

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS delivered by **PROFESSOR AIDAN MORAN**, Vice-President and Registrar, University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork on 21 April, 2004, on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*, on **JOHN HAYDEN**



A Sheansailéir, agus a mhuintir na hOllscoile:

Accounts published by the Higher Education Authority in 1975 included student statistics for the first time. The publication of the figures followed the assignment of responsibility for Statistics - Research and Education - to a newly appointed Senior Executive Officer. The introduction said "The statistics included in this publication will, it is hoped, be expanded in future years to provide more detailed information on courses of study, new entrants, and socio-economic groupings of students in university institutions". The five universities at that time had a total enrolment of just under 20,771 students. There are now seven with a total enrolment of over 70,000 students and some additional 50,000 students in other institutions of higher education. The expansion since 1975 in terms of courses of study, programmes of research and increased participation has exceeded the hopes of the Senior Executive Officer who would find himself at the centre of management of Irish Higher Education for the next thirty years.

John Hayden was born in Dublin in 1939 and grew up in Ranelagh. His parents were John and Rose Hayden from Dublin and Carlingford respectively. His father was a garage proprietor and hackney driver. John was a middle child of a family with four girls and two boys. He was educated by the Irish Christian Brothers at Synge Street and retains a strong sense of gratitude for the education he received. He went directly from school to work with Dublin Corporation. This was followed with periods at the ESB and Kosangas during which he studied by correspondence course for a degree in Economics and Statistics with London University which he obtained in 1966. He then worked in Marketing at Bórd Fáilte and in Management Services at RTE before joining the staff of the HEA in 1973. He became Deputy Secretary in 1975 and in 1983 succeeded Jim Dukes as Secretary of the Authority. John Hayden held the post of Secretary and Chief Executive until his recent retirement.

The HEA had been established in 1971. Members, including the Chairman, are appointed by the Government. Chairmen have had full-time appointments and played a significant role in the formulation and presentation of policy. The HEA is the funding body for all seven universities in the State including two teacher training colleges as well as the National College for Art and Design, the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal College of Surgeons. It is also an advisory body to the Minister of Education and Science in relation to all of the third-level education sector. The role of Secretary and Chief Executive of the HEA is demanding. In addition to the obvious major financial and legal responsibilities there is a complex and dynamic range of relationships to be managed including Ministers, current and former Secretary Generals of Departments of Government, Heads and Officers of universities and other institutions, contacts at European and international level as well as the media. There are many strong personalities associated with higher education not least academics who can be vocal advocates of their specialist areas of scholarship and professional expertise.

John Hayden became Secretary in 1983 during a tough decade for organisations funded out of public funds. Implementation of policy was never going to be easy for a Chief Executive in a context where there are no guarantees as to the monies

either recurrent or capital allocated to the Authority each year. John Hayden gained the trust of those dependent on the HEA for equitable allocation of limited resources and was exceptionally skilled and sensitive in his management of communications. He was also successful in the delicate task of being seen by institutions as the protector of their long-term interests while assuring the relevant Departments of State that the use of public funds met the priorities of the Government of the day. His perspective was informed by a background which lay outside both mainstream university and public service sectors. He was a strong advocate of development while respecting the traditional distinction between the State and the universities. One feels that the guarantees of university autonomy which were incorporated in the Universities Act 1997 are consistent with John Hayden's own sense of values in higher education.

In addition to the Universities Act, with its review role for the HEA as regards universities in relation to strategic development plans, quality assurance procedures and equality policies, important developments at national level which occurred during John Hayden's time as Secretary have included:

- The establishment of two new universities
- National Undergraduate Expansion Programme
- European Regional Development Programme
- EU staff and student exchange programmes
- EU Advanced Technical Skills Programme
- Scientific and Technological Skills Programme
- Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI)

These programmes among others involved the management of significant capital and recurrent spending by the HEA. The most recent, PRTLTI, a component of the National Development Plan involves a very major investment of over 600 million euro for research infrastructure awarded to institutions on a competitive basis. The expeditious manner in which a programme of this scale has been managed by the HEA is testimony to the operational efficiency and administrative capability attained by its secretariat during John Hayden's years with responsibility for operational management.

Addressing the Teachers Union of Ireland as Deputy Secretary in 1980 John Hayden noted that population projections presented a very real challenge because, in complete contrast to every other developed country, the number of young people in Ireland was growing rapidly and the demand for places in higher education would increase over the next two decades. He emphasised the need for infrastructure to accommodate these students and contrasted the significant investment by the State in infrastructure for industry with the minuscule investment being made then in higher education. The title of his address was Manpower in the Technological Age but he commented on the continuing need for study of the humanities and social sciences for their own sakes. The comment was not surprising given that John Hayden's personal interests include reading which ranges from the general in history and biography to the specialist in Victorian novelists. He has a particular liking for Anthony Trollope.

It was Trollope who said "In discussing the character of a man, there is no course of error so fertile as the drawing of a hard and fast line. We are attracted by salient points and seeing them clearly we jump at conclusions, as though there were a lighthouse on every point by which the nature of the coast were certainly shown to us. And so it will if we accept the light only for so much of the shore as it illumines" In John Hayden's case it is not possible to do justice to the very extensive coast that corresponds to his long and distinguished career at the HEA.

There would also be need for very many lighthouses along the way for he is a remarkably modest man quick to deflect credit to others.

A particular interest of his from the time of his appointment with the HEA was the socio-economic background of students and how choice of field of study related to subsequent employment. It found full expression in the series of reports he initiated on First Destinations of Employment for New Graduates and the national surveys of new entrants to higher education undertaken at his request by Professor Patrick Clancy. Beginning in 1982 these national surveys have provided comprehensive information on factors relating to the admission of new entrants to higher education in Ireland including social and educational background. They have been important in planning provision of the places and show the significant progress made in raising overall participation rates of the cohort of school leaving age in higher education from 20% in 1980 to over 50% now. The surveys have stimulated the debate on broadening access to higher education and informed actions on how to achieve it. Other important national developments with which he had a long involvement include HEAnet, which provides Broadband Internet services to Ireland's Universities and Institutes of Technology, and Oscail, the National Centre for Distance Education. His involvement at international level has included membership of the Directing Group of the OECD Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education and work for HEDCO the Irish international educational aid agency.

His interests outside work, in addition to reading, have included most spectator sports but especially hurling and cricket, as well as classical music and walking the dog. His greatest devotion is to his wife Gemma and his three children, now grown up, their names Eoin, Áine and Neasa reflecting their father's lifelong affection for the Irish language.

A good son, a good husband and a good father, John Hayden has also been a good friend to the many tens of thousands of students who benefited from his long and outstanding service to the development of higher education in Ireland. It is therefore very right and fitting that the National University of Ireland should honour him today.

PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS:

Presento vobis hunc meum filium, quem scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Utroque Jure, tam Civili quam Canonico, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.