

FIANNA FAIL AND LABOUR
PROGRAMME FOR A
PARTNERSHIP GOVERNMENT
1993 - 1997

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A GOVERNMENT OF PARTNERSHIP

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CONCLUSION

A GOVERNMENT OF PARTNERSHIP

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

The Fianna Fáil and Labour Parties have decided to form together a Partnership Government for the next five years, that will be new in character. It will be based on close cooperation and mutual trust, and will work in concert to achieve strong and stable government. It will be a Government devoted to meeting the challenge of change.

- The key to our whole approach will be to develop a strong sense of partnership, not only in terms of political structures but throughout the economy, our society, and our community - a partnership that will be dynamic and creative, and geared totally towards confronting the major challenges that lie ahead of us.

The aim of this Government will be to create economic prosperity and social justice. A mixed economy, with a dynamic role for both the private and public sectors, is the most effective means of creating employment and higher living standards. Achievement of our aims will be accomplished by broad social consensus, social solidarity, local initiative, openness and integrity, and the highest level of democratic participation.

The main priorities of the Government will be:

- To put the country back to work by creating useful and productive new employment, taking full advantage of all our human and natural resources;
- To confront the economic and budgetary difficulties created by the international recession and the currency crisis, in order to sustain existing employment;
- To extend and consolidate the principle of social partnership as the best means of achieving economic and social progress;
- To restore confidence in the democratic process, by encouraging greater openness and participation at all levels, by improving public accountability, transparency and trust, and by ensuring the highest standards in public life;
- To recommence and sustain the process of dialogue with the parties in Northern Ireland and with the British Government, building on progress already made. Dialogue will be conducted in a spirit of openness and honesty, with the overriding aim of achieving peace and reconciling the legitimate rights and aspirations of both communities, showing a willingness to discuss all constitutional issues and to initiate and incorporate change in the context of an overall settlement. Our long-term policy is to make possible the eventual achievement of a united Ireland by agreement and consent in the

spirit of the New Ireland Forum Report. We will continue to operate the Anglo-Irish Agreement, unless and until it is transcended by a broader agreement, and we wish to step up the pace of North-South Economic Cooperation;

- To maintain a total commitment to full and progressive participation in European Union and to ensuring that Ireland has a strong voice in the new Europe as it evolves. We support the principle of enlargement. We are committed to a Europe with democratic institutions, that has meaning and benefit for its citizens, that has a strong social dimension and which promotes peace, cooperation and disarmament both in Europe and abroad. Ireland's military neutrality will be maintained, unless and until the Irish people decide otherwise in a referendum, while we will support the search for a framework of collective security in a European-wide context covering the 52 Nations of the CSCE. We will also continue to participate fully in UN peace-keeping throughout the world;
- To order our priorities to match the resources that can be made available, so that the confidence necessary to achieve our economic and social goals is maintained, recognising that our commitments can only be achieved over a four to five year period;
- To create greater equality throughout society. Our programme includes equality for women, for the disabled, and for travellers, and the elimination as far as possible of social disadvantage and poverty;
- To encourage local initiative by a greater devolution of functions, and through the establishment of County Enterprise Partnership Boards, which will empower local communities to obtain funding to develop their own areas;
- To modernise and humanise our laws, both in the area of social legislation, and in the fair application of law throughout our public administration;
- To ensure that maintenance of the high quality of our environment is a consideration integrated into all our decision-making;
- To develop and support a full cultural life throughout the country, building on the best in our heritage and traditions, but also forging new forms of creativity.

This Programme, which is based on the policy proposals put forward by both parties during the Election, will be implemented in conjunction with the commitments contained in the Programme for Economic and Social Progress and the Community Support Framework agreed with the EC 1989-93 and its successor.

SUSTAINING GROWTH FOR EMPLOYMENT

ECONOMIC AND BUDGETARY POLICY

Our economic and budgetary policy will be formed in the light of national, European Community, and international developments, but will be so structured as to meet our national economic and social needs.

Fundamental to the successful implementation of this Programme and the achievement of the benefits it will bring to our society, is that we maintain firm control of our public finances so that there is a steady reduction in the national debt/GDP ratio. This is an over-riding principle, both of this Programme and the PESP, which have both been drafted in accordance with that principle. That principle cannot be infringed in their implementation.

- Budgetary policy will therefore be based on the overriding requirements of the Maastricht Treaty. Prospective participants in European Economic and Monetary Union are required to adhere strictly to an annual General Government Deficit of around 3% or less of GDP, and to be reducing their debt/GDP ratio towards 60%, having regard in particular to the provisions of Article 104c(2) of the Treaty on European Union. The implementation and phasing of all commitments in this Programme will depend on their consistency with these requirements, which will also involve continued restraint in public expenditure.
- Notwithstanding the particular difficulties in 1993 arising in large measure from the protracted international economic recession, and from international currency developments, the 1993 Budget will have to be framed in accordance with this Maastricht deficit parameter, in the longer term interests of employment protection and growth, which is the basis for pursuit of the Government's wider objectives otherwise.
- We will seek to promote a high level of economic growth that is export-led, consistent with the maintenance of low single-figure inflation, so as to create the greatest possible employment demand.
- In order to underpin our exchange rate policy, further steps will be considered urgently to help reduce the costs of manufacturers most affected by recent currency changes, and improve competitiveness and to ease the burden of interest rates.
- The continuation and extension of social partnership and consensus reflected in the Programme for Economic and Social Progress, will be a cornerstone of our approach to the management of the Irish economy.

TAX REFORM

We will continue the process of tax reform. Our priorities will be:

- To remove the low-paid, especially families, out of the tax net altogether;
- To broaden the standard tax band, so that, as in other countries, only relatively high earners pay the higher rate of tax, and to further reduce tax rates, especially the standard rate, when economic conditions permit;
- To maintain the basic tax reliefs, such as mortgage interest and VHI, and to consider measures in the 1993 Budget to relieve the position faced by mortgage holders, while the present situation of high interest rates lasts;
- To improve collection and enforcement, and to ensure equity as between those on PAYE, the self-employed, and those with substantial investment income;
- To study in consultation with the social partners the integration of the tax and social welfare codes;
- To structure the whole tax system so as to support employment and to minimise financial imbalances and outflows.

THE BANKING AND FINANCIAL SECTORS

State-controlled banks are commonplace in the EC, discharging both a commercial and developmental role, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. State involvement in banking has economic and fiscal benefits, and would provide necessary competition to the commercial banks.

The Government will develop a vigorous third Banking Force from within the State sector by merging the ICC Bank and ACC Bank, and by seeking a merger of the new entity with the Trustee Savings Banks. The new State Bank will also develop strong links with the network of An Post for money transactions and banking services.

It will also have an enhanced role in servicing part of the requirements of Government Departments, Local Authorities and State enterprises.

This strategy will have the advantage of meeting the varying objectives of supporting industry and jobs, trading profitably, and paying adequate dividends. A merged ICC Bank/ACC Bank/TSB would be a significant force in Irish banking with total assets of almost £3 billion, net profits of £25 million, and a capacity to pay significant dividends to the Exchequer.

The possibility of involvement with a major international bank will be examined in accordance with the new Bank's needs.

The setting up of companies by the IDA or State commercial bodies in the International Financial Services Centre that will offer support services to non-national financial and insurance companies will be seriously explored. The concept of establishing an International Arbitration Centre in the IFSC will be examined.

CREATING JOBS AND TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT

Our biggest challenge is to increase the number of sustainable jobs within our economy and to reverse the rising trend of unemployment. While the main thrust of our approach to job-creation must be based on market-led growth in both the private and public sectors, active intervention by the Government is necessary to boost the opportunities for all those seeking to gain or regain a foothold in employment. There is also an onus on the Social Partners with the Government to agree and work radical new measures which will make a serious impact on the situation.

Long-term unemployment must be tackled as the first priority, not only of Government, but of the Social Partners and the entire community. The costs of long-term unemployment go far beyond the financial burdens, and include a major element of social isolation and family stress.

Employment initiatives are set out throughout this document. This section describes a number of our more general proposals, designed to harness ideas in the community and to develop the skills of people who are looking for work experience.

INDUSTRIAL POLICY

We will seek to strengthen Ireland's industrial, scientific and exporting base, in line with the recommendations of the Culliton Report, to increase the level of directly productive activity and encourage a dynamic spirit of enterprise. We will broaden industrial strategy to take in all the factors that affect output and productivity, including the fuller development of our human skills. We will put a new emphasis on building up small industry and the productive use of indigenous resources, such as food processing and timber processing.

We will establish under the aegis of Forfás (An Bord Tionscáil, Trachtála agus Teichneolaíochta), two separate and autonomous agencies, each with its own Board, Managing Director, and grant-in-aid:

(a)"Forbairt" will be empowered to develop indigenous industry, and will be organised sectorally with a strong regional base.

(b)"IDA-Ireland" will be empowered to attract international mobile investment to Ireland.

Forfás, which will have its own Chief Executive and which will have a vital coordinating role, will also promote greater linkages between the indigenous and international sectors of Irish industry.

We remain committed to the further development and strengthening of a dynamic and efficient State enterprise sector, acknowledging the huge

role that State bodies continue to play in our economic life and the substantial job creation potential they possess.

We will implement the principles regarding State enterprise set out in the PESP, and guarantee that the main strategic utilities and enterprises remain in the ownership of the Irish people, while having the freedom to enter joint ventures with the private and cooperative sectors. We intend to ensure that strong public companies will also provide value for money to the consumer. And we are also committed to the principle that there must be adequate rewards for achievement coupled with penalties for failure.

As part of our industrial policy, the Government will review the Business Expansion Scheme, dealt with elsewhere in this Programme, and will provide incentives and a legislative framework for the establishment of Employee Investment Funds, to act as a supplementary source of capital for small and medium-sized enterprises.

We are also committed to a vigorous campaign for an EC Industrial Policy, the main elements of which must include:

- The development of a pan-European base of knowledge, research and development;
- A proper regulatory environment, firm and fair to all enterprises, both public and private, to ensure the highest standards of accountability;
- The basic legislative framework to ensure that State aid and trade policy is fair and equitable, having regard to the disadvantages from which peripheral regions suffer.

Our main priority will be to build a stronger indigenous industrial base, which can make a bigger contribution to employment and provide a more secure basis for building increased national prosperity.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES AND JOBS

The tasks spelled out here must be complemented by a new sense of urgency at Government level. Steady progress towards the goals in this document require a total effort.

We will establish a new Department of Enterprise and Employment. It will have responsibility for all the action aspects of industrial policy, including planning, the development of new plans for indigenous industry, and for implementation and co-ordination of the labour market measures outlined here, including training.

The regulatory aspects of business and industry (including the monitoring of EC funds allocated to industries such as the food industry), and

responsibility for industrial relations and protective legislation, will also be vested in the Department of Enterprise and Employment.

In addition, the Department will be charged with the promotion of consensus in industry (at national level and on the shop floor), with the development of competition in every sector of enterprise, and with consumers' rights.

This new Department will be ordered to work closely with the Departments of Food and Marine, in drawing up a comprehensive plan for the development of our natural resources, underpinned by, and reconciled with, a total commitment to conservation and the environment. The potential contribution of the food, fisheries, and energy sectors has never been fully tapped.

To protect existing jobs, an Employment Protection Unit in the new Department will be established to provide advisory services to small firms, whether those firms are experiencing difficulties or trading well and eager to grow. In addition, the Unit will help management and unions to solve problems that threaten jobs.

We will establish a specialist Department of Tourism and Foreign Trade (see also the section on Tourism). The main responsibility of this Department in the area of trade will be selling Irish goods abroad. It will be charged with the development of the international links referred to above.

We want a radical focus. Instead of marketing alone, structures and incentives need to be put in place to ensure that there are more Irish salespeople in the field to increase the export sales of Irish goods in all world markets.

While the promotion and marketing of Irish goods in export markets has been an appropriate emphasis in Irish trade policy over the years, there are insufficient numbers of highly-motivated, language-trained, hands-on salespeople in export markets selling Irish goods and services.

The new focus and priority of this policy, backed up by top-level political support, must be to overcome this deficiency.

These two new Departments will replace the existing Departments of Industry and Commerce and Labour. A re-orientation of the structures of Government will give a much needed impetus and concentration to the task of promoting and developing the sort of economic drive we need.

The Ministers responsible for those Departments will carry ultimate accountability for the successful development and implementation of policy.

Such a re-orientation will also provide a real focus for broadening the social partnership model which is now in place. It is integral to all our proposals that unions, employers, farmers, women, and the unemployed should have a real say, as of right, in the future development of the economy, globally and in the workplace.

NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FORUM

We will establish the National Economic and Social Forum under an independent Chairperson, with its own secretariat, provided by the Irish Productivity Centre. The Forum will contribute to the formation of a national consensus on major issues of economic and social policy, and to the development of new initiatives to tackle unemployment.

The Forum will have representatives from all of the Social Partners, and in addition, representatives of women's organisations, groups representing the unemployed, the disadvantaged and people with a disability. The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Employment will be merged with the Forum. The Forum may send reports to the Oireachtas from time to time for debate. The Social Partners and the Government will take account in their deliberations and in negotiating future economic programmes of the views expressed and positions agreed upon by the Forum.

It will meet in plenary session periodically, and will discuss Government policy and proposals on economic and social policy, except in the case where confidentiality is necessary.

The Central Review Committee established under the PESP will remain as the negotiating Forum for issues of particular concern to Trade Unions, Employers, Farmers, and Government, and the NESF will continue to function separately.

CAPITAL PROJECTS - JOBS FUND

We will implement the EC's decision at Edinburgh to stimulate European growth and recovery through investment, involving in Ireland's case full use of the increased Structural and Cohesion Funds, which will amount to about £8 billion in the seven years to 1999.

The Cohesion Fund will be established early in 1993, and will be available to assist environment projects needed to achieve EC environmental standards, and transport projects related to Trans-European Networks (e.g. Euro-routes, Dublin-Belfast railway).

A new National Development Plan is at present being drawn up in consultation with the social partners and the 7 sub-Regional Review Groups to cover the use of Structural Funds post-1993. The NESF will also be consulted in the preparation of this plan.

Capital projects will include:

- Integrated transport networks, roads, ports, airports and rail;
- Grants will be sought for access transport, especially mobile assets with special reference to investment in direct shipping services to Continental Europe;
- Investment in the development of the Shannon estuary as the best deep water port in the EC, and the port of Waterford as the major lift-on lift-off port for freight from the whole of Ireland to Europe;
- Investment in the energy sector to meet projected growth needs;
- Investment in higher education to provide sufficient places for all able to benefit.

A Jobs Fund is needed now to promote recovery and job-creation. An initial £250 million will be provided in 1993 from the new Cohesion Fund, from the sale of ACC to ICC within the State sector, and from monies allocated for the Community Enterprise Partnership Boards, to create a Jobs Fund to accelerate public investment above the level it would otherwise be. In future years, the Fund will be built up from a mixture of Cohesion and Structural Funding and State resources to a level of at least £750 million, to enable major priority projects to be brought forward and carried out.

The projects to be supported by this means include the introduction of light rail in Dublin and the modernisation of the national rail network, the modernisation of our ports and an access route to Dublin Port, the cleaning up of Dublin Bay, the construction of the Lee Tunnel in Cork, the building of a national convention centre and sports stadium, and other major infrastructure projects around the regions. Continued modernisation of the national road network, with more emphasis on the routes connecting the regions, housing and urban renewal will also be priorities in the use of the Jobs Fund, which will be superseded after three years by increased levels of Structural and Cohesion Funding.

Investment, including increased equity, will be provided if necessary for the development of viable and profitable State commercial enterprise, including transport, communications, and the industrial and commercial sectors.

COUNTY ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARDS

New County Enterprise Partnership Boards will be empowered to seek funding to assist local development, the start up of small enterprises, the promotion of tourism, and to establish Community Employment Schemes in consultation with community organisations, the social partners and the public sector at local level.

**COMMUNITY-
BASED
EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAMME**

A Community Development Programme that will employ thousands of long-term unemployed people will be put into operation by the County Enterprise Partnership Boards across the entire country, who will identify projects for improving their own areas. The work concerned will consist of quality programmes, to include work which can provide the basis for permanent jobs, especially in tourism, and small infrastructure type developments.

In the context of the new funding for the Community Support Framework 1994 - 1999, we will seek EC support for the Community Enterprise Development Programme. The aim will be to move towards a participation level of 30,000 each year.

**TARGETED WAGE
SUBSIDIES**

We will substantially increase the wage subsidies available for employers who hire additional people who have been on the Live Register for a year or more.

The rates of subsidy will be:

£80 p.w. in respect of long-term unemployed people;

£40 p.w. in respect of school-leavers and people who have been on the Live Register for shorter periods of time.

The Government in conjunction with the other Social Partners will seek to develop other initiatives in this area, having regard to the anticipated change at Community level in the operation of the European Social Fund.

We will be asking the Social Partners to agree and work out a national approach to maximise the take-up under this scheme. Initially, the scheme will focus on filling vacancies above a socially-adjusted core baseline which takes account of cyclical fluctuations in employment. All persons employed under the Scheme may be considered for FAS-funded training, if necessary.

The aim of this Scheme will be permanent re-integration of long-term unemployed people back into the workforce. We will also establish a National Pre-Return to Work Counselling Service for persons hired under the Scheme. Together with the Community-Based Employment Scheme, we aim to make substantial progress in reducing the numbers of people in long-term unemployment in our society.

**NATIONAL
TRAINING
SCHEME**

We will establish on a tripartite basis in consultation with the social partners a comprehensive National Training Scheme, covering both the manufacturing and services sector, as well as the public and private sectors.

Training contracts will be funded by the European Social Fund, with the on-the-job element funded by employers.

The Scheme will be based on three principles:

- that viable job creation is market-led (whether in the private or public sectors);
- that it will serve to integrate young people into the workplace, with independent validation and certification at the end of the trainee-ship period;
- that it will provide a valuable mechanism for easing many of the unemployed into viable employment.

NATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATION BOARD

We will establish a National Education and Training Certification Board, whose awards will be recognised internationally. This will help progression between courses in the education and training systems, and help Irish workers abroad obtain jobs that are consistent with their qualifications. Legislation will be required. Pending enactment of such legislation, we will appoint an interim board.

APPRENTICESHIP, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, AND TRAINING

We will further improve the statutory apprenticeship scheme, building on a "standards-reached" approach rather than a "time-served" approach. Based on existing employer and trade union agreements, legislation will be introduced as a matter of urgency to fund the new system.

We will extend the apprenticeship scheme to give certified training to those leaving secondary education but not going on to third level. This means increasing the number of occupations where certified and structured training applies and using the increased capacity in the education system for vocational education and training.

INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING & EDUCATION

The respective roles of the Departments of Education and Enterprise and Employment will be defined more clearly in relation to vocational education and training to ensure a better service.

RATIONALISATION OF SCHEMES

At present, there exists a very wide range of training and employment schemes both provided by FAS and the Department of Education. The range and number of schemes can give rise to confusion on the part of both employers and job seekers. These schemes will be rationalised so as to respond better to the needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers.

WORK SHARING

Having regard to the need for radical new measures, we believe that a National Voluntary Scheme of Work-Sharing must be introduced. Such a scheme would utilise tax and other incentives to ensure the creation of the largest possible number of vacancies. As an urgent priority, discussions will be held with the Social Partners to (a) establish a high degree of consensus and support for the scheme, (b) consider the best methods of implementation, and (c) ensure that the construction of the scheme is carried out in such a way that protects the viability of individual enterprises and respects the individual preferences of employees.

CURBING VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY

In consultation with the Social Partners we will implement a Scheme aimed at providing employers and employees with alternatives to redundancy where labour cost reduction programmes are sought by companies which have recorded profits in the previous three year period.

JOBS AND COMPETITIVENESS

Our priority is to build a solid base of Irish companies with a viable future in world markets. We will set up a jobs and competitiveness project, under the auspices of the social partners and the NESF, to disseminate to Irish companies the best practices of high employment countries - Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, and Japan - which enable them to be both good employers and highly competitive at the same time.

TAXATION AND INVESTMENT

To encourage productive investment, resulting in job creation, we propose the following tax measures:

Business Expansion Scheme

- The Business Expansion Scheme will be extended a further three years to April 1996, to ensure that there is equity capital for start-up and developing companies. The £75,000 limit on capital on the amount that an individual can invest under the Scheme will be abolished.
- The focus of the BES on high risk sectors offering prospects of extra sustainable output and jobs and on smaller riskier ventures, which could have serious difficulty raising equity capital without BES, will be maintained.

Taxation of Savings and Investment

The new Special Savings Accounts, the interest on which will be taxed at 10%, comes into operation on 1 January 1993, and are designed to keep money in the country following the liberalisation of exchange controls. Preserving liquidity in the Irish lending market and avoiding upward pressure on interest rates is essential for business and employment growth.

In parallel, Special Investment Accounts, also taxed at 10%, will be established to facilitate the flow of savings into equity investment in Irish

companies, so as to finance their development and to support sustainable development. A limit of £50,000 per person will apply to both Special Investment and Savings Accounts.

**Ireland-America
Trade and
Investment**

The work of the recently-established Ireland-America Economic Advisory Board, representative of a broad section of prominent Irish-American business people, will be intensified to increase trade, investment, and tourism between the United States and Ireland.

**DECENTRAL-
ISATION**

We will continue to implement the programme of decentralisation of Government offices.

**EMPLOYMENT
LAW**

We will encourage greater co-operation between employers and employees at enterprise level, to mirror co-operation between employers and trade unions at national level.

Our legislative proposals under this heading include the following:

- We will bring forward a new Bill on employment equality to consolidate the 1974 and 1977 Acts and to improve the workings of the legislation in line with the PESP commitment;
- We intend to amend and improve the working of the Unfair Dismissals legislation;
- The discussion document on the review of holiday legislation will be published early in 1993. In recognition of the Centenary of the establishment of the Dublin Council of Trade Unions, the first Monday in May will be declared a public holiday with effect from 1994;
- The review of the Conditions of Employment legislation dating from the 1930s will lead to new or amending legislation to bring the relevant Acts into line with modern employment conditions taking account of the EC Directive on Working Time expected to be adopted in 1993.

TRANSPORT

With the assistance of the Cohesion Fund and expanded Structural Funds we will step up investment in our transport infrastructure over the next few years.

**Public
Transport**

We will place a new emphasis on and give increased priority to public transport. We will start implementing the strategy of the Dublin Transportation Initiative, which includes up to four light rail lines, the introduction of ten quality bus corridors, a limited extension and

upgrading of DART and the provision of parking facilities at public transport terminals.

The railways are an essential element of the economic and social fabric of the country. Improvements in strategic rail links will be effected as soon as possible.

Public transport and in particular the railways have a vital contribution to make to balanced regional development, to which both Parties are strongly committed. Significant investment requirements in railway plant and equipment will arise over the coming years. With the help of EC funds, we will formulate a major investment programme for the development of the railway, which will help to secure its long term future and improve the quality of inter-city and other passenger rail services.

Roads

We will accelerate the modernisation of the national road network in the years ahead.

- There will be more emphasis on the roads connecting the regions and on upgrading the national secondary roads. In Dublin, there will be no Eastern bypass, but the motorway ring road will be completed, and an efficient access route to the port will be provided. The Lee Tunnel will be constructed in Cork to enable completion of the Cork ring-road;
- Grants for county roads will be maintained at a high level in the next few years, with priority for routes that are of importance for industry, tourism, and rural development. Additional support will be sought from the expanded EC Structural Funds towards this investment;
- The Roads Bill will be enacted in 1993 leading to the establishment of a National Roads Authority to take overall responsibility for planning and supervising the construction, improvement and maintenance of national roads;
- A new Road Traffic Bill will provide stricter limits and enforcement in relation to drink-driving, and also provide better enforcement of the law on motor insurance. Roadworthiness tests of older vehicles will be phased in. The introduction of a comprehensive system of motor insurance, linked to petrol usage, will be studied.

International Air Transport Links

We attach a high priority to the future development of modern efficient transport links with Britain, Europe and further afield, and will suitably upgrade ports and airports. We will investigate the possibility of further development which could use Shannon as a fast freight facility. We will ensure the commercial future of our national airline as part of our overall air transport policy.

BROADENING OUR DEMOCRACY

ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT

In line with our commitment to open Government and transparency in all Government transactions, we will undertake the following measures:

- Enact an Ethics in Government Bill at an early date;
- The Register of Members' Interests, which will be introduced from February 1993 initially by a Motion that will be put to both Houses of the Oireachtas, will be placed on a statutory basis in the Bill;
- A similar registration of interests will be introduced for senior civil servants, and senior executives of State companies;
- The Government Procedure Instructions as they relate to the registration of gifts to office holders will be incorporated into the legislation;
- We will introduce State funding for political parties, in line with European models;
- We will introduce a system of registration of substantial donations and subscriptions to political parties and candidates;
- Limits will also be imposed on expenditure for each election for each candidate and for political parties.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

We will consider the introduction of Freedom of Information legislation.

OIREACHTAS REFORM

Our proposals will represent the most radical overhaul of Dáil procedures and practices ever undertaken. They are designed to ensure that the Government are fully accountable to the Dáil for their policies, decisions and actions, in line with our shared commitment to open Government.

The reforms, which include the introduction of a comprehensive Committee system, will ensure that the Dáil will have the opportunity to carry out a detailed examination of all the Government's legislative and expenditure proposals. The Sub-Judice rule will be replaced by a new Standing Order, which will relax the existing restriction considerably. A further feature of the proposals will be the introduction of electronic voting in the Autumn 1993 Session.

VOTING PROCEDURES

Electronic voting will be introduced and come into operation after the summer recess in 1993. In the meantime, new voting procedures will be introduced to speed up the taking of divisions.

COMMITTEE SYSTEM

Four Standing Committees of the House (with sub-Committees as appropriate) will be established to consider the Committee Stage of all Bills, Estimates and Supplementary Reports. They will be properly resourced and Chairpersons will be remunerated. The Committees will be established as follows:

SOCIAL AFFAIRS - responsible for Social Welfare, Health, Education, Labour Law, Gaeltacht, Equality.

FINANCE AND GENERAL AFFAIRS - responsible for Taoiseach, Finance, Environment.

ENTERPRISE AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY - responsible for Agriculture and Food, Enterprise and Employment, Marine, Transport and Communications, Energy, Tourism and Trade.

LEGISLATIVE AND SECURITY - responsible for Justice, Law Reform and Defence.

Each Committee will have 30 members. The Committees will be established on a phased basis. The Finance and General Affairs Committee will be established immediately. The remaining Committees will be established by 1st January 1994.

A new Foreign Affairs Committee will be established, and the Procedures and Privilege, Public Accounts, Selection, Joint Services, and State-Sponsored Bodies Committees will remain.

They will also where necessary have general powers of research, investigation and reporting, and will be empowered to send for papers, persons and records. The necessary legislation regarding privilege and the compellability of witnesses will be introduced as a priority.

The introduction of the new Committee System will necessitate many changes in procedures, sitting times, etc. to ensure more effective and efficient use of Dáil time, and the necessary changes will take place following full consultation in the Committee of Procedure and Privileges.

M.E.P.s

Means of involving MEPs in the work of the Oireachtas will be examined as a matter of urgency.

SITTING ARRANGEMENTS

The length of Sessions and Recess periods will be fixed; There will be Friday sittings to deal with Reports from Committees, special debates, legislation, draft regulations and orders.

**ADJOURNMENT/
TOPICAL MATTERS
DEBATES** Under revised arrangements for the Adjournment/Topical Matters Debates, there will be five Adjournment Debates of five minutes each, and the appropriate Minister will have five minutes to reply.

**PASSAGE OF
LEGISLATION** We propose to put time limits on debates on Bills at Second Stage; We will examine the introduction of a procedure to allow individual members to introduce Bills of a non-controversial nature.

**ELECTORAL
REFORM**

We will proceed with a vigorous programme of electoral reform.

The Presidential Elections law will be amended and consolidated, with similar measures to follow on referenda and other electoral codes.

As soon as publication of the 1991 Census figures has been completed, we will appoint an independent Electoral Commission to prepare proposals for revision of the constituencies, which will be set up on a statutory basis, consisting of the Secretary of the Department of the Environment, the President of the High Court, the Clerk of the Dáil and Seanad, and the Ombudsman.

The independent Commission will also prepare proposals for revision of the Euro-constituencies before 1 December, 1993. Legislation will be required, and the ultimate decision will, therefore, rest with the Oireachtas. A uniform electoral procedure, when agreed at EC level, will be introduced.

Under present Constitutional provisions, there is only limited scope to grant voting rights to those temporarily absent from the country. We accept in principle that there should be constitutional change to give voting rights to emigrants, and this issue will be further examined.

**LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
REFORM**

We will accelerate the progress of Local Government Reform and the devolution of funding from Central Government to Local Authorities so as to give greater scope for local initiative in decision-making.

- Three new County Councils in the Greater Dublin Area will be established in 1993 - Fingal, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and South Dublin - to provide a more accessible system and improved local control;
- Statutory controls requiring Local Authorities to obtain Ministerial approval in carrying out various functions will be removed so as to widen the freedom of Local Authorities to act;

- Under new legislation, Local Authorities will have greater autonomy and responsibility for a wide variety of functions such as traffic control, land acquisition and disposal, bye-laws, etc;
- New Regional Authorities will be established in 1993;
- Elected members will be given additional reserved powers;
- The devolution of additional functions to local authorities covering the areas of competence of several Departments will be progressively implemented in the light of the recommendations of the Barrington Report;
- The reform of Local Government at sub-county level will be examined as a matter of urgency with a view to a clear decision, taking account of local finance and devolution of functions, so as to clear the way for elections to be held;
- The European Charter of Local Self-Government will be ratified.

WORKING FOR PEACE

NORTHERN IRELAND

The future welfare of all the people of Ireland is overshadowed by the conflict in Northern Ireland, which causes a heavy toll of human suffering and imposes a pointless and unwanted burden in terms of wasted resources and lost economic opportunity. A key element in the Government's programme will be the search for an end to this conflict. We will mobilise all the resources of the Government which can contribute to this process.

In particular:

- we will seek an urgent resumption of political dialogue to address comprehensively all of the relationships involved in an open and innovative spirit, ready to discuss every issue and to incorporate all agreed changes;
- we will use this process to work towards an accommodation between the two traditions in Ireland, based on the principle that both must have equally satisfactory, secure and durable, political, administrative and symbolic expression and protection, as set out in the Forum Report;
- since the final outcome of such negotiations will need to be acceptable to the people North and South, we will seek any necessary endorsement in a referendum for an agreed package, which achieves a balanced accommodation of the differing positions of the two main traditions on constitutional issues, and creates structures which will bridge divisions and promote reconciliation between the unionist and nationalist traditions and ensure enhanced co-operation between both parts of Ireland;
- unless or until it is transcended by new agreed arrangements, we will continue to operate fully the provisions of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, in close co-operation with the British Government, to deal with issues concerned with Northern Ireland and with relations between the two parts of Ireland;
- recognising that violence, from whatever source, is repugnant to the great majority of people in both parts of Ireland and a major obstacle to political progress, we will seek to combat it through the necessary security measures and co-operation and to the greatest extent possible prevent it;
- the challenges of economic development are a shared concern of both parts of Ireland. We believe that economic co-operation between North and South can be substantially expanded to mutual

advantage and will make this a priority, completing such projects as the Ballinamore-Ballyconnell canal and the modernisation of the Dublin-Belfast railway;

- we will bring forward programmes of action in this area, taking account in particular of the opportunities arising from the advent of the Single Market and the range of EC programmes which can be harnessed to develop a comprehensive and full-fledged partnership between North and South;
- in addition to developing co-operation at official level, we will also seek in this area to build on the substantive North-South co-operation already in place between private sector and voluntary bodies and through the work of the International Fund for Ireland.

DEFENCE

In recent years, substantial improvements have been made in the pay and conditions of the Defence Forces, following implementation of the Gleeson Recommendations, and representative organisations have been established for the Defence Forces.

Our priorities over the next four years are:

- To equip the Defence Forces to carry out their principal missions, notably providing security back-up to civil authorities, especially along the border, as well as to provide Irish participation in international peacekeeping missions, when requested by the UN;
- To seek EC aid to improve and extend the range and effectiveness of our fisheries surveillance;
- To maintain and improve the capacity of the Defence Forces to carry out rescue missions and to give assistance to the civil authorities in emergencies;
- To extend the role of women in the Defence Forces;
- To improve living accommodation for members of the Defence Forces and their families;
- To provide greatly enhanced certification of skills acquired and training provided while members are serving with the Defence Forces;
- To ensure that training provision and facilities for external education and training will be provided on an equal basis as between commissioned and non-commissioned members;
- To implement the "Towards 2000" policy document in respect of Civil Defence.

PLAYING OUR FULL PART - EUROPE & THE WORLD

EUROPE

We are fully committed to working towards European Union. We seek a Europe whose every citizen has an equal part to play, and which promotes peace and disarmament both in Europe and abroad.

We want to be in a position where Ireland can participate in European Economic and Monetary Union from the outset, and derive a fair share of the benefits of the Single Market of 340 million people. We support the opening of negotiations on enlargement.

Incomes in Ireland, per person, are still only 69% of the EC average, and it is essential to counteract the weight of market forces that tends to pull jobs and profits to the centre of what is now a European economy and that can exacerbate disparities in wealth. We support policies designed to reduce the gap between the richer and poorer regions, and aimed at ensuring that the peripheral regions benefit from European economic development, particularly in terms of increased employment.

The Delors II package agreed at Edinburgh will play a major role in this regard. It involves an increase in the EC Budget ceiling from 1.2% of GNP to 1.27% by 1999, and will provide Ireland with funds in the region of £8 billion over the next seven years. The implementation of the Plan and the actual use of the funding should be directed to the areas of maximum benefit in the poorer regions such as Ireland. We will draw up a new National Development Plan in consultation with the sub-regional groups and with the NESF to provide a framework for the best use of the funds. Urgent priorities are set out elsewhere in this document.

We will continue to press for the development of a Community industrial policy that can control State aids in the richer central regions of the Community as a vital aspect of regional development policy. Our aim is to bring jobs to people in Ireland rather than keep bringing people from Ireland to jobs at the centre.

The Social Policy Agreement between Eleven member States will facilitate implementation of the Social Charter. Ireland is a party to the Agreement and fully supports its aim of providing employment, while progressively improving the conditions of those at work and the rights of all European citizens. The Social Charter must become a reality. It will contribute to a strengthening and broadening of the EC equality law, which has been a valuable instrument in the struggle by Irish women for equal treatment in all spheres of life.

We will continue to promote international co-operation in favour of ecologically sustainable development.

We will work for a peaceful world and European order based on international co-operation, the rule of international law, and active participation in international bodies, in particular the UN, the CSCE, and the European Community.

We will support the search for collective security based on the UN Charter and the principles of the CSCE.

Ireland will not be a member of the Western European Union. Observer status carries no such implication, nor does it require us to take part in WEU decisions. We will not become a member of NATO.

Ireland will pursue a policy focused on the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for human rights, disarmament, peacekeeping and Third World development.

We will work with like-minded members of the European Community, and the new members, to strengthen the UN and UN peacekeeping, and to develop the CSCE as a pan-European security forum.

We will work for disarmament, arms control, nuclear non-proliferation, and a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

We will work for restraint in the transfer of conventional weapons and for a Code of Conduct for Conventional Arms Transfers.

We will support the conversion of arms industries to civilian purposes.

We will establish an Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs.

We will put the outcome of any future negotiation that would involve Ireland's participation in a common defence policy to the people in a referendum. This will ensure that Ireland's policy of military neutrality remains unchanged, unless the people themselves decide otherwise.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION

Ireland must recognise the growing plight of the 400 million inhabitants of Africa, who are in danger of drought, famine and disease, while the countries of the North continue to prosper.

Irish aid agencies make the highest voluntary contribution to third World development of any OECD country. In recognition of the value of this, provision will be made for private and corporate contributions to recognised Third World Agencies to be made tax deductible.

We will increase Ireland's official Overseas Development Aid (ODA) to 0.2% in 1993 and by 0.05% each year thereafter, so as to make steady progress towards achieving the UN goal of 0.7% of GNP. By 1997, we should be on a par with most of our EC partners.

Priorities for an expanded aid Budget will be to:

- Expand the scope of activities of the Agency for Personal Service Overseas to increase the number of Irish people working in developing countries. APSO currently has 400 volunteers abroad; with increased funding it could place 2,000 people overseas by 1997. APSO will be asked to produce an urgent study on how we can contribute personnel and expertise to developing countries;
- Expand the Bilateral Aid Programme to include new priority countries, in addition to the four currently targeted (Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia and Lesotho);
- Somalia will need substantial long-term assistance once peaceful conditions are restored. Ireland will play its part with suitable rehabilitation projects;
- We are committed since the Rio Conference to spending new resources on projects covered by Agenda 21 - the plan adopted at the Conference for environmental and development action in the period 1992-2000, as part of our overall ODA budget;
- Our voluntary contributions to the UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNDP and UNHCR are very small and will be increased;
- Co-operation with Non-Governmental Organisations such as Concern, Trócaire and the Red Cross will be strengthened. Funding for co-financed projects will be expanded and the NGOs given a greater role in our ODA;
- New areas of activity which have not been pursued because of lack of funds will be undertaken. These could include Import Support programmes involving Irish produce and Public Works programmes in developing countries;
- The Social Welfare rights and educational entitlements of volunteers will be safeguarded.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND A COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY

HOUSING POLICIES AND PROSPECTS Our overall objective is to ensure that every household has good prospects of decent housing, especially those who cannot afford to provide adequate housing from their own resources.

- We will speed up the implementation of the Plan for Social Housing published in February 1991, making a much more substantial provision for new local authority housing, as well as deploying a wide range of other housing options.

The aim of all our policies will be to reduce the pressure of waiting lists to the greatest extent possible over the life of the Government, to give renewed hope to those families in need of housing.

- As an initial step, the Public Capital Programme in 1993 will include provision for 3,500 new local authority housing starts. We are committed to an appropriate long-term building programme to meet the targets set out above. There will be a special emphasis on inner-city housing needs in our programme. For social and environmental reasons, we will avoid new large greenfield estates as far as possible;
- An accelerated programme of remedial works will be implemented, including £4 million a year to provide sanitary facilities in all the remaining houses where they are needed, in a five-year programme. Special attention will be paid to inner-city flat complexes;
- Particular provision will be made in all our housing policy and plans for the elderly and for people with a disability. As far as practicable, this will provide a broad range of community, sheltered and full care facilities, warden-managed and with audio-links to a monitoring centre both for caring purposes and for security. We will examine the possibility of providing Section 23 type tax incentives as part of such a programme;
- Continuing encouragement will be given to people to own their own homes. This will include the maintenance of mortgage interest relief, and the first-time grant to new house buyers;
- Stamp duty exemption on new houses will be extended from 125 to 150 square metres;
- A new permanent tenant purchase scheme will be introduced in 1993, with appropriate discounts. The proceeds from this scheme will be used to provide additional finance for house building programmes. We will implement a Structural Guarantee Scheme for all purchased council houses;

- We will publish a Charter of Tenants' Rights including:
 - * the provision of an income tax allowance for tenants of private rented accommodation;
 - * the abolition of "distress" (seizure of goods of tenants for default);
 - * a requirement of at least one month's notice to quit;
 - * mandatory rent books;
 - * legally binding standards of accommodation, including sanitary facilities, laid down by regulation;
 - * registration of all private rented dwellings.

HOMELESSNESS

A civilized and humane society can never tolerate a situation where homeless people are living on the streets, particularly in winter. Measures to tackle the problem effectively will be stepped up dramatically:

- A 24 hour referral system will be operated for the homeless seeking accommodation;
- Emergency accommodation prepared by the army at Lower Grangegorman will continue, including the identification of further accommodation, to cater for any overflow;
- We will increase maximum recoupment of local authority expenditure by the Department from 80% to 90%, and the allocation for this purpose will be doubled in 1993;
- Local authorities will undertake a full assessment of the number of homeless persons at 31 March 1993;
- A major new 107 unit development for homeless persons being provided by the Salvation Army with Government assistance will open in Summer 1993 (partially replacing existing accommodation);
- Increased grant assistance will be given by Health Boards to outreach services for the homeless provided by voluntary organisations;
- We will work in close co-operation with the voluntary organisations, Dublin Corporation, other local authorities and the health boards, and provide the necessary capital funding support for new or refurbished hostel accommodation, small specialised hostels for particular groups, and for Day Activity Centres, where required.

SOCIAL WELFARE

We are committed to the establishment of a caring society, where the needs of those living in poverty and others who depend on income maintenance from the State are seriously addressed. It is our intention to move as fast as possible towards a system which provides fast and efficient access to all on the basis of need. Our priorities are:

- To at least maintain the real value of social welfare payments and protect the incomes of pensioners, and to continue the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on Social Welfare;
- We will increase child benefit this year to £20 per month per child. Our target is to raise Child Benefit still further over time, following integration of the tax and social welfare systems;
- We are committed as a long-term policy to the maintenance of the social insurance system.
- We will examine measures to facilitate unemployed people who wish to study or take up further education.
- Anomalies in the system will be removed.
- The administrative requirements of the social welfare system will be simplified and made more compatible with human dignity, and the system of payment will be streamlined. We will work towards the provision of "one-stop shops" combining social welfare services and job and placement facilities, as the key to better services for people who are unemployed.
- The closer integration of the tax and social welfare system will be intensively examined by the Government in consultation with the social partners and the NESF.

HEALTH

We aim to have a caring health service of the highest quality, so that people, particularly the elderly, can be confident that they will be well looked after should they need medical care. Our priorities will be the following:

Waiting Lists

£20 million will be provided in 1993 for a major action programme to reduce waiting lists, where there are long waiting times for admission to hospital. These include orthopaedic surgery (hip replacement and other procedures), ophthalmology (cataract), ear, nose and throat, cardiac surgery (by-pass operations), vascular surgery (varicose veins) and plastic surgery. The aim will be to eliminate waiting lists in excess of 12 months in these specialties, and to set a maximum period of 6 months for children awaiting ENT or eye treatment.

- New Tallaght Hospital** Funding is being provided to enable the construction to start in the Spring of 1993. The hospital will have 467 beds with full state of the art support facilities, and will incorporate the Meath Hospital, the Adelaide Hospital and the National Children's Hospital, Harcourt Street. The ethos and traditions of the Adelaide Hospital will be fully protected in the broad structure and management of the new hospital.
- Patients' Rights** The Patients' Charter will be reviewed in 1993 so as to make any necessary improvements and to ensure that it provides a properly structured system of patients' rights. We will also extend the remit of the Ombudsman to cover patients' rights.
- Further charters, which will be based on legal reform where necessary, will be issued to cover groups such as children, expectant mothers, the elderly, the mentally ill, and people with a physical or mental handicap, as well as the right of patients to their medical records in any situation where they have reason to believe they have been hurt or damaged by medical treatment.
- Special Services For AIDS/HIV Sufferers** Funding will be provided in 1993 to allow a number of important and innovative measures to be introduced and the Report of the National Aids Strategy Committee to be implemented.
- These measures include:
- The appointment of a new Infectious Diseases Consultant post in the Mater and Beaumont Hospitals;
 - The establishment of two community-based Primary Care Clinics in Dublin;
 - The provision of additional services in other acute hospitals and support for existing services in different Health Board areas.
- Other priorities include:
- Education and Prevention Strategies;
 - Care and Management of Persons with HIV/AIDS;
 - Measures to avoid discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS;
 - More widespread availability of condoms.
- Mental Health Services** Legislation will be introduced in 1993 on foot of the Green Paper on Psychiatric Services, to reform the mental health services and update the 1945 Mental Treatment Act, to provide safeguards for persons involuntarily admitted, including judicial protection, and to prohibit applications for involuntary admission made by a spouse in defined situations of marital breakdown.

**The Rights of
People With A
Disability**

We recognise the importance of allowing people with a disability to express their full citizenship. This area is comprehensively dealt with in the Equality Section of the Programme for Government.

Nursing Homes

Provision will be made in the 1993 Estimates to begin the phased implementation of the Health (Nursing Homes) Act.

**Consequences of
the "X" Case**

Following the decision of the people in the Constitutional Referenda in November, arising from the "X" case, it will be necessary to introduce legislation to regulate the position, recognising the sensitivity of the issue throughout the community. The legislation will also cover the right to information.

**Orthodontic And
Dental Services**

We will implement a series of major improvements in the Dental Services to be implemented over a 5-year period which will commence in 1993.

Commencing in 1993, all newly qualified dentists will have to provide 1 year of community vocational service to the Public Dental Services. This will dramatically reduce waiting lists (currently in the region of 19,000 people), and will enable the system to cope with an additional 15,000 adults each year.

Commencing next year also, we will start to phase in free dental services for all children under the age of 16. Graduate Hygienists will do the basic work on scaling and cleaning etc., to further ease the burden on the dental service.

EDUCATION

We regard education as the key to our future prosperity and to equality and equal opportunities for all our citizens.

The process of consultation arising from the Green Paper will be open and democratic.

A White Paper will be published by the end of 1993, and a new Education Act will be published shortly thereafter. The main themes of the Act will be more democracy, devolution, and openness, a genuine and meaningful role for all partners in education, including parents, and a focusing of resources towards disadvantaged areas and groups.

The structures of education will be made more democratic, with an emphasis on devolution. This will involve the development of democratic intermediate structures for the management of first and second level education.

The priorities of our policy will be:

- At primary level, a reduction in the pupil/teacher ratio to 22.1 by September 1996. No class should be bigger than 29 by then;

- The recruitment of 500 additional remedial teachers by September 1996;
- The expansion of the psychological service to cover the whole primary sector to ensure that every child with learning or behavioural difficulties has access to help at the earliest stage;
- We will allocate an increased amount in each of the next five years to implement a planned programme of replacing or refurbishing sub-standard school buildings;
- A major concentration on disadvantaged areas, through increased capitation grants, free books, assistance towards the cost of uniforms, the replacement of sub-standard accommodation, the targeting of resources to ensure good recreational and physical education facilities;
- A proper system of pre-school education, for children between the ages of 2 and 4 years, in disadvantaged areas;
- The development of a nationwide home/school liaison service;
- We will continue to support Gaelscoileanna at primary and secondary level;
- The development of language skills at an earlier age. We will examine the introduction of a third language in the last two years at primary level. In public examinations at second level, major emphasis will be placed on the development of Oral and Aural proficiency with a high proportion of marks assigned for this purpose;
- A fund will be established this year to provide comprehensive Career Guidance counselling in second level schools;
- Our education system will have a major role to play in placing a new and creative emphasis on our own language, culture and heritage and in fostering a proud, confident and outward-looking sense of identity;
- We anticipate that under the new Structural Funds extra resources will be available to assist with the cost of third level education. On that basis, it is the Government's intention to ensure that these additional resources are used to widen the access of all students to third level education in the interest of social justice and equity. The promotion of social justice and equity will include continuing improvement of the Higher Education Grants Scheme to ensure that no student is deprived of access to third-level education, because of his or her financial circumstances;
- Second-chance education will be made generally available through the extension of Youthreach, VTOS, and other vocational schemes,

together with recently introduced grants for mature students at third level;

- The broadening of the curriculum, to foster creativity, critical faculties, political and social awareness, and analytical and problem-solving skills;
- We are committed to providing a comprehensive in-career training programme for teachers. We will achieve a more flexible system, providing opportunities for teachers to join the inspectorate, visiting teacher schemes and other programmes;
- We will protect the independence and traditional democratic decision-making structures of the Universities. We will enact legislation for the third level sector, which will preserve their diversity and enhance their developmental role.

Gender Equity in Education

The promotion of gender equity will be one of the main aims of educational policy, and a programme of affirmative action will include:

- Full curriculum choice for all students;
- The enhancement of career guidance programmes to include a positive programme to encourage women to enter labour markets traditionally closed to them;
- An emphasis in adult education on encouraging women to re-enter the work force;
- The promotion of women's studies in third-level education;
- A sports policy to encourage the participation of women at every level;
- An adequate and comprehensive system of sex education, appropriate to the maturity of students, at second level.

SPORT

We recognise that participation in sport and active leisure pursuits promotes good health and the quality of life to the benefit of the individual and the community.

Participation in sport is educational and contributes to the development of leadership and social skills in individuals. In addition, outstanding performances by Irish sports people in the international arena enhance the country's reputation.

Sports policy will be integral to the Government's education and health policies. We will:

- Increase assistance to the National Governing Bodies of Sport;

- Provide aid for a Programme to assist participants in international competition, including training for the 1996 Olympics;
- Provide funding to increase participation in Sport for All Programmes;
- Implement the Scheme to assist amateur boxing clubs;
- Complete the 1988 Programme for Sports facilities in 50 centres, and prepare a new Programme to complement the existing one, including, for example, the provision of an international hockey pitch at UCD to facilitate the hosting of the 1994 Women's World Hockey Cup;
- Provide a 50 metre national indoor Swimming Pool up to international competition standards in joint venture with the private sector;
- Support the building of an indoor National Sports Stadium.

CONSUMERS' RIGHTS

Our policy will be to strengthen the rights and the protection of consumers. We will enact a Bill to regulate most forms of consumer spending by:

- Introducing new and stronger provisions in the area of moneylending;
- Regulating matters arising during and at the end of credit agreements e.g. early repayment or prohibiting increased charges in the event of default;
- Setting down parameters for the content of credit advertisements and credit agreements;
- The Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs will be strengthened to allow for easier access by consumers throughout the country;
- Consumer Education will be included on all Primary and Post-Primary curricula. Consumer information and awareness for adults will be further developed through the VECs;
- We will introduce a Consumers' Charter to promote rights for all consumers and to ensure either by legislation or voluntary codes that those rights will be upheld and protected;
- The Small Claims Procedure is designed to provide a speedy informal and low cost system to handle consumer claims, and is consumer orientated, and relates to claims such as faulty goods, goods not supplied and bad workmanship. Introduced on a pilot basis in 1992 to Dublin, Swords, Cork and Sligo, it is intended to progressively expand the Small Claims Procedure to other areas and to increase the present maximum limit of a claim from £500 to £1,000;

- We will establish a National Consumers' Council. The functions of the Council will be to oversee Government and EC legislation, and it will provide an annual report to the Minister to outline the requirements and needs of consumers. The Council will consist of representatives from: The Consumers Association of Ireland; Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs; Business interests; Relevant Government Departments.

EQUALITY

We are firmly committed to eliminating inequality for all groups in society that have suffered from disability, disadvantage, or discrimination. A Cabinet Minister will have responsibility for seeing that equality becomes a reality, through institutional, administrative, and legal reform.

EQUAL STATUS LEGISLATION

We will pass Equal Status legislation which will prohibit discrimination and will cover a wide range of grounds, including sex, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, religion, age, handicap, race, colour, nationality, or national or ethnic origins, including membership of the travelling community.

Secondly, the objective of legislation will be to make discrimination unlawful not only in the work place, but also in education, in the provision of goods, facilities, and services (including recreational facilities and services, entertainment, accommodation, transport, and professional services), and in the disposal of accommodation or other premises.

THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

People with a disability are equal citizens of Ireland. But the full expression of that citizenship requires the utilisation of community resources, and a significant injection of political will.

Mental Handicap

Our proposals to enhance the rights of people with a mental handicap include:

- The provision of sufficient money from next year to speed up implementation of the "Needs and Abilities" Report;
- The enactment of legislation to put the rights of people with a mental handicap on a statutory basis, together with a means of redress for people whose rights are ignored;
- Measures to ensure that the parents and families of people with a mental handicap are adequately consulted and involved in the planning and decision-making processes;
- Measures to ensure greater co-operation among the agencies involved, in such areas, for example, as the assembling of financial and other information, and in the most rational and effective use of transport facilities;
- An educational programme based on the principle of choice - integration into mainstream schools and classes for those children whose families want it, and improved staffing and facilities in special schools for others;

- Re-classification of special national schools, as junior and senior schools, to recognise the fact that students attend such schools up to the age of eighteen years of age. Over time, the equipping of all such schools to the same standards as all primary and secondary schools;
- The establishment of a vocational training centre for people with a mental handicap on the campus of one of our Universities, as a pilot project, to enhance the rights and perception of people with a mental handicap, and to encourage and facilitate research into their training and developmental needs.

**Physical And
Sensory Disability**

People with a physical disability have the same talents and abilities as anyone else - they are equal citizens. A major programme of improvements is necessary to end marginalisation and ensure full expression of equality.

We propose:

- A major programme of development of accessible streets and public buildings: standards will be prepared in relation to such areas as dropped kerbs, safe crossings, on-street parking facilities, signs, and street furniture;
- Access to transport: all future replacement stock in the public transport fleet to include an emphasis on accessibility; train and bus stations to be totally accessible. This will involve capital expenditure over the medium term;
- Detailed examination of a scheme to provide an allowance to people with a disability to employ a personal assistant, in cases where they require help at home to maintain independence. Such a scheme can be highly cost-effective, especially when compared with the cost of hospitalisation.

**Employment for
People with a
Disability**

In 1977 the Government introduced a 3% quota for those with a physical or other disability for employment in the public service. Unfortunately, this 3% target has not yet been filled. Unemployment amongst people with disabilities now is estimated at 80%.

We will give a lead by honouring the pledge in the public sector, and will give serious consideration to legislation for a quota throughout the economy. This issue will be high on the agenda for any future talks between Government and the Social Partners.

TRAVELLERS

We are satisfied that the commitment in this programme to the passage of legislation which will enable Ireland to ratify the U.N. Convention on Ending all Forms of Discrimination will be of particular relevance and

benefit to travelling people who experience discrimination at all ages and in most aspects of their lives.

It is important that an acceptable level of accommodation is provided for the many traveller families who are now living in caravans on unserviced roadside sites. We commit ourselves to the target of providing permanent, serviced caravan site accommodation for all traveller families who require such homes by the year 2000. Pending the final realisation of that target, local authorities throughout the State will be required, as a matter of urgency, to provide temporary, serviced caravan sites to those traveller families in need of such facilities.

Some traveller families wish to be accommodated in houses rather than on caravan sites. These families will benefit from the increased numbers of local authority houses due to be built during the lifetime of this Government. To ensure that travellers and all other housing applicants are treated and are seen to be treated on a totally equitable basis in the allocation of local authority housing, all local authorities will be required to introduce an approved points system for housing allocation.

The responsibility for articulating Government policy in relation to travellers and for its implementation is being assigned to the Minister for Equality. The Minister in discharging this role will be assisted by a Task Force, whose terms of reference will include monitoring and pursuing implementation of Government policy on travellers. The Task Force, which will replace the existing Monitoring Committee, will be chaired by a member of the Houses of the Oireachtas and will include elected local councillors, a number of travellers, and persons from the voluntary sector supporting travelling people. The Task Force will have a particular responsibility for ensuring that appropriate and coordinated planning is undertaken so that the targets being set by the Government are achieved, and it will have a small budget and secretarial back-up to assist it in its work.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

In addition to the Equal Status Act, the Minister for Equality will pursue a broad programme of institutional, administrative, and legislative reform aimed at enhancing the rights of women. A detailed programme will emerge from the Government's commitment to act swiftly on the report of the Second Commission on the Status of Women. In the short term, changes will include the following (in addition to the range of reforms already specified in relation to other Government Departments and functions, for which the Minister will have a detailed monitoring role):

- A major programme of family law reform, culminating in a referendum on divorce by 1994, modernisation of the law of nullity; placing a monetary value on women's work in the home for the

purposes of property distribution; extension of barring order legislation; legislation to give each spouse an equal share in the family home and household belongings; increase in the age of marriage to 18; enhancement of the rights of parties in non-marital unions;

- Full implementation of the Child Care Act, 1991;
- A major expansion of child care facilities;
- The promotion of women in public life by State funding of a women's officer in all political parties;
- Increased funding for Rape Crisis Centres;
- Provision of adoptive maternity leave;
- Examination of the extension of the principle of maternity leave, to cover paternity leave on the basis of a sharing of parental responsibility;
- New legislation on employment equality, and more effective provisions on sexual harassment;
- Incentives for employers to introduce increased flexibility in hours of employment and to provide childcare facilities in the workplace;
- A radical programme of affirmative action in appointing women to State boards, with the objective of achieving a minimum of 40% of both men and women among the direct Government nominees, as recommended by the Commission on the Status of Women, within four years;
- The introduction of a "gender-proofing" policy for all legislation and other major government decisions to assess impact on women's rights and interests. In the legislative process, each of the Committees will have this specific task;
- A review of the small number of areas in the public service where women are excluded from employment, e.g. certain aspects of defence and justice, to ensure full equality of opportunity;
- A review of upper age limits for employment in the public and private sectors in the context of the return of women to work.

EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTION

Legislation will be introduced in 1993 to bring our law into conformity with the European Convention on Human Rights.

EQUAL ACCESS TO THE LAW

It shall be the responsibility of the Minister for Equality to administer a system of civil legal aid, to ensure equal access to the law irrespective of income.

The present Scheme will be placed on a statutory footing, and additional funding will be provided to facilitate an expansion of the scheme. We will also examine the possibility of extending civil legal aid to tribunals, such as the Social Welfare Appeals Tribunal and following consultation with the social partners the Employment Appeals Tribunal.

CRIME AND CRIMINAL LAW REFORM

CRIME AND VANDALISM

We will introduce a radical set of measures, and will provide the resources, to fight crime, including white-collar crime, and vandalism. A new broad-based approach to crime prevention will be adopted in urban areas, where particular law and order problems are being experienced. A five-year corporate strategy for the Gardaí to enhance their capacity to fight crime in present day conditions will be drawn up and implemented.

Specific measures to be taken will include:

- An increase in the number of Gardaí, through more use of civilians and accelerated recruitment of extra Gardaí;
- An increase in the Garda presence on city streets and the use of the most modern technology to combat city-centre crime;
- Resources will be provided to combat the problems of drugs and drug-related crimes in co-operation with local communities;
- Further development of the community policing approach, including development of the Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch programmes, an increase in the number of community Gardaí and extension of community policing in rural areas, and we will examine the establishment at local level of Garda liaison committees to involve local communities and Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the prevention of crime;
- Implementation of the findings of the Interdepartmental Group on Urban Crime and Disorder, including continuing positive discrimination in the allocation of resources to areas of urban deprivation;
- The establishment of a strategic planning unit to monitor and assess the causes of crime and the strategies to be adopted to deal with them;
- Further enhancement and expansion of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Service, and further development of programmes to divert potential young offenders away from crime;
- Greater use of non-custodial penalties for non-violent crime;
- Finalisation and implementation of a new set of aims, objectives, and agreed priorities for the prison system, including a programme of positive sentence management and a timetable for the implementation of recommendations of the Whitaker Report on Prison Reform.

We will also bring forward a comprehensive programme of criminal law reform. As part of this programme we will:

- Bring forward legislation providing for the review of unduly lenient sentences, a requirement that the impact on the victim be taken into account before sentencing, and a power on the part of the Courts to require offenders to pay compensation to the victims of crime. Consideration will be given to the provision of legal aid for victims of crime, in cases where severe personal trauma is involved;
- Revise and strengthen the law on serious fraud and on offences of dishonesty generally, in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Fraud and the Law Reform Commission;
- Introduce a modern Juvenile Justice Bill;
- Introduce legislation to deal with street crime;
- Update the legislation on offences against the person, including more appropriate sentencing for the use of weapons;
- Revise the law relating to fines, and provide for their indexation;
- Clarify the law on powers of arrest and abolish the out-dated division of crimes into felonies and misdemeanours.

OTHER LAW REFORM MEASURES

More generally, we will proceed with a phased programme of modernisation of our laws and the progressive repeal of old pre-independence statutes. We will also progressively legislate to implement Council of Europe and United Nations Conventions which have not yet been ratified and will ensure that full effect is given in Irish law to the European Convention on Human Rights.

In particular, we will bring forward legislation:

- To provide for review of alleged cases of miscarriage of justice and to give a statutory right to compensation for such miscarriage;
- To reform the outdated law on insanity as a defence, and introduce a new defence of diminished responsibility;
- To introduce stronger controls, including judicial supervision, on telephone tapping and interception of communications;
- To improve freedom of expression, by updating the law of defamation and contempt of court;
- To introduce tighter controls on charities and street collections, in line with the recommendations of the Costello Committee Report on Fundraising for Charitable Purposes;

- To improve the service provided to the public by the Land Registry and Registry of Deeds by converting them into a commercial semi-State body;
- To reform and update the law on Occupiers' Liability in line with the commitment given in the PESP;
- To amend the law on business tenancies;
- To introduce improved legal arrangements for the management of the affairs of elderly people, especially those suffering from Alzheimer's Disease;
- To amend the Solicitor's Act to provide for greater protection for clients of solicitors;
- To give effect to international conventions on drug trafficking, torture, recovery abroad of maintenance, money laundering, and mutual assistance in criminal matters.

THE COURTS

We believe the independence of the Courts must be enhanced. We will establish a Judicial Commission comprising the Presidents of the Courts, and the Attorney General. The Judicial Commission will be independent and will examine and make recommendations to Government on:

(a) Overall management of the courts and the streamlining of court services,

(b) The fixing of the courts' financial needs for submission to the Oireachtas and the fixing of court charges,

(c) The review and reform of Court practices.

We will improve the Courts service and will provide the facilities for greater access by the public to the Courts.

- We will introduce whatever further special arrangements for dealing with family law cases may be needed in the light of recommendations to be made by the Law Reform Commission on the subject of family courts;
- We will ease the workload of the Supreme Court, and improve access to it, by providing legal researchers for the Court and by establishing a new Court of Appeal with civil and criminal jurisdiction, staffed by full-time judges;
- We will propose measures aimed at reducing legal costs;
- We will examine the feasibility of prohibiting criminal convictions on the basis of uncorroborated confession evidence.

**REFUGEES AND
ASYLUM SEEKERS**

Our policy towards treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants will meet the highest international standards. Procedures will be introduced to guarantee rights of hearings, appeal, access to legal advice and access to the courts.

**DRAFTING
LEGISLATION**

Additional legal experts will be recruited by the Attorney General's Office to draft legislation to the extent that an increased programme of legal reform may require. Additional law reform measures are set out in the section of this Programme which deal with equality.

DEVELOPING AND PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

We will encourage the development of a modern, efficient, high quality, competitive agriculture and food industry attuned to market needs and with improved value added content. Our aim will be to maintain the maximum number of viable farm households and to maximise and maintain the employment possibilities in agriculture and food and in rural areas. We will seek to create favourable economic conditions for the agri-food sector by maintaining low inflation and pursuing a policy designed to lower interest rates.

We intend to ensure that Ireland's vital interests are protected under the reformed Common Agricultural Policy during the conclusion of the GATT negotiations and to see that the result is equitable as between all parties.

It is our intention to implement a development programme for the food industry following consideration, early in 1993, of the forthcoming recommendations of the Expert Group on the Food industry, set up in pursuance of a Culliton Report recommendation and a PESP undertaking.

We will make maximum use of new EC Structural Funds to:

- Develop the food industry in line with the recommendations of the Expert Group by means of a specific Operational Programme for the Food Industry;
- Support the on-farm investment necessary to develop more efficient and viable farms;
- Introduce an effective programme to protect the environment from pollution of agricultural origin;
- Develop an effective Farm Retirement Scheme;
- Re-organise, subject to EC Commission agreement and the results of the work of the Appeals Panel, the Disadvantaged Areas Scheme in particular through extension, reclassification, and the introduction of a third category of disadvantaged area and through a gradual increase in payment rates;
- Intensify the Programme available to support rural development initiatives including alternative farm enterprises, agri-tourism, and local community-based enterprises generally, and
- Ensure that State programmes to promote Irish food products on export markets will be intensified, operated in a co-ordinated way and adequately financed;

- Increased funding will be provided for the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme, with particular emphasis on marginalised rural areas.

Through a combination of Exchequer and EC funds, the Programme will provide the funds necessary to underpin an effective research, advisory and training programme through Teagasc.

In order to further improve the land transfer environment for the family farm, the Government will increase substantially the thresholds under the CAT, and will adjust the rules on the installation aid to ensure that the scheme can be applied as effectively as possible.

We will actively pursue the case presented to the EC Commission to provide substantial aid towards the cost of upgrading on-farm milk production facilities and to propose Community finance for an effective milk quota restructuring scheme and compensation in respect of the 4.5% suspended quotas. In the light of the outcome of the GATT negotiations, we will review the income support effects of the structural measures and will pursue with the Commission the necessary improvements and in particular the question of a "disadvantaged farms programme".

In the operation of the new CAP measures, we intend to establish individual base area entitlements for grain growers and to ensure that, as far as possible, compensation levels reflect yield variations. Priority categories of farmers, including new entrants, will receive special consideration through establishment of national reserves in the beef and sheep premium schemes and in the new cereals régime.

Special treatment for priority categories will be maintained in the new milk quota arrangements. We are committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure that the CAP compensatory premia are paid as quickly and with as little administrative difficulty as possible and that effective and fair controls in respect of all CAP schemes are properly in place.

With regard to Bovine T.B., it is our intention to implement a fully coherent 4-year eradication programme with the support of Community funds and subject to the conditions attaching to those funds. The law on illegal substances will be rigidly enforced. In the overall animal health context, we will provide the necessary resources to ensure that this country maintains the highest possible status in order to keep full access to all international markets.

We will accept and implement the recommendations of the Tribunal of Enquiry into the Beef Processing Industry.

THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Tourism has a proven potential for additional large scale job creation, which we are determined to realise, with beneficial effects spread throughout the country. We will aim over five years to increase foreign earnings in real terms by 50% and provide an additional 35,000 jobs.

We will proceed with the implementation of key recommendations of the Report of the Tourism Task Force on the following basis:

Structures

- We will establish a Department of Tourism and Foreign Trade to serve as the central focal point for development of the sector, with responsibility for overall national tourism policy and for CERT;
- Formal mechanisms will be examined to allow the tourism industry, through its representative body, to participate in partnership with Government in the formulation of policy for development, job creation and growth of the industry. The establishment of a Tourism Council will be considered in the light of the role, function and scope of the new Department of Tourism and Foreign Trade;
- The new County Enterprise Partnership Boards will have a significant role in tourism promotion in each county. The continued need in addition for regional co-ordinating mechanisms for tourism will be reviewed in the light of the Task Force's recommendations.

Marketing

- Bord Fáilte will continue to have primary responsibility for coordinating overseas marketing and promotion;
- Increased support will be sought for overseas marketing in the next round of EC Structural Funds;
- A major effort will be made to reduce seasonality, in particular by a greater focus on long-haul markets.

Product Development

- Specialised product development companies in areas such as golf, angling, and equestrian activities will be established on a joint venture basis between the public and private sectors;
- Substantially increased funding for tourism infrastructure and tourism development will be sought in the next round of EC Structural Funds;
- Recommendations in relation to VAT and investment incentives will be examined with a view to implementation over the next five years, subject to budgetary and general tax policy considerations;
- Heritage attractions will be developed, and access to them improved, with due regard to environmental considerations, throughout the country;

- The potential of tourism based on the extended family clan will be further developed.
- Accommodation**
- All tourist accommodation will require to be licensed or registered in accordance with objective standards;
 - EC funding together with mortgage financing from the banks on a commercial basis will assist the provision of budget accommodation, especially in those areas where a greater supply is required.
- Environment**
- Local authorities in coastal counties will be encouraged to continue participation in the Blue Flags Scheme, and to bring and keep as many beaches as practicable up to that standard;
 - In all planning and development, efforts will be made to make the urban and rural environment as attractive as possible both for visitors and for ourselves.
- Access Transport**
- We will seek to extend inter-airline agreements, such as exist with Australia and New Zealand, to improve access between Ireland and more distant parts of the world;
 - We will continue to press for EC aid for mobile assets, especially large modern ferries to the continent and airline fleet replacements;
 - We will press the British authorities, in the context of improving the European Community's transport infrastructure, to develop and modernise their ports in conjunction with our own programme of port modernisation;
 - The budget for roads in tourism areas will be significantly increased under the next National Development Plan.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Protection and enhancement of the environment will be a key component of Government policy.

We will build on and speed up implementation of the 10-year National Environment Action Programme, including the following measures:

- Comprehensive legislation on waste management will be introduced. This will provide support for the development of a national strategy on recycling following the recent publication of a major consultancy study on this question. It will include a statutory obligation on local authorities to prepare a recycling plan for their functional area;
- The EC Directive on Freedom of Access to Environmental Information will be fully implemented. ENFO, the Environmental Information Service, will continue to develop its services outside of Dublin;

- Dublin smog regulations will be extended to other major urban centres, where necessary;
- A special emphasis will be placed on the protection of wild-life and on the preservation of habitats, including the fullest implementation of EC Directives;
- There will be legislation to place the scheme of Areas of Scientific Interest on a statutory basis, with particular protection for peatlands and wetlands.

Environmental Protection Agency

Following enactment of legislation in 1992, we will press ahead with the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), with its headquarters in Johnstown Castle, County Wexford. The new Agency will bring greater cohesion and professionalism to environmental administration in Ireland. The following will be among the Agency's priority tasks:

- strict environmental regulation of large / complex industry and other processes;
- supervision of local authority operations, including tight controls on landfill sites to minimise visual impact and disruption of the locality, and the development of guidelines/advice on environmental impact assessment, with the regulations being strengthened;
- Liaison with the European Environment Agency, when established, for which the EPA will act as Irish national focal point;
- Other provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 will be implemented, including new and extensive controls on noise pollution.

Environmental Infrastructure

- The new EC Cohesion Fund, which is designed to facilitate implementation of Community environmental requirements, will provide important support in implementing the Environmental Action Programme. In particular, the Cohesion Fund will finance an accelerated programme of investment in environmental infrastructure, relating to water, sewage treatment and solid waste disposal.

Sustainable Development

- In accordance with the conclusions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), all major sectoral policies will be required to adhere to the principle of sustainable development. In particular, environmental considerations will be integrated into the following key areas identified in the EC 5th Environment Action Programme 1993-1997: industry, transport, energy, tourism and agriculture.

Sellafield

We will investigate the possibilities of using Community and International Law to hasten the winding down and closure of Sellafield, and particularly the new reprocessing facility, the opening of which is increasingly in doubt.

Planning

Changes in planning law will be considered which would foster incorporation of an arts dimension to defined categories of buildings, in particular, those to which the public have access.

All Government Departments and State agencies, including the Office of Public Works, will be required by law to comply, in general, with the information procedures contained in the planning laws, including the placing of public advertisements, and the lodgement of detailed plans with the local planning authority for public inspection. Two months will be allowed for public observations and/or objections to be lodged, and for design changes to be sought by the planning authority in accordance with the Development Plan for the area, for communication to the agency concerned.

In the case of local authorities the final decision will rest with the councillors. Departments and State agencies will be directed to comply, to the maximum possible extent consistent with the needs of the service that they must provide, with the requirements of good planning and to take due account of the legitimate interests and wishes of the population living in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Building Regulations

New building regulations came into effect on 1 June 1992, establishing a statutory building code on a national basis for the first time. A landmark achievement of the Regulations is the extensive requirements they impose on designers and developers of new buildings to provide for access and ease of circulation of the disabled. Implementation of these requirements will be vigorously pursued.

FORESTRY

We consider afforestation to be a key industry which exploits the potential of our natural resources and has the capacity to create sustainable employment. We propose:

- The continued expansion of the planting programme with a target to increase planting to 30,000 hectares and to maintain this level to the year 2000;
- To maintain and further expand wood production, which is now close on two million cubic metres a year;
- That Coillte Teo, which has achieved a highly successful restructuring of the public sector, will continue to make rapid strides to become a fully commercial stand-alone forestry company, and that emphasis

will also continue to be placed on the private sector where farmers and other landowners have already increased their planting by more than four and a half times in recent years;

- That assistance will continue to be maximised from the European Community which has already allocated close to IR£90 million for the development of Irish forestry in the period 1989-1993.
- To build up the potential for downstream employment from processing forest output, by way of both timber and increased thinnings which will provide the raw material for expansion of existing fibre board plants, and the development of a new strand board plant. Thinnings have also a potential use as biofuel in the energy generation sector, and there is a potential for a pulpwood mill in Ireland.

The development of forestry will be accompanied by the continued application of environmental criteria, which will allow forestry to expand without encroaching in any significant way on water and landscape amenities. Particular encouragement will be given to the planting of broadleaved trees. Particular emphasis will be given to the protection of trees and woodlands, especially the remaining oak forests.

ENERGY

An integrated energy utilisation policy will be developed. Our energy strategy will be aimed at securing a reliable and competitive supply of energy, involving the following:

- The continuation of investment in new electricity generating capacity to meet high rates of growth in demand, reflecting the strong economic performance of the Irish economy. The recently approved 125 MW Phase One development at Poolbeg has the capacity for further enhancement, including a high efficiency combined cycle operation;
- In order to limit the need for such additional investment, there will be greater use of combined heat and power (CHP). Electricity and heat are two of the most important expense items for social welfare recipients and health care institutions. An investment programme with the assistance of EC funds can secure major reductions in the cost of these items, with the benefits focused on the weaker sectors of the community.

We will therefore rapidly increase the number of hospitals fitted with CHP units, with any surplus sold back to the ESB. We will also rapidly introduce the production of electricity from municipal waste, locating the plants where the by-product heat can be employed in local authority housing;

- Energy conservation will become an important Government priority, and will be promoted in all sectors of the economy. All public buildings will be required to introduce an energy conservation programme. Local Authorities will be required to draw up Energy Conservation Programmes for their own buildings and housing schemes. New regulations for a “thermal efficiency audit” will be drawn up and implemented in the context of the planning laws;
- We will examine other conservation measures, including the possibility of the production in Ireland of long-life high efficiency light bulbs, for fitting in local authority houses initially, and the question of Bord Gáis Eireann increasing the number of condensing high efficiency boilers in service for both domestic and institutional use, so as to reduce heating bills by up to a third;
- Advances in technology, including gasification, will allow more extensive use of peat for electricity generation. Bord na Mona are currently examining the feasibility of constructing a 120 MW peat fired station in the Midlands, which would use 1 million tonnes of peat each year and generate about 350 jobs. We are committed to supporting this project, if it is feasible;
- The use of coal gasification technology will also be accelerated with possible financial assistance from the European Community. Gasification technology will include a possible application to the disposal of municipal and industrial waste;
- The use of appropriate alternative energy sources will be promoted, including quick growing forestry (biomass) and other environmentally-friendly energy sources, such as small hydro-electric stations, wave energy, and wind power. A study is currently being undertaken to assess the possible role of the Shannon Region as a clean energy transportation centre on a world scale;
- The gas interconnector between Ireland and Scotland is scheduled for commissioning in late 1993, and negotiations are on-going for the provision of an electricity interconnector between Ireland and Britain;
- Extra diligence will be exercised in relation to energy and the environment by minimising emissions of carbon dioxide, nitrogen and sulphur from industrial processes, including electricity generation;
- Oil and gas exploration will be strongly promoted, and there will be investment to upgrade the Whitegate Refinery, in order to remove the cost penalty from the Irish economy.

OUR MARINE RESOURCES

Ireland is the third largest maritime country in the EC. This valuable natural resource has great potential for wealth and job creation. We will develop our indigenous marine resources to exploit their full potential. The recently founded Marine Institute will have a major role in this development.

Reform of the EC Common Fisheries Policy will be a high national priority. Our objectives are to obtain the extra resources needed for the fishing industry which will create jobs in hard-pressed coastal communities. There are three main target areas:

- To modernise and increase our fishing fleet;
- To obtain increased fish quotas and keep inshore fisheries for Irish fishermen;
- To obtain EC aid towards surveillance costs, as Ireland owns and patrols 16% of EC waters.

Plans have been published for the development of aquaculture and inland fisheries involving investment targets of £63 million over five years and a potential of 3,600 jobs.

We will develop and implement a major programme of investment in harbour facilities assisted by the EC to cater for increasing demand and new designs of ships as well as for the requirements of a modern fishing industry. New Cohesion and extra Structural Funds will be used for port and harbour development to boost exports and increase Ireland's competitiveness.

Port investment will be concentrated in key commercial freight and passenger ports, Cork, Dublin, Dun Laoghaire, Rosslare, the Shannon Estuary and Waterford. We will ensure these ports have appropriate port capacity and high quality infrastructure, strategically located in relation to sea corridors and the main internal transport arteries, having regard to the upcoming opening of the Channel Tunnel, and also to facilitate the introduction of new ship handling and shipping technology.

Other measures will include:

- New institutional organisation of harbours to reflect the needs of modern commercial ports;
- A review of the fiscal and regulatory arrangements for merchant shipping and ferries to ensure maximisation of the job opportunities in this sector, and the improvement of services available to customers;
- Integration of the shipping, fishing, aquaculture and marine leisure strategies with industrial development strategy in ancillary industry;

- Implementation of policies designed to minimise and eliminate marine and freshwater pollution;
- Increased emphasis to be given to coastal protection programmes in the light of the growing problem of coastal erosion.

The commitment to improvement of safety on merchant vessels, fishing boats and pleasure craft will be intensified. The newly established Irish Marine Emergency Service (IMES/Slánú) will play the lead role in the co-ordination, intervention and planning of the saving of lives at sea. This role will be discharged in partnership with the voluntary agencies particularly RNLi and the various statutory authorities, the Naval Service, the Air Corps and the Gardaí.

COMMUNICATIONS

Broadcasting

Our policy will be to ensure that Irish TV and Radio Programming is of the highest quality and that it remains the preferred choice of a majority of Irish viewers by:

- Repeal of the "cap" contained in the 1990 Broadcasting Act, thus enabling RTE to improve the range and quality of the public service broadcasting that it can offer to the Irish public;
- Provision for access to broadcasting for the independent sector, thus enabling them to increase output and jobs in the audiovisual industry and giving them a firm home base to enable them to compete internationally;
- Measures to ensure that commercial local radio broadcasting remains viable;
- Ensuring that Irish advertisers have access, at a reasonable cost, to a strong domestic TV advertising medium.

Measures to achieve the latter objectives will be part of the terms of reference of the White Paper on the Film Industry.

Telecommunications

Our aim will be to ensure that Irish business and domestic subscribers have a first class Telecommunications service, at prices which are comparable with international competitors. This will involve measures:

- To re-balance appropriately Telecom Eireann's International, Domestic, Trunk and Local Call tariffs, and to ensure that the service provided meets the highest standards of competition;
- To encourage and support Telecom Eireann in developing their overseas business, with a view to enabling Telecom to become a significant international Telecom organisation.

Postal Service

To provide Irish business and domestic customers with a first class postal service at an affordable price, our policy will be:

- To ensure that An Post continues to operate on a countrywide basis a commercial postal service in accordance with Section 13 of the 1983 Act;
- To encourage management and unions to continue their efforts to successfully conclude the negotiations which are continuing under the general auspices of the Labour Relations Commission;
- To contribute to the development of a policy at EC level, which ensures that the Irish public will continue to enjoy a first class postal service.

FOSTERING OUR LANGUAGE, CULTURE & HERITAGE

AN GHAELIGE AGUS AN GHAELTACHT

Is cuid lárnach de shaol agus de chultúr na hÉireann í an Ghaeilge, a bhí mar theanga dhúchais ag formhór ár muintire anuas go dtí an céad seo caite.

Is é an spriocaidhm náisiúnta i leith na Gaeilge ná go mbeadh formhór ár muintire fíor-dhátheangach. Ní mór do gach dream den phobal a gcion féin a dhéanamh chun an aidhm sin a bhaint amach. Ní féidir leis an Rialtas amháin an cúram sin a chomhlíonadh ach is den riachtanas é go mbeadh lán-tacaíocht le fáil ón Rialtas. Caithefear an bhá atá ag an bpobal leis an nGaeilge, ach nach ndéantar beart dá réir go minic, a shaothrú sa tslí go mbeidh siad sásta iarracht phearsanta leanúnach a dhéanamh chun úsáid na Gaeilge a leathadh.

Cé go raibh sé mar pholasaí ag gach Rialtas ó bunaíodh an Stáit an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn, is léir go bhfuil gá le céimeanna a ghlacadh anois chun borradh úr-nua a thabhairt don teanga.

The Irish language has an integral and creative role to play in defining Irish identity. We accept that the State must play a leading role in expanding the degree of bilingualism in Irish society and, in particular, in achieving greater usage of Irish.

Bord na Gaeilge will prepare planned programmes of action for these purposes to be implemented by Government Departments and public sector agencies. The programmes will provide in particular for:

- ensuring the availability of the necessary bilingual resources in the public service;
- codes of bilingual administrative practice;
- increased visibility of Irish in a bilingual context;
- increasing the usage of Irish in the Gaeltacht; and
- removing obstacles to the greater use of Irish by citizens and actively creating opportunities for such usage.

We will regularly review progress in the implementation of these action programmes and will revise aims and targets in the light of these reviews.

Teilifís Na Gaeilge Glacaimid leis an riachtanas atá ann chun seirbhís theilifíse trí Ghaeilge a bhunú do phobal na Gaeilge agus an Gaeltachta.

We are committed to the establishment of Teilifís na Gaeilge as a third channel with limited broadcasting hours. The start-up costs will be provided from the accumulated surplus in excess of the “cap”, which will

be removed. The aim will be to provide two to three hours Irish language broadcasting a day, with some element of subsidy for running costs from a continuation of the lottery, EC and/or licence fee. Provision will be made in the 1993 Estimates.

The new channel will be headquartered in the Connemara Gaeltacht, and will broadcast nationwide. Initially, Irish language programming will be provided by RTE and by independent producers.

The new channel could also be used for other public service programming purposes which cannot be adequately catered for on the existing channels - distance educations, foreign language material, and Oireachtas coverage.

State Services Through Irish

Má táthar chun úsáid na Gaeilge a leathadh, ní mór go mbrathfadh an pobal go gcuirfí fáilte roimh aoin saoránach a bhreadh ag iarraidh gnó a dhéanamh leis an Státchóras trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Measures will be taken to improve the availability of State services through Irish and bilingually, generally and especially for the people of the Gaeltacht. An initial list of services will be drawn up by all Ministers in 1993 as services that will be provided through Irish or bilingually by the State, with further services being added to the list by the end of 1994.

Oideachas Trí Ghaeilge

Chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn, is den riachtanas é go mbeadh tacaíocht laidir aici ón gcóras oideachas.

The recommendations in the Green Paper on Education regarding the increased allocation of marks for oral and comprehension abilities in Irish in State examinations at second level will be fully implemented. We will continue to promote and support Gaelscoileanna outside the Gaeltacht and to provide them with all the necessary back-up support, especially textbooks and teaching aids.

An Gaeltacht

Is sa Gaeltacht is mó a labhartar an Ghaeilge mar ghnáth-theanga pobail agus caithfear iarrachtaí ar leith a dhéanamh chun í a chaomhnú agus a fhorbairt.

The linguistic, cultural, social, physical and economic development of the Gaeltacht will be intensified, particularly with the aid of EC Structural Funds. Employment creation, which is one of our primary aims, is also of vital importance in the Gaeltacht. Udaras na Gaeltachta will intensify its efforts not only in the creation of new jobs but also in safeguarding existing employment.

THE ARTS

In order to ensure the fullest development of our cultural life, and to untap the potential that exists in abundance throughout Ireland, the Arts Council will be asked to operate on a co-ordinated 3-yearly plan for funding of the arts. As part of that planning, there will be a requirement for improved co-ordination between capital expenditure (e.g. national lottery) and arrangements for the current funding of arts projects.

- Funding for the Arts Council will be increased to the level envisaged by the PESP. In 1993, £11.5 million will be provided for the Arts Council in the Estimates, an increase of £1.5 million over 1992. The PESP target of £12-13 million will be achieved in 1994, and at least maintained at that level in real terms in subsequent years. The current and capital funding needs of our National Cultural Institutions (National Library, Museums, Galleries, Archives, Theatre, etc.) will continue to receive a high priority, so as to enable them in many cases to complete modernisation and refurbishment programmes. We will intensify efforts to obtain EC funding for the arts, with particular reference to Article 128 on Culture in the Maastricht Treaty;
- Local authorities will be required to spend 1% of their budget for capital projects on artistic embellishment. An arts dimension will be incorporated into every Government building project. There will be changes in our planning laws which will require incorporation of the arts dimension to different categories of buildings. Where private sector projects not falling into the categories above benefit from significant tax advantages, there shall be a similar requirement;
- Funding of the arts by local authorities will be on a planned basis. As with planning and development, local authorities will be required to produce a cultural development plan, to guide planned priorities for arts funding for a number of years;
- The regional authorities envisaged in our local government reform plan will co-ordinate decisions on major items of expenditure (e.g., theatres);
- Each local authority will be encouraged to appoint an Arts Officer with requisite staff organised in an Arts Department;
- Arts will be part of overall job creation strategy. The cost to create a job in the arts is considerably less than in any other sector of the economy;
- We will seek to promote artists of exceptional talent, including grants for foreign study. The Arts Council Bursary Scheme to provide grants for artists of exceptional talent will be extended;

- We will maintain and expand the current favourable tax régime for artists;
- Changes in planning law will require incorporation of an arts dimension to defined categories of buildings; in particular those to which the public have access.

OUR HERITAGE

- We will complete the Cultural Quarter in Dublin's Temple Bar;
- We will enhance the protection for listed buildings including the placing of the system of listed buildings on a statutory basis;
- We will radically overhaul the national monuments legislation including automatic protection for defined categories of monuments;
- We will prohibit the giving of consent to the demolition of monuments without approval by the Oireachtas in exceptional circumstances and after a full archaeological excavation;
- We will undertake a full national audit of archaeological sites;
- The National Heritage Council will be placed on a statutory footing.

THE FILM INDUSTRY

We will actively promote the development of the film industry in Ireland. Film-making has a high employment content and could have enormous downstream benefits for the arts generally in Ireland. We will build on the reputation established in films like "My Left Foot", "The Field", "The Commitments" and "Hear My Song", which have all so greatly enhanced Ireland's image abroad.

- A White Paper on the Film Industry will be prepared to identify the areas of greatest potential and the support measures needed. There will be intensive consultation with all branches of the industry as part of this process;
- We will consider the re-introduction of the Film Board;
- Consideration will be given to increasing and extending existing tax incentives for the film industry;
- We will create a new regulatory framework for broadcasting, which will include opportunities for the independent production sector to feed into the national station.

CONCLUSION

Fianna Fáil and Labour are equally and strongly committed to the full implementation over a five-year period of this Programme for a Partnership Government, of a kind not seen before in this country.

The policies it contains are radical and exciting, and have been contributed by both Parties. They are intended to lead to the transformation of our society and its institutions.

We aim over the next five years to reverse decisively the unacceptable trend towards a very high level of unemployment, and to tackle with determination our major social problems. We want to establish hope and confidence in the future.

We have to combine more successfully than any of us have done in the past real and substantial economic progress with a strong sense of social justice, equality, and caring. Peace in our country, taking our future place in the European Union, and actively contributing to a better world for all, are also at the top of our priorities.

We know that we cannot achieve our objectives on our own. That is why we are seeking to establish the widest possible consensus and participation in decision-making at national and local level, so that the energies and ideas of every part of our community are harnessed in trying to achieve tangible progress for all.

The hallmark of our Government will be openness and accountability, and we will reform and modernise our institutions and laws. We will foster a flourishing culture and a healthy environment.

In all that we do, we will try to bring out and reflect our national character and spirit at its best.