COMMISSION ON EPISCOPAL NEEDS

REPORT 1998

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The Commission was established by the General Synod in 1995, with the following terms of reference: 'To examine and report on the episcopal needs of the Church of Ireland in a time of change and to report to the General Synod not later than 1997'.

Since its establishment, the Commission has met on twenty-one occasions. At its first meeting, the Very Rev. J.T.F. Paterson was elected as Chairman and Mr. W.F. Baker was elected as Honorary Secretary. Dean Paterson served as Chairman until April 1997, when he resigned from that position for health reasons and was succeeded by the Right Rev. M.H.G. Mayes. The Right Rev. N.V. Willoughby retired as Bishop of Cashel and Ossory in April 1997 and as a member of the Commission and was succeeded by the Most Rev. R.L. Clarke.

In September 1996 a Draft Report was sent to Diocesan Councils and to the Standing Committee with a request for comments and reactions. Requests from some of the bodies concerned for additional time for consideration meant that it was not possible to present a Final Report to General Synod in 1997, and so an Interim Report was made that year.

The Commission now submits its Final report to General Synod, which is contained in the following pages.

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PREFACE

The history of the Commission on Episcopal Needs is a complex one, and is important not only because of the question it was asked to deal with, but also because its work has been attended by a good deal of uncertainty.

Its immediate origins go back to the problem of the diocese of Tuam. In 1993, the Diocese of Tuam wrote to the Primate expressing concern that it was now too small to continue as an independent diocese. This view was shared by the then bishop and his predecessor. The Primate raised the matter at a meeting of the Standing Committee in 1993, and it was referred to the House of Bishops.

A number of alternative solutions were considered, none of which won the agreement of all the bishops. This was reported to the Standing Committee, and it was thereupon decided to propose the setting up of a General Synod Commission on Episcopal Needs. In an attempt to avoid the Commission becoming simply another exercise in rearranging diocesan boundaries, it was given a wider brief: to look into the nature of the Episcopate, and to see how *Episcope* could best be exercised in a time of rapid change.

There were, and are, those who felt that it was too early to consider the question of the Episcopate in isolation in this way, as it is an integral part of the wider question of Ministry in the Church. That in itself poses many questions which have not yet been resolved, and it was felt that the question of the oversight of the Church's ministry should have come last on the list instead of first. Nevertheless, the urgency of the problems facing the Diocese of Tuam meant that it could not be postponed, and so the Commission set about its work. In that context, it was almost inevitable that the question of diocesan boundaries and the number of bishops needed by the Church of Ireland would form the major part of the Commission's agenda. The Commission was asked to make its recommendations to the General Synod in May 1997.

When, in January 1996, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Caird, announced his intention to retire, the Dean of Christ Church, then chairman of the Commission, wrote to the Primate to say that, since the appointment of an Archbishop of Dublin might well involve the translation of the bishop of a diocese currently under review, it would be an opportune time to consider the possibility of putting in abeyance the appointment of a bishop for the diocese thereby made vacant, and suggested a meeting between the Primate, the Commission, and the honorary secretaries of the Synod.

Nothing came of this suggestion, and five episcopal appointments have since been made - to Dublin, Meath, Down, Cashel and Tuam.

The Commission continued its work, and made a preliminary report to the Standing Committee in 1996. However, because the Standing Committee was unable to consider the draft report until the autumn of 1996 before sending it to diocesan councils for their responses, the presentation of the final report was deferred until 1998. In the meantime the Commission held consultations with a number of dioceses most likely to be affected by its proposals, especially Limerick and Tuam, in which the suggestions of the

formation of a Diocese of the West were discussed. The initial reaction from Limerick (among a number of dioceses which had sent in their responses) was negative, but at a meeting in July 1997 between the commission and representatives of Limerick and Tuam it appeared that an acceptable solution was in sight. The chairman advised the Primate of this in a faxed letter dated July 2.

When the see of Tuam became vacant in April 1997 by the translation of the bishop to Cashel, the question of an electoral college for that diocese was raised again with the Primate, who informed the General Synod of 1997 that he intended to discuss the matter with the diocese of Tuam. Tuam by this time seemed to have changed their minds and were pressing for the appointment of another bishop, leaving the situation as it was.

The Primate had advised the chairman at the end of May 1997 that the only option open to him was the summoning of an electoral college unless the General Synod decreed otherwise. This raised the question of a special General Synod, and the chairman wrote on behalf of the Commission on 20 August to ask whether the Primate had decided to summon a special meeting of the General Synod or to proceed with an electoral college, as the Commission wished to make a carefully prepared input into a General Synod if one was to be held. He stated the Commission's view that Tuam was too small to continue as a separate diocese. Following a telephone conversation with the Primate, a second letter was sent to him on 21 August stating that it remained the Commission's view that an electoral college for Tuam should not be summoned before the final report could be considered, and that this was in line with the previous communication on the subject from the Dean of Christ Church.

Meanwhile, the Primate had asked the Legal Advisory Committee, through the Standing Committee, for a ruling, among other things, on the term "as soon as may be convenient" to help him decide whether a special Synod should be called, or whether an election could be deferred until after the final report had been considered by the General Synod in May 1998. In its response, conveyed via the Standing Committee, the Legal Advisory Committee advised that a special General Synod would be necessary to give him the authority to delay the convening of an electoral college.

In the event that the Primate decided to summon a Special General Synod, the chairman of the Commission offered to propose a Bill calling for the suspension of all electoral colleges for dioceses which were, or might become, vacant before May 1998. The Primate agreed with this suggestion. No meeting of the Commission was scheduled until it was too late for a Bill in the name of the Commission to be prepared. However, the chairman and the honorary secretary of the Commission telephoned all the members of the Commission to make sure that they were still of the same mind as regards the desirability or otherwise of Tuam's continuing as an independent see, but there was no discussion about the precise wording of a Bill to be proposed in the Commission's name. Mr. J.T.N. McGaffin consented to second the Bill, but it was to be proposed in the names of the two individuals concerned. The Bill was not drafted by the Commission, but members of the Commission supported the chairman's intention to propose the Bill to the Synod.

The Primate then called a meeting of the honorary secretaries, together with the Assistant Secretary, the Assessor of the General Synod and the chairman of the Commission, to take place in Armagh on 14 October to draft a Bill. The Bill drafted was based on a similar Bill presented to a special General Synod in 1971, with the addition of a phrase which included dioceses which were already vacant. When the wording of the draft Bill had been agreed by all present, the Primate decided on November 15 for the special meeting of the Synod, and asked the honorary secretaries to send out preliminary notices to that effect. An agenda, containing the Bill in the names of the Bishop of Kilmore and Mr. McGaffin, would follow later.

The draft Bill was then sent to the Bills Committee as is required, and the chairman of the Commission was asked to attend a meeting of the Bills Committee on 29 October to ensure that the Bill was in order. At that meeting, it was the unequivocal advice of the Bills Committee that any proposed legislation involving dioceses which were already vacant constituted retrospective legislation and was therefore unconstitutional. It was further pointed out that an electoral college is constituted, not by being convened by the Primate but by the occurrence of a vacancy. The chairman was also advised that he could nevertheless go ahead and propose the Bill if he wished. However, given the unanimity of the Bills Committee advice, and following discussion with the seconder, the proposer decided to withdraw the Bill and notified the Primate accordingly. There seemed to them to be little point in wasting the Synod's time by presenting a Bill whose constitutionality had been deemed to be flawed, and which clearly presented the likelihood of great confusion at the General Synod which the Synod would be unable to resolve without referring the matter to a body such as the Court of the General Synod or back to the Legal Advisory Committee. By the time the question was answered, it would be as near to May 1998 as made no difference.

The ideal course of action would have been to propose the suspension of electoral colleges, either *in toto* or with named exceptions (as had been done in 1971), at the time the Standing Committee proposed the setting up of the Commission.

Despite the events of the past year, we remain convinced that we are providing a blueprint for the future of the Church of Ireland, and that the proposals contained in Chapter Four should be implemented by the Church as the opportunity arises.

Chapter One

IN A TIME OF CHANGE

1.1 The commission at its first meeting on 19 June 1995 identified areas of thought and of geography which would need to be examined. The needs of the dioceses of Tuam were foremost in our minds but we recognised that many other areas, even those with large populations, also required consideration. We knew also that we needed to ask fundamental questions, many of which would be unpopular. We had to recognise that we were dealing with ecclesiastical politics and that we would be putting our heads on the line if we came up with ideas which members of General Synod might be unwilling to consider, let alone implement. In the end it was agreed that the politics might be considered later but that the ideal must first be presented even if rejection ensued.

1.2 We began a search to discover significant developments in the church and in society which might cause us to think anew. We had to learn from the past, but would also have to see if we could in any way be prophetic in addressing the needs of the church in the next millennium. What will be expected of a bishop then? It was therefore felt by all that to proceed without a thorough examination of the theology of episcope would be to build on poor foundations. This has been attempted in chapter Three *The Theory behind the Practice* and our resulting recommendations are based on putting theology into practice.

1.3 The process of *parochial* reorganisation within dioceses is one with which most members of the Church of Ireland will be familiar. Particularly in the Republic of Ireland, but also in rural areas of Northern Ireland and in central Belfast, amalgamation of parishes and the closure of churches have been taking place for many years. Constant activity of this sort does little to inspire hope and confidence in church members. Seeing church structures unable to cope with change around them they assume a "mindset of decline". How change is wrought can itself affect attitudes to the change. More forward planning can often lead to less uncertainty and provide greater confidence for a people nervous of change.

1.4 What applies to the parochial scene will also hold good for diocesan reorganisation. Chapter Two details the work of a number of commissions over the past one hundred and fifty years. The most recent of these finished its work just over twenty years ago but already some of their plans are seen as insufficiently radical. Further action now needs to be taken. The recommendations which follow may seem severe but a major operation, assuming it is competently performed, can be preferable to constant hospitalisation. The proposals of this commission are unlikely to be welcomed, particularly in those dioceses which have worked hard to implement the reports of earlier commissions. We are producing evidence of continued decline but we believe our proposals should ensure that no further surgery may be required for many years to come.

Indeed the purpose of the surgery is not to expand areas of weakness, but rather to foster stronger, healthier Dioceses with more varied ministries and richer resources.

1.5 We are aware that there is some opinion within the Church of Ireland that the Commission should recommend a reduction in the number of *diocesan* bishops, with a concomitant proposal for the establishment of a larger number of assistant, area or suffragan bishops (some of whom would in addition retain responsibilities as incumbents).

We have considered this with care. We find however that we cannot recommend this for reasons which should become apparent in the chapter on the theology of episcope. In brief, however, we would suggest at this point that the expedient of suffragan bishops has not been an entirely happy experience for the Church of England. The Commission would, in addition, argue that a bishop must be the bishop of a diocese (however large or small), and that the essentially delegated authority of a suffragan removes a genuine pastoral relationship, central to episcope. The suffragan bishop undertakes episcopal functions (confirmation, ordination etc.), but only in the absence of the diocesan bishop. If this is not the case, and the suffragan has a real autonomy within a particular area, *he* is therefore, de facto if not de jure, a diocesan bishop.

1.6 On the other hand, the multiplication of dioceses, as some have suggested, seems to the Commission to be ill-advised. The presence of a bishop at each and every civic, social or parochial occasion is not of the essence of good episcope, properly understood. It may indeed serve only to undermine the role and vocation of the rector. In arguing thus, the Commission has no interest in enhancing the perceived 'status' of the bishop, but seeks instead to avoid a confusion between the genuine pastoral role of a bishop, and the unfortunate perception that any public occasion within the diocese is axiomatically enhanced by the presence of the bishop.

1.7 The table of statistics (Appendix I) which ends this chapter will indicate clearly the reasons for our recommendations. They show a decline in population, in the number of parochial units and in the number of stipendiary clergy in every diocese in the Church of Ireland.

1.8 In some cases there are considerable discrepancies between figures returned by diocesan authorities and those obtained through the national census in 1991. This may be explained in part by differing methods of calculation in that some dioceses appear to have returned the numbers on which parochial assessments are based, i.e. the adult population. The comparative figures are given as Appendix II to this Chapter.

1.9 *Appendix I*

DIOCESAN POPULATION STATISTICS FOR 1947 & 1965 TAKEN FROM "ADMINISTRATION 1967" FOR 1996 AS SUPPLIED BY DIOCESAN SECRETARIES

The Commission offers the 1996 figures below simply as an approximate number for parochial units, population and stipendiary clergy, *E & OE.* See also maps at end of report.

Diocese	Parochial units			Population			Stipendiary Clergy		
	1947	1965	1996	1947	1965	1996	1947	1965	1996
Armagh	65	47	47	39200	41200	33639	80	63	52
Meath	40	22		4700	3400		44	22	
Meath & Kildare			20			5000			19
Tuam	27	17	8	2300	2400	2203	27	17	10
Derry & Raphoe	82	65	50	36700	35000	30600	90	76	52
Connor	82	88	78	144900	130400	105000	132	138	93
Down & Dromore	73	84	77	109300	94000	97000	109	122	94
Kilmore	64	40	25	14300	9200	7015	72	39	25
Clogher	57	46	35	22500	19600	15782	63	48	36
Dublin	154	89	55	51000	42100	30000	154	118	73
Cashel	32	14		2900	2300		36	15	
Ossory	64	45		11700	9600		80	50	
Cashel & Ossory			32			8293			32
Cork	76	41	23	11700	9300	7700	77	48	24
Killaloe	34	21			3300	2800		34	21
Limerick	30	17		2700	2200		36	19	
Limerick & Killaloe			16			3783			18
Total	882	646	466	457000	403500	346015	1033	796	528

The Commission thanks diocesan secretaries for providing the above statistics.

1.10 *Appendix II*

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS - 1991 CENSUS RETURNS AND 1996 DIOCESAN RETURNS

	1991 Census	1996 Diocesan Returns
Armagh	31236	33639
Meath & Kildare	6543	5000
Tuam, Killala & Achonry	2904	2203
Derry & Raphoe	37041	30600
Connor	104520	105000
Down & Dromore	97181	97000
Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	8172	7015
Clogher	16580	15782
Dublin & Glendalough	35581	30000
Cashel & Ossory	12221	8293
Cork, Cloyne & Ross	9691	7700
Limerick & Killaloe	6335	3783
TOTALS	368005	346015

The Commission is grateful to the Rev. Canon R.E. Turner and Canon J.L.B. Deane for supplying the 1991 Census figures for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland respectively.

Chapter Two

PREVIOUS COMMISSIONS

(see also maps at end of report showing diocesan boundaries)

2.1 The present diocesan boundaries of Ireland date largely from the period of the synod of Kells in 1152. Subsequent diocesan mergers and re-groupings lasted until the major re-organisation brought about by the *Church Temporalities Act* of 1833 which gave us a pattern that continued, with but minor alteration, to within living memory. This provided for two archbishoprics - Armagh with six suffragan dioceses and Dublin with five suffragan dioceses:

Armagh with Clogher
Down with Connor and Dromore
Derry with Raphoe
Kilmore with Elphin and Ardagh
Tuam with Killala and Achonry
Meath
Dublin with Glendalough and Kildare
Ossory with Ferns and Leighlin
Cashel and Emly with Waterford and Lismore
Limerick with Ardfert and Aghadoe
Cork with Cloyne and Ross.

2.2 In 1868 an attempt to stave off disestablishment was made by proposals to reduce the number of dioceses to eight: Armagh as archbishop with seven suffragan dioceses:

Armagh with Clogher and Kilmore
Down with Connor and Dromore
Derry with Raphoe
Tuam with Killala, Achonry, Elphin, Ardagh, Clonfert & Kilmacduagh
Dublin with Glendalough, Kildare and Meath
Ossory with Ferns, Leighlin, Waterford and Lismore
Limerick with Cashel, Emly, Killaloe and Kilfenora
Cork with Cloyne, Ross, Ardfert and Aghadoe

which, with the developing communication at the time, might have proved a workable scheme and have solved subsequent problems. Disestablishment, however, proved politically inevitable and so the proposals came to nothing.

2.3 After disestablishment the only variations from the 1833 scheme were the separation of Clogher from Armagh in 1886, and that of Connor from Down and Dromore in 1945, giving a total of fourteen dioceses.

2.4 The commission which produced the report *Administration 1967* proposed to reduce the dioceses again to twelve but to amalgamate the Belfast city areas of

Down and Connor to form a diocese of Belfast with sixty parochial units ministered to by one hundred and sixteen stipendiary clergy. The resulting dioceses would have been:

Armagh
Derry and Raphoe
Connor
Belfast
Down with Dromore
Kilmore with Clogher
Tuam with Killala, Achonry and Elphin
Meath with Ardagh and Kildare
Dublin with east Glendalough
Ossory with Ferns, Leighlin, west Glendalough, Waterford & Lismore
Cork with Cloyne, Ross, Ardfert and Aghadoe
Cashel with Emly, Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert, Kilmacduagh & Limerick

2.5 The commissioners' proposals for the amalgamation of dioceses in the above list from Kilmore onwards, if then implemented, might have produced more stable unions than those which subsequently emerged as a result of negotiations at special synods and in General Synod. However, Tuam, even with Elphin, would still have remained a weak link. The diocese of Belfast was never implemented.

2.6 It is interesting to note that, coming through each set of proposals, there has been a requirement for the dioceses in the west, the southwest, the southeast and the midlands to re-group if they are to be units which are not just financially, but also ecclesiologically, viable (see *The Theory Behind the Practice* page 18, paragraph 3.15).

2.7 Since *Administration 1967* three amalgamations of dioceses have taken place, though differing in their parts from the 1967 proposals. In 1976 the Rt. Rev. Donald Caird, bishop of Limerick, became first bishop of Meath and Kildare, with the Rt. Rev. Edwin Owen, bishop of Killaloe, succeeding him in the same year as first bishop of Limerick and Killaloe. In 1977 the Rt. Rev. John Armstrong, bishop of Cashel, became first bishop of Cashel and Ossory.

ıpter Three

E THEORY BEHIND THE PRACTICE

The purpose of our commission is not to explain episcopacy, but to see how episcope (oversight) both inside and outside the dioceses may be supported as the Church of Ireland moves into the twenty-first century. It is assumed, therefore, that General Synod would probably be willing to give assent to the section below taken from *Episcopal Ministry* (the report of the English Archbishops' Group on the Episcopate 1990):

Within the wider context of the mission and ministry of the whole Church, the diocese is often seen as basic to the life and unity of the local Church. This unity is personified and symbolised in the office of the bishop. Under God, the bishop leads the local church in its mission to the world. Among other things the bishop is:

(a) a symbol of the Unity of the Church in its mission;
(b) a teacher and defender of the faith;
(c) a pastor of the pastors and of the laity;
(d) an enabler in the preaching of the Word, and in the administration of the Sacraments;
(e) a leader in mission and an initiator of outreach to the world surrounding the community of the faithful;
(f) a shepherd who nurtures and cares for the flock of God;
(g) a physician to whom are brought the wounds of society;
(h) a voice of conscience within the society in which the local Church is placed;
(i) a prophet who proclaims the justice of God in the context of the Gospel of loving redemption;
(j) a head of the family in its wholeness, its misery and its joy. The bishop is the family's centre of life and love.

2 Such a comprehensive and clear statement could suggest that Anglicans have an articulate and distinctive ecclesiology and a doctrine of episcope which is a source of confidence as we move inexorably towards the twenty first century. But Anglicanism is in fact undergoing a period of radical self-assessment. This is something that must be encouraged at a practical and theological level if the church is not to be eroded by declining membership and decreasing influence in society around it. Part of this process must be a renewed assessment of the role of the bishop within the diocese.

3 Bishops are important in Anglican self-understanding as much for practical as for theological reasons. We insisted until recently that in all instances of unity among Christians others must "take episcopacy into their system" if they did not already possess it - yet we seem to be lacking a theology of episcope for the age in which we live. Sometimes we are not even clear as to what bishops are and do or how

we regard them. In ecumenical discussion we can even be hard-pressed to explain the sense of unity the bishop should bring to the everyday life of the parishes in his diocese.

* A parish can be so narrow in its vision as almost to be anti-gospel: "me, my family, my friends and those like us - all others are outsiders".

* A parish may want its bishop to be little more than a pastoral symbol supportive of their needs - compassionate, kind and connected, yet not connected so deeply as to worry them by being a visionary, a prophet, a mover, a shaker.

* A parish may even think it needs the bishop's vision - but only if the bishop's vision matches theirs.

* A parish can see itself as unaccountable to anyone outside of its boundary - except in some vague way towards God.

In every instance above, the prime work of the bishop as the guardian and teacher of the faith ought to be the enlargement of any view that diminishes the true vision of the Church. The old idea of power which resided solely in the hands of the few, a power which was exercised without the possibility of correction or outside restraint, is gone forever. Today the bishop's authority is not power but the provision of energy for mission and outreach. The church can still bear witness to moral and spiritual excellence and, when it does, its voice is still heard.

3.4 Historically there has never been a single pattern of episcopacy. The Church has known the ante-Nicene bishop-celebrant, the medieval prelate-politician, the eighteenth century grandee and the present day bishop-pastor-administrator. The bishop also moved from the title of Right Reverend Father in God to that of Right Reverend Lord but is rightly today reverting to the former concept. Secular dignity always obscures episcopal function.

3.5 The current "management model" which is so strong in today's church, brings with it substantial and subtle dangers both for the present and for the future of the church. Bishops, clergy too, no longer able to invoke the authority of "office", find it increasingly attractive to learn how to "manage" people. This, even if not admitted, is the church examining the nature of its authority.

Concerns have been expressed about the lack of proper preparation and training for episcopal ministry, and those appointed to it are thrown in at the deep end and expected to swim. In some senses, the whole of one's previous ministry is, or ought to be, training in at least the basic arts of pastoral oversight, collaboration, delegation etc. Perhaps more could be done at that level to harness and develop those skills, so that those to whom they do not necessarily come easily or naturally will be better able to exercise them if called to episcopal office. This would point to much more systematic in-service training in those aspects of ministry throughout one's entire ministry. Some have these skills by nature, others are less well-

endowed, and still others have the potential which could be brought out, but are sometimes left in positions where their leadership talents are allowed to wither. Although the parallels with, for example, the business world should not be too closely pressed, it is important to note that all leaders and potential leaders have the art of leadership as an integral part of continuous training and development throughout their careers.

However, while leadership and management skills are indeed essential tools for the future, they should not be allowed to assume a greater prominence than theological skills. It is possible to argue that today's clergy, once ordained, actually undertake less seriously the study of theology than do many of today's laity - and the clergy are the bishops of the future. The role of the bishop is not to sit and "manage" but to stand and to teach among the faithful with vigour and with clarity.

3.6 Recent events have also shown that not even Irish culture today will carry or sustain Christian thought or teaching unless or until the teaching is presented through clear and unambiguous public witness. Bishops, like other leaders in society, can today no longer expect to be listened to by virtue of their office. They know that it is the integrity of their life-style and their skill in presenting a vision to others that alone will enhance the profession of their office and demonstrate the effectiveness of their learning. No human being can be expected to do this other than imperfectly; yet when it is performed with courage and humility it does not pass unnoticed.

3.7 The Anglican bishop is a bishop-in-synod. *He* has not the individual authority of *his* Roman Catholic counterpart. But neither is *he* simply a moderator. The authority *he* still possesses can have both positive and negative effects on the diocese and people among whom *he* ministers. Episcopal authority is exercised in a very different way today than it was even a generation ago. It is much more consultative and collaborative. The autocratic issuing of edicts from afar has gone. This is one of the most important areas in which the bishop needs good diocesan resources. Gone are the days when people could be appointed to significant positions purely on the grounds of seniority in service, and then left largely to their own devices while the bishop ruled in isolation. Without such resources, it is much more difficult for *him* to "know the mind of the diocese", to have a proper sounding board that will enable *him* to think long, hard and critically about the development of ministry appropriate to the diocese, or to stimulate more widespread theological thought and education within the diocese.

3.8 *Positively*, this means that public statements are generally made after consultation with senior and representative members of the clergy and laity of the diocese who will be his close advisors. The bishop thus speaks the mind of the diocese. When public comment is urgent and necessary *his* sole official voice must even then be one that understands the mind of the diocese because he knows it and has helped form its thought.

3.9 *Negatively*, the bishop can also exercise power by preventing things from happening. This can be good and necessary in the life of the diocese when *he* fears something inadvisable may emerge from a discussion insufficiently thought out. It can also lead to inaction and missed opportunities if the bishop is unwilling to take risks. The Anglican synodical system is such that the bishop can easily form a kind of bottle-neck through which nothing can pass. What cannot get through will not happen. Where such intentional obstructiveness exists nothing will ever be done. In previous generations such obstructiveness, under the guise of pastoral concern, has not been unknown.

3.10 The bishop is a part of the community over which *he* teaches and governs. In the Church of Ireland *he* is chosen by a careful electoral system which seems as good as any other in the Anglican Communion. Once chosen *he* must be affirmed by *his* fellow bishops as bishop of the diocese of *his* title. At *his* episcopal ordination *he* is also affirmed by the people and, by prayer and the laying-on-of-hands of the bishops present, *he* is brought within the historic episcopate. What is often called "the apostolic succession" is not the "tactile" dead hand of the past but the Holy Spirit energising the church of today. If one may be allowed to think in spatial terms, there is in *his* ordination a vertical line by which *he* relates to the whole episcopate and to the spiritual line to which *he* succeeds *his* predecessors-in-faith in *his* diocese. There is also the horizontal line which is *his* relationship to the people over whom *he* will preside. To build a sense of togetherness is not simply to reorganise the bishop's diary. It may require a willingness to do away with every structure and symbol that reinforces separateness rather than partnership.

3.11 The relationship between bishop and people should be reciprocal. The bishop is not just an individual but is a corporate person whose ministry is exercised in relation to the community and with the support of the community. *He* gives but *he* also receives. Thus, in guarding the faith, *he* has the task of receiving the insights of the people and discerning the mind of those committed to his charge. They are to act and to think together.

3.12 This extends to the bishop's role as pastor. It is taken for granted that an essential part of episcopal ministry is the exercise of the pastoral care of the pastors in the diocese. "Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodes - but who will guard the guards themselves?". Juvenal's question could be modified in this context: "Who will pastor the pastor?". There seems to be an unconscious assumption that bishops have no further need for such things, and this can sometimes lead to a deep sense of isolation. Some bishops have been able to find their own pastoral support network either in an individual or a small group of people, and in this regard the potential for the ministry of lay people and of retired clergy is great, because both may be external to the authority structures of the diocese. It may not always be so straightforward in the case of the serving clergy of a diocese simply because of the formal relationship in which bishop and clergy officially find themselves. This question has already arisen in another context: that of "Clergy Under Stress" (see Standing Committee Reports 1990 and 1991) where a bishop is inescapably fulfilling the dual role of pastor and overseer. There the dual role was seen to

present difficulties for the bishop in *his* pastoral care of the clergy; here it may be seen as the opposite side of the same coin.

3.13 Because *he* is a part of the People of God and has no authority apart from his community, *his* pastoral and teaching role is to enable the community to act as a corporate body. This aspect of the bishop's pastoral role is best seen as the bishop ensures fidelity to the faith of the Church: *he* should never uncritically accept novelties and must be a defender of Biblical tradition seen as the moving stream of the church's life. As teacher *he* must also be a theological explorer, an innovator: he will never uncritically reject things new because they are new but will try to interpret them in the light of reason and of that ongoing tradition. Failure to defend traditional truths, as much as failure correctly to interpret needed change in faith and society, must inevitably lead to the death of theological thought in the diocese. To enable the bishop to develop this dimension of *his* ministry, the pursuit of systematic study needs to be built in to *his* programme. In the Church of England, most diocesan bishops on getting their new diary for the following year allocate up to eight weeks for study and rest. Nothing is allowed to interfere with that. In addition to a bishop's own personal reading preferences, there should also be regular access to people with expertise in different areas, so that when the bishop is required to say something it will be of some consequence. (Many years ago, the Duke of Edinburgh was asked how he managed to speak with authority on such a huge variety of topics. He said that he was fortunate enough to be in the position of having ready access to the most competent people available in almost any field, and "something is bound to rub off.")

3.14 Most bishops will inevitably gain insights as they share their thoughts and needs with other members of the episcopate. The bishops of the Church of Ireland thus have regular meetings during the course of the year. It is interesting, however, to note that the constitution of the Church of Ireland sees the role of a House of Bishops as essentially one of relating the bishops to general synod. The House may consult and discuss; it may even make pronouncements; but in the end the essential collegiality within the Church must be that between the bishop of the diocese and the people of the diocese.

3.15 The bishop's relation with his diocese must inevitably be governed by its size and population and also by the number of clergy over whom *he* presides. There can be no ideal size of diocese but every bishop should be able to know all *his* priests and many of the laity well. This is often taken to mean that small dioceses should be maintained whatever the cost. This need not be accepted as gospel. The principle of intimacy can be carried too far, and where a diocese is too small the bishop is almost inevitably dragged into every local concern. In every local difficulty *he* becomes the first port of call rather than the last. **This diminishes the status and role of incumbents,** who are not to be treated as junior curates. Instead of supporting the ministry of incumbents, the intimate involvement of the bishop threatens to diminish it. This is not to plead for an exalted status for the bishop, but to ensure that a bishop is not so omnipresent that every parishioner can bypass the rector at the slightest whim. In order that a diocese can be a diocese -

a Church which truly epitomises at least in some fashion the Church - it needs sociological, economic and cultural conditions which simply cannot exist in a very tiny diocese. A "village" cannot present the form of a developed complete city, nor a tiny collection of parishes a "complete" diocese.

From the point of view of ministry, dioceses need to be sufficiently large to enable a certain amount of mobility within them. Where parishes are large enough to have curates-assistant, the experience in recent years has been that they move to other dioceses after serving their title. The same frequently applies to changes of incumbency, where the only movement is away from the diocese. This poses problems for the continuity, stability and development of ministry within a diocese.

3.16 Because of these factors, the future dioceses of the Church of Ireland require realistic boundary adjustments. There are large areas of the south and west where the Church of Ireland population is very unevenly distributed. The number of Church of Ireland children (1991 census) under 10 years of age is down by 20% from the Census of 1981 (the whole community 15.7%). In many parts of the republic there are large areas of very small, widely scattered congregations.

3.17 Fewer bishops with better administrative help, but with larger areas, may be the only way to serve the Church of tomorrow and give new purpose to the role of the bishop. This is not an unquestioning acceptance of a management model. It is simply a recognition that most Church of Ireland bishops today meet the administrative needs of their dioceses with office assistance that would be regarded as inadequate by the clerk of a minor urban district council. In smaller dioceses, bishops are ex-officio chairmen of not only the major diocesan committees, but also of their sub- and sub-sub offspring. (Episcopal and parochial ministry is further hampered by the fact that very small dioceses have inherited, almost unchanged, administrative structures that were laid down at a time when they were numerically very much larger than at present.) In larger dioceses where such committee involvement is physically impossible, the administrative load on the bishop's desk has threatened to swamp *him* in any case because secretarial assistance up to now has not been properly provided. *His* equivalent in the Church of England has full-time administrative support, and in the Episcopal Church of the United States, dioceses which are numerically not much larger than an average rural Irish diocese provide their bishops with a much higher level of full-time support.

Administration and bureaucracy are extended to central church level with membership, and frequently chairmanship, of many extra-diocesan committees. The concept of the bishop as the link between the diocese and the wider Church, representing each to the other, is in danger of being altered to *his* being one of a number of links between diocese and central church committees. Many years ago, Archbishop Ramsey expressed the fear that the Church (of England) would soon be driven by bureaucracy rather than spirituality/theology. It was a timely warning.

3.18 The bishop's role as link between diocese and wider Church can be undermined not only by the administrative expectations noted above, but also by expectations of a different kind. Particularly in the Republic of Ireland, bishops are very much involved in the affairs of the wider society, and are frequently invited to attend public events. This is perceived as being an indispensable part of episcopal ministry. Representation is important, provided that it is seen primarily in terms of the bishop articulating the views and needs of *his* people to the wider society, but it is too often diminished to merely "flying the flag". To quote one bishop:

"There is the feeling in the Church of Ireland that it is much more important that a bishop is present at an event, than that he has anything coherent to say while he is there."

3.19 The bishop of a diocese is elected to serve and guide the Church. If *he* is to achieve this gospel servant role *he* needs the assistance of others - both clerical and lay. In reaching out to others *he* must allow *himself* to be reached. *His* authority must be built up, not by words, but by rebuilding structures that make it possible for people to connect, and by enabling congregations to find that deeper unity which is beyond their own vision, that unity to which the bishop bears witness. The Greek word *dynamis* best conveys the creative force involved in this kind of power. It is motive power rather than coercive power. In creating vision, the bishop will motivate lively communities within his diocese. Such liveliness would manifest itself in the vibrancy and the reflectiveness of the local parishes. The bishop, by example and teaching, would encourage the people of the parishes to be active, not just in the parish scene, but also in the secular affairs of the locality by bearing witness to the things of God. The people of God and their bishops will realise that any leadership worthy of the name must be one which inspires the humblest to embrace not just Christ and the church, but the whole of that world to which the church is called afresh to witness.

Chapter Four

STRUCTURES

A. "A DIOCESE OF THE WEST"

The scenario

4.1 More than any other of the four Irish provinces Connaught forms a self-conscious and definitive unit consisting of the counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. Along its greater length the river Shannon forms the natural boundary, although County Clare, which ecclesiastically would seem a natural part of the unit, is actually in the civil province of Munster. The ecclesiastical boundary between the provinces of Armagh and Dublin forms a border which divides this area of the west coast of Ireland where the Church of Ireland population is at its weakest in any part of the whole island. At present, just over six miles south of Galway city the diocese of Tuam ends and the diocese of Kilmacduagh (Limerick and Killaloe) begins. It was a nonsense when the legislation resulting from the Church Temporalities Act of 1833 united the dioceses of Tuam, Killala and Achonry within the province of Armagh, and left the dioceses of Killaloe, Kilfenora, Kilmacduagh and Clonfert to be within that of Dublin. Today it is an absurdity which prevents the Church of Ireland, as against the efforts of the Irish government, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy which still retains the old ecclesiastical province of Connaught, from attempting to provide a realistic policy for the west of Ireland.

4.2 Numbers alone would suggest that a single bishop covering the area of Tuam and Killaloe could provide an overall vision for a uniquely natural hinterland which simply cannot be given with present divided jurisdictions.

Such indeed were the bulk of the suggestions for Connaught made by the ecclesiastical commissioners in 1868 as the church worked to stave off disestablishment. They proposed the formation of a new diocese of Tuam which would include Tuam, Killalla, Achonry, Elphin, Ardagh, Clonfert and Kilmacduagh, excluding only Killaloe and Kilfenora, which they included in a new diocese of Cashel and Limerick. We would now propose the inclusion of Killaloe and Limerick in this new diocese of the west.

4.3 Although, in our initial report, we suggested that Limerick diocese might become part of a diocese of the south-west, uniting (in company with Ardfert and Aghadoe) with Cork etc., we now suggest, in the light of submissions received, that Limerick would fit better into a western diocese, in other words, that its natural axis is to the west (and its northern hinterland) rather than to the south. We therefore propose that the three parishes in Limerick diocese (Adare/Knockaney, Limerick, and Rathkeale/Kilnaughtin) should be part of the diocese of the west.

4.4 We are aware that the "diocese of the west" would constitute a large geographical area. We are, however, not convinced that a bishop of the "diocese of the west" (wherever *he* might be placed) would be any further separated, in terms of time, from *his* farthest-flung parishes than would be the case for a number of Scottish bishops, or indeed, for some English bishops. The crucial point is one made in an earlier chapter: A bishop's relationship with *his* diocese must inevitably be governed by its size and population and also by the number of clergy over whom *he* presides.

As we have read above, **(3.15)** there can be no ideal size of diocese but every bishop should be able to know intimately all his clergy and many lay people. This is often taken to mean that small dioceses should be maintained whatever the cost. This need not be accepted as gospel. In order that a diocese can be a diocese a Church which truly epitomises at least in some fashion the Church - it needs sociological, economic and cultural conditions which simply cannot exist in a very tiny diocese. A "village" cannot present the form of a developed complete city, nor a tiny collection of parishes a complete diocese.

Bringing together the new diocese

4.5 Based on the 1998 edition of the Church of Ireland Directory a "Diocese of the West" would consist of the following parochial units:

4 from the diocese of Tuam;
2 from the diocese of Killala;
2 from the diocese of Achonry (Straid/Foxford is serviced from Killala diocese);
7 from the diocese of Killaloe;
3 from the diocese of Limerick;
0 from the dioceses of Kilfenora and Kilmacduagh (serviced from Killaloe diocese);
2 from the diocese of Clonfert;
5 from the diocese of Elphin.

This would provide twenty-five parishes with twenty-nine stipendiary clergy.

Consequences

4.6 The provision of a diocese covering the west will require the separation of Ardfert and Aghadoe from Limerick and Killaloe etc., and eventually Elphin from Kilmore etc. Meath and Kildare, together with Kilmore and Ardagh, would form a new diocese of the midlands.

4.7 In these proposals, the commission has worked on the basis of existing unions or groups of parishes, and has avoided dividing them. Nevertheless, it will be seen that in some cases it might make more sense to allocate parts of existing groups to one diocesan jurisdiction and parts to another. This should be a matter for the respective diocesan councils to consider.

4.8 The proposed Diocese of the West would consist of the following parochial units:-

Diocese of Tuam	Diocese of Killaloe, etc.	Diocese of Limerick
Aughaval	Birr	Adare
Galway	Cloughjordan	Limerick
Omey	Drumcliffe & Kilfenora	Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin
Tuam	Killaloe	
Nenagh		
Roscrea		
Shinrone		
Diocese of Killala	**Diocese of Elphin**	**Diocese of Achonry**
Killala & Sraid	Boyle & Roscommon	Ballisodare
Skreen	Calry	Tubbercurry
	Drumcliffe	
Diocese of Clonfert	Sligo	
Aughrim & Ardrahan	Taunagh	
Clonfert		

Proposed number of cures: 25

Present number of cures:		
	Tuam, Killala & Achonry	8
	Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	25
	Limerick & Killaloe	16

B. "A DIOCESE OF THE SOUTH WEST"

The scenario

4.9 When, in 1977, the recommendations of the previous commission relating to this area were implemented, the dioceses of Limerick and Killaloe contained twenty-five parochial units (Limerick 5, Ardfert 7, Killaloe 13).

Today the diocese contains sixteen units (Limerick 3, Ardfert 4, Killaloe 9), an overall drop of nine (36%). In 1977 the dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross contained thirty-one units, whereas today there are twenty-three, a drop of eight (25%).

4.10 The figures show a trend which may well continue. Some parishes in these areas are very small indeed and are just about able to keep going. There is a sense of a "confident minority" and it is right that people should be given hope and inspiration but we must also face facts. It seems obvious to the commission that the number of parishes in the south-western region may not yet have bottomed out. If the south-western dioceses are left intact this time round, further action will be required relatively soon. The commission believes it is better to take action now which may produce stability and growth for the future. Incumbents, with improving road systems are covering areas which thirty years ago would have seemed inconceivable. Bishops could also cover greater areas if their central committee demands were less onerous.

4.11 Change will be necessary in the south-western area. It has been made the more difficult by the 1976 amalgamation of Limerick and Killaloe and by the successful way in which the dioceses have become fully one and for which they deserve congratulations.

Bringing together the new Diocese

4.12 To create a diocese that will remain viable into the foreseeable future it is our recommendation that Ardfert and Aghadoe should be separated from Limerick, Killaloe etc. Limerick and Killaloe (with the exception of Ardfert and Aghadoe) would be incorporated into a diocese of the west (see A above). Ardfert and Aghadoe would be united with the dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. The new diocese of Cork Cloyne and Ross with Ardfert and Aghadoe would, at present numbers, contain twenty-seven units.

According to the 1998 edition of the Church of Ireland Directory a united Diocese of Cork, Cloyne, Ross, Ardfert and Aghadoe would provide the following parochial units:

14 from the Diocese of Cork;
5 from the Diocese of Cloyne;
4 from the Diocese of Ross;
4 from the Dioceses of Ardfert and Aghadoe

4.13 The proposed Diocese of the South West would consist of the following parochial units:-

Diocese of Cork	Diocese of Ross	Diocese of Cloyne
Ballydehob	Abbeystrewry	Cloyne
Bandon	Beara	Cobh & Glanmire
Carrigaline	Kilgariffe	Fermoy
Carrigrohane	Ross	Mallow
Cork, *St Fin Barre*		
Cork, *St Luke*	Diocese of Ardfert & Aghadoe	
Douglas	Kenmare	
Fanlobbus	Kilcolman	
Kilmocomogue	Killarney	
Kilmoe	Tralee	
Kinneigh		
Kinsale		
Moviddy		
Templebreedy		

Proposed number of cures:	27	
Present number of cures:	Cork, Cloyne and Ross	23
	Limerick and Killaloe	16

C. "A DIOCESE OF THE MIDLANDS"

The scenario

4.14 The dioceses of Meath and Kildare were merged in 1976 giving an area stretching west of Dublin to east of the river Shannon. Northwards its furthest parish is Mountnugent (Castlepollard/Oldcastle union), the most southerly being Coolbanagher (Mountmellick union) and the most easterly Drogheda, Saint Mary (Julianstown union). The diocese covers a large rural area with no town of greater population than 12,000. There are two cathedrals - at Trim and at Kildare. Parishioners of some of the areas nearest Dublin - Clane, Dunboyne, Naas and Navan - commute to the capital but many would also be working as well as being involved in their local area.

4.15 Meath and Kildare dioceses presently contain twenty parishes, soon to be nineteen. The pastoral responsibilities of the bishop could be extended by the addition of two areas at the northern end (from Armagh and Kilmore).

4.16 Having taken cognisance of the strong feeling within the Church of Ireland as a whole that the line of the political border should not be a deciding factor in the border of a diocese, we now suggest that the Drogheda group of Parishes, (consisting of Drogheda, Ardee, Collon and Termonfeckin), alone should be transferred from the Diocese of Armagh to the Diocese of Meath. At present, the town of Drogheda is divided into two small parishes. Collon (Armagh) is far closer to Slane (Meath) than to any other parish, and Ardee also has considerable connections with that part of Meath Diocese which lies in County Cavan.

Bringing together the new Diocese

4.17 If the diocese of Elphin is joined to the proposed "Diocese of the West", the dioceses of Kilmore and Ardagh should be added to the dioceses of Meath and Kildare to form a Diocese of the Midlands. An exception might be made in the case of the groups of Killesher and Kinawley, and also Killinagh and Cloonclare, all of which lie to the north and west of Kilmore Diocese, much of which would identify educationally and socially with County Fermanagh, and all of which might advantageously be added to Clogher. (If Killesher and Killinagh were to be added to Clogher, Cloonclare would become a completely isolated part of Kilmore, and the recommendation is therefore that it too should be transferred to Clogher.) The diocese of Meath etc. would thus be enlarged, from the Kilmore diocese, by the addition of Annagh, Arvagh, Bailieborough, Kildrumferton, Lurgan, Drung, Kildallon, Killeshandra, Kilmore, Swanlinbar and Urney groups; and from the Ardagh diocese by the addition of Ardagh, Kiltoghart, Mohill, Mostrim and Templemichael groups. This would bring the total number of parochial groupings to thirty-six.

Based on the 1998 edition of the Church of Ireland Directory, a united diocese of Meath, Kildare, Kilmore (part), Ardagh, and Armagh (part) would provide the following parochial units:

12 from the Diocese of Meath
8 from the Diocese of Kildare
11 from the Diocese of Kilmore
4 from the Diocese of Ardagh
1 from the Diocese of Armagh

4.18 The proposed Diocese of the Midlands would consist of the following parochial units:-

Diocese of Meath	Bailieborough	Templemichael
Athlone	Drung	Diocese of Kildare
Castlepollard	Kildallon	Clane
Clara	Kildrumferton	Clonsast
Dunboyne	Killeshandra	Geashill
Julianstown	Kilmore	Kildare
Kells	Lurgan	Mountmellick
Kingscourt	Swanlinbar	Naas
Mullingar	Urney	Newbridge
Navan	Diocese of Armagh	Portarlington
Rathmolyon	Drogheda, *St Peter*	
Trim & Abbey	Diocese of Ardagh	
Tullamore	Ardagh	
Diocese of Kilmore	Kiltoghart	
Annagh	Mohill	
Arvagh	Mostrim	

Proposed number of cures:	36	
Present number of cures:	Meath & Kildare	20
	Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	25

D. The DIOCESE OF CLOGHER

4.19 If the recommendations for creating the new "Diocese of the Midlands" are followed, the Diocese of Clogher will be increased by four cures from the present Diocese of Kilmore, viz. Cloonclare, Killesher, Killinagh and Kinawley, bringing the total number of cures to thirty-nine.

E. The DIOCESE OF ARMAGH

4.20 If the recommendations for creating the new "Diocese of the Midlands" are followed, the Diocese of Armagh will be reduced by one cure, viz. Drogheda *St Peter*, bringing the total number of cures to forty-six.

Chapter Five

PROPOSED NUMBER OF CURES IN EACH DIOCESE

5.1 DIOCESE OF ARMAGH

Acton	Clogherny	Killyman	Newtownhamilton
Annaghmore	Clonfeacle	Kilmore	Pomeroy
Ardtrea	Derryloran	Kilsaran	Portadown, *St Columba*
Armagh Cathedral	Desertlyn	Lisnadill	Portadown, *St Mark*
Armagh, *St Mark*	Donaghmore	Lissan	Richhill
Ballinderry	Drumcree	Loughgall	Sixmilecross
Ballymascanlon	Drumglass	Loughgilly	Tartaraghan
Ballymore	Dundalk	Magherafelt	Tullanisken
Brackaville	Eglish	Milltown	Tynan
Caledon	Errigle Keerogue	Moy	Woodschapel
Camlough	Keady	Mullabrack	
Carnteel	Kildress	Mullavilly	

Proposed number of cures: 46
Present number of cures: 47
Proposed changes: Drogheda, *St Peter*, to transfer to "Diocese of the Midlands"

5.2 DIOCESE OF CLOGHER

Diocese of Clogher			Diocese of Kilmore
Aghadrumsee	Donacavey	Lisnaskea	Cloonclare
Aghalurcher	Donagh	Magheracross	Killesher
Aghavea	Dromore	Magheraculmoney	Killinagh
Augher	Drumkeeran	Maguiresbridge	Kinawley
Ballybay	Ematris	Monaghan	
Carrickmacross	Enniskillen	Rossory	
Cleenish	Fivemiletown	Sallaghy	
Clogher	Galloon	Tempo	
Clones	Garrison	Trory	
Currin	Inishmacsaint		
Derryvullan N.	Kilskeery		
Derryvullan S.	Lack		
Devenish	Lisbellaw		

Proposed number of cures: 39
Present number of cures: 35
Proposed changes: Addition of Cloonclare, Killesher, Killinagh and Kinawley from Kilmore

5.3 DIOCESE OF DERRY AND RAPHOE

Diocese of Derry
Aghadowney
Ardstraw
Ballyscullion
Balteagh
Camus-juxta-Bann
Camus-juxta-Mourne
Cappagh
Castledawson
Castlerock
Clooney
Culmore
Cumber Upper
Derg
Desertmartin
Donagheady
Drumachose
Drumclamph
Drumragh
Dungiven
Edenderry
Errigal
Faughanvale
Glendermot
Kilcronaghan
Killowen
Leckpatrick
Londonderry, *Christ Church*
Londonderry, *St Augustine*
Londonderry, Cathedral
Maghera
Tamlaghtard
Tamlaghtfinlagan
Tamlaght-O'Crilly
Urney

Diocese of Raphoe
Ardara
Clondehorkey
Clondevaddock
Convoy
Conwal
Donegal
Dunfanaghy
Fahan Lower
Gweedore
Inver
Kilbarron
Moville
Raphoe
Stranorlar
Taughboyne
Tullyaughnish

Proposed number of cures: 50
Present number of cures: 50
Proposed changes: None

5.4 DIOCESES OF DOWN AND DROMORE

Diocese of Down
Ballybeen
Ballyhalbert
Ballyholme
Ballyphilip & Ardquin
Ballywalter
Bangor, St Comgall
Bangor Abbey
Belfast:
Ballymacarrett, *St Patrick*
Ballymacarrett, *St Martin*
Ballinafeigh
Belvoir
Cregagh
Dundela
Gilnahirk
Knock
Knockbreda
Knocknagoney
Mount Merrion
Orangefield
Sydenham
St Christopher
St Clement
St Donard
Stormont
Willowfield
Bright
Carnalea
Carrowdore
Comber
Donaghadee
Down Cathedral
Down, *St Margaret*
Drumbeg
Drumbo
Dundonald

Diocese of Down (cont)
Glencraig
Grey Abbey
Groomsport
Helen's Bay
Hillsborough
Hollywood
Killaney
Killinchey
Killyleagh
Kilmore
Kilwarlin Upr.
Lecale Group
Movilla
Newtownards
Rathmullan
Saintfield

Diocese of Dromore
Aghaderg
Aghalee
Annahilt
Annalong
Ardmore
Castlewellan
Clonallon
Donaghcloney
Dromara
Dromore Cathedral
Drumgath
Gilford
Kilbroney
Kilkeel
Kilmegan
Knocknamuckley
Lurgan, *Shankill*
Lurgan, *St John*
Magheradroll
Magherally
Magheralin
Moira
Newcastle
Newry
Seagoe
Seapatrick
Tullylish

Proposed number of cures: 78
Present number of cures: 78
Proposed changes: None

5.5 DIOCESE OF CONNOR

Agherton
Ahoghill
Antrim
Ardclinis
Armoy
Ballinderry
Ballintoy
Ballymacash
Ballymena
Ballymoney
Ballynure
Ballyrashane
Ballywillan
Belfast:
Belfast Cathedral
All Saints
Christ Church
Finaghy
Holy Trinity &
St Silas
Malone
St Aidan
St Andrew
St Bartholomew
St George
St Katherine
St Mark
St Mary
St Mary Magdalene
St Matthew
St Michael
St Nicholas
St Paul
St Peter
St Simon
St Stephen
St Thomas
Upper Falls
Upper Malone
Whiterock
Billy
Broomhedge
Carnmoney
Carrickfergus
Cloughfern
Coleraine
Connor
Craigs
Derriaghy
Derryvolgie
Drummaul
Dunluce
Dunmury
Eglantine
Glenavy
Greenisland
Jordanstown
Kilbride
Killead
Kilmakee
Kilroot
Kilwaughter
Lambeg
Larne & Inver
Lisburn
Cathedral
Lisburn, *Christ Church*
Lisburn, *St Paul*

Diocese of Connor (cont)

Magheragall	Muckamore	Stoneyford
Mallusk	Ramoan	Templepatrick
Monkstown	Rathcoole	Whitehead
Mossley	Skerry	Whitehouse

Proposed number of cures: 77
Present number of cures: 77
Proposed changes: None

5.6 DIOCESE OF DUBLIN AND GLENDALOUGH

Diocese of Dublin		Diocese of Glendalough
Booterstown	Malahide	Arklow
Bray	Monkstown	Athy
Castleknock	Raheny	Blessington
Christ Church Cathedral Group	Rathmichael	Castlemacadam
Clondalkin	Rathfarnham	Celbridge
Clontarf	Rathmines	Delgany
Crinken	St Ann	Donoughmore
Crumlin	St Bartholomew	Dunganstown
Dalkey	St Patrick's Cathedral Group	Greystones
Donnybrook	St George & St Thomas	Leixlip &
Drumcondra	Sandford	Luncan
Dun Laoghaire	Sandymount	Narraghmore
Glenageary	Santry & Glasnevin	Newcastle
Holmpatrick	Stillorgan	Powerscourt
Howth	Swords	Rathdrum
Irish Church Missions	Tallaght	Wicklow
Kill	Taney	
Killiney, (Ballybrack)	Tullow	
Killiney, *Holy Trinity*	Whitechurch	
Kilternan	Zion	

Proposed number of cures: 55
Present number of cures: 55
Proposed changes: None

5.7 DIOCESE OF CASHEL AND OSSORY

Diocese of Cashel	Diocese of Ferns	Diocese of Leighlin
Cashel	Ardamine	Abbeyleix
Kilcooley & Fertagh	Bunclody	Baltinglass
Templemore	Crosspatrick & Carnew	Carlow
Diocese of Waterford	Enniscorthy	Dunleckney
& Lismore	Ferns	Fenagh
Clonmel	Gorey	Killeshin
Fiddown	Killane	Kiltegan
Lismore	Kilscoran	Leighlin
Waterford	New Ross	Maryborough
Diocese of Ossory	Wexford	Stradbally
Castlecomer		Tullow
Clonenagh		
Kells		
Kilkenny		
Rathdowney		

Proposed number of cures:	33
Present number of cures:	33
Proposed changes:	None

5.8 "A DIOCESE OF THE MIDLANDS"

Diocese of Meath	Diocese of Kilmore	Diocese of Ardagh
Athlone	Annagh	Ardagh
Castlepollard	Arvagh	Kiltoghart
Clara	Bailieborough	Mohill
Dunboyne	Drung	Mostrim
Julianstown	Kildallon	Templemichael
Kells	Kildrumferton	Diocese of Kildare
Kingscourt	Killeshandra	Clane
Mullingar	Kilmore	Clonsast
Navan	Lurgan	Geashill
Rathmolyon	Swanlinbar	Kildare
Trim & Athboy	Urney	Mountmellick
Tullamore	Diocese of Armagh	Naas
	Drogheda, *St Peter*	Newbridge
		Portarlington

Proposed number of cures:	36	
Present number of cures:	Meath & Kildare	20
	Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	25

5.9 "A DIOCESE OF THE WEST"

Diocese of Tuam	Diocese of Killaloe, etc.	Dioceses of Limerick
Aughaval	Birr	Adare
Galway	Cloughjordan	Limerick
Omey	Drumcliffe & Kilfenora	Rathkeale &
Tuam	Killaloe	Kilnaughtin
Diocese of Killala	Nenagh	Diocese of Elphin
Killala & Straid	Roscrea	Boyle & Roscommon
Skreen	Shinrone	Calry
Diocese of Achonry	Diocese of Clonfert	Drumcliffe
Ballisodare	Aughrim & Ardrahan	Sligo
Tubbercurry	Clonfert	Taunagh

Proposed number of cures:	25	
Present number of cures:	Tuam, Killala & Achonry	8
	Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	25
	Limerick & Killaloe	16

5.10 "A DIOCESE OF THE SOUTH WEST"

Diocese of Cork	Diocese of Ross
Ballydehob	Abbeystrewry
Bandon	Beara
Carrigaline	Kilgariffe
Carrigrohane	Ross
Cork, *St Fin Barre*	Diocese of Ardfert & Aghadoe
Cork, St Luke	Kenmare
Douglas	Kilcolman
Fanlobbus	Killarney
Kilmocomogue	Tralee
Kilmoe	Diocese of Cloyne
Kinneigh	Cloyne
Kinsale	Cobh & Glanmire
Moviddy	Fermoy
Templebreedy	Mallow
	Youghal

Proposed number of cures:	27	
Present number of cures:	Cork, Cloyne and Ross	23
	Limerick and Killaloe	16

POSTSCRIPT

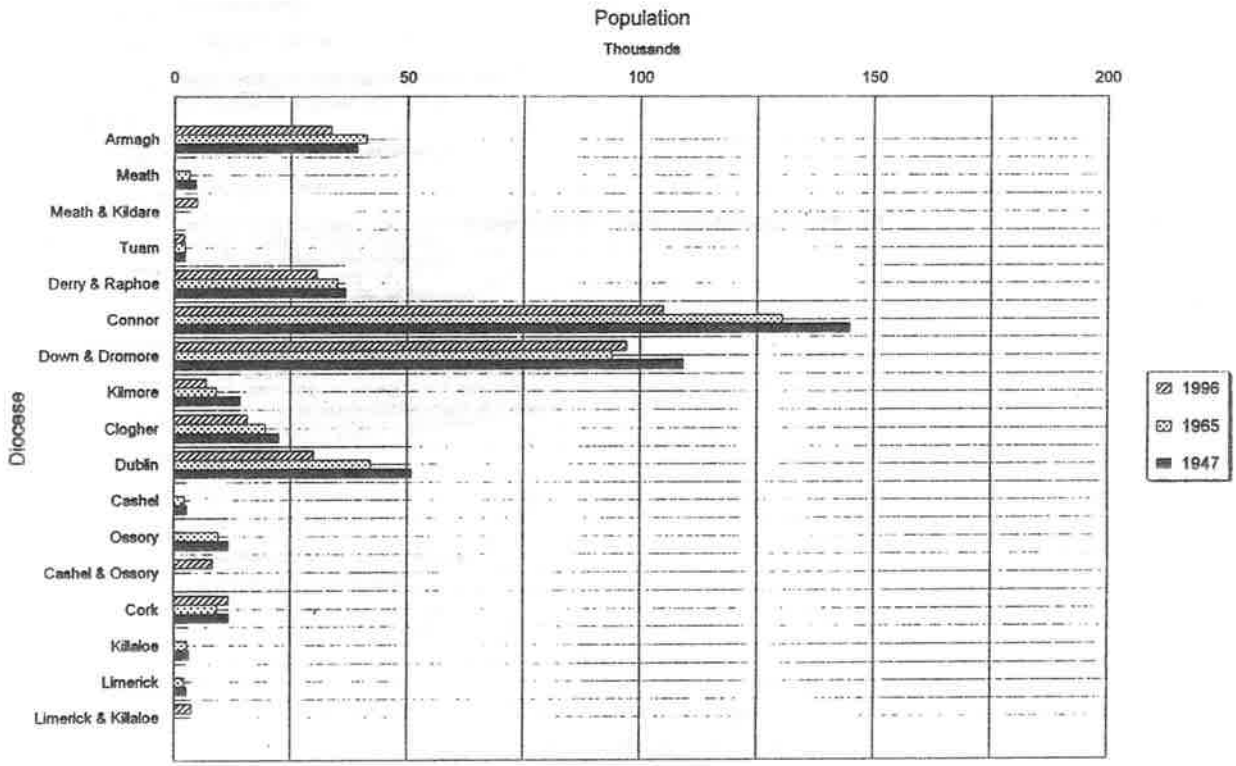
In compiling (and revising) this Report, the Commission was fully aware that its practical proposals on the re-ordering of diocesan boundaries were far-reaching, and would therefore meet with a degree of opposition. The *status quo* is always easier to contemplate than change.

However, we remain firmly and conscientiously convinced that, given the current trends within the Church of Ireland, our proposals will, later if not sooner, approximate to likely diocesan boundaries in the coming century. We would therefore urge General Synod (and diocesan synods) to grasp the nettle of proper diocesan reorganisation now, believing that this act of courage would, for decades to come, obviate the need for further dislocation.

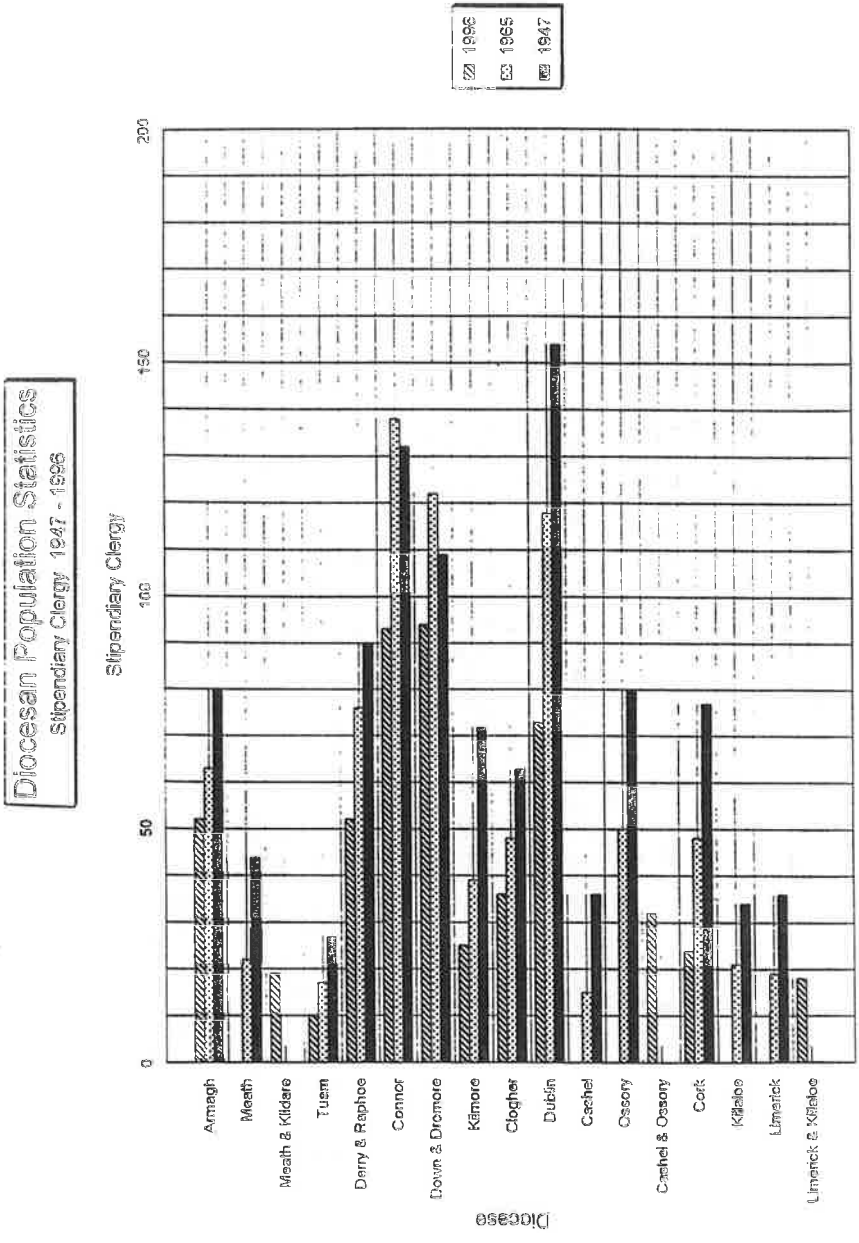
Being very aware of the traditional reluctance of synods to accept radical proposals (cf. *Administration 1967* and *Ministry Today - A Calling For All*, and *Time To Tell* etc.) we would urge General Synod not to copper-fasten any short-term alternatives it might wish to implement in place of these proposals. If, for example, at some stage the General Synod were to pursue the possibility (which we do not recommend and which was previously rejected by Synod) of combining the existing grouped dioceses of Tuam, Killala and Achonry with Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, we would request that such a linking would not involve the uniting of diocesan synods, diocesan councils, cathedral chapters etc., which would make the task of future diocesan re-organisation inevitably more difficult both legally and psychologically. We are convinced that, if such alternative paths were followed, further re-organisation of dioceses will be necessary within a few years, and we would therefore urge *all* grouped dioceses to refrain from any unnecessary amalgamation of structures in the meantime.

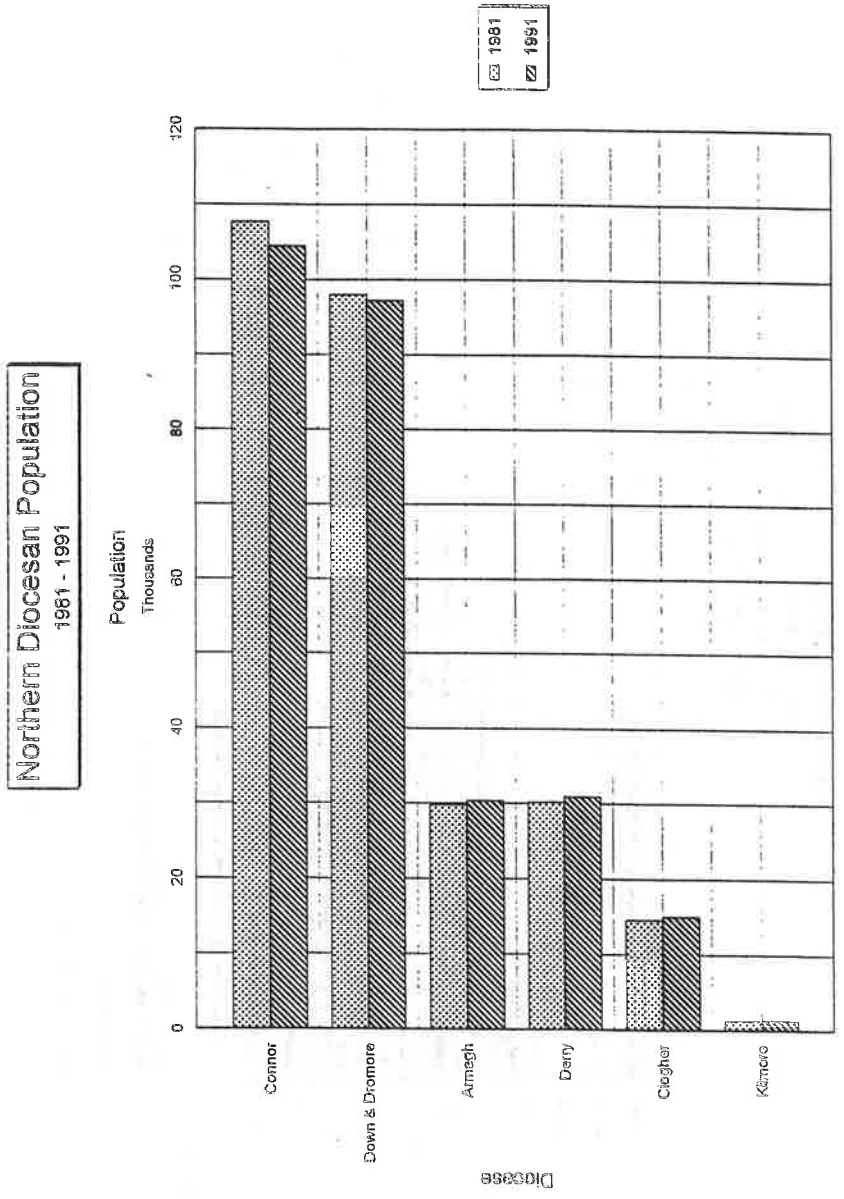
Diocesan Population Statistics

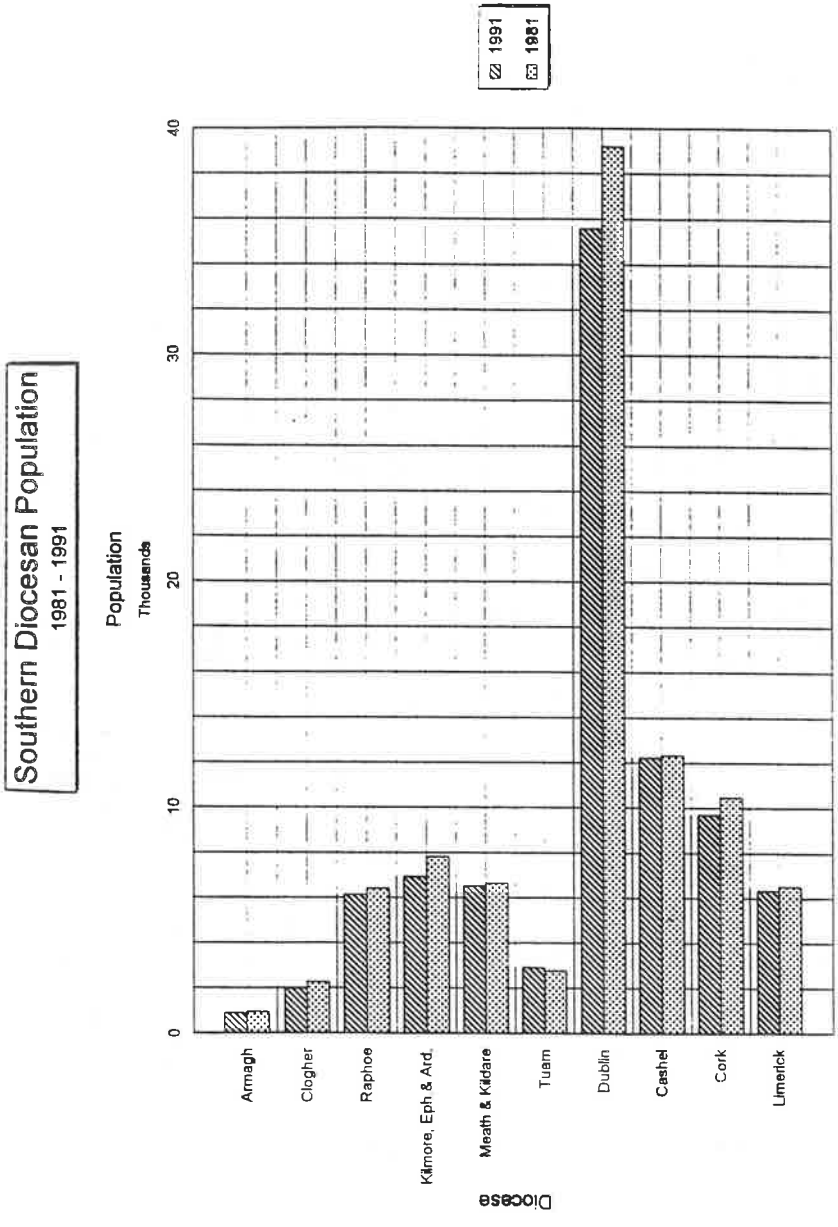
Population 1947 - 1996

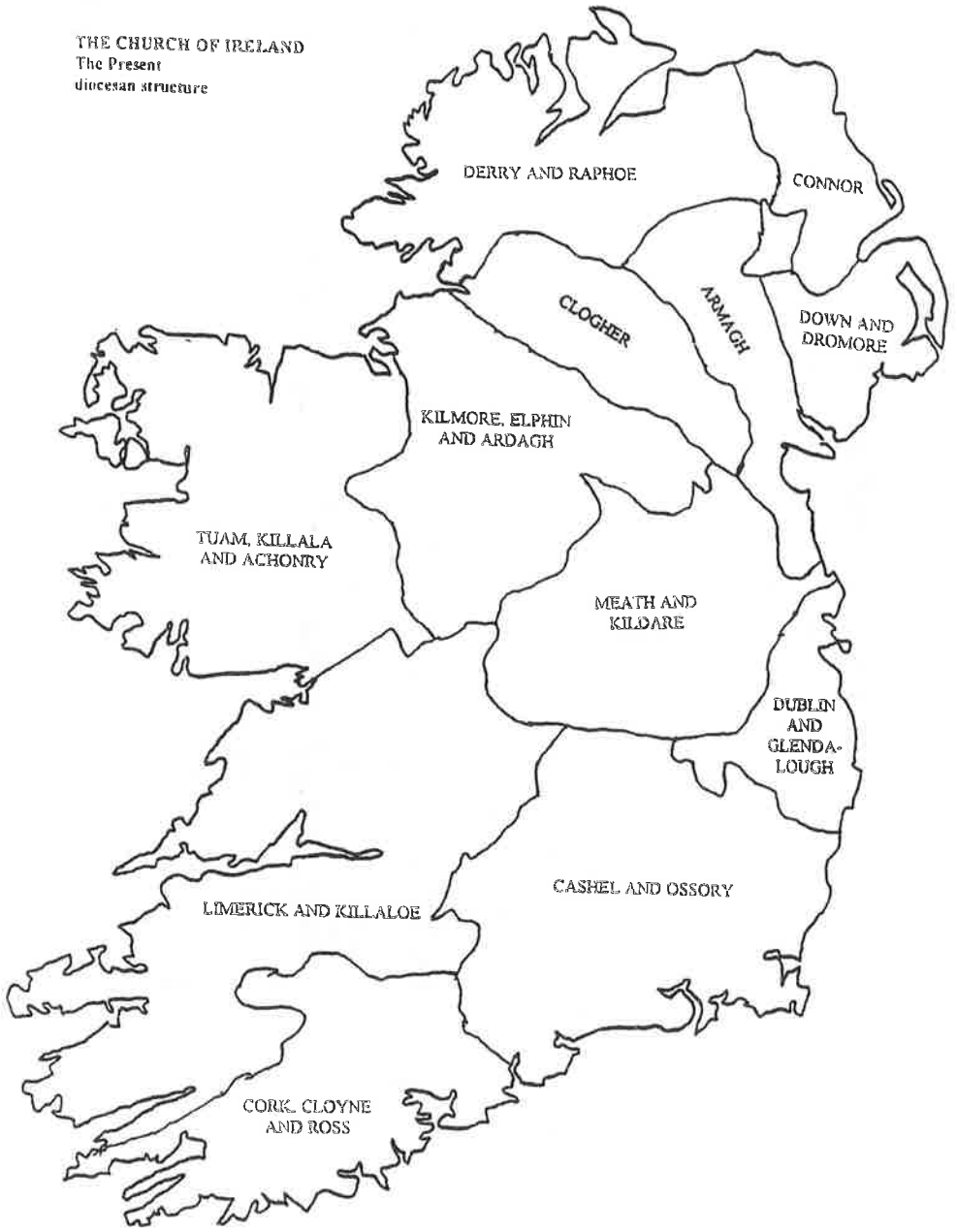


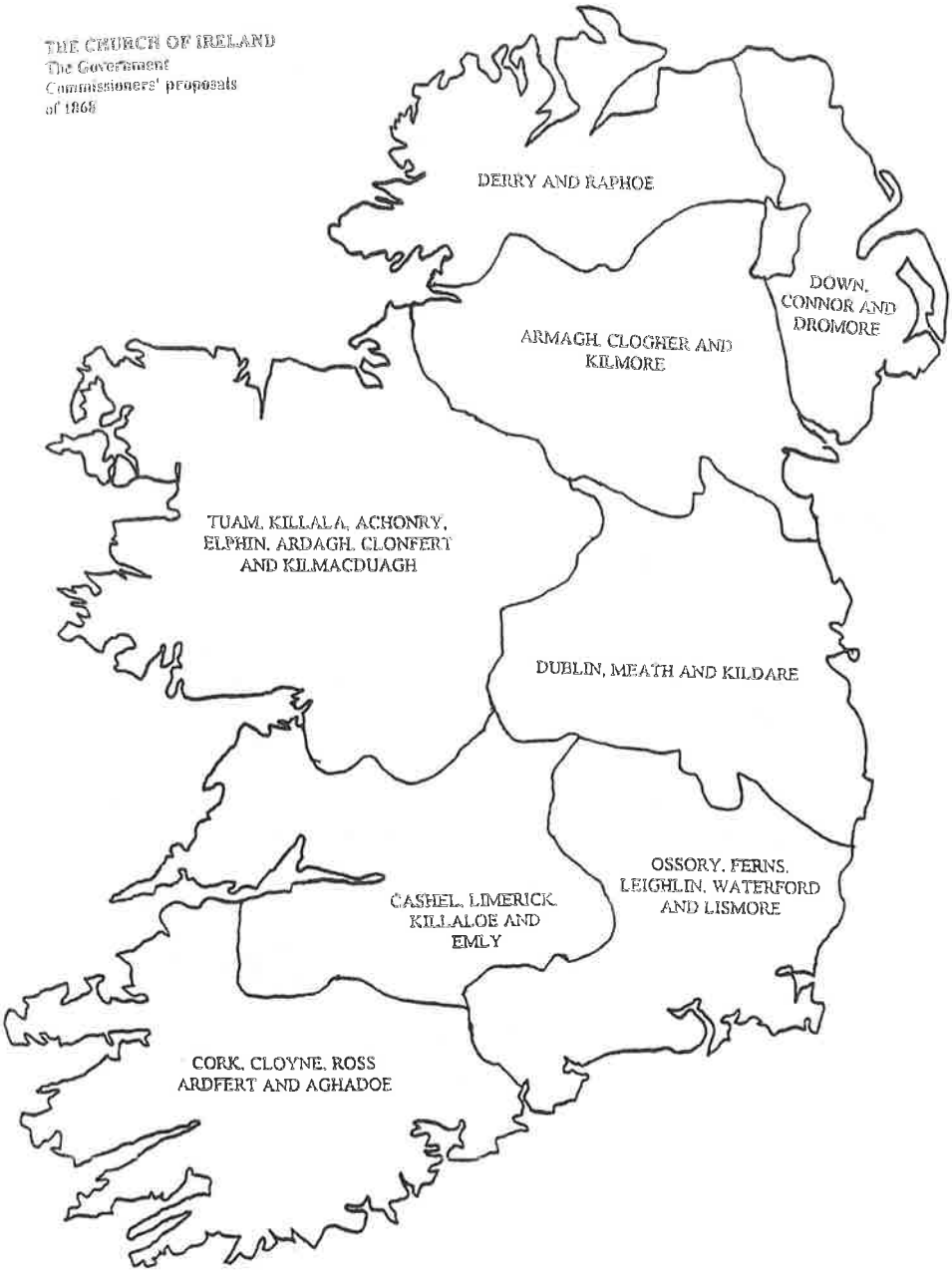
Diocesan Population Statistics
Parochial Units 1947 - 1996
Number of Units
0
50
100
150
200
Diocese
Armagh
Meath
Meath & Kildare
Tuam
Derry & Raphoe
Connor
Down & Dromore
Kilmore
Clogher
Dublin
Cashel
Ossory
Cashel & Ossory
Cork
Killaloe
Limerick
Limerick & Killaloe
1996
1965
1947


Diocesan Population Statistics
Stipendiary Clergy 1947 - 1996
Stipendiary Clergy
0
50
100
150
200
1996
1965
1947
Diocese
Armagh
Meath
Meath & Kildare
Tuam
Derry & Raphoe
Connor
Down & Dromore
Kilmore
Clogher
Dublin
Cashel
Ossory
Cashel & Ossory
Cork
Killaloe
Limerick
Limerick & Killaloe


Northern Diocesan Population
1981 - 1991
Population
Thousands
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
1981
1991
Connor
Down & Dromore
Armagh
Derry
Clogher
Kilmore
Diocese


Southern Diocesan Population
1981 - 1991
Population
Thousands
0
10
20
30
40
1991
1981
Armagh
Clogher
Raphoe
Kilmore, Eph & Ard.
Meath & Kildare
Tuam
Dublin
Cashel
Cork
Limerick
Diocese


THE CHURCH OF IRELAND
The Present
diocesan structure
DERRY AND RAPHOE
CONNOR
CLOGHER
ARMAGH
DOWN AND DROMORE
KILMORE, ELPHIN AND ARDAGH
TUAM, KILLALA AND ACHONRY
MEATH AND KILDARE
DUBLIN AND GLENDA-LOUGH
CASHEL AND OSSORY
LIMERICK AND KILLALOE
CORK, CLOYNE AND ROSS


THE CHURCH OF IRELAND
The Government
Commissioners' proposals
of 1868
DERRY AND RAPHOE
DOWN, CONNOR AND DROMORE
ARMAGH, CLOGHER AND KILMORE
TUAM, KILLALA, ACHONRY, ELPHIN, ARDAGH, CLONFERT AND KILMACDUAGH
DUBLIN, MEATH AND KILDARE
OSSORY, FERNS, LEIGHLIN, WATERFORD AND LISMORE
CASHEL, LIMERICK, KILLALOE AND EMLY
CORK, CLOYNE, ROSS ARDFERT AND AGHADOE

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND

The proposals of the Commission on Episcopal Needs, 1998