



The Historical Development
of
Irish Youth Work
(1850 - 1985)

Author: Louise Hurley
Typing & Presentation: Claire Sheehy

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Louise Hurley, 1992

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INTRODUCTION

The origins of youth work are very far from clear, but can be traced back to developments in community work generally.

Peter Baldock (1974) asserts that community work had its origins in the 1920s, where it served as a vehicle for the progressive evolution of the people to self-government in the context of economic and social change. Leaper (1971) suggests that the term community development has been taken from the context of colonial days, when administrators sought to equip indigenous communities for self-dependence. Primarily a rural construct, programmes were developed that included two aspects: external 'expert' assistance and 'internal local resources'. Fundamental to this approach was the *belief* that the local community desired improvement and that their wishes were incorporated into the development of programmes.

Baldock (1974) argues that the development of community work has taken a number of different emphases, divided, broadly speaking, into four distinct (but often overlapping) phases. The early period, starting in the 1880s and probably lasting until the 1920s is characterised by a Church oriented social service type intervention. This period was marked at the start of the period by the establishment of settlements in working-class areas of major cities. During this period, community work was viewed as an aspect of social work (Wilkinson,1976).

The second phase which spanned from 1920 to 1960 is characterised by:

"The emergence of a separate range of skills and concerns. It was closely associated with the increasing part played by central and local government in urban development."
(Baldock,1974,p.3)

Baldock categorises this phase as:

"an ideological response to the creation of massive new residential areas in the inter-war period and a reflection of the general anxiety to return to what was taken for normality after the social crisis of the 1930s and the Second World War."
(Baldock,1974,p.3)

The third phase started in the 1960s and is argued to be:

"a reaction against the neighbourhood/community idea which had provided the ideological basis for the second phase".
(Baldock,1974,p.3)

Thomason (1969) contends that the most significant development of this period was the increasing stress on professionalism.

The fourth phase has its origins in the 1970s, and places stress on a political dimension. Within this phase the emphasis identified is that of planning change in consultation with local communities as a partnership between those communities and government agencies (Skeffington, 1969). The following quotation from a community action journal reflects the motivation of community workers towards this move.

"The capitalist economy would not survive if it allowed equal access for all to the resources in our society and, while many of the unjust and insensitive decisions taken at local level are a result of sloppy thinking, bureaucratic inertia, insensitivity and ignorance, the majority are shaped by the demands of an unequal and unjust economic system, which depends for its survival upon the exploitation of a large proportion of the working population and their families." (Community Action,1974,p.23)

Using the development of community work as the background to the development of youth work, what are the forces that it is possible to identify that shaped the development and definition of social education within youth work?

CHAPTER 1

SOCIAL EDUCATION OF ADOLESCENTS: THE IMPACT OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Irish youth work is rooted in and coloured by developments in Britain. In Britain, the foundations of youth work, in common with community work, are found in the beginning to the mid-nineteenth century. British youth work, according to Davies & Gibson (1967) is rooted in a period of change that saw Britain move from an agrarian social order to an urban industrialised society. Furthermore, they assert that modern youth work is a phenomenon of industrial society.

"Indeed if youth work's origins are examined carefully, it is clear that they were closely related to and dependent on much broader and deeper processes affecting and moving British society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries." (Davies & Gibson,1967,p20)

Later they state that:

"Although one is not the 'result' of the other in any simple sense, education-recreation in situations for the socially immature came into existence because of the special conditions and requirements of an urban and mechanized way of life. Neither the Boy's Brigade nor a village youth club would have been possible in Britain before the nineteenth century." (Davies & Gibson,1967,pp.24-25)

Fletcher (1962) claims that the functions of modern youth work were adequately catered for within agrarian society. Within agrarian society the family functioned to protect, regulate and develop young people when they were not at work.

"The working-class family, whether engaged in agriculture or in domestic industry, was the closely knit society and economic unit. Both men and women shared the productive tasks of the family and children were put to work at an early, so that there was a definite division of labour within the family in the context of which the 'socialisation' of the child - including such education, moral or otherwise, as may have been available - took place." (Fletcher,1962,p.69)

The family, then, for many centuries prior to the onset of the Industrial Revolution in the second half of the eighteenth century provided the socialisation function of youth work today. Fletcher (1982) argues that because the functions of the family in pre-industrial society were quite extensive, not only over those who were direct family members, but also over many others, that this resulted in apprentices being kept dependant on the family until they were twenty-one. In addition, he suggests that the Poor Laws reinforced this dependency by ensuring that masters made provision for the recreation of children, including teenagers. Davies & Gibson (1967) illuminate this point:

"... the Poor Law machinery made some effort to ensure that masters fulfilled their obligations and clearly intended that some provision should be made for the education and supervised relaxation of children, including those in their teens."

(Davies & Gibson,1967,p.25)

They assert that the threat to established order was not a particular phenomenon of this period. Leighton (1982) argues similarly and suggests that the lack of threat can be attributed to the nature of the society at that time, that is, a society which was closely-knit, restricted in movement, lacking the means of communications of the modern age, all of which resulted in the way of life being passed on from one generation to the next almost unchallenged. This effectively meant that determined action to influence or regulate young people's socialisation was rarely required in practice.

In Britain during the late 1800s and early 1900s the advent of the Industrial Revolution radically altered the social situation of the time.

"The development of new sources of power and invention of machines in the cotton industry, the discovery of new processes in smelting, coupled with the widening world's markets and a need for greater productivity led to the movement of people to the centres of industry and the beginning of the organisation and the growth of new towns. This gave rise to a new class structure of owners and workers, fixed hours of work and thus leisure-time or non-working time." (Leighton,1972,p.10)

Many institutions acquired very different functions resulting from this change. The family, for example, was much affected by the demands of work since, with industrialisation, women as well as men were going out to work. The extended vocational obligations of a master to his apprentices mentioned earlier was losing its importance at this period. Finally, it is argued that with changes in the Poor Law in 1834, the educational and communal care, formerly the function of the extended family network, were no longer functions that the extended family had to fulfil (Davies & Gibson,1967).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, then, events which had created industries and factories and social legislation governing labour input, meant that from that time there was an increasing amount of spare productive capacity in the economy, which made it possible to release some of the young members of the labour force into full-time education and reduce the working hours for others. This brought longer and regular periods of free time which people could use at their own discretion. The reduction of working hours, first for women and then for children, the enforcement after 1850 of a half-day holiday, the Bank Holiday Act of 1871 and the slow spread of holidays with pay, created opportunities for the development of education and leisure for recreation.

Educational provision centred around the adult education task of basic literacy, together with the creation of opportunities for self-improvement. As more and more people acquired regular time off work, the pressure mounted to make part-time education more attractive. As early as the middle of the nineteenth century many of the mechanics' institutes were seen to have legitimate recreational and general cultural functions. Here, specifically, lies the attempt to create new and wider leisure opportunities which were to merge with the efforts to specifically cater for the adolescent.

Only when adolescents began to gain a noticeably large share of leisure did concern emerge about how they were using it. Early on only young children were released from labour and these were being protected and instructed through the growth of compulsory elementary education. Women, who also benefitted from release from the workforce, usually spent the increased time at home rearing families and managing homes. Only when adolescents were freed from work was there concern about the danger and threat to public order they might provide if left unprotected and unsupervised. This provided the special problem after the 1870s of adolescent leisure.

Mortell (1989) claims that there was:

"widespread concern about young people - particularly about those young people who migrated from rural to urban settings in order to take up apprenticeships in the growing number of trades springing up in the cities." (Mortell,1989,p.4)

This led to the creation of the first youth work initiatives which Booton (1986) outlines as being primarily based on recreation and aimed at the social and moral improvement of adolescents, particularly, young boys. The aim of the Young Mens' Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) cited below founded in Britain in 1844 reflects this thrust.

"To improve the spiritual conditions of young men engaged in the drapery and allied trades." (N.Y.C.I.,1975,p.22)

In Ireland, this development is reflected in the establishment of the Catholic Young Men's Society (C.Y.M.S.) with similar objectives (Irish Ecclesiastical Record,1890).

Leighton argues that the growth of provision for adolescents was coupled with a resistance against the direct intervention by government in the area of social or private life.

"Although government was taking some direct action to protect the young through the Factory Apprenticeship and Education Acts, there was and still is resistance to direct action in the areas of man's existence which falls loosely into the category of social or private life. This resistance in the last century may have been impossible in more favourable situations." (Leighton,1972,p.12)

Thus, Davies & Gibson (1967) argue that those who were becoming aware of the 'problem' of increased leisure time for adolescents would not turn to the state for intervention. Rather, they were motivated to solve their own problems by mutual agreement and cooperation, heralding the growth of voluntary and philanthropic agencies. This analysis is supported by Brew who states that:

"In the early stages youth work was in the hands of volunteers who pioneered with small groups of young people in neighbourhoods where overcrowding and disorderly behaviour, poverty and drunkenness most attracted their zeal." (Brew,1957,p.26)

From some of these pioneering approaches there evolved such organisations as the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy's Brigade, Scouts and the Girls's Brigade, Boys' Clubs and Girls' Club Movements as we know them today in Ireland.

It is difficult to assess the quality of work done by these individuals or the motivation or objectives of their work because of lack of records. Davies & Gibson (1967) suggest, however, that fear was a major motivational factor for some of those who were concerned with the social education of the adolescent. For others they maintain that the primary motivation was compassion, sympathy and

"a powerful social conscience and a deeply felt religious conviction." (Davies & Gibson,1967,p.34)

They assert that for many the opportunities industrialisation presented for increased access to wealth and achievement also presented a 'new' menace. All over Britain urban populations grew in size so that the threat to a stable social order was fermenting. As 'desirable' and 'slum' areas of towns grew, economic and social differences acquired a geographical definition. In addition, the position of the dominant elite was being eroded through mass communication, the growing awareness by the 'masses' of their own power and the spread of the ideology of democracy associated with the French Revolution.

"From the start of the nineteenth century, therefore, there was a more pressing need than ever before to protect and bolster the existing social and political structure, and to ensure by all the means available that the lower orders were 'loyal', 'obedient', 'respectful of law and order' and 'disciplined'." (Davies & Gibson,1967,p.36)

Good citizenship, then, became an objective of education, including social education, very early on. These qualities were also important for economic reasons. The industrial masters needed a punctual, obedient, responsible and disciplined work force. These traits were fostered among the working class by the resurgence of religious ideals which advocated sobriety, order and effort, and gave support to new habits of work, placing emphasis on hard work and discipline, teaching that these were virtues that would be rewarded materially and would be met with divine approval (Whyte,1960).

Youth work provision, it is argued then, was Church initiated and had as its objective the fostering of qualities of loyalty and responsibility.

"Thus under pressure, the motives of those who first sought to fill adolescent leisure were mixed and at least unconsciously self-interested. Ensuring that the young grew into 'full Christian manliness,' together with training them to be 'good citizens' and for 'responsible roles in society' all involved preparing the young to accept it was there and because any radical disturbance of it would have endangered the power of those who controlled it."
(Davies & Gibson,1967,p.39)

Davis (1982) argues that within this period the traditional notion of leadership was that leaders were 'born' not 'made'.

"It was assumed that people aspired to be leaders of youth and if chosen it was regarded as a privilege that set one apart from those considered less able. As a consequence the leadership style adopted was based on leading from the front by example or pronouncements." (Davis,1982,p.13)

Davies & Gibson (1987) add that the more immediate dangers of the age were reflected in the vision of the pioneers who led the first youth groups. Mortell (1989) concurs with this analysis, but points to the fact that British youth work took on a different direction following the Crimean War. He identifies the establishment of the Army Cadet Force founded in 1860 as the first organisation to introduce drills and army-like structures. This he maintains resulted in a proliferation of organisations, which were to follow, which functioned directly to train young men for a life of service to the army and the extension of the British Army. Davies & Gibson (1967) commenting on this period, suggest that the move towards scouting and its associated activities not only reflected a preoccupation with readiness for war, but also reflected a rejection of the 'depravity' and 'corruption' that became associated with industrialisation.

"One of its most obvious signs was the actual physical rejection of urbanism and an especially strong conviction that the countryside and the out-of-doors contained all that was most desirable. It was not only that the fields, the hills, the rivers offered relief from dirt and drabness. They were also invested with self-evident virtues and therefore needed to be sought with an almost spiritual intensity." (Davies & Gibson,1967,pp.40-41)

Davies & Gibson (1967) conclude that the influence brought to youth work was an abstraction of the culture of the ruling groups. This suggests a largely functionalist analysis of objectives. Harrison (1961) illuminates this point. He describes the influence on social education's development of concerns to reject urbanism.

"Urban and industrial life were debasing so that it was only the option of escape to a purer and detached range of activities which would enable young people to develop, socially. In particular, concepts of 'culture', 'character' came to decide the nature of social education with value in social education being regarded by what was deemed 'highbrow', 'respectable' or 'character building'." (Harrison,1961,p.89)

The physical rejection of urbanism is reflected in the growth of outdoor pursuits and in scouting in particular, though it also influenced other forms of youth work. It is argued that scouting excursions formed the context in which the development of personality and personal relationships took place and thus centred on character building, leadership training and initiative testing (Leighton,1972).

The further significance of youth work as an abstracted culture of the ruling class, according to Davies and Gibson, is the suspicion and rejection of commercial provision:

"it was automatically assumed from the start that commercialism must mean debasement and exploitation (so that) youth organisations were designed as a counter-attraction to the music hall, the street corner and the public house." (Davies & Gibson,1967,p.43)

Much of early youth work was model centred, that is:

"that good and acceptable social development with certain prescribed virtues was what was seen in the person who offered himself as leader to a group of young people and he became the model on which the young were to fashion themselves."

(Leighton,1972,p.14)

In summary, then, the elements of the social education curriculum which were most in evidence prior to 1939 included emphasis on 'manly christianity', militaristic and nationalistic objectives, conformity to prevalent orthodoxy, leisure, discipline and character training, outdoor pursuits (as a reaction to industrialisation), prevention of decadence and the recognition of a core function for the Church as an initiator and supporter of services. This emphasis mirrors the phase of development outlined by Baldock (1974) during this period. It is also indicative of a narrow functionalist sociological analysis characterised by a character building model of youth work.

CHAPTER 2

IRISH YOUTH WORK: EARLY BRITISH INFLUENCES

Youth work and social education within youth work more recently, is influenced by its early origins but there have also been subtle changes in the voluntary organisations which catered for adolescents' leisure needs. In Britain, the Board of Education circulated memorandum 1486 "In the Service of Youth" in 1939. This document according to Bunt & Gargrave (1980) set the model for the youth service from then up to the 1970s. They also claim that the document was more concerned with:

"preventing degeneration than the identification of positive aims."

(Bunt & Gargrave,1980,p.107)

The circular, in particular, emphasised the neglect of personal development within the 14-20 year age group within youth service provision and pointed to particular social problems that had arisen during World War 1.

"concern is not primarily with delinquency as in 1916, nor with national fitness as in 1937, but is with the positive all-round development of three million British youths, mostly young workers between the ages of 14-21." (Jefferies,1979,p.23)

Hubery (1972), commenting on the significance of the circular, posits that:

"It is no accident that the Service of Youth in England and Wales in terms of partnership between the state and voluntary organisations was established at the same time as the compulsory religious clauses of a new Education Act were accepted by both State and Church. In their different ways, the concern that boys and girls in their formative years and young people who had left school and had time on their hands should find a satisfying way of life in terms of spiritual or Christian fulfilment was widely acknowledged. The fearful consequences of a generation that could be won over to a Fascist or Nazi philosophy of life, and the demoralizing influences of war-time conditions, in the modern world, were only too apparent. In both formal and informal sectors of education there was a tacit acceptance of the view that a growing generation should be given a full opportunity of coming to understand and to respond to a spiritual interpretation of life, and for the overwhelming majority this was interpreted as a process of Christian education." (Hubery,1972,p.7)

Legal obligation was placed on Local Education Authorities (L.E.A.s) to develop the youth service through this circular.

"The social and physical development of boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20, who have ceased full time education, has for long been neglected in this country. In spite of the efforts of

local education authorities and voluntary organisations, provisions have always fallen short of the need and today considerably less than half of these boys and girls belong to any organisation.....The strain of war and disorganisation of family life have created conditions which constitute a serious threat to youth. The Government are determined to prevent the recurrence during this war of the social problems which arose during the last. They have accordingly decided that the Board of Education shall undertake a direct responsibility for Youth Welfare"

(H.M.S.O., Circular 1516,1940,p.1)

Circular 1516, which followed in 1940, confirmed the principle of partnership between voluntary and statutory sectors, as well as recognising that the youth service was to be seen as part of the general education provision.

"The principle has been accepted that youth welfare must take its place as a recognised province of education, side by side with elementary, secondary and further education." (H.M.S.O., 1516, 1940,p.1)

Bunt and Gargrave (1980) argue that participation was an element in the new thinking, at this time.

"Attempts were made to allow young people to obtain a representative voice (usually via a local youth council)"

(Bunt & Gargrave,1980,p.108)

Mortell (1989) asserts that during the post World War 11 period, youth work services in Britain went into a period of decline, which continued right through to the 1950s. Bunt & Gargrave (1970) partly attribute this decline to concern about an overlap of function between new local committees and the old established voluntary organisations. Brew (1957) illuminates this point.

"There was a lack of readiness to take advantage of the knowledge and advice of people who had actively and honourably engaged in youth work for many years. This not unnaturally planted the seeds of suspicion and mistrust in the hearts of those who felt that all their painfully acquired knowledge of young people was to be disregarded and indeed swamped by a 'soul-less' Government Scheme."

(cited in Bunt & Gargrave,1980,p.109)

The delicacy of this new partnership was acknowledged by Government, who sought to assure the voluntary organisation that they should not fear the expansion of local authority provision (Davis,1982). Davis goes on to claim that this partnership once forged is:

an early example (that) the established voluntary organisations long enjoyed a special relationship with government and influential society, forged by them consistently demonstrating their effectiveness in the winning of the young into becoming acceptable and productive members of adult society." (Davis,1982,p.19)

Eggleston supports this view and points to:

"their unquestioned link with powerful elite groups in business, commerce, the professions and politics, links that are effectively maintained through the appointments to committees, consultancy and honorary officership." (Eggleston,1976,p.9)

Mortell (1989) claims that the partnership between the Government, the L.E.A.s and the voluntary youth organisations was an unequal one and is reflected in a drop in the age of members being catered for by youth organisations. This he suggests developed side by side with increased funding being made for the building of detention centres. Springhall (1977) claims that this indicated that concern to develop the whole personality of young people was secondary to the need to control the threat of deviant behaviour.

Commenting on this period, Davies (1980) argues that the purpose of social education was rooted in an attempt at prevention of delinquency and anti-social behaviours, so that young people were seen in terms of threat, which needed to be contained. The primary justification for the provision of social education, then, becomes a negative one of keeping young people from crime.

Davis (1982) argues that with the decline in the evangelical influence at this time, a new intellectual climate emerged, with its thrust on 'humanitarian welfare services.' He claims, however, that similar to earlier developments the providers of this welfare intervention came from outside the class and cultural experiences of their clients.

"This often led to the emergence of inherent contradictions, the helpers making assumptions about the needs and problems of working class adolescents oblivious to the outside structural causes of their clients deprived status. As a consequence the evolved institutions and objectives of the Youth Service have been dominated by the influence of leaders who have perpetuated the practice of devising activities and programmes for young people on the basis of what they themselves, as adults, perceive as being good for their members. This is heightened by the tendency of youth organisations to recruit leaders from within their membership resulting in a perpetuation of the existing leadership styles and scope of programmes and activities offered....the end results of most approaches is the continuance of leader control." (Davis,1982,pp.23-24)

The concept of social education was, then, individualistic in its focus - rooted in a client-centred approach to young people - assuming that the important outcome would be within the young person; that it would be his or her personal capacities, philosophy, feelings and so on which would change.

"It would seem appropriate to state the objective of social education in terms of the young learning to understand themselves, the kind of person they are, the nature of the beliefs they hold, the roles they play and anticipate playing, as well as learning about their way of seeing the social and physical environment which they inhabit." (Taylor,1967,p.67)

The growth of personal development and group work methodologies associated with Leslie Button as a defining characteristic of youth work methodology, which flourished at this time, can thus be understood in terms of a concern to promote individual personality development. The line between social education and life skills training is not easily defined or understood. What perhaps distinguished the two is the economic bias of the latter and preparatory function it serves for entry to industry, and the world of work. A defining characteristic of social education however is less easily reached but it is probably concerned with the growth of the full person, individually and collectively. This reflects a more liberal functionalist analysis typified in the Personal Development Model in Chapter 1.

However, Davis (1982) claims that this emphasis:

".....where social problems are ideologically addressed in terms of the inherent deficiency of clients....has resulted in helpers being unable or unwilling to pursue the structural sources of the problems, being content instead to focus their energy on responding to the symptoms of individuals...." (Davis,1982,p.24)

Davies argues that:

"youth work's social education tradition - despite all the pressure to get young people to conform, to adjust to become merely 'socially acceptable' and so on - has thus consistently given attention to the meaning attached to their experience by young people themselves. It has therefore encouraged them, not just to receive and absorb a knowledge, pre-defined and self-evidently correct body of information, values and ideas. Rather, it has provided some space for autonomous reaction and learning, by asking questions, by expressing scepticism, by legitimating doubt and challenge." (Davies,1980,p.6)

He further argues that the earlier adoption of group work as the central method of youth work had highlighted a greater awareness of the complexities of human encounters. The evaluation of the effectiveness of group work methodologies had also clarified the nature of these complexities. In particular, the outcomes of social and educational research showed how little if any influence educational strategies which focus on the individual had on increasing opportunities for economic and occupational mobility. This he maintains led to a point where youth work policy developers questioned the value of concentrating their efforts and strategies on a personal development dimension to youth work development and began to pose a more radical critique. Thus, more recently, the concept of social education has concerned itself with collective outcomes (Eggleston,1975).

Emphasis, then, can be seen to be increasingly given, prompted by such reports as those of the Gulbenkian Foundation, to the social and political context of youth and community work generally. Gulbenkian (1970) comments that both central and local government have become conscious of the need to relate the youth service to the community with the context of youth work being seen directly in terms of community. Gulbenkian (1970,p.76) suggests that increasingly youth workers will not be effective:

"unless they are able to live with conflict and tension, as well as being able to recognise and handle problems of power politics."

This emphasis is reflected in the Albermarle Report (1960) in Britain and the Costello Report (1984) in Ireland.

CHAPTER 3

IRISH YOUTH WORK: MODERN DEVELOPMENTS

In Britain, modern youth work, as it was outlined in the previous chapter, is generally ascribed as being rooted in the latter two or three decades of the last century when individuals and groups, usually from the influential sector of society, motivated by anxiety about disorder, initiated provisions aimed at social improvement and control of working class young people. This intervention, as we have seen, is interpreted as an attempt to prepare its working-class youth for their stations in life.

"The middle classes know that the safety of their lives and property demands having around them a peaceful and moral population." (N.Y.B.,1979,p.7)

With traditional stabilising influences being threatened by migration to urban areas, spurred by increasing industrialisation, concern was being expressed by the upper classes about the growing unrest amongst the lower classes. In response to this perceived de-stabilisation there was a rapid increase between 1880-1914 of clubs and organisations geared at attracting working-class young people. The initial drive for the development of services is interpreted, as we have seen, as being located in a period of concern with the depreciation of moral standards associated with rapid industrial growth. These developments in Britain are closely paralleled by similar developments in Ireland. It is no surprise, then, that the first movements in Ireland reflected this trend, and that the first groups to be introduced in Ireland were Church initiated.

The Girls' Friendly Society (1877), the Boys' Brigade (1888), The Girls' Brigade (1893) and the Catholic Boys' Brigade (1900), were all formed at this time. According to Kennedy (1984) the most obvious theme underlying the objectives of these organisations was 'socialisation'.

"Their aim was to shape young people - who were often seen as a threat to the established order or, at least, as needed to maintain the established order in the coming generations - encouraging them to accept the religious, patriotic and militaristic attitudes passed on to them through such organisations." (Kennedy,1984,p.28)

Shortly after their inception in Britain in the early nineteenth century scouting groups such as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides appeared in Ireland. This trend developed particularly in urban areas. Their influence was less widespread in the rural areas because of the geographical and monetary constraints which prevented their spread to these areas, where it was mostly Catholic groups that developed (Corry,1978).

With the increasing development of nationalism, the scouting movement in particular attracted strong political reaction. In Ireland, Countess Markievicz is said to have been incensed at Baden Powell's new scouting initiatives. In response she founded, together with Bulmer Hobson, Na Fianna in 1909. Her objective was that of establishing an independent Ireland through the mental and physical training of young people, through scouting, military exercises, Irish History and Irish Language. Their philosophy is indicated in their promise which states:

"I promise to work for the independence of Ireland, never to join England's armed forces, to obey my Superiors." (Cited in: Kennedy,1987,p.7)

Na Fianna acted as a recruiting ground for the Irish Republican Brotherhood (I.R.B.), which aimed to overthrow British rule in Ireland and to create an Irish Republic.

By 1910, there were about fifty troops in Ireland whose aim was to mould young people and to encourage them to accept the religious and patriotic attitudes inherent in their socialising process (Kennedy,1987). Kennedy further adds that the emergence of militaristic type organisations in Ireland reflected a growth in Irish Nationalism at the time.

In the 1920s, following the establishment of the Irish Free State, the Catholic Boy Scouts were established as a separate organisation. Mortell (1989) adds that there was a flourishing during this period of the Gaelic Athletic Association (G.A.A.) and of the Catholic Young Men's Society whose common aim was:

"to pass on belief, values, attitudes which would ensure the continuation or revival of a traditional culture." (Kennedy,1984,p.35)

The Catholic Girl Guides movement was established in the early 1930s. The origins of youth club work can be found in Dublin in the late 1920s and 1930s, where Past Pupils Unions, St. Vincent de Paul and the Legion of Mary got involved in the development of youth clubs, mostly for boys.

"The idea of youth groups and work with young people was introduced into Ireland by the Churches and some of the earliest organisations in the mid-nineteenth century were C.Y.M.S., Y.W.C.A., Y.W.C.A. The Protestant churches were particularly active in establishing their own youth groups and in giving support to the first uniformed movements, the Boys' Brigade and the Girls' Brigade." (Corry,1978,p.7)

This formed the bulk of development prior to the State's involvement in 1930.

Given the concern on behalf of the State and the outrage and wrath of the Church to the falling moral climate of Irish society and the decline of moral standards among Irish youth, it is no great surprise that the State became involved in Youth Provision. This it did in the 1930 Vocational Education Act through its provision for 'continuation education'. This it placed in the hands of the Vocational Education Committee - the first official attempt to provide for services generally referred to as a 'social education'. It wasn't until the late 1930s and early 1940s that any direct action was taken. Motivated by the lack of services in the Dublin region the Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, took a personal interest in youth problems and was instrumental in getting the Minister for Education to establish Comhairle le leas Oige as a sub committee of the Dublin City V.E.C. in 1942. This was a unique development and is still the only statutory youth committee in the country. Comhairle le leas Oige, when it was established, made provision for the training of youth leaders who were volunteers from the Legion of Mary and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. In the same year the Catholic Youth Council was also established in McQuaid's Arch Diocese of Dublin.

The formation of the major organisations for youth clubs is quite recent and dates from the late fifties and early sixties. The National Youth Federation (formerly the National Federation of Youth Clubs) grew out of a Boys' Club Congress held in Limerick in 1961. Macra na Tuaithe (1952), a junior section of the Young Farmers' Organisation, had its origins in the Vocational Education system. It functioned largely as a means of implementing the extra-curricular activities of rural vocational schools, with vocational teachers giving guidance in rural science and home economics in an informal setting.

State concern with youth affairs continued into the 1940s and 1950s. In 1943, Sean Lemass, then the Minister for Industry and commerce, established a Commission on Youth Unemployment. The commission was a response to the growing trend of emigration to Britain where Irish labour was much in demand. The objective of the Report was to submit recommendations:

"designed to afford the boys and girls of this country a better opportunity of becoming useful citizens of a Christian State, adequately instructed in the teachings of religion, healthy in mind and body, willing and able to work for their own benefit and that of their country." (Commission on Youth Unemployment,1951,p.2)

The decade following the appearance of the 1951 document was a quiet phase and it was only in the 1960s when social and economic expenditure expanded that any real movement was experienced in youth work provision. The development of the Service was influenced primarily by:

- * The increased growth in social expenditure associated with the 1960s.
- * The increasing youth population.
- * Trends in Britain towards the increased recognition of Youth Services with the publication of the Albermarle Report in 1960 (Kennedy,1987)

However at this time in Britain:

"established society was again feeling threatened by the emergence of a distinct teenage culture allied to the bulge in age range and the need to end national service, because of the anticipated needs of the labour market." (Albermarle, 1960,p.10)

In Ireland, the first official recognition of the need to support the work of voluntary organisations, came shortly after the publication of the Albermarle report in Britain, when Donogh O'Malley was Minister for Education. In April 1966, a meeting was held in the Department of Education to which representatives of all the voluntary youth organisations were invited. The result of this meeting was a decision to investigate the possibility of establishing a co-ordinating and policy-making body for the major voluntary youth work organisations. In January 1968, following this investigation, the National Youth Council of Ireland (N.Y.C.I.) was established (Corry,1978).

The objectives of the N.Y.C.I. were:

- (i) to bring together youth servicing organisations and agencies in Ireland
- (ii) to promote the advancement of education and learning of young people
- (iii) to promote and to safeguard the common interests of young people. (N.Y.C.I.,1988)

The Council was inaugurated in the presence of Donogh O'Malley in January with an initial membership of 15 organisations (Corry,1978). In 1968 the new Minister for Education went on record in the Dail as recognising the N.Y.C.I. as the coordinating body of the principal voluntary youth organisations. Mr Linehan added:

"I feel that the role of my Department on this matter of out-of-school education for young people should consist of encouraging the appropriate voluntary bodies." (Press Release: Linehan,1978,p.1)

The sentiment was finally backed up in 1969/70 when Charles Haughey T.D., Minister of Finance at that time, put aside £100,000 for sport and youth organisations in his budget estimates. In April 1970, a sum of £33,000 was distributed among twelve youth organisations to extend their educational programmes and services.

In June 1969 a Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education was appointed and shortly afterwards a special section was established within the Department of Education for physical recreation, sport and youth. Thus, the framework for the development of services, promoted by the department through the voluntary agencies, was set in place. This reflects similar developments in Britain, following the publication of Circular 1486 in 1939, when a partnership between voluntary and statutory bodies was forged.

The Number of agencies benefitting from the grant scheme has increased from an original twelve to twenty seven in 1987, with the pattern now emerging of roughly 70% of funding allocated to the voluntary agencies being allocated to about six of the major youth club and uniformed organisations. This comprises the basic structure of services in the Republic.

CHAPTER 4

IRISH YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Chapters 2 & 3 have traced the historical origins of Irish youth work. Chapter 4 now focuses on tracing the evolution of Irish Youth Policy and how it interprets the objects of social education as stated in Irish Youth Work Policy. In order to appreciate the current policy objectives, it is necessary firstly, to trace the emergence of that policy. In the Irish context, policy development has been linked primarily with the growing intervention of the State in youth work provision. The first part of this chapter will thus, outline the emergence of that intervention. The latter part of the Chapter concentrates on outlining key objectives for youth work as stated in the various policy documents.

AN OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT

In the past twenty years major efforts have been made to establish a National Youth Policy in Ireland, acknowledging youth work as part of the educational process and committing it to a partnership with voluntary youth work agencies for the provision of youth work services. On the 31st December 1985, the long awaited "*National Youth Policy: In Partnership with Youth*" was finally published. What were the events that finally led to the publication of Ireland's Youth Policy and what now are the implications, tensions and issues that need to be teased out if youth work is to proceed within a coherent framework and united in its purpose?

The Youth Service in Ireland is used to denote a wide range of services for the leisure time, social education and recreation of young people between 12 and 21 years through a partnership between the voluntary organisations and the statutory sector.

"Youth Work in the Republic is almost solely based on the contributions of voluntary organisations. These include Scout and Guide organisations, Youth Club Federations, Church linked organisations and cultural movements." (Corry,1978,p.7)

The first major attempt to establish a National Youth Policy was in 1974/75 when the N.Y.C.I. prepared a document entitled "*The Development of Youth Services.*" The document was published with a change of Government and the appointment of John Bruton to the post of Parliamentary Secretary. Prior to this the Fianna Fail Government, when it first made grants available, chose for itself a limited role:

"one merely administering the grants scheme - and successive Parliamentary Secretaries have been slow to commit themselves to any definite policy statement." (Corry,1978,p.7)

Mr Bruton, on his appointment as Parliamentary Secretary, appointed a panel of advisers to draw up a youth policy. While no representatives from the voluntary organisations were appointed to the panel, consultations and submissions were sought and made by the voluntary organisations. Mr Bruton required youth organisations to clearly articulate the educational benefits for young people in youth work. The N.Y.C.I. document prepared earlier was submitted in response to the demand. The benefits of youth work as stated in the N.Y.C.I. document suggested that:

"The first principle to establish in this document is the educational and social contribution of youth work. Youth work is aimed at the personal, social, cultural and spiritual development of young people. It complements the family, takes place in the context of the local community....and in the case of many young people...is also supplementary to the school."

(N.Y.C.I.,1978,p.4)

The N.Y.C.I. document suggested that the:

"diversity in programmes and particular objectives that is found among the various youth organisations reflects the wide range of objectives that can be pursued and the methods that can legitimately be used." (N.Y.C.I.,1978,p.3)

The document also emphasised the benefits of professional youth workers in the development of voluntary organisations and in improving the effectiveness of voluntary workers. In addition, the N.Y.C.I. document suggested a framework in which development could take place and emphasised the need for additional finance for the voluntary organisations to employ Development and Programme Officers. It highlighted the central role of volunteers and stressed the need for effective training.

The Bruton Report reflected similar emphasis the N.Y.C.I. document prepared in 1974.

"The aims of an educational youth programme are to fashion an experience-orientated, ongoing developmental exercise. To do so it must be set in the realities of the youth's own environment. It must be framed to assist those participating to become more capable of functioning as responsible members of society in ways that have meaning to them." (Bruton,1977,p.38)

The Bruton Report also recognised the need for full-time workers, clearly defining their task:

"to motivate, train and support volunteers. The objective in creating a full time post will always be to support organisations run by voluntary adults and not to render them redundant."

(Bruton,1977,p.15)

However, some organisations were concerned about the emphasis placed in the Report on 'flexibility' and 'adaptability' (p.8,par.10) and suggested that it did so at the expense of continuity and stability within youth work. This argument was made on the basis that the report did not give priority to the employment conditions of staff (Treacy,1989).

In summary, the document accepted most of the arguments of the voluntary organisations and supported a youth work service based on volunteerism.

"The volunteer will continue to be the primary agent of youth policy." (Bruton,1978,p.1)

It recognised that education is not the sole prerogative of the school and that at times the schooling system is inadequate and

"may even permanently dull the eager curiosity which is the very stuff that education feeds upon." (Bruton,1977,p.1)

The document proposed a tightening of the annual grant aid system, and argued that the best way to measure progress was by assessing youth organisations on their success in increasing membership (Corry,1978). It also proposed an in-service training scheme for full-time youth workers and the appointment of four 'community animateurs' by the V.E.C.s outside Dublin. The report, though completed towards the end of 1974, was not finally published until 1977. (The document was, however, leaked to the press in February 1975.)

The voluntary organisations waited for the publication of the document which eventually came in the wake of the general election in June 1977. What was the delay until this? Lack of financial commitment by the Coalition Government? Inter-Department rivalry over jurisdiction? Whatever the reasons, the publication of the document came too late. Mr Bruton had announced a financial package of £215,000 to implement proposals for the V.E.C.s and £20,000 for the in-service training in 1978. However, after the election it was a Fianna Fail Government that came to power, and Mr James Tunney returned to office favouring sport above youth services. The Fianna Fail Government gave no extra finance to the voluntary agencies, while the V.E.C.s received an extra £100,000 and Comhairle le leas Oige £200,000. (Press Release: Tunney, 1978)

It was not until February 1978 that Mr Tunney began to make any movement towards the area of youth work. Mr Tunney refused to commit himself to the proposals of the Bruton Report and instead on May of 1978 commissioned District Justice James O'Sullivan to chair a 14 member committee with the task of reporting on:

"the nature and effectiveness of the programmes being carried out by the Youth Organisations in receipt of grants direct or indirect from the Department of Education and to make any recommendations deemed appropriate for the improvement and development of the Youth Services." (O'Sullivan,1980,p.7)

By October 1978, Mr Tunney, while waiting for the outcome of the O'Sullivan Committee, secured an additional £52,000 to meet the outstanding financial problems of youth organisations, created a separate Youth Affairs Section in the Department of Education and committed himself to revising the annual grant aid scheme. The Report of the O'Sullivan Committee "Development of Youth Work Services" commissioned early in May of 1978 was finally published in 1980 with the committee making 100 recommendations on areas of youth work needs, young people's needs, the questions of volunteerism, the nature and effectiveness of youth programmes, social disadvantage, youth employment and the role of statutory agencies and the Department. For the first time the government clearly indicated that it required some form of assessment of youth work, and commissioned two reports, a 'Research Report on Youth Organisation' and 'A survey of 12 Youth Clubs' to help overcome the lack of any analysis documented for consideration by the committee (Treacy,1989).

The community based youth clubs were specifically targeted by the committee as in need of support and development. The research report highlighted a number of empirical indicators which the committee judged:

as important in attempting to assess the way the adult leaders are involved in implementing programmes at club and unit level."
(O'Sullivan,1980,p.45)

These were:

- * Ratio of Adults to Young People
- * Age of Leaders
- * Adult Turnover

The committee, is examining the training supports offered to groups, while expressing general satisfaction, indicated concern that:

"the application of training and its communication at grass roots level may be deficient in a number of aspects:

1. The follow-up of courses needs to be strengthened at club level, through the visiting of clubs, supervision and discussion.
2. The senior club leader needs to receive greater support for basic training within the club setting and for building a leadership team.
3. The pressures of the actual club situation seriously limit the transfer and application of learning from training courses.
4. The lack of integration between personal development objectives and the provision of skills for implementing club programmes.
5. The weakness of links between club members and the organisation, and the failure to make full use of information, training and other resources of the organisation.

In our view this kind of learning is necessary to prevent the excessive turnover of volunteers and to ensure a good level of satisfaction for them." (O'Sullivan,1980,p.48)

Youth Organisations welcomed the O'Sullivan report, and drew particular attention to sections of the report that concerned itself with the employment of youth workers and the functions of these workers. However, little additional finance became available to implement any of the recommendations of the committee. In particular, the appointment of professional advisers recommended by the committee was not acted on because a Public Sector Embargo, on the employment of staff within the Civil Service, was implemented at the time (Treacy,1989).

With the publication of *The Task Force Report on Child Care Services* by the Department of Health in 1980, the role of the Department of Education in the development of services for youth came into question. That Report claimed that there was a lack of co-ordination of services for young people and recommended the transfer of responsibility for young people to the Department of Health as part of the Child Care System. The Report also recommended the establishment of Neighbourhood Youth Projects ((N.Y.P.s) for the 12-16 age group. These were set up on a pilot scheme basis in 1978, some of which are still in existence today. The Task Force also recommended the establishment of Youth Encounter Projects (Y.E.P.s) to provide an alternative educational option to institutional care for young people at risk in the 10-15 age group. Three Y.E.P.s still exist today, in Dublin, Cork and Limerick (Kennedy,1987).

Three General Elections were held in June 1981, February 1982 and November 1982 which helped to reinforce the commitments of the three main political parties to recognise youth work provision and in particular to recognise a social partnership role for the National Youth Council of Ireland, established in 1966. Dr. Fitzgerald confirmed in a letter to the N.Y.C.I. in November 1982 that:

"Fine Gael reiterates its commitment to bring representatives of young people into consultation on the whole range of national policies on a par with other social partners." (N.Y.C.I.,1982,p.2)

However, at a meeting with the new Coalition Government which was eventually obtained in June of 1983 the commitment to this consultative process was considerably altered, and consultative meetings with Government limited to three meetings annually (Treacy,1989).

Despite the recommendation for the transfer of responsibility for youth affairs to the Department of Health, it was in fact relocated, but within the Department of Labour in 1983. (This relocation probably reflects political concern with increasing youth unemployment, which was becoming evident at the time). The Fine Gael Government did not implement the recommendation of the O'Sullivan Committee but instead, in September 1983, the Taoiseach, Garret Fitzgerald, T.D. and George Birmingham, T.D., Minister of State for Youth Affairs, officially launched the Governments's Youth Policy Committee chaired by Justice Declan Costello. The Brief of the committee was

"to prepare for Government consideration, recommendations for a National Youth Policy." (Costello,1984,p.8)

In his introduction to the brief of the committee Mr George Birmingham, T.D., the junior Minister responsible for the publication of the report, states that:

"It must be acknowledged that there has been no attempt to place the Youth Services in context, either to establish the needs of young people or the place of such services in the overall Government provision of services more generally." (Costello,1984,p.1)

The launching of the Costello Committee was seen as an important contribution to Irish Youth Policy. Addressing the inaugural meeting, the Taoiseach, Garret Fitzgerald, said:

"We see the development of young people as a political element of the Government's response. We are concerned with assisting young people to become responsible and more active participants in society. This may demand profound changes in our educational system - in its structure and its curriculum. How our young people are enabled to become involved will be an excellent test of our ability to develop our democratic way of life." (Press Release: Fitzgerald,1984,p.4)

The Costello Report: "National Youth Policy Committee Final Report" makes very explicit its philosophy, based on what it claims to be democratic principles.

The Service envisaged is outlined in the diagram overleaf. The Youth Service, as can be seen from this diagram, was proposed as a comprehensive National Youth Service distinct and independent but with links with other services for youth. This would be the responsibility of the Minister for Education, and autonomous but linked to the V.E.C.s. The function of Local Committees would be the preparation of annual budgets for Ministerial approval, need assessment and the promotion of Local Voluntary Councils of Youth Organisations. In addition, the Minister would be advised by a National Advisory Committee with national coordination being ensured through legislation. The estimated cost of developing such a service was £20 million. The total grant aid in the year was £2 million.

In 1985, the Government responded to the Costello Report with the country's "National Youth Policy: In Partnership with Youth" which was published on the 31st of December of that year, in recognition of the closure of International Youth Year. The Government pledged to make funding available to establish its coordinating structure - Local Youth Service Boards. (These were proposed as Councils in the Costello Committee Report,1984)

"The Government accept that unless there is a clear allocation of responsibility for the development of a National Youth Service such provision is bound to be erratic, confused and inadequate. Accordingly, the Government have decided that a clearly defined statutory duty to supply or have supplied a comprehensive youth service should be placed on the Minister for Education and Local Youth Service Boards. The Local Youth Service Boards will be linked in the first instance with the Vocational Education Committees under the Vocation Education Act 1930. The existing provision in the 1930 Act relating to sub-committees will be used to establish ad hoc boards ... The long-term arrangements will be defined in legislation which will outline the purpose of the National Youth Service and Local Youth Service Boards, as well as the functions, powers and composition of the Boards, taking account of proposals in the Green Paper 'Partners in Education' and in the Policy Statement 'Reform of Local Government'."

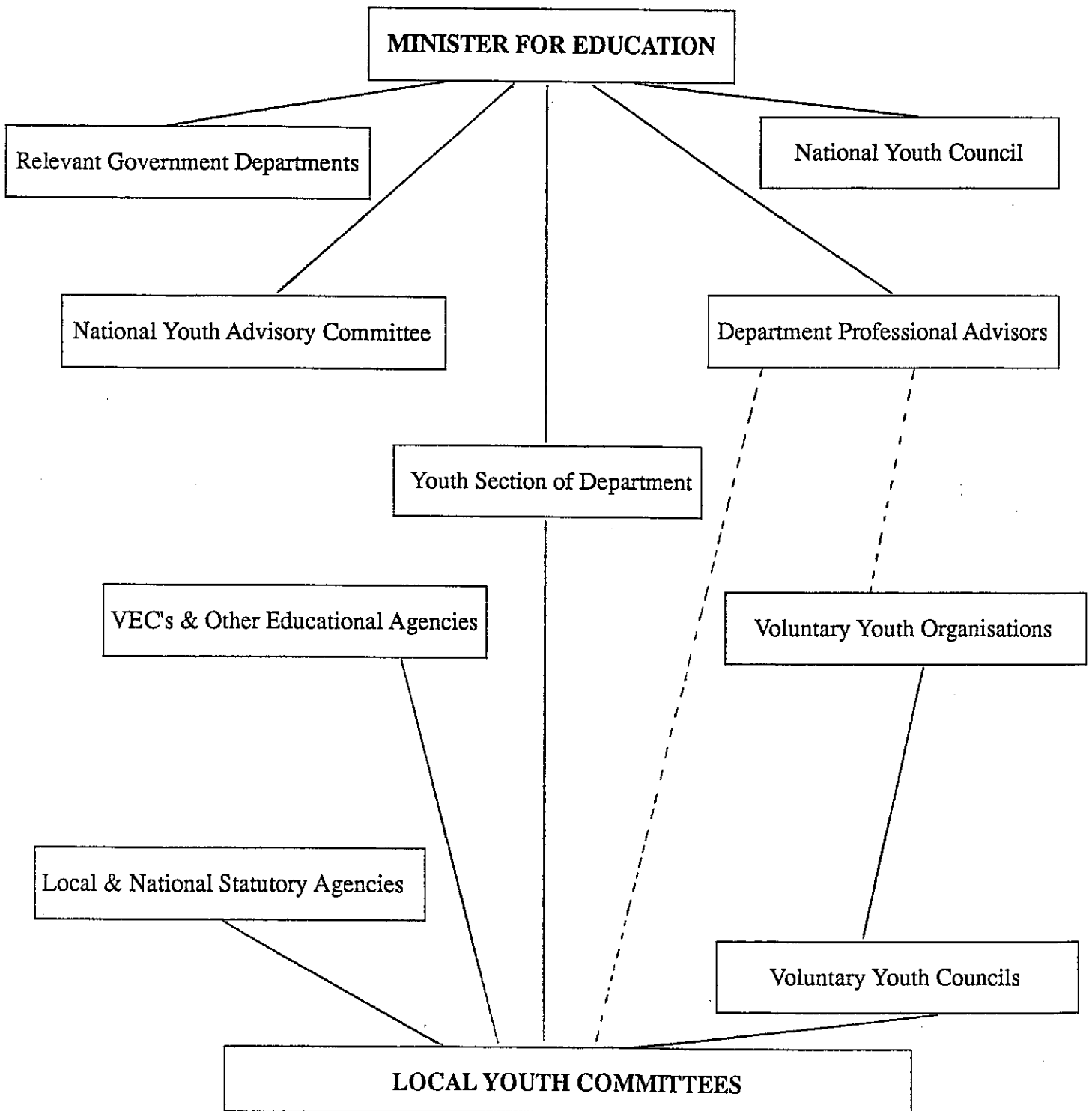
(National Youth Policy,1985,p.17)

CONCLUSION:

In tracing the development of Youth Service Policy up to the publication, in 1985, of the National Youth Policy, it can be seen that Youth Service provision has been shaped primarily by the efforts of a youth work philosophy that is firmly rooted in volunteerism. In addition to the voluntary nature of youth work, youth service provision is seen to reflect an emphasis on recreation and leisure as appropriate vehicles for socialising young people. This is to be primarily achieved through local youth clubs. The development of services, furthermore, is seen to be best provided by a partnership between voluntary youth organisations and government agencies, particularly the V.E.C.s.

Figure 1

The Irish Youth Service (1985)



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