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Introduction

This chapter focuses on a period when efforts were made to redefine the office of president while also considering the role of the presidency during a period of considerable party political strife. Each of the three presidencies – Erskine Childers (1973-1974), Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh (1974-1976) and Patrick Hillery (1976-1990) – is examined in terms of the personal background of the incumbent, how they were selected for the position and their role while in office. By its very nature – due to the activism of Childers, the resignation of Ó Dálaigh and Hillery's limited assessment of the role – the discussion will focus on the theme of the power of the president.

The 1973 to 1990 period commenced with the electorate voting into office their preference for president but was followed by two unelected presidencies, a resignation crisis, and a largely unremarkable two-term presidency. The period undoubtedly brought new focus on the office, and two clear areas of difference from the first three presidencies emerge, namely, increased activity as well as issues of presidential cohabitation with the government of the day.

In this first instance Childers's high level of activity in accepting domestic engagements coupled with a willingness to travel abroad was a departure point for the presidency. Ó Dálaigh and Hillery continued with this heightened representation role. Yet, none of these three presidents – in what can be considered the presidency's middle period – set out to radically recast the office. There was a real sense of the status quo prevailing in their respective approaches to the position. The redefinitions that they brought to the position were relatively unambitious, and throughout this period the 'non-political' nature of the office was effectively reinforced by means of limited presidential action. Alongside this 'limited activism' another new challenge emerged in the guise of cohabitation and managing the tricky relationship between governments led by a party leader who differed from the president's party tradition. This was a particular feature when Liam Cosgrave as leader of Fine Gael was Taoiseach between 1973 and 1977 – a four-year period which opened with the latter stages of de Valera's second term and remarkably took in his three immediate successors.

Erskine Childers, 1973-1974

Erskine Childers was, in the words of one of his party colleagues, 'a curious paradox, really' (Andrews 2007: 58). His Anglo-Irish accent and English public school education did not make him a natural member of Fianna Fáil. He was on the liberal wing of a conservative parliamentary party (speaking in favour of the public availability of contraception) and was a moderniser in a party not defined by reformers (as health minister he campaigned against excessive alcohol consumption and smoking in public). Following the death of his first wife in 1950, Childers married again two years later, this time to Rita Dudley. Since she was a Catholic and Childers was a Protestant, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, advised against what was a mixed marriage but the couple celebrated at a small, private ceremony in Paris. Childers's long political career was defined by a strong work ethic: 'a man with a single-minded, intense interest in the work assigned to him' (McInerney, 1974). His personality was distant and reserved but colleagues tolerated his eccentricities. On one occasion ahead of a Dáil vote he approached Fianna Fáil Senator Mark Killilea – thinking he was an opposition TD – and asked whether he would mind 'pairing' with him as he had a function to attend.

Childers was born in London in December 1905 and graduated from Cambridge University. Despite this background he had a strong republican pedigree; his father, also Erskine, had been an adviser to the delegation which negotiated the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which he ultimately opposed, and he had been executed during the civil war. After university Childers worked in France prior to being appointed as an advertising executive with the *Irish Press* newspaper in 1931. He held this position until 1935 when he was appointed secretary of the Federation of Irish Manufacturers, a role he retained until 1944 (Young, 1985). Childers was selected to contest the 1938 general election but before the campaign got underway he was keen to resolve the matter of his Irish citizenship. In April 1938 he wrote to de Valera explaining that as his late father had died prior to independence he did not in fact automatically qualify for citizenship through his Irish mother. It was necessary for the government to confirm citizenship for Childers, his brother and his mother following the introduction of new legislation (Section 5 of the Citizenship Act, 1935). Certificates of naturalisation were issued to all three on 25 April 1938 – to Mary Childers, as she herself had rendered distinguished service to the Irish nation, and to her two sons, Robert and Erskine, based on their late father's 'distinguished service'.¹

Successfully elected as a Dáil deputy in 1938, Childers was returned at 11 national elections representing Athlone-Longford (1938-1948), Longford-Westmeath (1948-1961) and Monaghan (1961-1974). It was said in 1944 that there was 'no more conscientious or hard-

working Deputy in Dáil Eireann' (Kenny, 1974). He enjoyed a long ministerial career, serving under de Valera, Lemass and Lynch. A parliamentary secretary from 1944 to 1948, Childers was a cabinet minister in every Fianna Fáil government from 1951 to 1973. He served in a number of different ministries: Posts and Telegraphs (1951-1954; 1966-1969), Lands and Fisheries (1957-1959); Transport and Power (1959-1969) and Health (1969-1973). Lynch appointed him Tanaiste in 1969. His ministerial record has been dismissed as 'spectacularly unsuccessful' (Browne and Farrell, 1981: 39) but another source credited him as Ireland's 'most successful' Minister for Health (Nowlan, 1974).

Childers backed Jack Lynch during the 1969-1970 'Arms crisis' when two government ministers were dismissed from cabinet amid allegations of illegal importation of guns for use in Northern Ireland. At the fractious Fianna Fáil *ard-fheis* (convention) in 1971, when internal divisions were played out in public amid scuffles and fistfights, the cameras captured the image of the dignified Childers sitting at the top table with his head in his hands. During this period he emerged as a strong voice at cabinet in support of Lynch's moderate approach to the nascent crisis. Childers authored two 'thought-provoking' papers in August and September 1969 on the government's policy on Northern Ireland (Keogh, 2008: 197-8). The contents reflected his outright opposition to the use of violence: 'Everything that I had said presumes a tough control of the new IRA. Their incursion will spell disaster. The IRA can only destroy any reputation we have and discourage unity in the Six Counties'.² The two papers also show the progressive thoughts of the then 64-year-old Childers on ecumenism and the constitutional ban on divorce.

Selection and election

Erskine Childers, by now a veteran politician, had effectively withdrawn from frontline activity following Fianna Fáil's electoral defeat in the 1973 general election at the time when Jack Lynch was addressing the uncertainty about candidate selection for an imminent presidential election. Lynch's name was mentioned as a possible candidate but the party leader ruled out moving from the parliamentary arena. Childers had adopted a similar stance while a minister in the outgoing government – and had rung political correspondents and issued a statement indicating his lack of interest in the presidency – but with Fianna Fáil now in opposition it was reported that 'his attitude may have changed' (*The Irish Times*, 4 April 1973).

The request to Childers to contest the presidential election came from Lynch and had the unanimous backing of the Fianna Fáil parliamentary party at a meeting on 6 April 1973. In his first media conference after securing the party nomination Childers laid emphasis on redefining the office: 'I have consented to be candidate, on the understanding that, if I am elected, I will be able to expand the dimension and character of the Presidency, and only on

that condition' (*The Irish Times*, 7 April 1973). In this first appearance, prior to having his views shaped by the campaign itself and, indeed, later by the realities of office, Childers mentioned prioritising the place of young people – or 'youth' – and inviting representatives from the two communities in Northern Ireland to the presidential residence, Áras and Uachtaráin. Beyond these two specific areas the other issues identified were general and vague, with Childers promising that he 'would not create division, but would encourage enlightened examination' (*The Irish Times*, 7 April 1973).

In an obvious acknowledgement of the limitations of the role in contemporary politics, he said that the president should look to the future, an area that was no doubt regarded as safe ground, 'to speak about shaping the nation, not dictating solutions but asking for reasoned discussion on new policies.' He saw the presidency outside the Áras in terms of public engagements while recognising the need to avoid conflict with the government of the day. In this regard, he said, the president should be able to seek out the views of those 'engaged in constructive policy-shaping, and ask that all people should weight up their proposals without committing the government or any political party to making decisions' (*The Irish Times*, 7 April 1973).

While asserting that the constitutional limitations of the office had previously been too narrowly interpreted, Childers declared that the president 'could not be a personal innovator.' So while setting out to 're-define' the role, Childers was openly accepting the limitations of the office – and he offered the experience of his long ministerial career as an advantage in avoiding controversy. Grappling with the limitations of the president's powers while attempting to identify new themes for the office – as articulated by Childers on 7 April 1973 – would in many respects become a challenge for all subsequent presidential candidates in seeking to provide this non-political office with added legitimacy and relevance.

During the election campaign Childers expanded on his initial thoughts for the office. The one specific new proposal to emerge was the establishment of a 'think tank' to advise the president on new ideas for the Ireland of the 1990s, to debate long-term development and to help avoid 'all the evils of an industrial society'. Crucially, however, this 'think tank' was to reach conclusions by popular consensus so as to avoid intervening directly in the affairs of government (Walsh, 1973a). The Childers campaign undoubtedly borrowed from themes identified by Fine Gael's Tom O'Higgins seven years previously in promising a presidency that was more accessible and more relevant to contemporary life. O'Higgins had been narrowly defeated by de Valera in 1966. He did not contest the 1973 Dáil election as he had already been selected as Fine Gael's presidential candidate due in the same year.

Fianna Fáil ran a high-profile personalised campaign, a template of sorts for its 1977 Dáil election campaign. Childers visited every constituency in what newspapers reported as a 3,000-mile tour, making use of a specially converted bus with its own speaking platform. The campaign bus was mocked by opponents who labelled it 'Wanderly Wagon', a reference to a popular children's programme on the state television station, RTÉ. For such an experienced political figure, however, Childers was not a natural campaigner. David Andrews recalled his arrival in Dun Laoghaire:

There was quite a good crowd of people out to see him and the famous bus. As he got off the bus he spotted a newspaper seller and bought an evening paper. He then proceeded to walk down the road reading it and completely ignoring the welcoming party, which went down rather badly (Andrews, 2007: 58).

It was an approach that would not have survived the more media-driven presidential campaigns after 1990. Voting took place on 30 May 1973. With a turnout of 62.2%, Childers received 635,867 votes (51.9%) against O'Higgins's total of 587,771 (48.0%).

Vision of the office

The Childers inauguration took place on 25 June 1973, when he became the fourth President of Ireland. Some 450 invited guests attended the 20-minute formal ceremony which was broadcast 'live in colour' by RTÉ television (Grogan, 1973).³ Security plans for the event noted that it would last for all of 54 minutes, and that included arrival and departure times. Little pomp or ceremony surrounded the presidential speech. In a short address, Childers noted that, 'making a meaningful contribution to the harmony among Irishmen and Irishwomen is all I desire'.⁴ He did not attempt to stake out an over-arching theme for his presidency or expand on ideas floated during the campaign. Interestingly, the national newspapers opted to concentrate their coverage on the significance of the interdenominational religious service in St. Patrick's Cathedral that had preceded the inauguration ceremony at Dublin Castle. As an editorial in *The Irish Times* put it, 'in religion, as in other things, Erskine Childers has a mind which reaches out, and his choice of readings yesterday was not only an expression of a broad as well as a deep Christian faith, but an appreciation of the faith of others' (*The Irish Times*, 26 June 1973).'

Childers died suddenly on 17 November 1974. His short tenure allowed insufficient time to truly define his vision of the presidency or make real in any significant way the promise to add a new dimension to the office. Nevertheless, the immediate and historical assessments of this short-life presidency have been remarkably positive. Newspaper coverage reflected the view that Ireland had lost a highly popular and visible president while with the benefit of

greater distance, Dermot Keogh, subsequently described Childers as 'the first of the modern presidents' based on his active diary of public engagements (2008: 380). As President, Childers was undoubtedly visible in a way none of his predecessors had been. For example, his schedule was frequently mentioned in the 'What's on today' noticeboard column in *The Irish Times*. Listings of presidential engagements open to the public included an address delivered in the Metropole Hotel in Cork on the topic 'Ireland in the 1990s' (20 September 1973); a literary festival at the Derryhale Hotel in Dundalk where the President read poetry (25 October 1973); and a lecture on Ireland's architectural heritage at the RDS Concert Hall in Dublin under the auspices of An Taisce, an Irish heritage body (25 September 1974). There were other events which, while adding to the President's public visibility, did not always clearly fit into Childers's desire to redefine the office: opening a cricket festival week in Cork in April 1974, for instance, and opening a new swimming pool in Portarlington in June 1974.

Political role

This new wave of presidential activism also reached into the international arena. The organisation of the Childers state visit to Belgium in May 1974 by the President's staff (themselves drawn from the civil service) suggests a lack of prior experience in dealing with the logistics and protocol of presidential foreign travel. There were questions about whether the President would need a valet (no) and whether Mrs. Childers would need a 'hairdresser in attendance' (yes), while one early official memo observes of travel arrangements: 'for prestige and security purposes [a] special plane chartered by Aer Lingus would seem essential'.⁵ This decision to be an active and visible President brought tensions amongst the civil service staff responsible for ensuring that invitations and speeches met with government approval. Childers's wife, Rita, would later recall that *Áras an Uachtaráin* was 'rigidly administered by the civil service':

In the beginning long tedious memoranda appeared on the President's desk practically every day setting out various reasons why such invitations should be accepted or not 'under the Constitution of the Presidency'. Eventually these screeds so infuriated the late President that he went into town himself to buy the largest felt pen on the market to write the words 'over-ruled' on such memoranda. If he had not done so he would have sat in a chair for most of his all too few days there (Childers, 1976).

Garret FitzGerald, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the 1973-1977 Fine Gael-Labour coalition, was aware of the difficulties Childers was experiencing – as FitzGerald put it – 'in coming to terms with the constraints of office as a constitutional president' (FitzGerald, 1991: 254). Within weeks of his election Childers confided in FitzGerald that he was considering

resigning. The circumstances arose following communication from Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave that the President could not proceed with his election promise to establish a 'think tank' to consider Ireland's future wellbeing. Childers felt he had been placed in 'an impossible situation' and, according to FitzGerald, it took 'resources of tact and diplomacy' to dissuade him from leaving office (FitzGerald, 1991: 254). With no constitutional issues at stake Childers would most likely have been within his rights in convening such a body. In allowing Cosgrave the power of veto, however, Childers was effectively conceding his own powerlessness in circumstances where the government of the day narrowly interpreted the President's role. It was an experience shared by his two immediate successors in their relations with Cosgrave.

In Dáil tributes following Childers's sudden death in November 1974, the Labour leader Brendan Corish remarked that the fourth president had 'added a new dimension to that office, one which will be quickly imitated and followed by his successors' (*Dáil debates*, 276: 8, 19 November 1974). In truth, however, Childers had not been long enough in office to deliver on the challenges he set himself when accepting the Fianna Fáil nomination for the 1973 presidential election: to redefine the dimension and character of the presidency. He did not proceed with the idea of using the *Áras* to bring the two communities in Northern Ireland together, and, surprisingly in light of this promise, no politicians from north of the border received formal invitations to his inauguration.

Childers also showed a reluctance to directly challenge Cosgrave's restrictive attitude to the presidency. This was most clearly evident when plans for the proposed presidential 'think tank' were stymied. The dispute behind closed doors over the 'think tank' is an early example of a pattern of difficult relations that existed between Cosgrave and the presidency. Had Childers lived, it is possible that the strained relationship with Cosgrave may have led to public controversy. Such issues of problematic cohabitation between a head of state and a head of government from a different party political background also featured in the Ó Dálaigh and Hillery presidencies – particularly dramatically in the first case. It is arguable that the Fine Gael leader viewed the incumbents from a party political perspective and that this narrowed his regard for the holders of the office. Interestingly, when Childers hosted a dinner for members of the Council of State and their spouses in early 1974, Cosgrave declined an invitation despite this being an innovation by a new President only a short time in office.⁶

Notwithstanding his premature death, through his highly visible presidency Childers succeeded in reconnecting the office with the wider public and commenced an era of presidential activism, though defined in less ambitious terms than by his successors. Noting the 'spontaneous outpouring of affection' when news of the President's death was

announced, a leader writer in *The Irish Times* observed that the 'strenuous timetable of what must often have seemed a trivial round of openings and commemorations would daunt many a younger man' (*The Irish Times*, 18 November 1974)

Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, 1974-1976

Born in February 1911, Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh had been a Fianna Fáil activist in the 1930s. He sought to establish a national political career but was unsuccessful in both Dáil and Seanad contests in 1948 and again in 1951. He worked as Irish language editor with the *Irish Press* newspaper from 1931 to 1940, at the same time as Childers worked there, while also building up his legal career. His first journalistic assignment was – ironically in light of both men's subsequent routes to the Áras – to interview Douglas Hyde on his retirement from University College Dublin. De Valera appointed Ó Dálaigh as Attorney General on two occasions (1946-1948 and 1951-1953) and in 1953 he was appointed to the Supreme Court. He became Chief Justice in 1961, a role he filled until 1973 when he was nominated as Ireland's judicial representative at the European Court.

Selection as President

Following the death of Erskine Childers, speculation focused on the idea of an agreed candidate from the world beyond politics. The Fine Gael-Labour government was keen to avoid an electoral contest. There were differing views within Fianna Fáil about the party's approach, although Jack Lynch's name was widely mentioned. The government prepared a list of possible agreed candidates and this was sent to Lynch for consideration. The coalition favoured Rita Childers, widow of the late President, who had agreed to have her name included on the list. What followed, however, was a bizarre and messy episode. Lynch requested that discussions with Cosgrave remain private until he secured Fianna Fáil backing for Rita Childers. But when the story appeared in the newspapers there was considerable anger in Fianna Fáil circles that the party was being 'bounced' into a decision based on a government 'leak'.

Political correspondent Dick Walsh noted that government support for Mrs Childers was 'looked upon by leading members of the Opposition as a gesture of expediency' (Walsh, 1974a). The unsigned Backbencher column in *The Irish Times* – generally written by John Healy – summarised the outcome: 'while the men were still squaring off the earth on Erskine's grave, Liam takes Jack aside, makes the ritual noises about an agreed candidate – and before Jack can call the lads together to sound them out, Liam leaks the news to the press' (Backbencher, 1974). It subsequently emerged, however, that there had not been a deliberate leak; rather, a government minister had inadvertently confirmed that Mrs Childers

was the agreed candidate, believing that an announcement had been made public (Fitzgerald, 1991: 315).

Following several hours of discussion at a parliamentary party meeting on 27 November 1974 Lynch publicly confirmed that he would not be a candidate but neither was the party going to acquiesce in the government's preference for Rita Childers. Fianna Fáil figures mooted as possible candidates included George Colley (a prominent former minister), Vivion de Valera (son of the party founder and a long-standing TD) and Joseph Brennan (a former minister and the party's deputy leader). But Lynch had other ideas. He phoned his former cabinet colleague Patrick Hillery, who was now Ireland's European Commissioner. Hillery had been sounded out as a possible candidate for the 1973 presidential election but opted to remain in his European position. As Hillery later recalled of the second request: 'When Childers died, Jack contacted me. He said: "The party wanted to know would you go for the presidency, but I don't think you would want to". I said "I don't". Then Jack asked: "Would you ask Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh?"' (Walsh, 2008: 413). Hillery duly made contact with Ó Dálaigh, who had a Fianna Fáil background but who was now a European Court judge based in Luxembourg. After considering the offer for 24 hours, Ó Dálaigh accepted in a phone call: 'he was reluctant, but in view of the times that were in it he accepted' (Walsh, 2008: 414).

While Fianna Fáil was secretly attempting to confirm a presidential candidate Rita Childers added to public confusion, and surprised many of her supporters, by declaring an interest in being a non-party candidate. The government's attachment to Rita Childers, however, was far less than its desire to avoid an election and, with Fianna Fáil clearly signalling its intent on nominating an alternative candidate, support rapidly ebbed away from the widow of the late president. On 28 November 1974 Labour issued a statement confirming that its parliamentary party had 'empowered the Labour Ministers through the Government to reach agreement with Fianna Fáil on a Presidential candidate' (Walsh, 1974b). Lynch formally wrote to Cosgrave on 28 November 1974 informing him that Fianna Fáil was nominating Ó Dálaigh to fill the presidential vacancy: 'He... is willing to accept nomination if the three parties represented in Oireachtas Eireann will agree' (Walsh, 1974b).

An unedifying game of behind-the-scenes political horse-trading was nearing an end. The government had apparently already rejected Ó Dálaigh as an agreed candidate (Walsh, 1974a). Moreover, correspondence from Cosgrave to Lynch noted the government's regret that agreement could not have been reached on any of the names on the list presented to the Fianna Fáil leader on 21 November 1974.⁷ Nevertheless, the Fianna Fáil move, combined with its opposition to Rita Childers and a government desire to avoid an election,

ultimately secured the position for Ó Dálaigh, whose nomination papers were signed, as he requested, by representatives of the three main political parties.

Ó Dálaigh's candidacy was confirmed on 29 November 1974. Despite being an agreed candidate, his nomination was widely welcomed: 'unlike so many eminent jurists, his personality has not been dehydrated by his profession' (*The Irish Times*, 30 November 1974). When nominations closed on 3 December 1974 the sole candidate was at his home in Kilquade in County Wicklow. He invited the media for tea and sandwiches before telling the journalists that he had no concerns about securing the position without an election. He also deftly sidestepped controversial questions – for example, about European political unity: 'political means are something outside the line of my activity' – and was sufficiently vague about plans for his term of office: 'a President's contribution is what he endeavours to make himself in the years he has lived before he has attained office' (*The Irish Times* 4 December 1974).

Vision of the office

Ó Dálaigh clearly accepted the limitations of the office, and in this respect his views were similar to those of his immediate predecessor. He observed in one pre-inauguration interview:

You cannot take out of a vessel more than there is in it. There are many functions, which I will be called upon to discharge on the advice and instructions of the Government. Necessarily, and quite properly, I shall have no views to offer on the great political decisions, which are being debated in the community. I must be above all that' (Ellis, 1974).

Alongside his distinguished legal career, Ó Dálaigh had strong links with cultural organisations and the national council on alcoholism. He was keen to associate with these groups so as to provide 'moral support' for their activities (Ellis, 1974). In this regard, the new president was setting down a path that later presidencies (Robinson, McAleese and Higgins) would follow in strengthening the non-constitutional role of the office.

The inaugural address was wide-ranging and touched on personal and political matters. Ó Dálaigh paid tribute to Flann O'Brien, quoted Standish O'Grady and Oliver Cromwell, and drew laughter in mentioning his 'life-long difficulty with elections'. Contemporary events were also mentioned when Ó Dálaigh expressed the hope that the Provisional IRA's temporary Christmas truce would be 'prolonged indefinitely'. In his inauguration address the fifth president was from the outset also more in tune with the approaches later adopted by

Robinson, McAleese and Higgins than with those who had held office previously (or, indeed, with the two Hillery addresses). He set down a template to be followed by several of his successors when he observed that while Irish Presidents did not have policies they could have themes, and his would be 'community spirit'.

Unlike his predecessors, Ó Dálaigh's previous career had not involved an active public role. At the time of his inauguration one commentator remarked on his 'awkwardness' in front of the camera (Gray, 1974). He has been described as 'a very sensitive person' (Andrews, 2007: 62) while FitzGerald recorded that although popular Ó Dálaigh 'did not seem entirely happy in the job and did not adjust easily to his new position'. He speculated that Ó Dálaigh and his wife regretted taking the position and that this may have been 'a contributory factor' in his resignation (FitzGerald, 1991: 315). Whatever about the accuracy of this latter assessment, the record shows that the fifth president continued with the highly visible diary of public engagements of his predecessor. He also had a strong international profile, visiting France and Spain, and becoming the first head of state to visit the European institutions.

Political role

As had been the case during the Childers presidency, Ó Dálaigh was also to experience the dismissive attitude that Liam Cosgrave showed to the office of President. There was infrequent contact. Ó Dálaigh later accused Cosgrave of failing to keep him 'generally informed on matters of domestic and international policy' as required under Article 28.5.2 of the constitution.⁸ The two office holders had only four such meetings, described by Ó Dálaigh as 'bright, breezy, chatty, but carefully non-communicative on policy matters. The Taoiseach would gratefully accept an Irish whiskey, [inquired how the President found life in the Áras] and talked of this and that of no constitutional relevance'.⁹ Ó Dálaigh admitted that the lack of contact baffled him and was both 'a grave constitutional default on his [Cosgrave's] part' and 'a calculated act of defiance of the protocol'.¹⁰ Cosgrave, however, took a different view, arguing that he had complied with the constitutional requirement in having met de Valera once, Childers five times and Ó Dálaigh four times. He also noted that in his final 15 months as Taoiseach Jack Lynch had met de Valera on only four separate occasions (*Dáil debates*, 294: 430, 23 November 1976). The reality of cohabitation, however, might suggest that the Fine Gael leader needed to make a greater effort in a relationship with a President from a Fianna Fáil background than Lynch might have needed to do with a President from his own political tradition.

Tensions with the Cosgrave government were fuelled in part by the President's decision in March 1976 to consult the Council of State on the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill. The government had said that its advice was that the legislation was constitutional, a view which

was subsequently endorsed by the Supreme Court. There was renewed tension when in September 1976 the President decided to consult the Council of State on the Emergency Powers Bill and the Criminal Law Bill. The legislation had been prompted by the heightened security situation related to the conflict in Northern Ireland. Loyalist paramilitaries had set off bombs in Dublin and a number of other locations in the Republic in early July 1976, leaving 34 people dead, while at the end of the same month Provisional IRA landmines outside the British Ambassador's residence in Dublin killed the ambassador and a member of the embassy staff. Ó Dálaigh was on holidays in County Kerry where he heard of the national emergency announcement from reading the newspapers.

Following a meeting of the Council of State, Ó Dálaigh signed the Criminal Law Bill into law but opted, quite correctly in one assessment (Lee, 1989: 482), to refer the second piece of legislation to the Supreme Court. The Emergency Powers Bill proposed allowing a person to be detained for up to seven days without charge. Ó Dálaigh's response was criticised in private by some ministers but there was no public conflict with the President. The Supreme Court ultimately found the legislation to be in keeping with the constitution, and on Saturday 16 October 1976 the President signed the bill into law. Two days later on Monday 18 October 1976 the Minister for Defence Paddy Donegan gave vent to his strongly held view that the President in referring the bill had acted incorrectly. His intervention, and the Taoiseach's subsequent response, led to the single biggest controversy to engulf the office of President. Speaking before a military audience at Columb Barracks in Mullingar, Donegan reportedly described Ó Dálaigh as a 'thundering disgrace' for delaying the legislation (though it is widely acknowledged that the actual words used took a cruder form (Keogh, 2008: 402).

The Minister for Justice, Patrick Cooney, who was present at the same function, clearly understood the import of the intemperate remarks. Cooney immediately phoned Cosgrave. Once the attack was publicised, Donegan, having considered the implications of his words and his own position as Defence Minister in attacking the President, who was the titular commander-in-chief of the defence forces, offered to resign. Cosgrave, however, refused the resignation offer and his attitude over the following days towards Ó Dálaigh, and the office he held, has left a significant blemish on his political record.

Ó Dálaigh heard of Donegan's remarks on the 6.30pm RTÉ radio news. A presidential aide had in fact received a phone call from a journalist alerting the Áras to the news story. 'It was the first item. Short and to the point,' Ó Dálaigh later recalled.¹¹ The President's response was swift. He issued instructions that no government representative except the Taoiseach was to be admitted to the Áras without his approval. He then prepared some notes, anticipating a phone call from the Taoiseach. Cosgrave made contact with the Áras at 10pm

on that Monday evening. Ó Dálaigh recorded that the Taoiseach said that the minister's remarks were 'unofficial'.¹² No apology on Cosgrave's behalf, or on behalf of his government, was offered. Ó Dálaigh said he was prepared to meet with the Taoiseach but he did not wish to discuss the matter over the phone. Cosgrave did not take up the offer and would only speak once more with the President before his resignation four days later. That same evening the Government Information Service issued a statement noting Donegan's regret at the incident and his intention to apologise to the President.

Donegan's formal request for a meeting was made on Tuesday morning 19 October 1976 but Ó Dálaigh declined. Following a cabinet meeting to consider the impasse Cosgrave again briefly spoke with the President by phone at 12 noon to inform him that a written apology from Donegan was being prepared. In what must have registered as a warning Ó Dálaigh informed Cosgrave that he had 'already taken certain preliminary steps'.¹³ Donegan's letter – which offered his 'sincere and humble apology' was received at the Áras at 5.45pm on Tuesday 19 October 1976.¹⁴ Ó Dálaigh drafted his reply that same evening but with no typist available in the Áras he opted to sleep on the text. The cabinet met to consider the reply on Wednesday 20 October 1976. Ó Dálaigh, while not threatening resignation, observed that his relationship with the Defence Minister had been 'irreparably breached not only by what you said yesterday but also because of the place where, and the persons before whom, you chose to make your outrageous criticism' (FitzGerald, 1991: 316).¹⁵ The President had chosen his words carefully but as far as he was concerned 'irreparably breached' meant, 'the Minister left/was removed; or I didn't stay. Could I have spelt it out more clearly or more directly?'.¹⁶ There was little in the correspondence from which the Fine Gael and Labour ministers could have drawn any comfort. The President had not softened his words in relation to Donegan: 'have you any conception of your responsibilities as a Minister of State and, in particular, as Minister for Defence?'

As the government considered its next move, which appeared to be that the exchange of correspondence had brought the affair to a close, the controversy was raised in the Dáil later that day, Wednesday 20 October 1976. Cosgrave was asked what action he proposed to take in light of Donegan's 'gross insult' (*Dáil debates*, 293: 35-6, 20 October 1976). Cosgrave noted his regret 'that the Minister should have made any remark which slighted the President' and stated that Donegan had 'offered a full and unreserved apology' (*Dáil debates*, 293: 35-6, 20 October 1976). It is likely that Donegan's resignation combined with contrition from the government would have ended the controversy at this point. But Cosgrave was apparently intent on protecting his party colleague, and, with little sign of unrest from his coalition partners in Labour, he refused to be drawn in subsequent questioning. Jack Lynch

said he was unhappy with the 'taciturn and totally indefensible reply' and duly moved a motion of no confidence in Donegan.

In the Dáil debate on the Fianna Fáil motion on Thursday 22 October 1976 Cosgrave maintained his stance of attempting to see out the controversy from a party political perspective. He repeated his view that his minister had made a full and unreserved apology (*Dáil debates*, 293: 155-63, 21 October 1976). But the Taoiseach did nothing to ease any slight the President felt either personally or in respect of the office he held, and was, in the words of one of his ministers, 'unwise to the point of provocation' (FitzGerald, 1991: 316). Donegan did not contribute to the debate.

Ó Dálaigh had departed for Wexford late on Wednesday afternoon for a series of official engagements. He returned to the Áras in the early hours of Thursday morning, 21 October 1976, and several hours later received the new ambassador from New Zealand as the Dáil debated the no confidence motion. Garret FitzGerald, who was in attendance at the Áras in his capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs, admitted to Ó Dálaigh that he was 'personally dismayed at the recent incident'.¹⁷ Ó Dálaigh observed from reading newspaper commentary that, 'the matter is over as far as the government was concerned'.¹⁸ He listened to the radio news at 6.30 where the Dáil motion dominated the headlines and noted that, 'the matter was disposed of in a short debate'.¹⁹ By a majority of five votes (63 to 58) the motion calling on Donegan to resign was defeated. Cosgrave's sole priority was to protect his party colleague and – in his words and inaction – he showed little understanding of the seriousness of the situation. It seems that he saw a ministerial casualty as having greater party and governmental consequence than the fall-out from presidential embarrassment. Apart from Cosgrave's two brief telephone conversations, there was no further contact. Ó Dálaigh was, however, more than embarrassed. Within 24 hours of the Dáil vote he had tendered his resignation.

Ó Dálaigh's letter of resignation was sealed at 11.35am on Friday 22 October 1976 and timed for 6pm that evening so that he could fulfil a final public engagement. He left Áras an Uachtaráin at 3pm for the final time. About 90 minutes later Cosgrave – having received news of the arrival of the resignation letter – called an impromptu meeting of several cabinet members. The government's poor handling of the entire episode was only further emphasised by an unsuccessful last minute attempt to minimise the political fallout by having Donegan finally resign before news of the President's decision was publicly announced (FitzGerald, 1991: 317). A second letter from Donegan – 'of no relevance' according to Ó Dálaigh – was delivered to the President as he was driven with his wife to their home in County Wicklow.²⁰

Ó Dálaigh's reason for resigning – 'to protect the dignity and independence of the presidency as an institution' – was a direct rebuke to Cosgrave, who had dismissed such a notion in the previous day's Dáil debate. FitzGerald concluded that Cosgrave had been 'fatally betrayed by his own excessive loyalty' to Donegan (FitzGerald, 1991: 317). Cosgrave undoubtedly acted in a partisan manner and must ultimately share the greatest responsibility for the presidential resignation. As mentioned previously there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the Fine Gael leader had difficulty dealing with presidents from the Fianna Fáil tradition and, more specifically, in the case of Ó Dálaigh he was dealing with someone whom he had not even wanted as President. Childers had encountered difficulties with Cosgrave while Ó Dálaigh's successor, Patrick Hillery, who was only in office for a short period before Cosgrave departed as Taoiseach, also recorded that the Fine Gael-Labour government displayed 'a policy of hostility and accorded the presidency low political status' (Walsh: 2008: 430-1). Interestingly, this assessment of Cosgrave's attitude was supported by the acting British ambassador in Dublin in a report on the controversy submitted to the Foreign Office. In this report – released in 2006 – it was concluded that Cosgrave's response to Donegan's outburst was driven by his 'tough and partisan approach to politics in general ... [and an] ... over-tender feeling of loyalty to a colleague' (Rapple, 2006).

One final aspect of the controversy is worthy of comment: the implications of Ó Dálaigh's route to the Áras. He had addressed his non-elected status in his inauguration address when being an agreed candidate was not considered a serious issue. It is only possible to speculate about how the affair would have played out had Ó Dálaigh secured the office through a vote of the people. As a directly elected President he might have felt greater personal security in his role and might therefore, through an implicit threat of resignation, have had the potential to cause greater difficulty for Cosgrave's two-party coalition. In this regard, it is interesting to note Ó Dálaigh's subsequent conclusion that he was 'a substitute for an elected President' – an apparent admission that in succeeding Childers as an agreed candidate he lacked a degree of popular legitimacy.²¹

Patrick Hillery, 1976-1990

Born in County Clare in 1923, Patrick Hillery was a medical doctor by training, having studied at University College Dublin. He was first elected a TD in 1952 on a Fianna Fáil ticket in Clare that also included Eamon de Valera. A member of Dáil Éireann for 21 years, he spent 12 of those years at the cabinet table in a ministerial career that included Education (1959-1965), Industry and Commerce (1965-1966), Labour (1966-1969) and Foreign Affairs (1969-1973). His frontline political career was relatively unremarkable, judged to have been low key and lacking any sense of urgency (Kennedy, 1976). One obituary writer following Hillery's

death in April 2008 observed: 'As a minister, he had ability and ideas but lacked the drive necessary to push his proposals through cabinet or the civil service' (Daily Telegraph, 16 April 2008).

The outbreak of conflict in Northern Ireland led to Hillery's most noted interventions. His statement in 1969 that 'we do regard all 32 counties as our territory' raised 'howls of outrage' from the British government, and 12 months later he again offended the British government by crossing the border without informing them that he was going to visit Belfast (McHardy, 2008). His career is also remembered for his strong public support for Jack Lynch at the Fianna Fáil *ard-fheis* in 1971. Hillery was appointed Ireland's first European Commissioner in 1973 but with the Fine Gael-Labour government not offering a second term he was contemplating prolonging his public career through membership of the European Parliament when the first direct elections were held in Ireland. Instead, he found himself the sole nominee to become Ireland's sixth President.

Selection as President

Following the Ó Dálaigh resignation Liam Cosgrave had moved quickly to minimise the ongoing controversy by approaching the Fianna Fáil leader to find an agreed candidate. While there was once more speculation that Jack Lynch would take the position he, in fact, favoured Patrick Hillery as the Fianna Fáil nominee. Hillery's term as Ireland's European Commissioner was coming to an end, and the coalition government had confirmed that he was not going to be reappointed. It was the third time in as many years that Hillery was presented with the opportunity of being Fianna Fáil's presidential nominee. As, when approached at the end of de Valera's second term, and later after Childers's death, Hillery's initial reaction to the idea of succeeding Ó Dálaigh was negative: 'it is very flattering but I would not like to spend seven years a prisoner in the Phoenix Park especially from the point of view of my children' (Walsh, 2008: 418). Following a meeting between the two men, Lynch publicly confirmed Hillery's negative response on 25 October 1976.

The name of the outgoing European Commissioner, however, continued to be mentioned in newspaper reports along with other senior Fianna Fáil figures, including, once again, Vivion de Valera and Joseph Brennan. With continued Fianna Fáil pressure coming on Hillery, Fine Gael and Labour ministers let it be known that they would support his candidacy. Hillery – a 'profoundly reluctant' candidate – acquiesced on 3 November 1976 (Walsh, 2008: 421). The selection was made by a vote of the Fianna Fáil parliamentary party, with Hillery defeating Brennan by 55 votes to 15. His election was thereafter a mere formality; he was the only candidate when nominations closed on 9 November 1976.

Vision of the office

Hillery took the oath of office on 3 December 1976. The inauguration, the third in as many years, was, according to one newspaper report met by 'international indifference' with no heads of state in attendance (*The Irish Times*, 1 December 1976). The conflict in Northern Ireland was one of the main issues touched upon in Hillery's inauguration address; 'Hillery stresses law and liberty in first speech as President' was the somewhat uninspiring headline in *The Irish Times* (O'Brien, 1976). The address did little to connect the new President with the public, who had once more been denied an opportunity to decide who occupied the Áras. Moreover, Hillery made no attempt to identify his presidency with a specific theme or set of ideas. Seven years later, in marking the start of his second term, again as an agreed candidate, Hillery's inauguration address focused on the prevailing poor economic situation and the use of illegal drugs at a ceremony considered to have been on a 'smaller scale' than previous events (Pyle, 1983).

Hillery was 'a reluctant but safe' choice (Arnold, 2001: 193). In light of Ó Dálaigh's resignation the initial challenge was to keep the presidency out of controversy: in his own words, 'I saw my task as one of restoring the presidency' (Walsh, 2008: 438). That Hillery achieved this objective was supported by Brian Cowen's graveside oration for Hillery in April 2008 when he noted that 'his time in Áras an Uachtaráin was calm and dignified' (Cowen, 2008). A less flattering assessment concluded that stability had been restored 'largely through invisibility and silence' (Daily Telegraph, 16 April 2008). In the short term, Hillery's low-key approach assisted in achieving equilibrium, although it may ultimately have undermined perceptions of his own presidency, and even the office itself.

When he started his first term as President Hillery, at 53 years of age, was younger than the five other men who had served as President. Yet this relative youth mattered little as Hillery adopted a conservative approach. He openly accepted the constraints of the office and he had little inclination to seek to give his presidency a 'theme'. He displayed no ambition to re-orientate or to redefine the role – as he saw it, there were 'no policies to carry out' (Walsh, 2008: 439). Nevertheless, there was continuity, as the activist role pioneered by Childers and followed by Ó Dálaigh was continued. The new President had a busy schedule of domestic engagements but what was novel under his two immediate predecessors now became the norm. There was also a succession of high profile international trips, with seven state visits in his first term alone, with increased emphasis on the 'trade envoy' role for the President when abroad. The second term deviated little from this routine of domestic engagements combined with foreign travel.

Walsh has argued that Hillery had neither the inclination nor the opportunity to expand significantly the role and profile of the presidency. While essentially correct in the former respect, particularly in light of Hillery's limited ambition for the role, the latter interpretation is open to challenge. As President, Hillery did little to give his two terms wider public relevance. He worked within a narrow interpretation of the role, as the novelty of the limited activism adopted by his two immediate predecessors lessened over time. In a profile assessment as Hillery's first term came to an end one commentator wrote: 'One way or the other, with a [golf] handicap of seven the President of Ireland has the lowest handicap of any European head of state. So the past six-and-a-half years haven't been entirely wasted' (Kerrigan, 1983). Hillery believed that media coverage of his activities was inadequate and felt aggrieved at the government's failure to provide him with a full-time press officer. Yet, he actually had access to the media should he have wanted to use it. He was embroiled in a bizarre episode in 1979 that saw him bring senior journalists to the Áras to deny that he was experiencing marital difficulties, following rumour and speculation that he would resign because of extra-martial affairs.

In many respects Hillery's two terms resembled an amalgam of the first three low-key presidencies with the increased public activity of his two immediate predecessors. Despite being reluctant to accept the presidency in December 1976 – followed by a sense of frustration in the role and a desire to leave public life – Hillery was returned unopposed for a second seven-year term. As he put it, 'I changed my mind against my better judgement and against my feelings' (Walsh, 2008: 487). The opportunity presented by a second term was not grasped.

Political role

During the 14 years that he spent as President, Hillery avoided political conflict. For example, he acceded to a government request not to attend the inauguration of the new Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh in April 1980. In November of the same year he declined – again on advice from the Department of the Taoiseach – an invitation to attend a Remembrance Day service organised by the British Legion. It was the first time the President had received an invitation to the service, which commemorated Irish members of the British defence forces who lost their lives in the two world wars. These events were, however, genuine opportunities to provide a wider narrative for the presidency but Hillery failed to take advantage. Alongside these areas for symbolic expansionism Hillery was also presented with the possibility of exercising a previously unused presidential power – described as one that is 'potentially the greatest' available to a President (Gallagher, 1977: 374). The President may

'in his absolute discretion' refuse to dissolve the Dáil leading to a general election on the advice of a Taoiseach 'who has ceased to retain the support of a majority' in parliament.

On 27 January 1982 the minority Fine Gael-Labour coalition was defeated on a Dáil vote on the annual budget. Garret FitzGerald's government had only been in power since the previous summer. Following the Dáil vote, Fianna Fáil publicly indicated its interest in forming a new government without recourse to a general election. Such an eventuality would have required the President to use his constitutional power to refuse dissolution to allow an alternative administration to be formed. Given that it was only eight months since the previous general election – and if a stable Fianna Fáil-led government was a possibility – there was justification in seeing this as the type of scenario envisaged by the framers of the constitution when providing the President with this power.

Hillery had, however, decided from the outset not to exercise this constitutional power (Walsh, 2008: 474-6). His rationale was that to do otherwise would ultimately embroil the President in party politics. He also adopted an exceptionally narrow interpretation of the President's role in being unwilling to consult on the issue; nor was he prepared to offer any public explanation for his decision. Following the government's parliamentary defeat, Hillery instructed his staff that he would only speak to the Taoiseach. The fact that FitzGerald as the defeated Taoiseach did not travel immediately to the Áras created space for additional uncertainty. Charles Haughey contacted the Áras to inform the President that he was available to form a government without a general election being called. With Hillery unwilling to speak to anyone other than FitzGerald, or to explain his stance, other Fianna Fáil figures contacted the Áras, as did independent TD Sean Loftus. Hillery was angry at what he considered political interference with his office and saw the contacts as part of a 'gang mentality' seeking to influence his decision (Walsh, 2008:480). It subsequently emerged that the President's staff had been verbally threatened as Haughey and his colleagues sought access to Hillery.²²

Nevertheless, if the President had publicly explained his thinking – and the decision he had already taken – room for any form of pressure, political or otherwise, would have been limited. Moreover, it does not seem an unreasonable action for a President, in determining the appropriateness of using the constitutional provision, to formally consult the outgoing Taoiseach and the individual who might be able to form an alternative administration. By deciding that he would only act through the outgoing Taoiseach, Hillery believed that he was avoiding any personal intervention in the political process. But it is also possible to see Hillery's very decision as itself an inherently political action. Interestingly, when Haughey's minority coalition collapsed later in 1982, Hillery was apparently happy to receive indirect

communication from Haughey's opponents in Fianna Fáil who wanted the President to know that dissolving the Dáil could be prevented by a leadership change in the party (Walsh, 2008: 482). In the aftermath of the 1987 general election – when it was unclear that the first meeting of the reconvened Dáil would lead to the election of a new Taoiseach – Hillery had no difficulty in offering advice to the outgoing Taoiseach, Garret FitzGerald (Walsh, 2008: 493). According to Walsh, this tactical approach was intended to exert increasing pressure on the Dáil to resolve the deadlock' (Walsh, 2008: 493) but it was nonetheless the type of political intervention Hillery had sought to avoid in February 1982. Hillery's relationship with Haughey was poor and this may have influenced his decision and approach in opening up a direct line of contact. Moreover, Haughey's hostile and threatening communication with Áras staff as the political situation developed would only have reinforced Hillery's viewpoint about Haughey's suitability for office. Nevertheless, the type of situation that existed when FitzGerald's coalition collapsed in February 1982 is precisely that in which the constitution allows for presidential intervention. Had Hillery played a proactive role – and had an election been prevented – it is possible that his influence on the office and its standing, and on those who succeeded him in the position, would be far greater than the limited historical legacy that exists today.

Conclusion

The presidencies of Erskine Childers, Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh and Patrick Hillery contributed to the emergence of a new activism in the Irish presidency, most evident in public engagements and foreign travel. This activity created a tangible difference from the early presidents and has become a hallmark of more recent presidential terms. Yet, despite higher public visibility, none of the three presidents considered in this chapter had any radical plan to reinvent this non-political office or to push the boundaries of presidential power. There were some limited ideas for role expansion – such as Childers's idea for a 'think tank' – but there was no desire to counter governmental restrictions or to seriously challenge the narrow interpretation accepted by the first three presidents. If anything, the Childers – Ó Dálaigh – Hillery era is defined by an implicit acceptance of the weakness of the office and the view that activity in the political arena clashed with a desire to be 'above politics' (Gallagher, 1977: 382). There was a very strong desire to avoid all possibility of political conflict without carefully distinguishing between engagement in the 'political arena', defined primarily as party political, and an enhanced role in the 'public arena'. There was nothing to prevent Childers from pursuing his 'think tank' proposal so long as its agenda was carefully managed, although once Cosgrave rejected the idea it was apparently meekly abandoned.

Of the three Presidents in the 1973-90 period Hillery, in particular, was presented with the greatest opportunity to reorientate the position, but he was the one with least ambition for the role. Following Ó Dálaigh's resignation there was a serious opportunity to consider the role anew, and certainly as Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald was open to change, and would, he later recorded, 'happily have provided him [Hillery] with further assistance had he wished to pursue more actively some suggestions that came up in discussion between us' (FitzGerald, 1991: 604). Hillery was also presented in February 1982 with a scenario to legitimately exercise new powers but he was unwilling to consider constitutional intervention to prevent a general election. Overall, with these three presidents we see more than the 'hints of themes' (see Chapter 5) evident in earlier terms but the increased activity is still framed against a continuation of conservatism relating to the role itself.

Cohabitation is the second significant issue that can be identified from these three presidential terms. In this 17-year period three presidents from Fianna Fáil backgrounds were in office at a time when Fine Gael and Labour enjoyed three terms in government (1973-1977, 1981-1982 and 1982-1987, with 1982 broken by a short Fianna Fáil interregnum). The issue of cohabitation emerges as a strong theme, primarily due to the attitude and actions of Liam Cosgrave, whose relationship with each of the three Presidents was difficult, and, in one case, was ultimately responsible for a presidential resignation. It might have been expected that a leader from a party different to that from which the President emerged would have shown greater sensitivity in developing good working relations. It has been suggested here, however, that Cosgrave viewed these Presidents through a party political prism and against their Fianna Fáil backgrounds. Interestingly, in light of the Cosgrave experience, another Fine Gael Taoiseach adopted a very different approach. Garret FitzGerald ensured regular communication with the President, including providing updates on political events and offering information on key government initiatives including the 'developing plans for an Anglo-Irish Agreement' (FitzGerald, 1991: 604).

The issue of cohabitation was also a reality during later presidential terms, most particularly during the Robinson presidency (Reynolds, 2009: 299-300). Such difficulty as did emerge between Robinson and the four Taoisigh who were in office in the 1990 to 1997 period (Charles Haughey, Albert Reynolds, John Bruton and Bertie Ahern) fell short of those discussed in this chapter. It seems that there has been little, if any, serious contention arising from presidents and governments from differing political persuasions. Indeed, such differences of opinion as did emerge on a small number of issues were as likely to have involved the President and members of her former party, Labour, which was in office from 1992 to 1997.

Notes

¹ National Archives of Ireland (NAI), Office of the President, PRES 10564 2005/7/570

² NAI, 2000/6/659 D/T 9361O, Childers memo. 26 August 1969.

³ NAI 2004/27/5, Details on Childers inauguration plans.

⁴ NAI, 2004/27/5, Text of Childers inauguration address.

⁵ NAI 2005/24/01, Organisation of state visit to Belgium, May 1974.

⁶ NAI 2005/160/38, Council of State dinner.

⁷ NAI 2004/25/48, Cosgrave to Lynch, 21 November 1974.

⁸ University College Dublin Archives (UCDA), Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh papers, P51/216 4-5

⁹ UCDA, P51/216 171-172, 182, Notes prepared by Ó Dálaigh.

¹⁰ UCDA P51/216 12-13, Notes prepared by Ó Dálaigh.

¹¹ UCDA P51/217 23, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹² UCDA P51/217 26, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹³ UCDA P51/217 23, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹⁴ UCDA P51/211 23, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹⁵ UCDA P51/217 45, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹⁶ UCDA P51/217 45, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹⁷ UCDA P51/217 176, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹⁸ UCDA P51/217 59, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

¹⁹ UCDA P51/217 61, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

²⁰ UCDA, P51/217 84, Ó Dálaigh papers: 'The Last Days of a President'

²¹ UCDA P51/209 9 Notes prepared by Ó Dálaigh.

²² UCDA, Patrick Hillery papers P205/145, Áras an Uachtaráin telephone log record, 27 January 1982.