintir na Tire (MNT). Founded in 1937 by a Tipperary priest, Canon John Hayes, MNT proclaimed itself to be 'a Movement for the promotion of the true welfare, spiritual, cultural and material of Ireland and, in particular, of its rural people, through the application of Christian social principles'. Despite the national scope of its aspirations, 'between 1937 and 1958 an axis of three Munster counties Cork, Limerick and Tipperary was the movement's strongest point' while 'the number of guilds in the eastern and western regions of the county increased extremely slowly' (Devereux 1992: 358). The national headquarters of the movement was – and still is – in Tipperary town, close by the Bansha parish of Canon Hayes.

Canon Hayes died in January 1957 and exactly a year later the National Executive of MNT was informed by the Department of Agriculture that 'a limited sum of money had been made available to provide grants towards the cost of technical assistance projects developed by rural and farming organisations' (Newman 1964a:vii). The source of this money was the Grant Counterpart Fund<sup>1</sup> created during the 1948-52 period in which Ireland was a Marshall Aid recipient. MNT responded by proposing 'a social and economic survey of County Limerick' and in June 1958 the Department indicated that such a project was eligible for funding. Two-thirds of the cost of the LRS was met by technical assistance, the other third being provided by MNT itself.<sup>2</sup>

Within the National Executive of MNT the originators of the LRS idea were P. J. Meghen and the Reverend Dr. Thomas Morris. Meghen was at the time the County Manager of Limerick. An earlier stage of his career in local government had included an extended period as a commissioner administering the town of Ennis in place of its dissolved Urban District Council (Robins 1993: 109-111). While he was discharging this role, he assisted Lloyd Warner and other members of the Harvard Irish Study team, becoming particularly friendly with Conrad Arensberg who in 1937 dedicated *The Irish Countryman* to both Meghen and Warner (Byrne, Edmondson and Varley

2001: XLI). An engineer by profession, Meghen was familiar with the sociological community studies tradition that linked 1930s Clare with Middletown and Yankee City and, more broadly, with a variety of accounts of Ireland written from a social scientific perspective (Meghen 1961 and 1963).

With its main base in Maynooth and its main outlet in the journal *Christus Rex*, Sociology in Ireland was – visiting Americans excepted – a Catholic clerical fiefdom (Conway 2006: 12-17). Vice President of the diocesan seminary, St. Patrick's College in Thurles, before his elevation in 1960 to Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, Morris was not prominently associated with the public face of the discipline. However his private letters to Reverend Dr. Jeremiah Newman, shows him to have been keenly interested in moving Catholic social studies away from the rehashing of Papal encyclicals and towards empirical investigation based on scientific principles – a shift Newman promoted after his appointment as Maynooth's Professor of Sociology in 1953 (Newman 1959).<sup>3</sup> From Newman the significant but unobtrusive role Morris played drew the acknowledgement 'that those who know can say with truth that rural sociology in Ireland owes more to him than to anybody else' (Newman 1964a: ix).

With technical assistance funding approved, the National Executive of MNT turned to Newman – who was himself a native of Dromcollogher in County Limerick - to supply the social scientific skills to bring the LRS into operation. A visit to the USA by Newman in the Summer of 1958 obtained advice for and recruited some high profile names as Consultants<sup>4</sup> to the LRS. But, undertaken under the auspices of the US National Catholic Welfare Conference, the visit's principal purpose was 'to investigate the courses in Sociology (Rural Sociology, Social Research) which would be suitable for post-graduate studies by Irish students and the possibility of obtaining scholarships for such Irish students'.<sup>5</sup> The main external source of expert input into LRS was to come from Holland rather than the USA. Reporting the first Canon Hayes Memorial Lecture delivered by Newman in Limerick in February 1958, the MNT monthly journal *Landmark* referred to the newly-formed European Society of Rural Sociology whose President, Professor G.W. Hofstee of the University of Wageningen in Holland, was coming to speak at MNT's annual Rural Week conference in July.<sup>6</sup> Contrary to MNT's intentions, Hofstee, when he came to Ireland, argued against reliance on foreign experts to carry out the fieldwork for LRS. Instead he urged the employment of an Irish graduate for whom he offered to provide specialised training in Holland before the survey commenced (Newman 1964a: vii).

The selected researcher was Patrick McNabb, a recent graduate in Philosophy from UCD, who was in his early thirties and had supported himself while a student by doing night work in the Telephone Exchange. McNabb had no formal social science qualification but he had been a wide and voracious reader since his mid-teens when 'I joined the Rathmines Library, which was very well stocked, to read classic novels but in exploring the shelves I discovered art and architecture, archaeology and anthropology'.<sup>7</sup> A protégé of UCD's Reverend Professor of Logic and Psychology, E.F. O'Doherty, he was casting about for a viable postgraduate thesis topic at the time the opportunity to work on the LRS arose. In October 1958 he went to Wageningen for the arranged period of study, returning to Limerick to begin his field work in January 1959. The only full-time researcher employed, he worked on the LRS for one year. He was subsequently recruited as a manager by the Shannon Free Airport Development Company at a time when it was formulating plans for the creation of a

model industrial community (Murray 2009: 168-171) before he resumed his social science research involvement with a move to the University of Leiden in Holland. While carrying out his Limerick research he was joined for a number of weeks in the Spring and Autumn of 1959 by Jelle Lijfering with whom he had been most closely connected during his time in Wageningen.

*Publications of the Limerick Rural Survey*

Table 1 sets out the sequence in which MNT published a series of interim reports on the LRS. A book collecting these (unrevised) interim reports, edited by Newman and published by MNT, marked the completion of the survey.

**Table 1 LRS Reports: Dates of Publication, Topics and Authors**

1960	Migration (Patrick McNabb)
1961	Physical Geography and Geology (P. J. Meghen and others)
1962	Social Structure (Patrick McNabb)
1963	Social Provision and Rural Centrality (Jeremiah Newman)
1964	Social History (P. J. Meghen)
1964	Volume collecting interim reports edited by Jeremiah Newman

*Civil Servants and the LRS 1: The Taoiseach's inquiry, January 1961*

On 10 January 1961 the Taoiseach, Sean Lemass, received a request to meet a deputation from MNT's Executive 'to put before you some important matters in connection with the future of our Movement'. Anticipating that 'they may wish to discuss the extension of the rural social survey on which they have been engaged in Co. Limerick on which an interim report was published last year', Lemass minuted his department's Assistant Secretary that 'I should like to have information on the following points:'

- (1) Are Counterpart Funds, available for this purpose, now exhausted?
- (2) If it were decided to make State Funds available to continue the Survey how best could this be done?
- (3) How does the survey link up with the Agricultural Institute? Is it regarded as a proper activity for the Institute? Is there any similarity between the Muintir na Tire survey in Limerick and the Institute's survey in West Cork?
- (4) Would this survey come within the scope of the proposed Institute of Economic Research?

'Apart from these specific points', he concluded, 'I should like to have Department of Agriculture's view regarding the value of the work done by Muintir na Tire on this survey, the quality of the graduate whom they employed on it, Mr. Patrick McNabb, B.A, and on the operation generally'.<sup>8</sup>

On 20 January the Department of Agriculture responded with a six page memorandum.<sup>9</sup> On the financial points, it noted that MNT had not yet drawn down the full amount of the initial grant for the LRS while Agriculture's allocation for technical assistance from the Grant Counterpart Fund was not yet exhausted. Further funding from this source was therefore possible (and was in fact to be subsequently provided).

Moving on to the Taoiseach's third question, the memorandum stated that 'surveys of this kind can be regarded as a proper activity for the Agricultural Institute'. The West Cork Survey (which local MNT Parish Guilds, among others, had lobbied to have undertaken)<sup>10</sup> differed from the LRS in being 'more comprehensive'. The initially proposed scope of the LRS had been wider but, for feasibility reasons, this had been narrowed on the advice of Professor Hofstee. The response concluded that 'the resources of Muintir na Tire are rather limited for the undertaking of detailed survey work on their own and some sort of a working arrangement between Muintir na Tire and the Agricultural Institute in regard to studies of this kind would appear desirable'.

The objects set out for 'the proposed Institute of Economic Research' gave it 'a broad field' but the Department of Agriculture considered that 'in view of Dr. Walsh's attitude towards the establishment of the Economic Research Institute it is probable that in the circumstances the Institute would be chary of sponsoring a survey of this type'. The reference here was to repeated statements in September-October 1959 by the Director of the Agricultural Institute that inevitable duplication between his organisation and the proposed Economic Research Institute made state support for the establishment of the latter inappropriate. Walsh had desisted only when informed of the Taoiseach's view that 'no further clarification of the matter is necessary or, indeed, practicable at this stage'<sup>11</sup> but could be expected to return to the fray if faced with any concrete Economic Research Institute initiative he perceived to be intruding into what he regarded as the Agricultural Institute's territory.

Turning to 'the value of the work done by Muintir na Tire on this survey and the quality of the graduate employed on it', the Department of Agriculture opined that McNabb, who had grown up in Dublin city but had County Down farming roots, 'suffered from the fact that he had not a rural background'. In this context it was noted that, prior to his employment on the LRS, he had been working under Professor O'Doherty's supervision on 'social studies in two city parishes'. It was stated that McNabb was 'offered the assistance of the local agricultural advisory officers by the Chairman of the County Committee of Agriculture and of the advisory services generally by this Department but he did not avail himself of these offers'. Instead 'his guides in the county were the local Health Officers' – a perhaps unsurprising development given the central involvement of the Limerick County Manager P.J. Meghen in the LRS. Indeed McNabb was positively spoilt for choice with regard to 'guides' as alongside the lay Meghen at the head of the LRS stood the Reverend Professor Newman, not merely a local priest who had attained academic eminence in Maynooth but one who was widely (and correctly) regarded by the Limerick clergy as a future bishop of their diocese.<sup>12</sup>

The value of the work MNT could do in the social research field was distinctly limited in the view of the Department of Agriculture - 'surveys of this kind which could be carried out by Muintir na Tire could not do much more than scratch the surface of the rural problem'. It was, however, conceded that such studies would 'have a value in creating interest among rural people in the subjects covered and in laying the foundations for more detailed investigations'. Specifically in relation to the LRS, the memorandum exemplified the 'sure we knew all that anyway' attitude identified by Tom Garvin – 'judged by the Interim Report on the Limerick Survey, the work done has not gone very deeply into rural problems and indeed does not add a

great deal to what keen observers already knew about the county'. The initial qualification was significant, however, as the memorandum implicitly endorsed the view it attributed to the Dutch adviser Lijfering that 'the Interim Report should have been held over to be used as an introduction to the comprehensive report'. It is to civil servants' response to the overall LRS report contained in Newman's 1964 edited volume that we now turn.

*Civil Servants and the LRS 2: The Taoiseach's book launch speech, November 1964*

In September 1964 the Taoiseach accepted an invitation to speak at the launch of the LRS volume collecting the five already published interim reports. Before drafting a speech for the occasion Assistant Secretary Tadhg O' Cearbhaill informally consulted four fellow public servants – Central Statistics Officer Director Dr. M.D. McCarthy, Department of Agriculture Deputy Chief Inspector Dr. H. Spain who had worked as an agricultural adviser in Limerick for ten years, an Assistant Secretary with responsibilities in the planning area of the Department of Local Government (M. Lawless) and an Industrial Development Authority officer who was then chairing a committee 'on development centres, industrial estates etc.' (T. O'Neill).<sup>13</sup> A memorandum to the Taoiseach recorded that 'the consensus of opinion among these is that viewed as a piece of research of potential value in policy-making, the section contributed by the Rev. Dr. Newman, i.e. Part V – Social Provision and Rural Centrality (pages 248-306), is way ahead of the rest of the Report'. Also recorded was the fact that 'Dr. McCarthy has a reservation about the practical value of the work of Mr. McNabb – Parts III and IV – which he fears tends to be more "sociological and psychological" rather than simply "social" research'.<sup>14</sup>

The memorandum suggested that 'in the light of this evaluation of the survey, it may be advisable to take a restrained line in dealing with the merits of the Report, while, of course, complimenting the authors on their initiative and industry, etc.' A number of 'further factors that we cannot anticipate' that implicitly strengthened the case for pursuing a restrained line were also noted. These were:

- (1) the work of the informal committee on the organization of social research
- (2) the report of the committee on Development Centres and
- (3) surveys to be carried out by local authorities under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963 as a prerequisite for the making of plans - which could provide for development centres

*Discussion*

By the early 1960s the Irish institutional environment within which new sociological ideas were beginning to be produced and consumed was an increasingly complex one. The acquisition of a scientific research infrastructure had been a key 'americanisation' legacy of Ireland's post-war participation in the Marshall Plan with the Grant Counterpart Fund being used to create a substantial new Agricultural Institute and greatly extend the capacities of the existing Institute of Industrial Research and Standards as well providing, through its technical assistance allocation, the opportunity to carry out a small scale project like the LRS. A feature of post-war US aid to Europe was a dovetailing of projects financed by large US private foundations with activities funded from US government sources (Gemelli 1998). In Ireland's case this was exemplified by the role Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OECC) personnel played in influencing a positive Ford Foundation decision to

provide a grant for the establishment of the Economic Research Institute (Murray 2009: 176-177). Once established or enlarged, all of these institutes - as well as other new specialised bodies combining research activity with primarily educational remits like the Irish Management Institute or the Institute of Public Administration – would look to ongoing funding from the Irish Exchequer for support. The generation and reception of ideas thus became enmeshed in the sometimes conflicting agendas of institutes and of their departmental sponsors – a developing tendency clearly reflected in the questions posed and the replies received by Sean Lemass in January 1961.

Greater complexity was also coming to characterise relationships between voluntary organisations and government departments. Perhaps because of its focus on practical action at the local parish level, MNT did not exhibit the very strong hostility to state bureaucracy that featured in some variants of the Irish Catholic tradition of vocationalist thinking. Through Emergency drives for self-sufficiency in food and fuel as well as the late 1940s proposals for the expansion of agricultural advisory services on the basis of the Parish Plan, it positively engaged with policy development and with political leaders (Rouse 2000: Daly 2002: Wills 2007). This evoked a financially supportive response. During the Emergency the Department of Agriculture recommended that MNT should receive an annual grant through its Vote, but de Valera's reaction to this suggestion was that this 'would constitute nothing short of a disservice to the Association, because it would deprive it of the spirit of self-reliance and self-help so sorely needed in this country as a whole and among the farmers in particular' (quoted in Daly 2002: 258). With the advent of the Marshall Plan US aid providers were also favourably impressed by MNT, earmarking it along with the Irish Countrywomen's Association and Macra na Feirme for Grant Counterpart Fund allocations to strengthen their organisational capacities.<sup>15</sup>

By the late 1950s, however, leading MNT figures like Morris perceived some of its fellow grant beneficiaries as developing threats. It was argued that there was a need to redefine MNT's role as other rural community-based organisations – principally Macra na Feirme and its offshoots the National Farmers Association (Smith and Healy 1996: 42-50) and Macra na Tuaithe - were emerging as stronger social forces. A broadly educational focus that emphasised the combination of community development and rural sociology was the means adopted to secure the end of renewed relevance for MNT. The rural could not in this perspective be equated with the agricultural nor could the regeneration of rural society be reduced to more efficient farming.<sup>16</sup> Thinking along these lines within MNT prompted its initiation of the LRS. By the mid-1960s it had also resulted in MNT moving away from a primary relationship with the Department of Agriculture and into the ambit (as well as on to the Vote) of the Department of Education.<sup>17</sup>

When attention is turned from the wider context within which social research was funded, produced and consumed to the specific reception of the finished LRS product by a small group of senior civil servants, the impression formed is not one of indifference to or belittlement of ideas but rather an attribution of 'practical' or 'policy-making' value selecting some ideas (Newman's contribution) while marginalizing others (those of McNabb). This might be regarded as an artefact of the selection of those to be consulted since two of the group of four had direct responsibilities for physical planning policies and Newman's contribution consisted of a consideration of how the planned building up of selected towns to provide

employment opportunities and services to the surrounding areas might serve as a means of stabilising the rural population and preserving a rural way of life (Newman 1964b). But McCarthy's reservation about the practical value of the work of Mr. McNabb as being 'more "sociological and psychological" rather than simply "social" research' suggests that there was more to it than this.

In his Social Structure report McNabb emphasised the importance of class division within the rural community. From 'being a stable and closed community, having a rigid class structure assented to by all its members' Limerick had moved to a currently 'unstable and open' situation characterised by a debilitating stand-off between classes. Based on the farm family, 'the traditional class system remains intact, but the workers no longer accept it'. The farm workers had 'opted out of the rural community'. They now shunned farm work where they could and chose to steer their children towards emigration in order for them to enter other kinds of employment. Among farmers, 'the family is increasingly becoming the unit of economic production... since the war, more and more of the larger farmers are dispensing with hired labour'. As a result 'the farmer has more or less successfully resisted the direct attacks of the workers, but only at the price of losing them altogether'. But the turning inward of the farm family was undermined by the contrast between the situation of the remaining children and those of their now urbanised peers who have emigrated but return home on holidays. This contrast 'goads the farmer's children to revolt, so that indirectly the social conflict between farmer and worker has been carried into the heart of the farm family and has initiated the decay of family loyalty'.

To McNabb the 'various government agencies working for the improvement of agriculture' were 'paternalistic' - 'they weaken the society by taking on too many of its functions, as the father weakens the family by refusing to delegate responsibility'. The forces for social change were not these agencies but movements like MNT, Macra na Feirme, the Irish Countrywomen's Association, the National Farmers Association and the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association. But these were all community-centred organisations whereas the society they sought to regenerate was family-centred. MNT's ideal was a co-operative one but this 'can be realised only by a change in the role of the father and a complete reorganisation of the society' (McNabb 1964: 193-247).

While a strikingly bold and radical analysis of this type could scarcely be dismissed with a 'sure we knew all that anyway' response, it is hardly surprising that its frontal assault on the conventional wisdom of policymakers should be greeted with McCarthy's reservation about its practical value. In relation to such criticism McNabb might be said to have got his retaliation in first with the concluding sentence of the Social Structure report. This called for 'further and more intensive scientific investigation' as 'much of our national policy towards rural problems is influenced by well-meaning community leaders whose opinions are more usually based on prejudice or sentiment, and who presume to legislate for the rural areas without due reflection or study'.

The infrastructural context within which 'further and more intensive scientific investigation' would take place was the concern of 'the informal committee on the organization of social research' identified as one of three 'further factors that we cannot anticipate' in the November 1964 memorandum to the Taoiseach. Set up in

1963, the Social Research Committee straddled the civil service (it included several Department Secretaries), the universities and the state-sponsored research institutes. Its activities began a debate in which two alternatives were canvassed - a scheme of university-based postgraduate research fellowships whose holders 'would investigate specific problems of Irish sociology, preferably of an applied nature' or the reconstitution of the Economic Research Institute on a multi-disciplinary basis. When UN Consultant Henning Friis was engaged to study Irish social research needs in 1965 he came down decisively on the side of the latter. But while Friis viewed a dedicated research institute with a policy focus as essential, he argued that social research within the universities should also be supported. He noted that university research was restricted by the combination of heavy teaching loads with 'very limited funds' and pointed out that 'most other countries have a publicly sponsored science foundation or council to which researchers from various disciplines can apply for research funds, and part of the problem of financing university research is thereby solved'. The creation of such a council he left over for further study (Friis 1965: 29-31), a position in which it would remain for another thirty years (Jackson 2004). That Irish policy-oriented social science research was not simply prioritised but was promoted to the exclusion of a support structure for basic research in the social sciences owed much to the decisive influence exercised in the mid-1960s by McNabb's critic, M.D. McCarthy (Kennedy 1993; Murray 2009: 186).

The other two 'further factors that we cannot anticipate' listed in the memorandum to Lemass were related to physical planning issues and particularly to the possible adoption by the government of development centre designation. As we have seen, Newman's LRS contribution was positively regarded by the consulted civil servants because of its relevance to these questions. But while it was plainly more palatable to senior civil servants than McNabb's 'sociological and psychological' analysis, whether it actually possessed the practical value that the latter was indicted for lacking is open to question. The kind of rational spatial planning strategy it envisaged might appeal to public servants and (some) professional practitioners but - as the fate of the Buchanan report in the 1970s illustrates - it was to sit very uneasily with the clientelism and localism of Irish party political culture (Bohan 1979: 1-2 and 90-92; Breathnach 1982: 36-39).

What sort of book launch speech resulted from following the 'restrained line in dealing with the merits of the Report' advocated in the memorandum? When he spoke in Limerick on 26 November 1964 Lemass dwelt on the inevitability of change and on how adopting a realistic attitude towards its extent and likely future course did not imply approval of its character. Assumptions of a much reduced agricultural workforce in government economic expansion programmes were to be properly interpreted in this way. The other topic he addressed was Pope John XXIII's Encyclical *Mater et Magistra*. Irish rural policies by and large conformed with those advocated by the Pope and where they did not the government would 'continue to work, within the limits of our national resources, to bring them into line'. The concluding sentence of the speech hoped that the pioneering LRS would be followed by other surveys that 'will help us to see very clearly the things we have yet to do, so that the Irish social structure, particularly in rural areas, will eventually conform to the ideals so clearly enunciated for our guidance by a great Pope.'<sup>18</sup>

Within a political culture much given to the citing of papal documents (Puirseil 2008), *Mater et Magistra* was in some ways a special case. This encyclical's call for the closing of the gap between rural and urban living standards had, perhaps, particular resonance in the 1960s Ireland which witnessed the October 1964 resignation of the Minister for Agriculture, Patrick Smith, in protest against what he saw as neglect of the rural areas while the government mollified the trade unions and the street protest campaign with which the National Farmers Association confronted the government in 1966-67. These events took place within a context where frustrated farmer organisation aspirations to benefit from the EEC Common Agricultural Policy and ongoing dependence on the disadvantageously organised British market were combined. During this decade Irish farm organisation leaders 'regularly cited *Mater et Magistra* to support claims for additional state funding' (Daly 2002: 373). A biographer of Lemass, referring to 'his undoubted admiration for Pope John XXIII', adds that 'at one point, according to a report at the time of his death in the *Irish Times*, he instructed his ministers to keep a copy of the latter's encyclical *Mater at Magistra* on their desks for guidance' (Horgan 1997: 322). The civil service inclination to take a 'restrained line' on the merits of the LRS nonetheless led to an ironical outcome. A study conceived in part by clerics aiming to turn Irish sociology towards empirical social investigation was launched by a speech from one of the state leadership elite's least pietistic laymen (Horgan 1997: 325) largely devoted to lauding one of the papal encyclicals beyond whose regurgitation Morris and Newman were seeking to move the discipline.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A state receiving US dollar aid under the Marshall Plan was obliged to deposit in a special account a local currency sum equivalent to the value of the dollars it had been given. These local currency funds were known as counterpart funds and they were intended for developmental use. US dollar aid could take the form of either grants or loans. Between 1948 and 1952 Ireland received \$18 million in grants and \$128.2 million in loans (Whelan 2000: 127). The way in which the specific uses to be made of the local currency funds was decided varied according to whether the dollars to which they formed the counterpart were loaned or granted. If loaned, then the recipient country's government decided how the counterpart funds should be spent. If granted, the expenditure of counterpart funds had to be agreed between the recipient government and the US authorities. Loan counterpart was fairly quickly expended by the Irish government (mostly on land reclamation) while protracted negotiation of agreements between Irish and US governments held up the spending of grant counterpart until the late 1950s (Whelan 2000: 286-314; Murray 2009: 59-61). For the full list of grant counterpart projects eventually agreed between the USA and Ireland see Whelan (2000) Table 7.2.

<sup>2</sup> see National Archives of Ireland (NAI) Department of the Taoiseach (DT) S 17,673/95 Muintir na Tire: Rural Survey of County Limerick, "Financial Aid to Muintir na Tire"

<sup>3</sup> These letters are in Jeremiah Newman's Papers in the Archive of the Diocese of Limerick

<sup>4</sup> The Consultants listed by LRS reports were – *U.S.A.* Prof. Lloyd Warner, Chicago, Prof. C. Mihanovich, St. Louis *Netherlands* Prof. E. W. Hofstee, Wageningen, Mr. J. Lijfering, Wageningen, *Britain* Prof. M.P. Fogarty, Cardiff, , Dr. H. Bracey, Bristol *Ireland* Dr. T. Walsh, Director, Agricultural Institute, Dr. H. Spain, Director, Department of Agriculture Advisory Service, Dr. M.D. McCarthy, Director, C.S.O., Dr. E.F. O'Doherty, U.C.D., Prof. J. Lyons, UCC

<sup>5</sup> "In a Difficult Period the Movement Has Gained Ground – Reports Honorary National Secretary" *Landmark*, August 1958

<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah Newman "The Future of Rural Ireland" *Landmark*, February 1958

<sup>7</sup> Patrick McNabb in interview with Peter Murray

<sup>8</sup> NAI DT S10,816 Muintir na Tire General File, Minute from Taoiseach to Assistant Secretary, 12/1/1961

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Department of Agriculture memorandum, "Points Raised by Department of the Taoiseach on Survey of County Limerick conducted by Muintir na Tire", 20/1/1961

- 
- <sup>10</sup> See NAI Department of Finance (DF) 2001/3/166 Community Development, Economic Development Branch memorandum “Community Development”, August 1961, p. 23
- <sup>11</sup> For Dr. Tom Walsh’s objections and responses to them see NAI DT S 16,705 Centre for Economic and Social Research in Ireland Establishment
- <sup>12</sup> Patrick McNabb in interview with Peter Murray
- <sup>13</sup> Two of the four – M.D. McCarthy and Henry Spain - were listed as Consultants to the LRS (see Note 4 above)
- <sup>14</sup> NAI DT S 17,673/95 Muintir na Tire: Rural Survey of County Limerick, memorandum from TO’C to Taoiseach 23/11/1964
- <sup>15</sup> Initially £30,000 was allocated for grants to the Irish Countrywomen’s Association, Muintir na Tire and Macra na Feirme. When a reserve fund set aside to cover contingencies was later distributed, the Irish Countrywomen’s Association, Muintir na Tire and Macra na Feirme each received an additional £4,000 from this source.
- <sup>16</sup> Letters from Thomas Morris to Jeremiah Newman, Archive of the Diocese of Limerick
- <sup>17</sup> See NAI DT S 17,138 B/95 Community Development: Federation of Local Development Associations; General
- <sup>18</sup> For the text see “Mr Lemass Stresses the Value of the Limerick Rural Survey” *Landmark*, January 1965 or NAI DT S 17,673/95 Muintir na Tire: Rural Survey of County Limerick. *Mater et Magistra* was also the principal topic of the speech Lemass had delivered on 15/8/1961 at MNT’s Rural Week in Cavan - see NAI DT S 10,816 D/61 Muintir na Tire General File

## REFERENCES

- Bohan, H. (1979) *Ireland Green* Dublin: Veritas
- Breathnach, P. (1982) “The Demise of Growth-Centre Policy: The Case of the Republic of Ireland” pp. 35-56 in R. Hudson and J. Lewis (eds.) *Regional Planning in Europe* London: Pion
- Byrne, A., R. Edmondson and T. Varley (2001) “Introduction to the Third Edition” pp. I-CI in C.M. Arensberg and S.T. Kimball *Family and Community in Ireland Third Edition* Ennis: CLASP Press
- Conway, B. (2006) “Foreigners, Faith and Fatherland: the Historical Origins and Present Status of Irish Sociology” *Sociological Origins*, Special Supplement to Vol. 5, No.1, pp. 1-36
- Daly, M.E. (2002) *The First Department: A History of the Department of Agriculture* Dublin: Institute of Public Administration
- Devereux, E. (1992) “Community Development – Problems in Practice: The Muintir na Tire Experience, 1931-1958” *Administration*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 351-370
- Friis, H. (1965) *Development of Social Research in Ireland* Dublin: Institute of Public Administration
- Garvin, T. (2004) *Preventing the Future: Why Was Ireland So Poor for So Long?* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan
- Gemelli, G. (1998) “American Influence on European Management Education: The Role of the Ford Foundation” pp. 36-68 in R.P. Amdam (ed.) *Management Education and Competitiveness: Europe, Japan and the United States* London: Routledge
- Horgan, J. (1997) *Sean Lemass: The Enigmatic Patriot* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan
- Jackson, J.A. (2004) “Research Policy and Practice in Ireland: A Historical Perspective” pp. 23-40 in M. MacLachlan and M. Caball (eds.) *Social Science in the Knowledge Society: Research Policy in Ireland* Dublin: Liffey Press
- Kennedy, K.A. (1993) “R.C. Geary and the ESRI” *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 225-245

- 
- Lee, J.J. (1989) *Ireland 1912-1985: Politics and Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- McNabb, P. (1964) "Social Structure" pp. 193-247 in J. Newman (ed.) *The Limerick Rural Survey* Tipperary: Muintir na Ti re Publications
- Meghen, P.J. (1961) "Community Studies in America and Ireland" *Rural Ireland*, 1961, pp. 48-67
- Meghen, P.J. (1963) "Sociological Survey-Work on Ireland" pp. 177-201 of J. Newman (ed.) *Organising the Community: Report and Papers of European Study Group on Organising Resources for Community Development, Gormanstown, Ireland 30<sup>th</sup> June -7<sup>th</sup> July 1962* Tipperary: Muintir na Tire, 1963
- Murray, P. (2009) *Facilitating the Future? US Aid, European Integration and Irish Industrial Viability, 1948-73* Dublin: UCD Press
- Newman, J. (1959) "For Success in Life We Must Face Facts" *The Landmark*, September 1959, p. 11
- Newman, J. (1964a) "Preface" pp. vii-ix in J. Newman (ed.) *The Limerick Rural Survey* Tipperary: Muintir na Tire Publications
- Newman, J. (1964b) "Social Provision and Rural Centrality" pp. 248-306 in J. Newman (ed.) *The Limerick Rural Survey* Tipperary: Muintir na Tire Publications
- Puirseil, N. (2008) "Catholic Stakhanovites? Religion and the Irish Labour Party, 1922-73" pp. 178-199 in F. Devine, F. Lane and N. Puirseil (eds.) *Essays in Irish Labour History: a festschrift for Elizabeth and John W. Boyle* Dublin: Irish Academic Press
- Robins, J. (1993) *Custom House People* Dublin: Institute of Public Administration
- Rouse, P. (2000) *Ireland's Own Soil: Government and Agriculture in Ireland, 1945 to 1965* Dublin: Irish Farmers' Journal
- Share, P., H. Tovey and M. Corcoran (2007) *A Sociology of Ireland Third Edition* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan
- Smith, L.P.F. and S. Healy (1996) *Farm Organisations in Ireland: A Century of Progress* Dublin: Four Courts Press
- Whelan, B. (2000) *Ireland and the Marshall Plan, 1947-57* Dublin: Four Courts Press
- Wills, C. (2007) *That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War* London: Faber and Faber