NEW EDITION of this market-leading textbook with a special focus on the 2018/2019 compulsory documents study Government, Economy and Society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949–89 including a FREE Documents Resource Book.

- Covers four popular syllabus topics, two of which students must select for study:
  - Movements for Political and Social Reform, 1870–1914
  - The Pursuit of Sovereignty and the Impact of Partition, 1912–49
  - Government, Economy and Society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949–89
  - Politics and Society in Northern Ireland, 1949–93
- NEW Summary Charts aid revision and essay-writing
- Exam-focused approach highlights key personalities and key concepts
- NEW Review Questions throughout each chapter and updated end-of-chapter exam questions reflect the latest exams, aid revision and encourage analysis

CASE STUDIES
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THE AUTHORS
Gerard Brockie and Raymond Walsh have extensive experience in teaching and examining at second level. They have collaborated in writing several history textbooks for both Junior and Senior cycles.
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The Research Study  
Choosing a Topic  
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Modern Ireland Documents Resource Book  
*Included with the textbook, for extra homework assignments and classwork*  
1. Introduction to the Documents-Based Question  
2. Answering the Documents-Based Question  
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Note: The topic ‘Government, Economy and Society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949–89’ will be prescribed for the compulsory documents study section of the Leaving Certificate Examination in 2018 and 2019. Questions will be based on the case studies in this topic and on a wider knowledge of the topic overall.
Course Outline

**Note**
The sections of this book, parts 1 to 4, cover Topics 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the syllabus. They will be labelled Topic 2, Topic 3, Topic 5 and Topic 6 on your exam paper.

**Topic 2: Movements for Political and Social Reform, 1870–1914**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSPECTIVE</th>
<th>ELEMENT</th>
<th>CASE STUDIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics and administration</td>
<td>The Home Rule movement:</td>
<td>The elections of 1885 and 1886: issues and outcomes</td>
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<td>• Origins</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Leadership – Butt, Parnell, Redmond</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Suffrage movement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The first Sinn Féin Party</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Irish Volunteers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unionism and the Ulster Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Society and economy</td>
<td>Land agitation and land reform</td>
<td>Dublin 1913 – strike and lockout</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unionisation of the working classes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The co-operative movement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Industrial development in Belfast: the shipyards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational reforms: schools and universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture and religion</td>
<td>The GAA</td>
<td>The GAA to 1891</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cultural revivals: the Gaelic League, the Anglo-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irish Literary Revival</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The consolidation of Catholic identity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Studying this topic, students should examine the roles of the key personalities listed on the next page. Use the checklist to make sure you have studied/revised each one.
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Students should be aware of the contribution of the following to the developments listed under the elements on the previous page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY PERSONALITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.S. Parnell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Redmond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Carson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Isabella Tod</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>James Connolly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Davitt</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Larkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Hyde</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>W.B. Yeats</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>KEY CONCEPTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Rule</td>
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<tr>
<td>separatism</td>
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<tr>
<td>militarism</td>
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<tr>
<td>socialism</td>
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<tr>
<td>feminism</td>
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<td>political agitation</td>
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<td>anglicisation/de-anglicisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irish Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anglo-Irish</td>
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<tr>
<td>suffragette</td>
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</table>

**Topic 3: The Pursuit of Sovereignty and the Impact of Partition, 1912–49**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSPECTIVE</th>
<th>ELEMENT</th>
<th>CASE STUDIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics and administration</td>
<td>The Third Home Rule Bill, 1912–14&lt;br&gt; The impact of World War I; the 1916 Rising; the rise of the Second Sinn Féin Party; the 1918 election; the War of Independence; partition, treaty and civil war&lt;br&gt; State building and the consolidation of democracy; from Free State to Republic&lt;br&gt; Northern Ireland – the Unionist Party in power&lt;br&gt; The impact of World War II, North and South&lt;br&gt; Anglo-Irish relations</td>
<td>The Treaty negotiations, October–December 1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society and economy</td>
<td>Impact of partition on economy and society; impact of world economic crisis; from free trade to protectionism; impact of World War II</td>
<td>Belfast during World War II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and religion</td>
<td>State and culture, North and South: language, religion and education; promotion of cultural identity</td>
<td>The Eucharistic Congress, 1932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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- Students must also identify and become familiar with the main concepts in each topic. These key concepts are listed on the next page and highlighted in the text.
### Topic 5: Politics and Society in Northern Ireland, 1949–93

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSPECTIVE</th>
<th>ELEMENT</th>
<th>CASE STUDIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics and administration</td>
<td>From Brookeborough to O’Neill; the civil rights movement; emergence of the provisional IRA; the fall of Stormont; direct rule; republican and loyalist terrorism; Sunningdale and power-sharing; the Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1985 The Republic – responses to the Troubles</td>
<td>The Sunningdale Agreement and Power-Sharing Executive, 1973–74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and religion</td>
<td>Religious affiliation and cultural identity; ecumenism; cultural responses to the Troubles.</td>
<td>The Apprentice Boys of Derry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY PERSONALITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terence O’Neill</td>
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<td>Conn and Patricia McCluskey</td>
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<td>Bernadette Devlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ian Paisley</td>
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<td>Brian Faulkner</td>
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<td>John Hume</td>
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<td>James Molyneaux</td>
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<td>Margaret Thatcher</td>
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<td>Gerry Adams</td>
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<td>Seamus Heaney</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY CONCEPTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Civil rights</td>
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<td>Gerrymandering</td>
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<td>Terrorism</td>
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<td>Power-sharing</td>
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<td>Sectarianism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bigotry</td>
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<td>Tolerance and intolerance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural traditions</td>
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<td>Cultural identity</td>
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<td>Ecumenism</td>
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<td>Propaganda</td>
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</table>

**Students should be aware of the contribution of the following to the developments listed under the elements on the previous page:**

**Topic 6: Government, Economy and Society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949–89**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSPECTIVE</th>
<th>ELEMENT</th>
<th>CASE STUDIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Politics and administration | Alternating governments and their economic and social policies, 1948–59
Economic planning; the move to free trade
Changes in education, health and social welfare provision; economic and social challenges of the 1970s and 1980s
Anglo-Irish relations, 1949–89
Increasing international involvement – the UN and the EEC | The First Programme for Economic Expansion, 1958–63 |
| Society and economy | Demographic change
Social change – status of women, housing, schools, amenities
Economic change and its social consequences; the impact of EEC membership | The impact of the EEC on fisheries |
| Culture and religion | Changing attitudes towards Irish language and culture:
the impact of television
the impact of Vatican II
the impact of the communications revolution | The impact of RTÉ, 1962–72 |
• Studying this topic, students should examine the roles of the key personalities listed below. Use the checklist to make sure you have studied/revised each one.
• Students must also identify and become familiar with the main concepts in each topic. These key concepts are listed below and highlighted in the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY PERSONALITIES</th>
<th>COVERED</th>
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<tr>
<td>T.K. Whitaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seán Lemass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archbishop J.C. McQuaid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Lynch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Haughey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garret Fitzgerald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sylvia Meehan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Robinson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breandán Ó hEithir</td>
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<td>Gay Byrne</td>
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<th>KEY CONCEPTS</th>
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<td>Economic planning</td>
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<td>Common Market</td>
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<td>Equality of opportunity</td>
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<td>Ecumenism</td>
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<td>Secularisation</td>
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<td>Balance of payments</td>
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<td>Pluralism</td>
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<td>Liberalisation</td>
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</table>

**Note**
The topic ‘Government, Economy and Society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949–89’ will be prescribed for the compulsory documents study section of the Leaving Certificate Examination in 2018 and 2019. Questions will be based on the case studies in this topic and on a wider knowledge of the topic overall.
19 From Lemass to Lynch, 1959–73

In this chapter you will learn about:

- Seán Lemass and Ireland’s economic development
- The First Programme for Economic Expansion (Case Study)
- The Irish Government’s response to the crisis in Northern Ireland
- Ireland and the EEC

From De Valera to Lemass

Following Fianna Fáil’s victory in the general election of March 1957, de Valera was elected Taoiseach at the age of seventy-five. In appointing his government ministers, he recognised the need for a new direction. Seán Lemass was appointed Minister for Industry and Commerce, and James Ryan was chosen as Minister for Finance instead of the more conservative Seán MacEntee.

In June 1959 de Valera resigned from the office of Taoiseach and contested the presidential election. He defeated the Fine Gael candidate, Seán MacEoin, and went on to serve two terms as President of Ireland until 1973. Seán Lemass was chosen unopposed by Fianna Fáil TDs as their new leader, and he succeeded de Valera as Taoiseach in June 1959.

Lemass was born in Dublin in 1899. He fought in the 1916 Rising and the War of Independence. He took the anti-Treaty side in the Civil War and became a founder member of Fianna Fáil in 1926. He served in successive Fianna Fáil Governments as Minister for Industry and Commerce and took charge of the Department of Supplies during the Emergency. Although he was sixty years of age on becoming Taoiseach, Lemass was to bring a new, dynamic approach to government and politics in Ireland. Nowhere was this more evident than in his management of the Irish economy.

The Irish Economy under Lemass: A Period of Progress and Prosperity

As Minister for Industry and Commerce during the 1930s and 1940s, Lemass had advocated and implemented a policy of economic self-sufficiency and protectionism. One of his great qualities was his openness to change, and by the 1950s he had come to realise that this policy was seriously impeding economic progress and that a new direction was urgently required.

Between 1959 and 1966 Lemass as Taoiseach was to preside over a period of unprecedented growth and expansion in the Irish economy. Although he provided the leadership and vision, Lemass was also greatly favoured both by external economic circumstances and by new thinking within the Irish civil service. The prosperity of the Lemass years was based on a plan for the development of the Irish economy known as the First Programme for Economic Expansion.
The First Programme for Economic Expansion, 1958–63

Although the implementation of the First Programme for Economic Expansion is inextricably linked with the name of Seán Lemass, its origins can be traced to the Second Inter-Party Government of 1954–7. The Minister for Finance in that Government, Gerald Sweetman, began to encourage a greater degree of foreign investment in the Irish economy. He allowed the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) to attract investment from abroad and provide tax concessions and grants for export-oriented industries.

However, Sweetman’s greatest contribution to economic progress was his appointment in 1956 of T.K. Whitaker as Secretary of the Department of Finance. Whitaker was a leading advocate of the need for radical change in order to lift Ireland out of the depression of the 1950s. In 1957 the Department of Finance, under Whitaker’s direction, prepared a comprehensive survey of the economy, including proposals for change and reform. Entitled Economic Development, it was completed in May 1958 and formed the basis for the subsequent White Paper outlining government policy, known as the Programme for Economic Expansion and published on 12 November 1958.

One of the strengths of Economic Development was its accurate analysis of the social and economic failures of the 1950s. The following extract from Economic Development (Document 1) vividly portrays Whitaker’s view of the state of Ireland in the 1950s.

**Document 1: The Condition of Ireland in the 1950s**

> After 35 years of native government people are asking whether we can achieve an acceptable degree of economic progress. The common talk among parents in the towns, as in rural Ireland, is of their children having to emigrate as soon as their education is completed in order to be sure of a reasonable livelihood. To the children themselves and to many already in employment, the jobs available at home look unattractive compared with those obtainable in such variety and so readily elsewhere. All this seems to be setting up a vicious circle – of increasing emigration, resulting in a smaller domestic market depleted of initiative and skill, and a reduced incentive, whether for Irishmen or foreigners, to undertake and organise the productive enterprises which alone can provide increased employment opportunities and higher living standards. There is, therefore, a real need at present to buttress confidence in the country’s future and to stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of the young in particular. A general resurgence of will may be helped by setting up targets of national endeavour which appear to be reasonably attainable and mutually consistent.

Source: Economic Development, Dublin: Department of Finance 1958

**Questions**

1. What question was being asked by people after thirty-five years of ‘native government’?
2. Why, according to parents in Ireland, did children have to emigrate?
3. What was identified by the author as a real need at that time?
4. Suggest what the author meant by the final sentence.
From Protection to Free Trade

One of the main arguments put forward in Economic Development and subsequently in the Programme for Economic Expansion was that the old policy of economic protectionism had failed and that it should be replaced with free trade. Protectionism, which had involved the imposition of taxes or tariffs on imported goods, had sheltered inefficient, uncompetitive industries and was a major barrier to economic progress. This emphasis on the shortcomings of protectionism and the need for competitiveness can be clearly seen in Documents 2 and 3, also taken from Economic Development.

Document 2: The Failure of Economic Protectionism

“...It is accepted on all sides that we have come to a critical and decisive point in our economic affairs. It is only too clear that the policies we have hitherto followed have not resulted in a viable economy. It is equally clear that we face economic decay and the collapse of our political independence if we elect to shelter permanently behind a protectionist blockade. For this would mean accepting that our costs must permanently be higher than those of other European countries, both in industry and in large sections of agriculture. That would be a policy of despair... The effect of any policy which entailed relatively low living standards here would be to sustain and stimulate the outflow of emigrants and make it impossible to preserve the 26 counties as an economic entity.

Source: Economic Development

Document 3: The Need to be Competitive

“If we do not expand our production on a competitive basis, we shall have failed to provide the economic basis for the political independence and material progress of the community. Indeed, if we expect to fail, it would be better to make an immediate move towards re-incorporation in the United Kingdom rather than to wait until our economic decadence became even more apparent. For these reasons the importance of the next five to ten years for the economic and political future of Ireland cannot be over-stressed. Policy must be re-shaped without regard to past views or commitments.”

Source: Economic Development

Questions

1. What, according to Document 2, had become ‘only too clear’?
2. Why, according to Document 3, did Ireland need to be competitive in its economic affairs?
3. Why were the following five to ten years of such importance for the Irish economy?

KEY CONCEPT – FREE TRADE

An economic system in which goods and services can move freely from one country to another without the imposition of taxes or tariffs on imported goods.

KEY CONCEPT – ECONOMIC PLANNING

The government decides economic goals and targets to be achieved over a set period of time.
Support for Whitaker’s Ideas

The radical proposals advocated by T.K. Whitaker in Economic Development were widely acclaimed at the time.

Document 4: In Praise of T.K. Whitaker

Mr Whitaker’s Economic Development is the most important single survey of the Irish economic problem since the Banking Commission Reports of 1938. Deservedly, it has aroused wide interest and elicited the highest commendations. The qualities of mind revealed in his work are those of one who seeks to stimulate fresh ideas and expose false ones; he deserves enthusiastic applause. . . . What he has done, generally, is to isolate the main problems; to show how previous attempts to solve them have failed; to argue that solutions are possible if sought in a realistic manner; and to convince that realism demands radical change in a great deal of the thinking associated with Irish economic development in the past . . . He is explicit that past policies, though given a fair trial, have failed to secure maximum economic development . . . Ireland has unused human and material resources, but there must be a change in the attitudes towards using them. More than anything else, new ideas count in the long run – provided they are the right ones.

Source: Patrick Lynch, ‘The Economics of Independence’, Dublin 1959

The Leadership of Seán Lemass

Whereas Whitaker’s Economic Development reflected the radical new thinking within the Department of Finance, it was Lemass who provided the political leadership and drive to bring about real change in the Irish economy. As Minister for Industry and Commerce from 1957 onwards and then as Taoiseach between 1959 and 1966 he presided over a period of economic growth and prosperity. Free trade and the encouragement of export-oriented industries were central to the new approach. This was a major theme in the First Programme for Economic Expansion, 1958–63. Lemass’s commitment to the development of strong, competitive industries within a European free trade area is evident in the following extract from the Programme (Document 5).

Document 5: A Commitment to Free Trade

Bearing in mind that the only scope for substantial expansion lies in the production of goods for sale on export markets, it is clear that there can be no place for weak or inefficient industries . . . Such industries place a burden on the economy generally and render other industries less able to meet foreign competition. Hence it must now be recognised that protection can no longer be relied upon as an automatic weapon of defence and it will be the policy in future in the case of new industries to confine the grant of tariff protection to cases in which it is clear that the industry will, after a short initial period, be able to survive without protection.


Questions

1. What praise did the author give to T.K. Whitaker’s Economic Development?
2. Why did T.K. Whitaker deserve enthusiastic applause?
3. What was T.K. Whitaker’s view of past policies?

Questions

1. Why could there be no place for weak and inefficient industries?
2. What, according to the author, would now have to be recognised?
3. What would be the future policy in the case of new industries?
New Directions in Government Investment

The First Programme for Economic Expansion was marked by a significant shift in government expenditure from social investment, such as housing, to productive investment in industry and agriculture. The Government set a target of 2 per cent growth per year for the Irish economy for the following five years. Export industries were given special support. The IDA received increased resources to attract foreign investment. Many British, American and European companies were attracted to Ireland by means of grants and tax concessions. The Government also invested in agriculture to encourage export-oriented production. However, the performance of the agricultural sector remained disappointing by comparison with industry.

The Impact of the First Programme for Economic Expansion

The First Programme for Economic Expansion was highly successful. Instead of the projected 2 per cent annual growth rate in the Irish economy, an actual rate of 4 per cent per year was achieved for the duration of the Programme. The turnaround in the economy was quick and dramatic. Between mid-1959 and mid-1960 alone, the volume of national output rose by 8 per cent, and the value of the country’s exports rose by nearly 35 per cent. The rapid expansion in Irish exports eliminated the balance of payments problems that had been a marked feature of the stagnant Irish economy earlier in the 1950s.

During the years of the First Programme for Economic Expansion, from 1958 to 1963, unemployment fell by one-third. This in turn led to a reduction in emigration, which fell by 40 per cent in the early 1960s. One of the most significant indications of the success of the Irish economy appeared in the 1966 census. It showed a population increase of 66,000 over the historically low figure recorded in 1961.

The Government itself emphasised the success of the First Programme in the introduction to The Second Programme for Economic Expansion, which was published in August 1963 (Document 6).
Lemass’s Minority Government 1961–5

In October 1961, in the middle of the First Programme for Economic Expansion, Lemass contested his first general election as Taoiseach. Despite the country’s economic progress, Fianna Fáil won only 70 seats. This represented a drop of eight since 1957 and left the party just short of an overall majority. Fine Gael increased its representation from 40 to 47 seats, and Labour also improved from 12 to 16 seats. However, the failure of Fine Gael and Labour to cooperate helped Fianna Fáil to return to government. With the support of independents, Lemass was re-elected as Taoiseach and led a minority government for the next four years. During this time, he continued to pursue the same progressive economic policies that had characterised his first two years in office.

In the early 1960s, therefore, Lemass and his ministers continued to use every opportunity to emphasise the need for competitiveness and openness to change. Addressing the Institute of Public Administration in Killarney in April 1962, he spoke about the challenges facing industry and agriculture (Document 7).

Document 6: The Government’s View on the Success of the First Programme for Economic Expansion

The Government’s First Programme for Economic Expansion was published in November 1958. It outlined the objectives of economic policy in agriculture, industry, tourism and the other main sectors of activity. It dealt specifically with the role of the State in promoting economic development, both directly through State investment and indirectly through the encouragement of private enterprise by grants, loans, tax incentives and other means.

The programme was introduced at a time of concern about Ireland’s capacity to progress economically at the rate needed to give all who wanted to live in Ireland an acceptable income. Its aim was to accelerate progress by strengthening public confidence, indicating the opportunities for development, and encouraging a progressive expansionist outlook.

We have reached the final year (1963) of the First Programme a much better off nation than in 1958. The rise in the community’s standard of living during the four years to 1962 is expressed by the increase of about 18½ per cent in GNP measured by 1958 prices. Over the period 1958–63, employment created in industries and services has come closer to offsetting the continuing and not unexpected movement of manpower from the land . . . The population is rising again, though slowly.

Source: The Second Programme for Economic Expansion, Dublin 1963

Questions

1. What were the three main areas of the economy identified for improvement in the Programme?
2. How did the state promote economic development?
3. How did the Programme set out to accelerate economic progress?

Document 7: Lemass Calls for Modernisation

The industrial producer whose equipment, organisation and sales methods may have been good enough in the conditions of a protected market and who fails to adjust to the new conditions with sufficient speed and thoroughness; the farmer who still thinks of farming only as a traditional way of life and not as a business enterprise in which the maximum utilisation of resources, modern productivity techniques and new methods of marketing his output are as essential as in any other kind of competitive business; the trade union leader who is still thinking in terms of the defensive campaign of the Victorian era and not of labour’s
The Contribution of Lemass to Economic Growth

Although the upsurge in international trade provided a favourable climate for Irish economic expansion, Lemass played a vital role in Ireland’s economic transformation. He showed his openness to change and new ideas by appointing young, energetic ministers to his Cabinet. These included his own son-in-law Charles J. Haughey, Donogh O’Malley, Patrick Hillery and Brian Lenihan. T.K. Whitaker, in an interview given in 1986, paid tribute to the huge role played by Lemass in Ireland’s economic recovery (Document 8).

Undoubtedly, the First Programme for Economic Expansion ushered in an era of prosperity and rising expectations. It was followed by a Second Programme for Economic Expansion, which covered the years 1963 to 1970. This had targets even more ambitious than those of the First Programme. Although the Second Programme was not as successful as its predecessor, growth rates remained high throughout the 1960s.

Questions
1. What type of industrial producer was criticised by Lemass?
2. What criticism does he make of old-fashioned farmers?
3. What type of trade union leader did he see as a barrier to progress?
4. Suggest what Lemass meant by the last phrase in the document (‘all these . . . dead past’).

Document 8: T.K. Whitaker’s Tribute to Seán Lemass

I must say it was a very pleasant surprise when the Fianna Fáil Government, committed so much to self-sufficiency and protection, abandoned it all so readily. There is no doubt that Lemass was the great moving dynamic spirit in all of this. There was grudging acquiescence, or recognition granted, that without Lemass’s drive and also probably without de Valera’s benevolent blessing, change would not have come about nearly as quickly. Lemass was a pragmatic nationalist, and I put the emphasis on the two words. He was a nationalist in the sense of wanting to see Ireland have a respectable place in the world, but I don’t think he was opposed to Dev’s traditionalist outlook. He simply had some impatience with it in so far as it might be a hindrance to change, the change he wanted. He didn’t have a programme of cultural change. His aim, as indeed my own, was focused on improving the economic and social scene.


Questions
1. In what respect did the Fianna Fáil Government surprise T.K. Whitaker?
2. What was Lemass’s contribution to bringing about economic change?
3. Whitaker described Lemass as a ‘pragmatic nationalist’. What do you think he meant by this?
Assessing the Success of the First Programme for Economic Expansion

The First Programme for Economic Expansion has a very special place in the history of twentieth-century Ireland. Unlike many other economic policies, it has, because of its success, attracted very little criticism. Most historians and economists regard it as a key turning point in Ireland’s economic development. The Programme resulted in a dramatic rise in employment and a fall in emigration. The downward population trends were reversed and the census of 1966 showed a population increase.

The First Programme signified a decisive departure from the policies of protection and self-sufficiency which had prevailed since the 1930s. The new approach was based on free trade, competition and foreign investment. While it was widely supported and praised, it was not without its critics. Some criticised the over-reliance on investment by foreign-based companies and the decline of traditional native industries. Lemass believed that all sections of society would benefit from the new prosperity, a view that was summed up by his phrase, ‘a rising tide lifts all boats’. However, deep social divisions remained, because not everyone reaped the benefits of economic progress. Nevertheless, the new economic prosperity of the 1960s was in sharp contrast to the economic depression of previous decades.

Emigration from Ireland, 1946–71

Websites

www.rte.ie/archives
Search on Google for ‘TK Whitaker’s economic plans RTÉ archive’ for an interview on the First Programme for Economic Expansion.

www.irishtimes.com
Search for ‘A plan to save the Irish economy Whitaker’ for an extract from TK Whitaker’s biography.

www.youtube.com
Search for ‘TK Whitaker Servant of the State’ for a documentary on Ireland’s economic expansion in the 1960s.
Case Study: Review Questions

1. The Origins of the Programme
   (a) Who was Minister for Finance in the Second Inter-Party Government 1954–7?
   (b) What was his view regarding foreign investment in the Irish economy?
   (c) Who was appointed Secretary of the Department of Finance in 1956?
   (d) What was contained in Economic Development (1958)?

2. The First Programme for Economic Expansion
   (a) When was the First Programme for Economic Expansion published?
   (b) What development during the 1950s did it accurately portray?
   (c) What question concerning the Irish economy was being asked widely at this time?
   (d) What did the Programme state about economic protection?

3. From Protection to Free Trade
   (a) How had inefficient companies fared under economic protection?
   (b) What effect could poor economic performance have on Irish self-government?
   (c) What is free trade?

4. The Leadership of Seán Lemass
   (a) What role had Lemass from 1959 onwards?
   (b) What was his attitude to the First Programme for Economic Expansion?
   (c) What was Lemass's view regarding the need for competitive industries in Ireland?
   (d) Did he believe in a European free trade area? Explain your answer.

5. The Impact of the First Programme for Economic Expansion
   (a) The Programme aimed for 2 per cent annual growth in the economy. What rate was achieved?
   (b) How did Irish exports fare during the years of the Programme?
   (c) Outline the effects of the Programme on unemployment and emigration.
   (d) Did people's standard of living improve? Explain your answer.

6. Strengths and Weaknesses of the First Programme for Economic Expansion
   (a) Why has the Programme attracted very little criticism?
   (b) What was shown in the census of 1966?
   (c) What did some commentators say about traditional native industries during the 1960s?
   (d) Did all sections of Irish society benefit from the new prosperity?

Documents-Based Questions

1. Comprehension
   (a) In Document 2, what was the author's view of economic protection?
   (b) What, according to Document 3, needed to be done over the following five to ten years?

2. Comparison
   (a) How do Documents 2 and 3 differ from Document 7 as sources for the historian?
   (b) Do you think that Document 7 supports the view of Lemass portrayed in Document 8? Explain your answer.

3. Criticism
   (a) Do you think that Document 6 is a biased or unbiased source? Explain your answer.
   (b) What does Document 8 tell us about T.K. Whitaker's view of Seán Lemass? Do you think that this is an accurate portrayal?

4. Contextualisation
   (a) Why did the Irish economy expand during the 1960s?
   (b) What role was played by Seán Lemass in bringing about economic change in Ireland?
Emerging from Isolation
Under the leadership of Lemass, Ireland was emerging from economic isolation. By attracting increased foreign investment and promoting export-oriented industries, the country was forging new economic links with the outside world, especially Europe and Britain. This outward-looking approach was also evident in Ireland’s greater participation in world affairs at this time and in its efforts to establish better relations with the Northern Ireland Government.

Closer Economic Links with Europe and Britain
Lemass believed that Ireland’s future prosperity depended on closer ties with Europe. This pro-European outlook was clearly seen in Ireland’s application to join the European Economic Community (EEC), which had been founded in 1957. Lemass believed that a small nation like Ireland would benefit greatly from closer economic ties with Europe. Ireland’s application to join the EEC was linked with the British application. Both were vetoed by the French President, Charles de Gaulle, in January 1963. This had the effect of delaying Irish entry to the EEC for ten years.

In the meantime, Lemass promoted closer economic ties with Ireland’s leading trading partner, Great Britain. In 1965 he and the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, signed the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Area Agreement (AIFTAA). Both countries agreed to gradually reduce tariffs on each other’s imports and abolish them completely by 1975. The gradual establishment of free trade between the two countries was another milestone in Ireland’s emergence from economic isolation.

Ireland and the United Nations
While the Irish Government was attempting to forge closer links with Britain and Europe, it was also expanding the country’s role in international affairs by participation in the United Nations (UN).

Since joining the UN in 1955, Ireland had established an important role within the organisation. Under the direction of Frank Aiken, Minister for External Affairs, Ireland played an important role in formulating UN policies on decolonisation, disarmament and international peacekeeping. In 1960 the Irish ambassador to the UN, F.H. Boland, was President of the General Assembly.

Ireland’s most significant contribution to the UN was in the area of peacekeeping. The first major involvement of the Irish Army in foreign peacekeeping duties took place in the Congo, in Africa, between 1960 and 1964. An Irish diplomat, Conor Cruise O’Brien, was UN representative in the province of Katanga in the Congo. On 9 November 1960 the Irish troops suffered their greatest loss when ten soldiers were killed in the Niemba ambush. This prompted widespread shock at home, but many people also felt great pride that Irishmen had given their lives in the cause of international peace. In all, twenty-six Irish soldiers were to die in the Congo operation between 1960 and 1964. Despite these casualties, Ireland continued to play a major role in UN peacekeeping, participating in seven out of twelve operations between 1960 and 1970.

As well as contributing to international peacekeeping operations, the Government sought to forge new relationships closer to home. Attempts were made to begin a process of dialogue with the Unionist Government of Northern Ireland.
The Lemass–O’Neill Talks
In his approach to Northern Ireland, Lemass encouraged co-operation between north and south in non-political areas such as tourism and fisheries. His approach marked a departure from the old anti-partition outlook of earlier governments. As long as the hardline unionist Lord Brookeborough remained Prime Minister, there was little hope of better relations between the two governments. However, in 1963 Brookeborough retired and was replaced by a more moderate Unionist Party leader, Terence O’Neill.

O’Neill invited Lemass to a meeting in Belfast on 14 January 1965. This was a landmark in north–south relations. Although reaction in the north was mixed, the meeting was generally welcomed in the south as a possible new beginning. A month later O’Neill visited Dublin. After this exchange of visits, other ministers from both governments met to discuss co-operation in areas of mutual concern such as agriculture, tourism and trade.

However, these first tentative steps towards greater co-operation were soon to be overtaken by the emergence of serious conflict in Northern Ireland from 1968 onwards.

The General Election of 1965
We have seen how Lemass presided over a period of economic expansion and greater international involvement. It was not surprising, therefore, that Fianna Fáil chose the slogan ‘Let Lemass Lead On’ for the 1965 general election campaign. As well as having a strong record of economic achievement, Lemass and Fianna Fáil were fortunate in facing a divided opposition.

The Labour Party, under Brendan Corish, was becoming more socialist in outlook. It increased its number of Dáil seats from 16 to 22. However, Labour’s refusal to enter a coalition with Fine Gael helped Fianna Fáil. Fianna Fáil under Lemass increased its number of seats from 70 to 72 and emerged with an overall majority. This was a clear
vindication of the successful economic policies pursued by the Lemass Government over the previous number of years.

In April 1966 Seán Lemass as Taoiseach, together with Éamon de Valera as President, presided over the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter Rising of 1916. In the presidential election held the following June, de Valera, the Fianna Fáil candidate and outgoing President, was re-elected for a second term of office. He narrowly defeated the Fine Gael candidate, T.F. O’Higgins.

The End of the Lemass Era
Owing to increasing ill health, Seán Lemass retired in November 1966. During his period as Taoiseach, between 1959 and 1966, he had made a remarkable impact on the Irish economy and on Irish society in general. He brought a new, pragmatic managerial style to the Irish economy. In encouraging competitiveness and openness to change, he moved the Irish economy away from the stagnation of the past. Although remaining strongly nationalist, he also believed that Ireland’s future would be best served by developing closer links with the outside world.

Lemass believed firmly in the view that ‘a rising tide lifts all boats’. By this he meant that economic progress would benefit everybody in society. However, while Ireland did experience a period of unprecedented economic growth during the Lemass years, glaring inequalities between rich and poor persisted. The emergence of a more materialistic consumer society also threatened to undermine traditional beliefs and values.

The resignation of Lemass marked the end of an era in Irish politics. A new, younger generation of politicians was now emerging to take over from those who had fought in the struggle for independence.

Review Questions
1. How did Lemass try to foster closer economic links with Britain and Europe?
2. What was Ireland’s most significant contribution to the United Nations?
3. What important step was taken by Lemass to foster better relations between north and south?
4. Did all sections of society share in the economic progress of the Lemass era?

Jack Lynch becomes Taoiseach
Following the resignation of Seán Lemass in November 1966, an intense leadership battle occurred within Fianna Fáil. Three ministers in particular competed to succeed Lemass – Neil Blaney, George Colley and Charles Haughey. In order to prevent a bitter contest between the favourite candidates, Colley and Haughey, Jack Lynch, the Minister for Finance, was put forward as a compromise choice. Blaney and Haughey then withdrew, and in a ballot by Fianna Fáil TDs, Lynch defeated Colley by 51 votes to 19.

Jack Lynch was born in Cork in 1917. After a short career in the civil service, he studied law and became a barrister. He was a brilliant sportsman, winning All-Ireland medals in both hurling and football for his native Cork. He was elected to the Dáil as a Fianna Fáil TD in 1948 and served as a Cabinet minister under both Éamon de Valera and Seán Lemass. In 1965, following the retirement of James Ryan, Lemass appointed him Minister for Finance.

As Taoiseach, Lynch always gave the impression that he had not sought the position but had accepted it in order to
serve his party and the country. He related very well to ordinary people and was especially popular in his native Cork. His first real test as leader of Fianna Fáil came with the general election of June 1969.

The 1969 General Election

The general election of June 1969 was keenly contested. Fianna Fáil campaigned on its record; it claimed that it provided strong single-party government and warned the electorate against the dangers of coalitions. Fine Gael fought its first election campaign with Liam Cosgrave as leader.

It was the Labour Party under Brendan Corish, however, that dominated the campaign. The party had moved considerably to the left, a development summed up in its slogan ‘The Seventies Will Be Socialist’, and it completely ruled out participation in a coalition government. Labour’s new socialist agenda was associated with a group of intellectuals that included Conor Cruise O’Brien, Justin Keating and David Thornley. Fianna Fáil exploited the Labour Party’s move to the left by means of a ‘red scare’ campaign that portrayed Labour as a communist party. In rural Ireland particularly, Fianna Fáil candidates accused the Labour Party of threatening to take land from inefficient farmers.

Jack Lynch and Fianna Fáil ran an American-style presidential campaign. Lynch toured the country and campaigned in person in an effort to win votes. Contrary to expectations, Fianna Fáil, with 75 seats, secured an overall majority. The failure of Fine Gael and Labour to cooperate contributed to Fianna Fáil’s success. Fine Gael increased its representation in the Dáil by three seats to 50. The election was a big disappointment for the Labour Party, which won 18 seats, a loss of four since the previous election. Gains made in Dublin by the Labour Party were more than offset by serious losses in the country, where Fianna Fáil’s ‘red scare’ tactics had worked.

Victory in the 1969 general election strengthened the position of Jack Lynch, both as Taoiseach and leader of Fianna Fáil. He could now look forward to a comfortable period in office. However, soon after the election a new crisis erupted in Northern Ireland that was to have a dramatic impact on Lynch’s Government.

Jack Lynch and the Crisis in Northern Ireland

In August 1969 serious rioting broke out in Belfast and Derry. Since a civil rights march had ended in violence in Derry in October 1968, events in Northern Ireland had been moving at a fast pace.
Civil rights groups demanded justice and equal rights for the minority Catholic community. The Prime Minister, Terence O’Neill, made certain concessions but was under pressure from the Rev. Ian Paisley and from extreme unionists in his own party not to introduce reforms. Jack Lynch and the Government in the Republic advised the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, to take charge of the situation in Northern Ireland and insist on the implementation of reforms.

However, when violence appeared to be getting out of control in August 1969, Wilson had to send the British Army into Northern Ireland. With nationalists in Belfast and Derry under attack from the RUC and Protestant loyalists, the Irish Government came under pressure to intervene. People in the Republic could see the violent scenes on the television every night. The arrival of Catholic families who had been burned out of their homes in Belfast evoked much sympathy in the south.

In this atmosphere of heightened emotions, Lynch decided to address the nation on Wednesday 13 August. He declared that partition was at the root of the Northern Ireland problem and criticised the Unionist Government for its treatment of the Catholic minority. He also promised to send troops to border areas to set up field hospitals for people who might want to flee from Northern Ireland. However, he stopped short of direct intervention.

Although he declared that ‘the Irish Government can no longer stand by and see innocent people injured and perhaps worse’, Lynch had no intention of sending Irish troops over the border. To have done so could have provoked civil war in Ireland and conflict between Ireland and Great Britain. Instead, Lynch, who strongly supported the peaceful unification of Ireland, concentrated on two main approaches to the problem of Northern Ireland. First, he continued to advise the British Government to introduce reforms there. Second, he set out to do everything in his power to prevent the Troubles in Northern Ireland from spilling over into the south and destabilising the government and society of the Republic. This approach was soon to be challenged not only within the Fianna Fáil party itself but also by members of Lynch’s own Government.

The Arms Crisis, 1970

Within the Fianna Fáil Government in 1969, there were strong differences of opinion on Northern Ireland. Whereas Jack Lynch and a majority of the Cabinet held moderate views, some ministers were of a strongly republican outlook. These included the Donegal TD Neil Blaney, who was Minister for Agriculture, and two Dublin-based ministers, Kevin Boland and Charles Haughey. Both Blaney and Haughey had hoped to succeed Lemass as leader of Fianna Fáil, but the success of Lynch in the 1969 general election strengthened his position in the party and he appeared set to remain leader for a long time. Thus, personal resentment against Lynch was mixed with disagreement over the Government’s Northern Ireland policy.

On 6 May 1970 there was profound shock when news broke that Lynch had dismissed two of his senior ministers, Blaney and Haughey. The official statement said that it was because of their failure to support government policy on
Northern Ireland. Another minister, Kevin Boland, resigned out of sympathy with Blaney and Haughey. The real reason for the dismissals, however, was an accusation that both Blaney and Haughey were using public money to import arms and ammunition from abroad for the use of republicans in Northern Ireland. Lynch finally acted when the leader of Fine Gael, Liam Cosgrave, came to him with information concerning this accusation.

Ireland Joins the European Economic Community

On 28 May Blaney and Haughey were arrested and charged with planning to import arms and ammunition illegally into the state. However, both former ministers were found not guilty of the charges. In July the case against Blaney was dismissed, and in October Haughey was acquitted by a jury. Haughey then called on Lynch to resign, but Lynch refused and secured a vote of confidence in the Dáil.

The Arms Crisis had a deep long-term impact on Fianna Fáil. Blaney and Boland left the party and set up their own political organisations. Haughey chose to remain within Fianna Fáil, however, and to work his way back slowly to a prominent position within the party. The 1970 Fianna Fáil Ard-Fheis witnessed scenes of violent disagreement between the supporters of Lynch and his more republican opponents. One of Lynch’s main defenders was the Minister for External Affairs, Dr Patrick Hillery, who said that the rebellious minority would not be allowed to take over Fianna Fáil.

Hillery also played a prominent role in the most significant economic initiative taken by the Government of Jack Lynch – Irish entry into the European Economic Community (EEC).

In 1969 Georges Pompidou, Charles de Gaulle’s successor as President of France, withdrew French objections to British entry into the European Economic Community (EEC). Britain and Ireland immediately applied once again to join. Under the leadership of the Minister for External Affairs, Dr Patrick Hillery, the Irish negotiating team secured very favourable terms for the country.

A referendum was called for May 1972 on the issue of joining the EEC. Both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael were strongly in favour, pointing to the economic advantages of membership. So too were the farmers’ organisations, as Irish farmers expected to do very well under the Common Agricultural Policy of the EEC.

The Labour Party campaigned against Irish entry, arguing that jobs could be lost in traditional industries and that the...
EEC in Brussels would have too great a say in Irish affairs. When the referendum took place, a huge majority of 83 per cent voted in favour of joining the EEC. This decision by the people confirmed the Treaty of Accession, which had been signed by Jack Lynch and Patrick Hillery in January 1972. Ireland would become a full member of the EEC on 1 January 1973.

The End of an Era

Having successfully organised Irish entry into the EEC, Jack Lynch was about to seek the verdict of the people on his Government in a general election. Despite success in joining the EEC, the Fianna Fáil Government was beset by difficulties at home. The deep divisions in the party during and after the Arms Crisis made it appear divided in the eyes of voters. Its opponents could claim that some sections of Fianna Fáil were sympathetic to the IRA at a time when increasing violence in Northern Ireland was alarming most people in the Republic. Indeed, Dublin was to experience the direct impact of the northern Troubles during 1972. Following the shootings in Derry on Bloody Sunday, 30 January 1972, violent scenes took place in Dublin, including the burning of the British Embassy. In December two people were killed by bombs in the centre of Dublin city.

In an effort to gain popularity in the country, the Government introduced a generous budget in 1972. As unemployment increased from 6.7 per cent in 1968 to 8.1 per cent by 1972, the Minister for Finance, George Colley, refused to take corrective measures. Instead, for the first time since the foundation of the state, he failed to balance the current budget and borrowed to make up the difference between taxation and expenditure.

Despite attempting to win over the electorate, however, the Government faced a severe challenge in the general election of February 1973. For the first time in sixteen years, Fianna Fáil’s main political opponents, Fine Gael and Labour, joined forces in an attempt to remove them from power.

Review Questions

1. Who succeeded Lemass as Taoiseach in 1966?
2. What two approaches were taken by Jack Lynch to the Troubles in Northern Ireland?
3. Why did Lynch dismiss two of his ministers in May 1970?
4. What development took place on 1 January 1973?
5. State two difficulties faced by the Fianna Fáil Government in the early 1970s.

KEY PERSONALITY

T.K. WHITAKER (1916–)

T.K. Whitaker – public servant and economist – was born in Rostrevor, Co. Down, in 1916 and educated at CBS Drogheda. He obtained a BA degree in mathematics, economics and Celtic studies and later went on to achieve a master’s degree in economics from London University. He entered the civil service in 1934 and four years later was attached to the Department of Finance. He rose rapidly within the ranks of the civil service, becoming Secretary of the Department of Finance in 1956.

Whitaker took up his new position as Secretary of the Department of Finance at a time of deep economic gloom and depression in the country. He believed that economic protectionism should end and that Irish agriculture and
industry should become more competitive in a free-market system. He also believed that jobs would have to be created by a shift from agriculture to industry and services. He advocated long-term planning to assist the development of the Irish economy.

Whitaker formed a team of officials within the Department of Finance who together carried out a detailed survey of the Irish economy. He set out his findings and proposals in a paper known as *Economic Development*. His proposals for the Irish economy were accepted by the Government and formed the basis of the First Programme for Economic Expansion, adopted in November 1958. This Programme is widely regarded as a landmark in the development of the Irish economy, resulting in unprecedented growth rates, rising employment, and a population increase. Whereas the dynamic T.K. Whitaker provided the plan for economic progress, it was the political drive of Seán Lemass as Taoiseach that transformed the plan into reality. Whitaker also played a key role in organising the historic meetings between Lemass and the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Terence O’Neill, in 1965. He retired from the Department of Finance in 1969.

Whitaker was Governor of the Central Bank from 1969 until 1976, and a senator from 1977 to 1982. Other appointments in an illustrious career included President of the Economic and Social Research Institute, Chairman of Bord na Gaeilge and Chancellor of the National University.

Seán Lemass was born in Dublin on 15 July 1899 and educated by the Christian Brothers at O'Connell School. He joined the Irish Volunteers in 1914 and fought in the GPO during the Easter Rising of 1916 and fought subsequently in the War of Independence.

He opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) and was a member of the Four Courts garrison at the outset of the Civil War. He was elected to Dáil Éireann in 1924, but in line with Sinn Féin policy he refused to take his seat in the Dáil.

Lemass was a pragmatist who, like Éamon de Valera, believed that Sinn Féin should come in from the political wilderness. He followed de Valera in leaving Sinn Féin and was a founder member of Fianna Fáil in May 1926. Together with Gerald Boland, he played a key role in building up the organisation of the new party at local constituency level. When Fianna Fáil entered the Dáil in 1927, Lemass took a leading part in opposing the Cumann na nGaedheal Government. He famously described Fianna Fáil in March 1928 as ‘a slightly constitutional party’.

Following the 1932 general election, Fianna Fáil entered Government, and Lemass was appointed Minister for Industry and Commerce. At this time he advocated the old Sinn Féin policy of economic self-sufficiency and protectionism. During the 1930s he put in place a programme of tariff protection for Irish industry and state intervention to develop the country's resources. He established a number of semi-state bodies, including Bord na Móna, Aer Lingus and Irish Shipping. Despite the depression of the 1930s, Lemass’s achievement in generating industrial growth was remarkable.

During World War II Lemass was appointed Minister for Supplies. He had responsibility for rationing and controlling the distribution of limited resources such as petrol and foodstuffs. His energy, pragmatism and organisational ability made him well suited to this task.

During the 1950s Lemass was again appointed Minister for Industry and Commerce in the de Valera governments of 1951–4 and 1957–9. He became increasingly convinced of the need for Irish industry to become competitive in a
market economy based on free trade. He believed that the protectionist policies of the past were in need of radical review. Lemass strongly supported the economic policy proposed by T.K. Whitaker, Secretary of the Department of Finance. The Government adopted Whitaker’s proposals in November 1958 in the First Programme for Economic Expansion. Lemass provided the political will to implement this Programme when he succeeded de Valera as Taoiseach and leader of Fianna Fáil in 1959.

The First Programme for Economic Expansion was a watershed in the development of the Irish economy. It set targets for growth and attracted foreign industries to Ireland by means of generous grants and tax concessions. The results were spectacular: output increased by almost one-quarter, unemployment fell by one-third, and emigration declined sharply. Lemass believed that Irish industry should become more competitive within Europe, and he applied for Irish membership of the EEC in 1961, as part of a joint application with Britain. However, as a result of France’s opposition to Britain’s application for membership, Ireland did not become a member of the EEC until 1973.

Nevertheless, Lemass sought to maximise Ireland’s economic advantage abroad by joining the European Free Trade Association and concluding an Anglo-Irish Trade Agreement in 1965.

Lemass also brought new thinking to the problem of Northern Ireland. In 1965 he had two historic meetings with the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Captain Terence O’Neill. These meetings indicated a willingness to develop a more open relationship between the two governments, north and south.

As Taoiseach from 1959 to 1966, Lemass presided over a period of unprecedented economic and social change in Ireland. A significant increase in prosperity was accompanied by the introduction of far-reaching social policies, including free secondary education. His most successful government was the minority Fianna Fáil Government from 1961 to 1965. Lemass retired as Taoiseach and leader of Fianna Fáil in November 1966 and was succeeded by Jack Lynch.

Ordinary Level Questions
1. Read the following account of the publication of the First Programme for Economic Expansion, and answer the questions that follow.

   The atmosphere (inside Leinster House) was aglow with unusual anticipation as Finance Secretary T. Kenneth Whitaker received congratulations on a project that had taken almost two years to complete. That afternoon, members of the Dáil had received copies of a White Paper entitled *Programme for Economic Expansion*. This White Paper was based on *Economic Development*, a 250-page study of the Irish economy which Whitaker had initiated and supervised. To mark the occasion, the Taoiseach, Éamon de Valera, had invited Whitaker to attend the parliamentary session. As members of the Dáil shook his hand, Whitaker’s thoughts drifted back to 1956 when he had begun work on the study that was to revolutionise Ireland’s economic thinking. Twenty-eight years later, Whitaker recalled his achievement with characteristic understatement. ‘I knew I could put together a team of willing collaborators who would be very able,’ he said. ‘I knew there were people I could touch who would be glad of a release from the rather narrow confines of their own responsibilities. We had economists. In the Finance Department itself I brought in as many good officers as I could, no matter what their rank. One must try to transcend the hierarchical system.’


   (a) Describe the scene outside Leinster House on 11 November 1958.

   (b) Why was T.K. Whitaker being congratulated?

   (c) What was the new Programme based on?

   (d) How did the Taoiseach, Éamon de Valera, mark the occasion?

   (e) What had begun in 1958?

   (f) Explain Whitaker’s recollections of the events twenty-eight years later.
2. What was contained in the First Programme for Economic Expansion?

3. Examine carefully the illustrations covering industrial expansion in the 1960s on page 281 and answer the following questions.
   (a) Choose an example of highly skilled work. Would you think products such as this were likely to be exported? Explain your answer.
   (b) Pick out an example of a native Irish product that was presented in a modern way.
   (c) Can you identify examples of modern machinery in the illustrations? What does this tell you about the companies involved?
   (d) Would you regard these pictures as unbiased sources? Explain your answer.

4. Write a short paragraph on Ireland’s involvement in the United Nations

5. How did Seán Lemass attempt to improve relations with Northern Ireland?


7. What did Seán Lemass achieve as Taoiseach?

8. What were Jack Lynch’s achievements as Taoiseach?

**Higher Level Questions**

1. What impact did the First Programme for Economic Expansion have on the Irish economy and society?

2. What was the contribution of T.K. Whitaker to economic change in Ireland?

3. How effective was Jack Lynch as Taoiseach in terms of domestic and foreign policy between 1966 and 1973?

4. Who faced the greater challenges as Taoiseach, Seán Lemass or Jack Lynch? Argue your case, referring to both.

5. Read the following criticism of Irish society in 1966 that was made by Patrick Lynch, a lecturer in economics in University College, Dublin and Chairman of Aer Lingus. Then answer the questions that follow.

   **We would best honour 1916 by being honest with ourselves and in our attitudes towards 1916. As a people we have deliberately chosen not to realise many of the ideals of 1916. Neither Pearse nor Connolly contemplated a middle-class society of the kind that we have created over the last fifty years. Socially, we have become a conservative, self-satisfied people. To judge from the pictures in the evening papers, our middle class, which sets standards for all of us, is more concerned to be seen publicly rejoicing in material affluence than with idealisms of any kind.**


   (a) How would the people alive in 1966 best honour 1916, according to the speaker?
   (b) What, in your view, were the ideals of 1916 which were not realised by 1966?
   (c) How did Lynch characterise Irish society of the 1960s in social terms?
   (d) In his view, what was the main concern of the middle class?
   (e) Would you agree that this passage accurately points to some of the weaknesses of Irish society during the Lemass years? Explain your answer.
A Greater Sense of Freedom

The economic progress witnessed in Ireland during the 1960s was accompanied by extensive changes throughout society. To understand these changes, it is important to appreciate the significance of greater wealth throughout the community. In effect, higher incomes allowed ordinary people a greater degree of choice in their lives. They could socialise more, buy more consumer goods and form their own opinions on the basis of information received from the mass media, particularly from the newly established television service.

As more and more people found jobs in towns and cities, many of the traditional restrictions on their lifestyles were weakened. In country areas it was easier for parents and other older members of the community to monitor the lifestyle of the young. The greater anonymity of towns and cities meant greater freedom for the youth of the 1960s.

In addition to the growing affluence and urbanisation of Irish society during the 1960s, other strong forces were at work and were leading to greater choice and freedom for the individual. One of the most important of these was the radical transformation in education.

Education: A Period of Major Change

Glaring inadequacies in the Irish education system were revealed in an OECD report entitled *Investment in Education*, which was published in 1965. Using detailed statistics, the authors of the report highlighted a lack of resources in education and unequal provision throughout the country. There were huge disparities in participation between different regions in the country and between different social classes. The report also drew a strong link between economic progress and the availability of an educated workforce.

Reform in education became a priority for the Fianna Fáil Governments of both Seán Lemass and Jack Lynch. Under a number of young and energetic ministers, the
Department of Education assumed a central role in the direction and planning of educational policy. It made building grants available to schools and took steps to modernise the curriculum.

Donogh O’Malley, the minister who introduced free post-primary education.

A new community school built after the introduction of free education.

The most significant change of all was the introduction of free post-primary education in 1967. This was the scheme of the Minister for Education, Donogh O’Malley. Most secondary schools entered the Free Education Scheme and no longer charged fees to their pupils. Although the number of pupils in second-level schools had been increasing steadily during the 1960s, the introduction of free education led to a huge expansion in the sector. Enrolment in post-primary schools rose from 148,000 in 1966–7 to 185,000 in 1968–9, and by 1974 it had reached a figure of 239,000.

Kevin Street College of Technology in Dublin, which was modernised during the late 1960s.

Some significant reforms also took place in third-level education. New regional technical colleges (RTCs) established during these years offered a more practical and technological education than the traditional universities. In 1968 grants for third-level education were introduced for students whose parents’ income was below a certain level. As with the introduction of free second-level education, the provision of university grants contributed to greater educational access in the years ahead.

The reforms in education led to the emergence of a more critical and questioning society in Ireland. This trend was also powerfully influenced by major reforms in the Catholic Church.

During the 1960s the state assumed a much more active role in education and challenged the control of the churches. This was clearly seen in the establishment of new, state-owned schools, known as community schools. These were set up in areas where there was a shortage of second-level schools and were usually co-educational and multi-denominational.

Number of Students Taking the Leaving Certificate, 1951–72

This concept means that everyone, regardless of background, religion or race, will be given the same chance to succeed in life. It relates particularly to the areas of justice, employment and education.

KEY CONCEPT – EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Because the population of the Republic of Ireland was about 95 per cent Catholic, any changes in that Church were bound to have a significant impact on Irish society. As we saw in Chapter 18, the Catholic Church in Ireland remained deeply conservative throughout the 1950s. The last major public event of the traditional Catholic Church took place in the Patrician Year of 1961. This was the 1,500th anniversary of the death of St Patrick, and it was marked by the arrival of a papal legate and splendid ceremonies throughout the country. However, by then plans were in progress in Rome that would radically change the role of the Catholic Church in Irish society.

In 1958 the conservative Pope Pius XII died and was replaced by Pope John XXIII. To the surprise of many, this elderly Pope turned out to be one of the most radical in history. He believed that the Catholic Church needed to change and reform, and he called the Second Vatican Council (1962–5) to examine in detail the condition of the Church and to plan its role in the future.

The Second Vatican Council, or Vatican II, ordered the most detailed and thorough reform in the Church since the Council of Trent four hundred years previously. It stressed that the Church consisted of the whole people of God, not just bishops, priests and nuns. It placed a new emphasis on the role of lay people. It ordered that the Mass be said in the vernacular, or spoken, languages of the people, instead of in Latin. Perhaps the most radical departure initiated by Vatican II was in its approach to other Christians. They were now to be regarded as brothers and sisters in Christ and treated with respect. This approach, known as ecumenism, stresses the similarities between different Christian faiths rather than their differences. The Council expressed the hope that all Christians would eventually become united in a spirit of peace and friendship.

KEY CONCEPT – ECUMENISM

This movement emphasises the common beliefs and traditions rather than the differences between the various Christian churches and works for eventual unity among Christians.

Vatican II and the Irish Church

These changes were to have a profound effect on the Catholic Church in Ireland. As lay people grew more confident and better educated, they began to criticise bishops and priests if they disagreed with them. This was practically unheard of in Ireland before the 1960s. For the first time, priests, and later bishops, appeared on radio and television programmes to discuss religious issues with lay people. The downgrading of the Latin language would also affect the education system. Up to the 1960s knowledge of Latin was required for entry to most faculties in the universities. After this requirement was removed, most schools replaced Latin with modern continental European languages.

The decree of Vatican II on ecumenism led to better relations between the Catholic and Protestant churches in Ireland. Before this, the Catholic Church had very strict rules forbidding its members from attending services in Protestant churches. For example, when Douglas Hyde, a member of the Church of Ireland and the first President of Ireland, died in 1949, members of the Irish Government had to stand outside St Patrick’s Cathedral to pay their respects. During the 1960s these old attitudes changed. Catholics and Protestants were allowed to visit each other’s churches and
to conduct joint ecumenical services. These services took place especially during Church Unity Week between 18 and 25 January each year. The Catholic Church also relaxed its strict rules concerning mixed marriages, i.e. marriage between Catholics and members of other religions.

**Challenges for the Catholic Church**

Despite the hope created by the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church faced certain difficulties during the 1960s. Higher incomes, greater job opportunities and more personal freedom led to a decline in the number of vocations to the priesthood and religious life from the middle of the 1960s onwards. Certain bishops and priests were slow to implement reforms at local level. In Ireland, as elsewhere in the Western world, controversy arose when Pope Paul VI (1963–78) issued *Humanae Vitae* in July 1968. This was a papal encyclical that condemned artificial methods of birth control. It sparked a lively debate among Catholics in Ireland as well as in other countries, with many Catholics rejecting the Pope's teaching on this matter. The traditional, authoritarian, united Catholic Church in Ireland had become a feature of the past.

**Review Questions**

1. How did greater wealth in the 1960s impact on people's lifestyles?
2. What was the most significant change in the provision of secondary education?
3. State two reforms that took place in third-level education during the 1960s.
4. State two ways in which the Second Vatican Council affected Ireland.

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**Case Study: The Impact of RTÉ, 1962–72**

**Planning a New Television Service**

In 1958 the Government set up a commission to examine the possibility of establishing an Irish television service. At that time television was only available on the east coast, where people could tune in to British television stations. The broadcasting commission issued a favourable report in May 1959, and in 1960 the Government passed the Broadcasting Authority Act. The Act set up the Radio Éireann Authority, which had power to operate both radio and television services. Overall control remained in the hands of the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs. The new television station was named Telefís Éireann. In 1966 the radio and television stations were renamed Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ).

**Opening Night**

On 31 December 1961 the new Irish television service broadcast for the first time (Document 1).
Broadening Horizons

After the successful opening night of Telefís Éireann, life in Ireland would never be the same again. One of the immediate effects of television was to bring distant persons and places into the living rooms of ordinary people. The religious affairs series *Radharc* was a good example of this. The programme won several awards and made a number of visits to missions in Africa and South America. Before this, most Irish people could only read about life in these countries. Now, through the medium of television, their horizons were broadened, and they could actually see what conditions were like for their fellow human beings in the developing world. One of the presenters of *Radharc*, Fr Joseph Dunn, has written of his experiences of film-making in Africa (Document 2).

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**Document 1: The Inauguration of Telefís Éireann**

“...Irish television went on the air for the first time on the last, cold, night of December 1961. At Donnybrook, the celebrities picked their way through pools of mud to reach the half-completed studio building. In O’Connell Street, outside-broadcast cameras panned across the crowds near the Gresham Hotel. Inside the hotel, ‘a tremendous party’ was in progress under the observing eyes of another pair of cameras. The festivities in O’Connell Street were ‘live’ and punctuated an evening’s transmission of otherwise largely recorded material. The station opened with the Anthem at seven o’clock.

President Éamon de Valera inaugurated the service. The Taoiseach, Seán Lemass, and the Minister, Michael Hilliard, ‘also spoke’. The Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev. Dr McQuaid, gave Benediction. The actors added their imprimatur: Siobhán McKenna and Micheál Mac Liammóir. The show was on. Jimmy O’Dea, Maureen Potter, Mary O’Hara, Dermot O’Brien’s Céili Band gave a céad mile fáilte. The Newsroom contributed film of major events throughout the country. The three women continuity announcers led a tour to ‘Meet the People’. Every so often the 300,000 audience at 35,000 sets were whisked back to the Gresham to see the spree. To mark the occasion, there were no advertisements.

It was half past midnight before the little white dot shimmied from the screen. As the floor manager, Charlie Roberts, counted down the last few seconds to the New Year on the floor of the Gresham ballroom, the newspapers were preparing to tell a bemused and bedazzled television audience what they thought of the night’s doings.”


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**Questions**

1. When did Irish television first broadcast?
2. Who inaugurated the new service?
3. State two activities that occurred in the course of the broadcast?
While programmes like Radharc provided Irish people with an insight into the wider world, the biggest international events to be covered by the new television station in its early years were the visit to Ireland of US President John F. Kennedy in June 1963 and his subsequent assassination and funeral the following November.

RTÉ and the Visit of President Kennedy

The visit of President Kennedy to Ireland in June 1963 was one of the high points in the early days of RTÉ. He was the first US President to visit Ireland and he was returning to the land of his ancestors. Only a year and a half in existence, the new television service was widely praised for its coverage of the visit. The fact that it took place in June and included open-air events in Dublin, Wexford, Limerick and Cork made for ideal television broadcasting. The tragic news of the President’s assassination the following November and his state funeral in Washington were also transmitted to homes throughout Ireland by Telefís Éireann (Document 3).

Document 2: Filming for Radharc in Africa

Our first big trip abroad was to Africa. There were several other visits in later years, but the memories of the first one have lasted the longest. We prepared for about six months, reading everything from Elspeth Huxley to technical data on how to keep lenses and film from going mouldy in tropical countries.

One of the things that made the 1965 trip memorable is the fact that we were witnessing the beginning of the sudden transition of people like the Pokot and Turkana from a stone age to a high technological culture. One day we recorded a group of Pokot women singing and then played it back. They had never seen or heard or imagined a tape recorder before.

Less than five years later, when I was next in Africa, I noticed a big change. Driving in East Pokot, we stopped the land-rover to talk to a young boy looking after grazing cattle. He had a few brown rags about his middle, a stick to goad the cattle and a small transistor. He told us that the first man had landed that day on the moon.

Source: Joseph Dunn, No Tigers in Africa: Recollections and Reflections on 25 Years of Radharc, Dublin: 1986

Questions

1. How did the author prepare for his first trip to Africa?
2. Why, in his view, was the 1965 trip to Africa memorable?
3. What change did he see on his return visit?
4. What do you think he achieved by filming in Africa?

Document 3: The Visit of President Kennedy

President John F. Kennedy was considered a perfect performer for television. This was because of his charisma, presence, statesmanship and an ability to combine humour and seriousness. A public relations team, in Ireland in advance of his visit in June 1963, strongly expressed their preference for the welcoming ceremonies to be out of doors to optimise the media coverage. Moreover, Kennedy wanted all public engagements on his Irish visit to be televised live...
Having successfully broadcast the visit of President Kennedy to Ireland in 1963, RTÉ faced a new challenge in 1966: the coverage of the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter Rising of 1916.

RTÉ and the Fiftieth Anniversary of 1916

In April 1966 the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter Rising was commemorated throughout the country. Both the President, Éamon de Valera, and the Taoiseach, Seán Lemass, had been participants in the Rising. RTÉ provided extensive coverage of the main ceremonies, such as the military parade outside the GPO in Dublin. It also broadcast interviews with surviving participants and produced programmes in both English and Irish. However, the most colourful and popular programme was a drama series called *Insurrection*, which was shown each night during Easter Week and contained re-enactments of the main events of the Rising.

RTÉ's coverage of the Rising was largely celebratory and uncritical, in line with the general outlook at the time. This would change dramatically when violence erupted in Northern Ireland a few years later and a more critical view of the place of the Rising in Irish history emerged. Indeed, RTÉ, through its coverage of current affairs, was to play an important part in educating the public on political events and developments.

RTÉ and Political Debate

Under the terms of the Broadcasting Authority Act (1960), the station had to provide fair and unbiased coverage of current affairs. The Act declared that the national broadcasting service had to ensure that the treatment of...
current affairs was balanced and fair to all interests concerned and that coverage was presented in an objective and impartial manner and without any expression of RTÉ’s own views.

During elections RTÉ showed party political broadcasts by the various parties. It also ensured that the different parties were given fair representation on television programmes during election campaigns. The advent of television produced a gradual change in the methods of electioneering. The old-style mass meetings in towns and cities and the election addresses outside church gates became less important. Instead the voters could see the spokespersons for the political parties discussing the issues on television.

The main current affairs programmes in the 1960s were news broadcasts and the 7 Days programme. Such programmes were at times controversial, occasionally resulting in government intervention. In 1966 a memorable clash occurred between the television station and the Minister for Agriculture in the Fianna Fáil Government, Charles J. Haughey. At the time there was a serious dispute between the Department of Agriculture and the farmers, who were represented by the National Farmers’ Association (NFA). Haughey objected to the way in which the event was covered on the television news bulletin.

The following is an account of the events from the point of view of RTÉ journalists (Document 4).

**Document 4: Charles J. Haughey and RTÉ**

“The telephone rang on 2nd October 1966 in the Newsroom. Mr C.J. Haughey was on the line, complaining about the juxtaposition of a statement from the National Farmers’ Association with one of his own. The NFA had advised the farmers to sell the cattle which Mr Haughey had advised them to hold.

The complaint was in vigorous terms, no doubt. Mr Haughey does nothing by three-quarters. Both statements had appeared in the main News bulletin. The Duty-Editor telephoned the Head of News at home and the NFA statement was deleted from the following bulletins. ‘All hell’ broke loose.

The National Union of Journalists met to discuss the incident which was reported in the following morning’s papers. The Minister for Agriculture said that he had felt compelled in the public interest to protest that the NFA statement should have been carried immediately after his. ‘I gave specific advice to farmers in reply to questions from Deputies in the Dáil... and I felt that to have my advice followed by a contradiction from a [farming] organisation could only lead to confusion and damage the industry.’

The NFA said it was amazed at the Ministerial intervention. The Irish Times was amazed that Mr Haughey’s telephone call had succeeded. It asked whether he had any right to ring the Newsroom at Montrose. RTÉ, it pointed out, had immediately complied with the request. The NUJ was amazed. It was already considering what union action it could take. Staff generally were not amazed. They were uneasy and disturbed.”

Source: Doolan, Dowling and Quinn, *Sit Down and Be Counted*

**Questions**
1. What was Charles Haughey’s complaint to RTÉ?
2. What action did the head of news take following this complaint?
3. How did the minister justify his actions?
4. Suggest why journalists were ‘uneasy and disturbed’ by these developments.
The intervention by Haughey was not an isolated incident. Because RTÉ was a public company, funded by the taxpayers, the Government had overall responsibility for it. Normally, however, the Government exercised restraint when dealing with RTÉ in order to avoid being accused of exerting undue political pressure on the organisation. However, politicians were prepared to intervene if they considered that the actions of RTÉ journalists were unjustified. A significant example of political intervention in the affairs of RTÉ concerned a documentary featured by the 7 Days current affairs programme.

7 Days: Political Intervention and Controversy

On 13 November 1968 the RTÉ television programme 7 Days featured an investigation into illegal money-lending in Dublin. Presented by reporter Bill O’Herlihy, the documentary used hidden cameras and featured the dramatisation of money-lending transactions. As well as claiming that illegal money-lending was a serious problem in poorer areas of the city, the programme also alleged that gardai were not doing enough to deal with it.

The Government and An Garda Síochána reacted strongly and a tribunal of enquiry, headed by a judge, was set up to investigate the programme. Significantly it was not to investigate the extent of illegal money-lending or the Garda response, but the 7 Days programme itself. When the tribunal issued its report in August 1970 it criticised the 7 Days team for the use of techniques such as the dramatisation of money-lending transactions. Current affairs programmes at RTÉ became more cautious in the aftermath of the tribunal (Document 5).

Document 5: The 7 Days Programme on Illegal Money-lending

The programme was notable in a number of respects. It used hidden cameras. It re-constructed money-lending transactions on film. And it said, without doing much to soften its message, not only that illegal money-lending was a major social problem in Dublin, but also that the gardaí were not doing enough to stamp it out.

The two key issues as they seemed to be emerging, were the use of hidden cameras and the question of whether participants had been suborned [bribed] by having had drink purchased for them. In point of fact, RTÉ had spent only fifty shillings on drink for the participants during the three weeks that the programme took to make.

The garda pressure on the Minister for Justice had become intense to the point where he effectively manoeuvred the Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, and by extension the Government, into agreeing to institute a sworn public enquiry into the matter. The Government announced the composition of the tribunal and its terms of reference in December. It was immediately evident that the enquiry would not be into either illegal money-lending or the garda response to this problem, but into the programme itself . . . When its report was published, the tribunal came down heavily against the broadcasters, accusing the programme of inauthenticity and of failing to observe proper journalistic standards.


The tension between politicians and journalists, evident during the 7 Days controversy, would re-emerge with the onset of the Troubles in Northern Ireland.
RTÉ and the Troubles in Northern Ireland

From the late 1960s RTÉ was to play a vital role in keeping the public informed of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. One significant event occurred at the outset of the Troubles. During the civil rights march in Derry on 5 October 1968 the filming, by RTÉ cameraman Gay O’Brien, of baton charges by the police against the demonstrators was broadcast throughout the world (Document 6).

Document 6: The Power of the Camera

It was the worldwide reach of television news which gave 1968 its global character. The Northern Ireland civil rights movement was aware of this context. Inspired by Martin Luther King’s tactics in the United States, the movement had held earlier marches that summer without making much impact. It was the police response on this occasion and the fact that it had been captured by television which made the difference. Most especially, it was the news film taken by Gay O’Brien of RTÉ which proved most dramatic, capturing the chaos and the fury of the baton charge close up. It was the circulation and worldwide impact of this film footage which dramatised for millions of television viewers across the world that something was very wrong in Northern Ireland. It showed members of the RUC charging into the midst of peaceful marchers, cracking skulls with their batons, dragging some demonstrators roughly to police vans, battering others with high powered water cannon. Unbeknownst to the constables, the whole world was watching.

RTÉ’s head of news described the key scenes in the news report as one hundred seconds of film which ended a regime. Historian Paul Bew concurred: it was this civil-rights demonstration in Derry which opened up the modern Ulster crisis. The television coverage... changed the course of Irish history.

Source: Bowman, Window and Mirror

Questions

1. What took place in Derry on 5 October 1968?
2. What is meant by the ‘global character’ of television news?
3. Why was the impact of this march different from that of earlier marches?
4. What impression of the Troubles did the filming of RTÉ convey?

RTÉ reporters provided extensive coverage of events in Northern Ireland. The broadcast on RTÉ of a speech by Taoiseach Jack Lynch in August 1969 was one of the most important television appearances in the course of the Troubles. Three years later the station became involved in a major controversy with the Fianna Fáil Government when RTÉ broadcast an interview with Seán Mac Stiofáin of the Provisional IRA. As a result, the Government sacked the RTÉ Authority. The RTÉ journalist who conducted the interview, Kevin O’Kelly, was sentenced to three months’ imprisonment for refusing to identify his source. As the Troubles in Northern Ireland continued, the Government of the Republic was careful to ensure that RTÉ radio and television did not broadcast the views of people who advocated the use of violence in Northern Ireland.

While RTÉ’s coverage of political life expanded through the 1960s, it was also to shape social and cultural change in Irish society.

One programme in particular had a profound and sustained impact on Irish society from the 1960s onwards. This was the Late Late Show, produced and presented by the broadcaster Gay Byrne.
The Late Late Show

The Late Late Show, which began in July 1962, was a chat show filmed live before an invited audience. It frequently dealt with controversial topics that had rarely been discussed in public before. In his account of the first ten years of the show, Gay Byrne explained how it originated (Document 7).

Document 7: The Start of the Late Late Show

"Tom McGrath contacted me and said he wanted to do a quiz on Saturday nights called Jackpot and would I act as compere and I agreed. Then shortly afterwards he again told me that he was placing a late-night talk show as a summer filler . . . and he wanted me to host that as well. This was all in the first year of RTÉ. We did a first dry-run of the show in June 1962. This went very well, and we decided to go into production on 6 July 1962, for a few months, as a summer filler only.

That was the first live Late Late Show, and that's how it all started. In my opening announcement on that first night I told viewers roughly what we had in mind and what the show was about: I warned them that because it was totally ad-lib and unscripted and off the cuff, they must expect the built-in disadvantages of such a format: we did not know what anyone was going to say at any particular time, so they must not expect 'balance'. Sometimes, I warned them, the show would be interesting, informative, entertaining and amusing. On other occasions, it would bore them stiff. Some nights, they would hear gems of wit and wisdom, other nights they would be dropped into the middle of a holiday for clichés. Some nights, I warned them, they would love it, and on others it would be far better for all concerned if they took their cocoa with them and went to bed. The one thing I asked them not to do was sit it out to the bitter end and then phone in to complain. I reckon now that my opening announcement was remarkably prophetic and still pretty well applies after ten years. Not, of course, that anyone paid any attention to it.

Source: Gay Byrne, To Whom It Concerns: Ten Years of the Late Late Show, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan 1972, 18–19

Questions

1. When was the Late Late Show first broadcast and how was it originally viewed by RTÉ?
2. What did Gay Byrne's announcement on the first night reveal about the proposed format of the show?
3. What do his comments tell us about the unpredictable nature of live television?
4. Is this a primary or a secondary source? Explain your answer.

The Late Late Show: Debate and Controversy

Two issues in particular were to prove extremely controversial on the Late Late Show – religion and the Irish language. Whenever they were discussed, the telephone lines were busy with people complaining, and the programme team received many critical letters. A typical example of a controversial Late Late Show occurred on 26 March 1966, when a Trinity College student, Brian Trevaskis, criticised the Catholic Bishop of Galway, Dr Michael Browne, for spending a vast sum on a new cathedral, which Trevaskis declared to be of poor architectural merit. The following day the Sunday Press reported the controversy in detail (Document 8).
There were heated interjections from the studio audience during the Late Late Show on Telefís Éireann last night, and at one stage a spectator said to Gay Byrne: ‘I think it is up to you Mr Byrne to stop characters coming up here to slag the clergy.’ Gay Byrne instantly replied: ‘Wait a minute. I do not bring people in here to slag the clergy. We have a programme and we are proud of it as a programme on which you are allowed to say what you want.’

Trinity College student and playwright, Brian Trevaskis, who appeared as a member of the panel, referred to Galway’s new cathedral as ‘a ghastly monstrosity’. In a city which did not have such things as a theatre or art galleries the people were having to pay for this monstrosity.

He added: ‘I don’t blame the people of Galway – I would rather blame the Bishop of Galway.’ Referring to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 Rising, he added that the Constitution had guaranteed equal rights and equal opportunities for all our citizens. One man who tried to achieve this was Dr Noël Browne, but the Archbishop of Dublin had put back the image of Ireland from fifty to one hundred years.

A member of the studio audience rose and said: ‘The people from where I come from – Ballygarvan, County Cork, would not listen to you speaking so degradingly about our Churches and Bishops’. Another member of the audience said he thought Mr Trevaskis spoke a bit harshly, but he was glad to see he was not afraid to express his opinions.

Another member of the audience said he thought Mr Trevaskis was right in his criticism, and he agreed that Ireland had developed very little since the Proclamation. ‘I support Brian as a progressive member of the youth of Ireland,’ he said.

Source: Sunday Press, 27 March 1966

As a result of the controversy some county councils throughout the country passed resolutions condemning the Late Late Show. Throughout the 1960s the show was frequently condemned from the pulpit by priests during Sunday sermons. Many churchmen found it hard to adjust to the new era in which people now questioned established rules and regulations.

The Late Late Show was often the first place where controversial topics such as divorce and family planning were openly discussed. On one famous occasion the Fine Gael TD for Laois–Offaly, Oliver J. Flanagan, remarked that there was no sex in Ireland before television, implying that there was no open discussion of the matter before the arrival of programmes such as the Late Late Show.

**The Impact of the Late Late Show**

In reviewing the role played by the Late Late Show in Irish life during its first ten years between 1962 and 1972, Gay Byrne placed particular emphasis on the fact that it allowed the open expression of different points of view (Document 9).
The Expansion of RTÉ

The expansion of television in Ireland in the first ten years of the new service had been remarkable. At the outset, in 1961, only 30,000 Irish homes out of a total of 700,000 were watching television – on British channels. By 1966, 380,000 homes were receiving RTÉ, and this increased to 536,000 by 1971.

It is clear, therefore, that between 1962 and 1972 the Late Late Show was one of the most influential and controversial of all television programmes on Telefís Éireann/RTÉ.

Document 9: The Search for Balance

“They tell me, the historians who know about such things, that when the history of Ireland for the next fifty years comes to be written, television in general and the Late Late Show in particular will be mentioned as having been a tremendous force for change in the community . . . ‘Broadening the horizons’ and ‘letting in fresh air’ are two of the phrases thrown around like snuff at a wake.

One of the things which this programme has done to me is to deprive me of the luxury of ever having only one point of view about anything; give me a man who has an opinion about something and by tomorrow morning I’ll produce ten men who will disagree with him. And they will all fiercely resent the other being allowed to speak.

When one is producing television programmes, one is reminded forcefully and regularly that there are two sides to every story, and the depressing thing is that when you try honestly to present those two sides, you very quickly discover that there are another two you hadn’t dreamed of.

In fifteen years of radio and television I have never been able to find out what balance is. I only know that ‘lack of balance’ is when anyone gets up and says anything a politician disagrees with. When a Fianna Fáil man comes along and congratulates me on a job well done and tells me that I have achieved a ‘balance’, I know precisely what he means. He means thank God that shower from Fine Gael and Labour never got a chance to get a word in. The only trouble is that as soon as he’s gone both of the other two are screaming at me about ‘lack of balance’ and about programmes which are a disgrace and an affront to Irish viewers. It is quite astonishing the number of people in this country who are firmly convinced that they have a God-given mandate to speak on behalf of the nation.”

Source: Byrne, To Whom It Concerns, 158–60

Questions

1. How will historians view the impact of the Late Late Show, according to Gay Byrne?
2. What do the phrases ‘broadening the horizons’ and ‘letting in fresh air’ reveal about the influence of the show on Irish society?
3. How has the programme influenced Gay Byrne’s views?
4. What has he come to understand by the term ‘lack of balance’?

This cartoon shows the clash between traditional Ireland and the modern society that was emerging in the 1960s.
As well as introducing Irish viewers to foreign cultures, the new television service had a significant influence on the culture and values of the Irish people themselves. It is important to realise that from the 1960s onwards RTÉ both expressed the values of Irish society and helped to bring about changes in these values. Many of the home-produced programmes in particular attempted to show what life was like for ordinary people. Among the earliest of these were soap operas such as *Tolka Row*, which was set in Dublin, and *The Riordans*, set in a farming community in Co. Kilkenny.

As many of the programmes originated in England or the United States, the cultures of these countries were increasingly influential in Ireland. Often the ideas broadcast were materialist and consumerist. In advertisements and in programmes, people were given the message that wealth and spending were glamorous. Influences such as these, together with greater freedom of expression, marked television out as a new and powerful force in Irish society.

Websites

www.historyireland.com
Search for ‘window and mirror rte television’ for a review of John Bowman’s book on the history of RTÉ.

www.dcu.ie
Search for ‘Irish television drama in the 1960s’ for a detailed account of drama produced by RTÉ in the 1960s.

www.scoilnet.ie
Search for ‘Teaching Key Personalities in History’ and go to the section of the pdf on Gay Byrne for extra resources.

www.rte.ie/archives
Click on ‘History of RTÉ’ and then ‘06 RTÉ 1960s’ for links to interesting events in the history of RTÉ in the 1960s.

www.rte.ie/tv50
Click on ‘RTÉ TV History’ for an account of the main developments at RTÉ during the 1960s.
1. The Beginnings of Irish Television
   (a) What commission regarding television was set up by the Irish Government in 1958?
   (b) What authority was established under the Broadcasting Authority Act (1960)?
   (c) Give the name of the new Irish television station.
   (d) What name was given to the united Irish radio and television stations in 1966?

2. The Opening Night
   (a) When did Irish television go on air for the first time?
   (b) Where in O’Connell Street in Dublin were celebrations held?
   (c) What function did President de Valera perform on the opening night?

3. The Early Years of Television
   (a) What type of documentaries were shown on the Radharc programme?
   (b) How did they extend the knowledge of people in Ireland?
   (c) When did President John F. Kennedy visit Ireland?
   (d) Did RTÉ successfully cover his visit on television? Explain your answer.

4. Covering the Fiftieth Anniversary of the 1916 Rising
   (a) What ceremonies commemorating the Rising did RTÉ broadcast?
   (b) What type of interviews relating to the Rising were seen on television?
   (c) What was Insurrection?
   (d) Was RTÉ’s coverage of the anniversary of 1916 one-sided? Explain your answer.

5. RTÉ and Politics
   (a) How did the arrival of television change the nature of election campaigns?
   (b) What was 7 Days?
   (c) Why did the Minister for Agriculture, Charles Haughey, complain to RTÉ during a dispute with farmers in 1966?
   (d) What action did the Government of Jack Lynch take regarding the 7 Days programme on money-lending in 1968?

6. RTÉ and the Troubles in Northern Ireland
   (a) What was the impact of the filming by RTÉ of the civil rights march in Derry in October 1968?
   (b) Name the Taoiseach who made a historic speech on television regarding events in Northern Ireland in 1969.
   (c) Why did the Government dismiss the RTÉ Authority in 1972?
   (d) What views from Northern Ireland was RTÉ not allowed broadcast during the Troubles?

7. The Late Late Show
   (a) Who presented the Late Late Show and when was it first broadcast?
   (b) Name two issues which caused controversy on the show.
   (c) Why did the show annoy many bishops and priests?
   (d) How did the programme reflect changes in Irish society?

Documents-Based Questions

1. Comprehension
   (a) How many television sets does Document 1 tell us were tuned in to the first broadcast by Telefís Éireann?
   (b) According to Document 3, what help did Telefís Éireann enlist when broadcasting the visit of President Kennedy?

2. Comparison
   (a) What have Documents 5 and 6 in common as sources?
   (b) How does Document 8 differ from Document 9 as a source for the historian on the impact of the Late Late Show?

3. Criticism
   (a) Do you think that Document 4 is a biased or unbiased account? Explain your answer.
   (a) What insight does Document 5 give us into political interference in RTÉ?

4. Contextualisation
   (a) What role did RTÉ play in Irish society during the 1960s?
   (b) How did RTÉ reflect and promote change in Ireland between 1962 and 1972?
Changing Lifestyles
One of the most significant developments in Irish society during the 1960s was the emergence of a distinct youth culture. Modeled on the experience of young people in America and England, it featured a preference for pop music and the latest fashions in clothes. When the pop group The Beatles visited Dublin in November 1963, they received a rapturous welcome from their Irish fans. The most popular Irish music groups during the 1960s were the showbands. Stars such as Dickie Rock, Brendan Bowyer and Eileen Reid attracted thousands when they played for dances. They also performed on records, radio and on the new medium of television.

The Politics of Protest
Students protesting outside Georgian houses in Dublin which were threatened with demolition.

The new, more confident assertion of identity on the part of young people was not confined to leisure alone. As improvements in communication made them more aware of injustice throughout the world, they took to the streets in protest. One cause that attracted particular attention during the 1960s and 1970s was the abolition of apartheid in South Africa. Although older people were also involved in the Irish anti-apartheid campaigns, students and other young people were usually the mainstay of public demonstrations. Young people also protested against the destruction of Georgian Dublin by property developers and campaigned in favour of better educational opportunities. Their political importance was recognised when the electorate passed a referendum in 1972 that lowered the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen.

Health and Social Welfare
The prosperity achieved during the 1960s allowed the Fianna Fáil Government to improve the provision of health and social welfare. The health service was reorganised with the introduction of regional health boards; new hospitals were built and more staff employed. The introduction of
the medical card was a major improvement in health provision for the less well off. They were no longer compelled to go to a dispensary doctor but could choose their own general practitioner (GP) and receive free medical care and prescriptions.

In the area of social welfare, the introduction of free travel for senior citizens by Minister for Finance Charles Haughey in 1967 was a milestone in the provision of services for the elderly. Although of limited benefit in rural areas, it was widely availed of by pensioners in towns and cities.

**The Status of Women in Irish Society**

Although there were no significant advances towards equal treatment of women in Irish society until the 1970s, the position of women was beginning to improve during the 1960s. Greater wealth and the arrival of modern conveniences such as vacuum cleaners and washing machines lightened the workload of women in the home. Those who worked outside the home benefited from a gradual improvement in wages, although the women’s average wage still lagged behind that of men. With the gradual decline in the older, stricter notions of behaviour, women were less under the control of their fathers or husbands. One obvious sign of their newfound freedom was the widespread popularity of the miniskirt during the 1960s.

**Travel and Transport**

It was a period of rapid change in transport and travel, both domestic and foreign. At home many railway lines were closed down because they were considered uneconomic. As a result, both passengers and goods had to travel by road. The number of motor cars grew steadily throughout the 1960s as the country grew wealthier. Foreign travel became more widely available at the same time, as people could afford to fly to Spain and other sunny destinations. The national airline, Aer Lingus, symbolised the new confidence of Irish society during the 1960s. It greatly expanded its services, and its aeroplanes and staff were regarded as representatives of Irish hospitality abroad.

**The Impact of Change on Irish Culture and Language**

Whereas many of the social developments in Ireland during the 1960s were positive, others caused unease. Greater wealth often produced a materialistic outlook and the loss of a distinctive Irish cultural identity. The continuing decline of the Gaeltacht at a time of economic expansion was a cause of concern. Many people also expressed the fear that, partly because of television, Irish people were becoming too heavily influenced by the cultures of America and England, to the neglect of their own traditions. Despite the unprecedented economic expansion and the significant growth in employment, many people continued to live out their lives in poverty, which was made all the more unbearable by the sight of prosperity all around them.

Even with these shortcomings, however, the 1960s are remembered as a time of exceptional prosperity and a period of greater choice and freedom in Irish society.

**Review Questions**

1. Give two examples that show the emergence of a distinctive youth culture in Ireland during the 1960s.
2. What improvements took place in the areas of health and social welfare during the 1960s?
3. What improvements came about in travel and transport during the 1960s?
4. How did the status of women improve during the 1960s?
5. State two ways in which Irish cultural identity was affected by changes during the 1960s.
Gay Byrne (1934–)

Gay Byrne was born in Dublin on 5 August 1934 and educated by the Christian Brothers at Synge Street. He started his career in insurance but soon became involved in broadcasting, becoming a presenter on Radio Éireann in 1958. He did some work for Granada Television in Manchester and for the BBC, but after the establishment of Telefís Éireann in 1961, he worked increasingly and eventually totally for the home station.

Byrne became most famous as the producer and host of the Late Late Show, the longest-running live television chat show in the world. The first Late Late Show was broadcast on 6 July 1962. The programme was an important agent for social change in Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s. While reflecting the changing values of Irish society, it also acted as a catalyst for change and modernisation by providing a forum for the discussion of controversial topics previously considered off limits for debate. Subjects of public and personal morality, including contraception, abortion and divorce, were aired for the first time on the Late Late Show.

Although Byrne himself held conventional, conservative views on many subjects, his programme played an important role in creating a more open, outward-looking society in Ireland.

In addition to his work on television, Byrne also made an important impact through his radio programmes. His most popular daily programme was the Gay Byrne Show, which began broadcasting in 1972. Many people, especially women, wrote to the programme about their personal and family problems, thus providing an insight into the lives of hardship endured by many ordinary people.

Byrne has received numerous awards for his contribution to Irish broadcasting, including six Jacob’s Awards, a Golden Award and, in 1988, an honorary doctorate from Trinity College, Dublin. He was TV presenter of the Rose of Tralee festival for seventeen years and is the author of two books: To Whom It Concerns (1972) and his autobiography, The Time of My Life (1988). Although he retired as host of the Late Late Show in 1999, he has continued to work in broadcasting, both on radio and on television.

Brendán Ó hÉithir (1930–91)

Writer and broadcaster Breandán Ó hÉithir was born on the Aran island of Inishmore in 1930. A nephew of the writer Liam O’Flaherty, he was educated at Coláiste Éinde, Co. Galway, and at University College Galway. He began his career in journalism, becoming editor of the Irish-language section of the Irish Press from 1957 to 1973. He was also editor of an Irish-language magazine, Comharr. Ó hÉithir became best known as one of the main journalists working on the Irish-language politics programme, Féach, and played an important role in modernising Irish for television.

An active participant in the Irish language movement, he helped to shed its conservative and anti-British image. He had a lifelong interest in sport, especially Gaelic games.

Throughout his career Ó hÉithir remained a prolific commentator on Irish life, and his many publications in Irish and English include Lig Sinn i gCathú (1977), Over the Bar: A Personal Relationship with the GAA (1984) and The Begrudger’s Guide to Irish Politics (1986). He died in 1991.
Ordinary Level Questions
1. Write a paragraph on the changes in Irish education in the 1960s.
2. What was the impact of television on Irish society in the 1960s?
3. Write a paragraph on the effects of Vatican II on Irish society.
4. How did Breandán Ó hÉithir contribute to Irish life?
5. What was the impact of Gay Byrne on Irish life?
6. Read the following description by Gay Byrne of Irish television viewers, and answer the questions that follow.

I was beginning also to realise a startling truth about the Irish viewer. Many people had praised the Late Late Show for its quality of free speech; I was naïve enough to think they meant it – that what they wanted was free speech. But it now slowly began to dawn on me that free speech was all right as long as the talker was saying what they wanted to hear – anything else was some weird kind of licence or obscenity or just ‘lack of balance’. Of course, one must realise that at that time television was a very new toy and Irish people generally were still attaching far more importance to it than the average British viewer, and, in my opinion, far more importance than it deserved.

Now, ten years later, the medium had begun to find its own level and people have begun to live with it, accept it for what it is, and have become a little more discerning about what it portrays. Although still for far too many people the cursed box is the all-embracing drug they cannot do without, worse than drink or tobacco or gambling. It is as if, having paid the annual licence fee, they are hell-bent on getting the maximum value for money, and so the box is lit up at six o’clock and stays on until midnight and close-down. They will sit there in front of it in a state bordering on stupefaction and take anything it cares to dish up.

Source: Gay Byrne, To Whom It Concerns: Ten Years of the Late Late Show, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan 1972

(a) Did viewers really want free speech on the Late Late Show? Explain your answer.
(b) What is meant by the phrase ‘new toy’?
(c) How has the situation changed ten years later, according to the author?
(d) Why does Byrne compare the television set to a drug?
(e) Describe the actions of people who leave the television set on all the time.

Higher Level Questions
1. How did RTÉ contribute to changing attitudes in the Republic of Ireland between 1962 and 1972?
2. What impact did Gay Byrne have on Irish society?
3. What changes came about in religion or education during the 1960s?
4. Which had the greater impact on Irish society, RTÉ during its first decade or Vatican II? Argue your case, referring to both.
5. What were the positive and negative effects of the rapid transformation of Irish society during the 1960s?
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