

The Two Irelands:

The problem of the double minority



THE TWO IRELANDS

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This report has been commissioned and is published by Minority Rights Group as a contribution to public understanding of the issue which forms its subject. The text and views of the individual authors do not necessarily represent, in every detail and in all its aspects, the collective view of Minority Rights Group.

THE AUTHORS

HAROLD JACKSON was born in 1932 and has been on the staff of *The Guardian* since 1950. In 1969 he was named Reporter of the Year by the International Publishing Corporation. He first went to Northern Ireland when rioting broke out in Londonderry in October 1968. He has returned many times since then and believes he has written more on the subject than on any other he has dealt with. Having had a rib cracked by rioters, been batoned by the police, gassed by the British Army, and being agnostic in outlook, he claims to be totally neutral in his approach to the Irish question. He recently retired from *The Guardian*.

ANNE McHARDY was born in 1946 and has been on the staff of *The Guardian* since 1974. She first went to Northern Ireland in January 1976 and was the paper's resident correspondent there from 1977 to 1980. In 1981 she published a book on Northern Ireland in collaboration with Lord Longford. She is now editor of *Guardian Education* and prior to this was the paper's night news editor.

MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP

Minority Rights Group works to secure rights and justice for ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities. It is dedicated to the cause of cooperation and understanding between communities.

Founded in the 1960s, Minority Rights Group is a small international non-governmental organization that informs and warns governments, the international community, non-governmental organizations and the wider public about the situation of minorities around the world. This work is based on the publication of well-researched reports, books and papers; direct advocacy on behalf of minority rights in international fora; the development of a global network of like-minded organizations and minority communities to collaborate on these issues; and **the challenging of prejudice and promotion of public understanding** through information and education projects.

Minority Rights Group believes that the best hope for a peaceful world lies in **identifying and monitoring conflict** between communities, **advocating preventive measures** to avoid the escalation of conflict and **encouraging positive action** to build trust between majority and minority communities.

Minority Rights Group has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and has a worldwide network of partners. Its international headquarters are in London. Legally it is registered both as a charity and as a limited company under the United Kingdom Law with an International Governing Council.

THE PROCESS

As part of its methodology, MRG conducts regional research, identifies issues and commissions reports based on its findings. Each author is carefully chosen and all scripts are read by no less than eight independent experts who are knowledgeable about the subject matter. These experts are drawn from the minorities about whom the reports are written, and from journalists, academics, researchers and other human rights agencies. Authors are asked to incorporate comments made by these parties. In this way, MRG aims to publish accurate, authoritative, well-balanced reports.



Belfast, September 1994
STEPHANE COMPOINT/SYGMA

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THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from any fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if a man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore,

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims

THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interest.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.



Part One NORTHERN IRELAND

There is no easy answer to the problems of Northern Ireland and none is offered in this study. The purpose is rather to bring out clearly the iceberg of political, religious and social conflict that lies beneath the rioting, deaths and material damage. The conflict predates the civil rights marches of the 1960s by centuries and has roots in the earliest British attempts to subdue the whole of Ireland. But the events of recent years have deepened the divisions between the Catholics and Protestants who make up this tiny but volatile community.

Any attempt to analyse the situation is made more difficult by the need to look not just at tensions within the 1.5 million strong community but also at the interaction between Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic and Britain. Both the Republic and Britain bear their own scars from the violence and face internal political problems in seeking to solve the problem of Ulster.

The six counties of the province have existed as a separate political entity since the early 1920s, creeping reluctantly into life in the aftermath of the First World War and the achievement of independence for the major part of Ireland. The Protestant majority of Ulster did not want a separate Parliament, preferring to be totally integrated into the United Kingdom. But the Stormont legislature was imposed on them as part of the complex deal with which England hoped finally to rid itself of the Irish problem, a plague for three centuries or more. The roots of the problem go almost as far back as the history of the islands. Ireland is a natural satellite of the British mainland – a fact that has contributed much to the intransigence of all the subsequent problems. It was colonized by the British who went to great pains to suppress any local rebellion against their rule. In the seventeenth century they offered grants of land, seized from the Irish, to any who were prepared to maintain forces to keep down the surrounding rebels, and thousands of Scots and English took up the offer – the so-called Protestant Plantation. For the most part they settled in the north-eastern counties, which were nearest their point of embarkation, and the Protestants there gradually evolved as a majority.

The differences of stock and religion and the circumstances of the newcomers' arrival ensured the enmity of their Catholic victims which survives to this day. It also created a siege mentality in the settlers themselves which has been just as durable. They were surrounded by people whose main discernible purpose was to obliterate them and the long campaign for Home Rule, primarily among the Catholics, in the nineteenth century heightened this paranoia. So Edward Carson, a diehard Protestant lawyer and politician (who later served in the British Cabinet) found a ready response among the Protestants when he promised to meet any surrender to the Home Rulers by the British government with force of arms. Not an inch of the soil was to fall under Catholic rule and these early slogans are ritually repeated on every formal occasion even now. The birth of Northern Ireland was thus attended with all the suspicion of the English that has characterized the history of Ireland. The irony was that the people of the six counties who remained under the Crown felt more isolated than those who formed the Irish Free State. They saw themselves as the last stronghold of all the Protestant virtues which they had previously associated with England, and the subsequent years have accentuated this belief. This was made comically plain one day in Londonderry when an old woman, shaking with rage, screamed 'We want to stay British, whether you bloody English like it or not'. Only with the safeguarding presence of Ulster within the kingdom, apparently, could an Ulsterman be sure of preserving his heritage.

But all this politicking also left the legacy that is found in some of the world's most intractable trouble-spots – the problem of the double minority. Within their own enclave the Protestants of Ulster, one million strong, outnumber their Catholic brethren by two to one. But in the wider context of Ireland they themselves are easily outnumbered three to one. The inevitable and disastrous result was the advent of a ruling establishment with the reins of power in its hands but acting under the stresses of a besieged minority.

For all its separate life Northern Ireland was ruled by the Unionist Party and for most of that time there has only been one issue – the preservation of the border with the Catholic Republic. Any real attempt at social, political and economic advance has hit this barrier and bounced back from it. And what has emerged has been a society suffering from a deep psychosis in which rational thought and action are invariably overtaken by emotional spasms the moment it comes under stress. It is fatally easy for the detached observer to ask loftily why the two sides don't just do this or that to resolve their differences. There is always the calm assumption that reasonable people sitting round a table can come to terms with any problems. But it is vital to grasp that this sort of 'reason' is still far off in Ulster because of the enormous build-up in pressure created by the quite genuine fears on each side. The fact that these fears are often based on incorrect assumptions does not mean that they are any less strongly felt. Fifty years of failing to get any real say in the government of the province – and with little prospect of a change in the situation – left the Catholics with a burning sense of grievance, reinforced by both institutionalized and informal discrimination.

A man's first name – Sean, Eugene, Liam, anything Irish rather than English – is usually enough to reveal he is a Catholic and nothing will convince him that his failure to get a job or a home is not governed by that fact, particularly as successive surveys have shown that even recent equal opportunities legislation has had a minimal effect.

Similarly the Protestants see themselves confronted by a sullen minority which they believe wants to destroy their constitution and put them into the hands of what they regard, with justification, as one of Europe's most reactionary, theocratic states. Article 2 of the Republic's constitution, for instance, says flatly that 'the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland'. Every northern Catholic is thought to support that assertion wholly and southern politicians, however often they repeat that they understand the Protestant objection to that claim, have made no attempt to change it.

It is not that the Protestants are liberals. Far from it. But they do not want their standards dictated, as they believe those of the Republic are, by the Roman Catholic Church. They look at censorship in Ireland, at the contraceptive legislation, which makes even condoms available only to the married and only on prescription, at the prohibition of divorce and the influence the Catholic bishops

wield when, as in 1983 with the abortion referendum, change is contemplated. They run terror stricken to vote the straight unionist ticket.

As certain as they fear the loss of their cultural and political identity, the Protestants fear economic decline within a united Ireland. The average wage in the Republic was some 20% lower than in the north before entry into the EEC. The fact that the difference has almost vanished has failed to enter the Protestant consciousness and differences in social benefits remain, largely because Britain subsidizes payments in Northern Ireland. The economic problems faced in the south since 1980 and the fall in the exchange rate of the Irish punt against the pound sterling since parity was abandoned have served to reinforce the traditional beliefs.

Notably, when the Irish Forum presented its formula for change in May 1984, the Protestant and unionist reaction was to seize on two points. One was the acceptance of all the parties to the report, the main Irish parties and the SDLP, the biggest Catholic party in Northern Ireland, of a unitary Irish state as the most desirable solution. The other was the finding of the Forum's own economic survey that living standards would inevitably decline within a united Ireland without continuing aid from Britain and the EEC, and even from the United States.

The north has an urban, working-class tradition born of its industrialization which sets it apart from the essentially agricultural south and the conflict can be seen as a working-class problem. There have been no riots in the prosperous areas of Belmont or the Malone Road. But that is not the whole story. The economy of the north is also largely agricultural and the middle classes, though protected to some extent from the violence, are very much a part of the problem. The most affluent and the professionals frequently chose to opt out of the political scene because of the difficulty of reaching a solution. They are protected by their own mobility. They know they have the resources to go, if they must, to calmer parts of the province, or to Ireland or Britain. But, when important changes have been contemplated and the Stormont or British governments have looked for electoral support, the middle classes have split along sectarian lines as decisively as the working class. Ian Paisley, when he topped the European polls in 1979 and 1984, did so with the support of Malone as well as the Shankill. John Hume, on the Catholic side, gained the same sort of massive support. The Alliance Party, the only party with a claim to have a cross-sectarian appeal, which can count on a good vote at local level when the border ceases to be the issue, was swamped.

That the violence is confined to the poverty-stricken ghettos reflects the working-class lack of an escape route. With a generally low level of industrial wage, high unemployment, and an acute shortage of low-cost housing, the people, trapped by their economic circumstances in the slums, are ready victims of gut reaction when they feel a threat to such little stability as they can cling to. The Unionist hierarchy has always relied on the Protestant fear of being degraded to the level of the poorest Catholics. Most recently the extremist parties, like Paisley's Democratic Unionists, and Provisional Sinn Fein, since its resort to the ballot box, have relied on the siege mentality of the people on the working-class estates for support.

There were specific reasons for the trouble which erupted in October 1968 and has continued more or less ever since. The improved standard of education available to Catholics after the education reforms of the 1940s had helped to create a generation of Catholics no longer prepared to accept the status of second class citizens but also prepared, as their forebears had never been, to take part in running the northern statelet. The reaction of the Protestants to the Catholic demand for an equal vote and a share in government was inevitable. But even if there had not been that particular spark, disorders would have come.

They were endemic in the society and in the strains its people were facing. Conflict was present at the birth of Northern Ireland and it has remained part of its heritage, periodically breaking out into violence. Only in the face of trouble were positive moves made by the authorities to aim at the roots of the problem, but due acknowledgement must be made to them. They brought in equal voting rights for all elections, disarmed and reorganized the police, took housing construction and allocation away from the bigots on the councils, introduced methods of complaint against the

administration broader than those in England, and set up a Community Relations Commission to try to ease inter-group friction.

But these have been overtaken by events, and replaced. For, as so often happens with long-overdue reforms, no matter at what rate they are brought in they will never come fast enough for the deprived minority and, at the same time, they will represent a growing and unacceptable threat to the privileged.

The reason for this is simply the total inability of either side to recognize the good intentions of the other. There was one example of this, again in Londonderry, following the usual senseless stone-throwing by Catholic youths in the Bogside. After some hours of skirmishing an English lieutenant-colonel called his troops back and approached the crowd. They stopped their bombardment and he talked to them, trying to calm the situation. After about ten minutes a middle-aged man forced his way through the crowds and started haranguing the officer about three soldiers who had attacked a Catholic civilian who had given them a lift in his car. The man detailed the injuries the civilian had suffered and, when the officer said he had only recently arrived in the city and knew nothing of the incident, scornfully said 'Well, it was in all the papers. You can read, can't you?' It had, indeed, been in the papers. The account was of a court hearing in which each soldier was given a six-month sentence for the attack. But this fact had been entirely obliterated from the man's memory: all that remained was the 'atrocious' committed against a fellow-Catholic. The swift reaction of the establishment to the event had left no imprint at all and there was the sad feeling that it never would. Thus are the grievances tended and kept alive.

People believe what they need to believe. It is important for the Catholic working class to feel persecuted as it is for the Protestants to feel at risk from the enemy within and the Catholic hordes waiting over the border. This is what provides each side with the sense of community which is felt to be the only real security available. The manifestations of it have been seen on a hundred newsreels – the waving flags, the Orange sashes, the pictures of their folk-heroes, the Easter lily, the bowler hat, the incantations recalling the Troubles or the victory of King William III over the Jacobites in 1690. The Ulsterman's passion for parades baffles the outsider. But it is a highly significant element in the sub-tribalism which is the kernel of the society. Its purpose is not only to display the trophies of each side's successes but also to delimit the territory each claims. The parades seldom caused trouble until they ventured into areas regarded as the property of the other side. So a Civil Rights march could not pass safely through the Protestant town of Claudy nor an Orange parade pass even the fringes of the Catholic Bogside area. Similarly, an attempt by the army or the police to stop a march over acknowledged territory produced a sense of outrage. It is no use dismissing all this as primitive nonsense. Robert Ardrey has sought to show the importance of territory to all animals, man included, as a source of security. It cannot lightly be threatened, no matter how ritually, in a society as insecure as Northern Ireland. The banning of marches altogether was resisted, and strikes and funerals took over the tribal element in part.

So this is the first point to make: that virtually everyone in Ulster feels himself under threat and reacts accordingly. There is no inclination for reason or compromise simply because the most urgent need is to combat a threat which may seem small or non-existent to outsiders but looms obliteratingly over those locked into the situation. This is why so much of the effort of both sides is aimed against the established authority, be it the government, the police or the British army. Any action these bodies may take can be, and mostly is, interpreted as favouring the other camp and it produces the inevitable response. But there are other reasons for this too. The political and economic geography of the six counties is relevant here. They are divided in both respects by the River Bann, which runs northwards to the sea more or less bisecting the province. To the east lie the counties of Antrim and Down and the city of Belfast, where Ulster's principal industries and main sources of employment are. These house the greater part of its population and are therefore overwhelmingly Protestant. The county of Armagh is a sort of halfway house, reasonably prosperous where it touches Down but increasingly depressed as one moves inland. To the west of the river lie Londonderry, Tyrone and Fermanagh, mainly agricultural, underdeveloped, and containing large areas of Catholics. Most of the real bitterness of the conflict

lies in these counties 'west of the Bann' and the very phrase conjures up a wealth of significance for an Ulsterman. Here is the longest history of discrimination and political thuggery. Because they felt themselves outnumbered the Protestants used every device to ensure their continued supremacy – rigging electoral boundaries, casting dead men's votes and seeing that jobs and homes went to their co-religionists. In the areas they controlled the Catholics did the same, though their power was obviously more restricted. But the combination bred enmity which smoulders and flares and will continue to do so for years to come.

By its very nature Ulster is the poor relation of the United Kingdom. Its location has attracted little outside industry from the mainland and it founded what prosperity it had on its ability to turn out great ships and fine linen. Both these occupations have declined catastrophically since the Second World War and the province has fought a desperate struggle to persuade reluctant Englishmen to take notice of its plight. Neither the British government nor industry has really responded – a penalty both of geography and of devolutionary government – and Ulster's unemployment rate of 7-8% before the disturbances was far above the general British average.

By mid-1984 this figure was 21.6%. British unemployment had risen too, to 12.6%, but was still much less than that of Northern Ireland. There industry was in trouble even in the more prosperous east coast areas.

But the overall Ulster figure masked the real internal problem in which the employment rate varied not only according to area but even, in some cases, from street to street. In the province's second city, Londonderry, the rate ran in the '60s at 12.5% and there were other places west of the Bann where it climbed even higher – to a peak of 23% in Strabane. By 1984 the Derry average was 29.3% and that of Strabane a frightening 40.6%. The nature of unemployment exacerbated the social problem still further. Everywhere adult male unemployment was higher than adult female unemployment. The '84 Belfast male figure was 21.1%, still below the province's average, and the female figure 11.9%. The Derry figures were 38.2% for men and 15.8% for women while the Strabane figures were 53.1% for men and 20.5% for women.

This meant that not only was east better off than west, but that for years the main breadwinner in many families has been the wife. A common sight on the desolate city housing estates was to see the men lounging their day away on the street corners.

And what has grown out of this has been an embryo matriarchy in which the traditional dominance of the male has been steadily eroded. In a society which still observes the sort of cultural mores which persisted in England in the nineteenth century, this has had deep social and psychological effects. There is a constant 'need' for the men to assert their masculinity.

Often this takes the form of excessive drinking and gambling. Public houses take on the identity of their users. Pilot studies of the effects of long-term unemployment have suggested that it eventually saps virility in the strictly physical sense and this, too, may well have set up considerable stress. The result of it all has been a growing incidence of vandalism and blind destruction of public property – walls defaced, telephone kiosks destroyed – and a growing inclination to combat authority in the most flagrant way possible. This was one way to show that masculinity was still potent. Allied to the political grievances already simmering away, it is evident why the riots that eventually broke out took the form they did. There was an astonishing recklessness about the behaviour of the men involved. They seemed to lose all sense of personal safety as they hurled their stones and firebombs at the members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. They were fired with the militant enthusiasm which Konrad Lorenz, in his study *On Aggression*, discussed thus:

'One soars elated above all the ties of everyday life; one is ready to abandon all for what, in the moment of this specific emotion, seems to be a sacred duty. All obstacles in its path become unimportant: the instinctive inhibitions against hurting or killing one's fellows lose much of their power. Rational considerations, criticism, all reasonable arguments against the behaviour dictated by militant enthusiasm are silenced by an amazing reversal of all values, making them appear not only untenable but base and dishonourable. Men may enjoy the feeling of absolute righteousness even while they commit atrocities. Conceptual thought and moral responsibility are at their lowest ebb.'

The crime rate since 1967 has risen considerably, even in non-security-related indictable offences.*

This has been true on both sides, of course. The militancy of the Catholics caused immediate reverberations among the Protestants and they responded in like fashion. There have been few more shattering experiences in years of reporting than to arrive among the smouldering remnants of Conway Street and Norfolk Street in the Catholic Falls area of Belfast. In a few hours at the height of the rioting in August 1969 ninety houses were methodically burned out by the Protestants from the nearby Shankill district. The inhabitants were first chased out of their homes – allegedly with the help of the Special Constabulary – and groups of men and youths then broke in and tossed petrol bombs in each home. Among the ruins a middle-aged man could only repeat time and again ‘They were decent working-class folk. What had they ever done?’ But the Protestant men of First Street and Third Street, who were said to have been responsible, were also decent working-class folks as became evident when one talked to them later. Between the two groups lay a miasma of suspicion and misunderstanding which had far transcended any normal moral instinct. Some months afterwards a Protestant housewife stood contemplating the still-ruined street and gave a long circumstantial account of how the Catholic savages had come marauding towards her home. She sincerely believed it and no amount of factual information – that there had been high barricades protecting her area, that no house in her street had been damaged, that all the losses had been on the Catholic side – could penetrate the mental barriers which the months had built up. Any action in defence of her tiny terraced house had been justified and the Catholics had brought on themselves the penalties they had suffered.

This is the material on which leaders like Ian Paisley and Gerry Adams can work with such effect. Both rely on the emotional response they draw from their followers and use a mixture of radical economic and old-fashioned nationalist politics. There are, in fact, strong similarities in their avowed dedication to the oppressed working classes and their opposition to the established regime. Sinn Fein is the political front for the IRA and Adams is very much to the fore in what is euphemistically known as the republican movement. Paisley does not have the same direct links with paramilitaries and, indeed, denounces all bloodshed. But he is not above using the threat of violence, as his resort to the Carson trail and his midnight demonstrations with men in military formation showed, and he does draw support from among the Loyalist extremist groups.

Adams gains some strength because of the genuine involvement of the Provos in community politics through their advice centres and loses some because of his own brand of socialism and the IRA’s violence. He taps the same vein in the Catholic community as Bernadette Devlin, now McAliskey, did in the 1960s and again, briefly, in the 1979 European election. A comparison of her 1979 vote and the 1984 vote given to Adams’ cohort, Danny Morrison, makes that clear.

Mr Paisley works on easier material, if only because he speaks to the majority. He is a demagogue of extraordinary talent and can gauge his audience’s susceptibilities to a fine degree. To see him work is to realize how simplistic is the view that the quarrel is religious. His speeches are spattered with references to the Reformation and attacks on the Church of Rome but these are a tribal shorthand for the real meat of his appeal.

The bulk of his speeches refer to the economic threat posed by the Catholics and the threat to the integrity of the province posed by all except the staunchest of Loyalists. His targets include the British government, soft-line unionists and the EEC, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, and the Irish government. He harps constantly on the virtues of the Protestant working classes and his attacks on the Official Unionist Party, the heirs to the old Unionist establishment, point to a lack of contact with the grass roots. (In 1977 during the second Loyalist strike one of his supporters, outside Stormont, carried a banner saying: ‘I am a grass root.’) His message is that those in authority are sapping the vitality of the country and, by their concessions to the minority, are taking away the hard-won perquisites of the Protestants. With this message he has succeeded

in shattering the old Unionist conglomerate and winning to himself a core of working class votes which take him and his fellow Democratic Unionists to Westminster.

More interestingly, in analysing the whole of the problem, he can do what Sinn Fein cannot, and can appeal to the whole of his section of the community. The stubborn resistance of Protestants of all classes to constitutional change helps explain the massive vote Paisley has attracted in European elections, the only ones in which the whole population has been asked to vote in one single constituency. The Official Unionists continue to outpoll his party in local and Westminster elections but in both 1979 and 1984 in the European poll Paisley took a massive share of the vote – over 29% the first time and over 33% the second – and left them trailing far behind. Comically overdrawn and even crude though he may appear to outsiders, he strikes a cord in the majority of Protestants. He voices their fear of being submerged, of becoming an oppressed minority within a united Ireland.

The greater readiness of the Catholic community to look for a solution is reflected in the fact that at the European elections, while the Protestants have voted for the extremist, the Catholics have voted for the most moderate leader on their side of the sectarian divide, John Hume, and not for the Provisionals. While the Protestants vote one way at local and Westminster elections and another in the European polls, the Catholic vote is cast in almost the same proportion in all elections. If anything the SDLP does slightly better at European level.

The point about the emphasis on religion in the quarrel is not that it bears any real relationship to confessional differences. People rarely make any reference to doctrinal differences.* But religion is the handiest identifying mark available to the two sides. The terms Catholic and Protestant are used to describe the cultural, political and even racial differences, not just the religious ones that, by accident of history, attach to them.

Similarly the charges the two sides level at each other have nothing to do with their religious beliefs. They are ill-defined, emotional, and always refer to the general, never to particular individuals. The Catholics call the Protestants bigotted, grasping, rigid and unforgiving of any transgression of their cultural norms. The Protestants say the Catholics are feckless, lazy, have too many children, are dirty and expect everything handed to them on a plate.

Only relatively late in the civil disorder did churches become a target for attack and, again, this was more because of their symbolic significance than because of any religious dispute as such. It was the territorial nature of the buildings that mattered.

The roots of the Ulster problem are group identity and insecurity. The Catholics doubt their ability to protect themselves within the six county unit. The Protestants do not want to be a defenceless minority within a 32 county state. The Catholics look to the Irish government for protection and the Protestants to the British. But to further complicate the already complex, neither trusts its ally. The Catholics do not always like what they see of the Irish Republic, any more than the Protestants do. It would be a shock to be part of a state that did not pay welfare benefits on the British level, and that did not provide a free hospital and education service. The dominance of the Catholic Church is often irksome even to those born and bred south of the border, so it can hardly be expected to appeal to those raised in a more secular climate.

The Protestants have lived since partition with the knowledge that the British saw Irish unity in 1921 as the ultimate objective. However often the formula that there can be no change without the consent of the majority is repeated, they know the British would like to be rid of this seemingly insoluble and ugly problem. Neither do they have much liking for the British moral and social climate. They resisted having their divorce and homosexual laws brought into line with those in force in England and Wales and abortion law reform has still not been extended to the province.

Much of the violence has stemmed from the work of the Irish Republican Army and the Irish Liberation Army or the equally extreme Ulster Defence Association and Ulster Volunteer Force. But the factions could not have made much headway if there had not been readily volatile material to work on. The reason for this

* The steepest rise has been in ‘other offences’ and ‘other offences against the person’. (It is not clear whether these have included a rise in the rate of rape, which often climbs in circumstances such as these.) A large number of the bomb attacks have been on public houses, the focal points of each community.

* The Diplock Commission remarked, ‘Terrorist acts are not the monopoly of extremists on one side only . . . the gulf between them is one of politics rather than creeds . . .’

volatility is the fine-crocheted network of interdependent tensions that can only be unstitched over a long period of relaxation. It is as simple and complex as that. The difficulty of achieving that relaxation can be gauged by the failure, since 1972, to find a consensus that would allow the British to return some measure of control over their own affairs to local politicians. That the British will to devolve control back to a Stormont authority is there can be seen from the careful way the Northern Ireland institutions and body of law have been kept separate from those of England and Wales. But each attempt to make progress has proved even less effective than the last.

One of the most fundamental and baffling aspects has been the apparently ineradicable tendency of the minority to attract discrimination. Not since the foundation of Ulster have they been prepared to contemplate assimilation. They rejected the concept of the state from the beginning and refused to participate in its institutions.

The inevitable consequence was that they drew to themselves the very antagonism and suspicion of which they complained. Perhaps the clearest example of this, and the matter which many people take to be the root cause of the difficulties, has been in education. The Catholic hierarchy, as in many other countries, has insisted that its flock be taught in Catholic schools. This has meant that from the age of five years the two communities have led separate lives in the most formative area. They have not seen one another, they have been taught different aspects of their joint history, and inherited different cultural outlooks. The Catholic schools received state support but there is a persistent allegation that they do not get as much money as the Protestant establishments; the government of the day answered that this was simply because more pupils attend Protestant schools. In spite of pressure, not least from the Catholics, that this system should be ended in favour of integrated education, the Roman Catholic Church remained intransigent. Like many another exiled community – and this is in essence how it sees itself – it had a horror that unless its tenets are rigidly inculcated into its adherents they will gradually succumb to the mores of the major group.

There were any number of consequences that flowed from the opposition to integration. The main one was the alien and, hence, distinctive quality which accrues to those who do not share the experience of the majority. The system also ensures the ghetto herding of the Catholic population. This herding was to the advantage of the Catholic priest for whom it was administratively easier if his parishioners and their institutions were geographically close. The church is plainly the focal point in each area and then the school. Around these two buildings cluster the population they serve and a ghetto is born. The Stormont government, with its own vested interest in herding the Catholics, used the priests as its point of contact with the minority community. With the birth of the civil rights movement the disadvantages of this system were acknowledged but successive governments hesitated to antagonize the Church by changing it.

Even into the late 1970s and early 1980s British ministers found themselves expected, by the local civil servants, to work through the priests. Their determination to use alternative community leaders to decide how areas should be developed was weakened by the fact that those leaders often either were or had close ties with the paramilitaries.

During 1977 there was an outbreak of rioting on the Lower Falls in Belfast between the Provisionals and the Official IRA after a minister, Lord Melchett, talked to the Republican Clubs, the political wing of the Officials, about the siting of a new leisure centre. He was barred by his Secretary of State from talking to the Provos but the new centre was going close to Provo controlled territory. The Provos were outraged that the Officials should be shown to be bringing government money into an area where they were influential. Five people died.

The ghetto system was attractive to the Protestants too. It meant that the Catholics were handily grouped together for political purposes and could be manipulated more easily. The most flagrant case occurred in Londonderry, before its political control was taken away and placed in the hands of an appointed commission and the later local government reforms. For local government purposes the city was divided into three districts – Waterside, North Ward, and South Ward. The first two had a predominantly Protestant population, the last was overwhelmingly Catholic. But the electoral

boundaries were drawn in such a way that 4300 Protestants in North Ward elected eight councillors, 3600 Protestants in Waterside elected four, and 10,000 Catholics in South Ward elected eight. So, in a city whose population was 67% Catholic and 33% Protestant, there were 12 Protestant councillors to eight Catholic. The gerrymandering cannot be defended. But it could not have been achieved so easily had it not been for the insistence of the Catholics in grouping together.

The point of this closeknit community emerges all too plainly when the situation boils over into crisis. Not the least astonishing manifestation to the outsider was the unbelievable rapidity with which protective barricades sprang up at the end of each street in the adjacent Falls and Shankill districts of Belfast once the rioting in Londonderry had started in August 1969. It was obvious that it would soon spread to the capital, so contagious was the fear it generated, and the inhabitants of the mean streets in the heart of the city prepared themselves within hours. Within these enclaves a falsely cosy sense of belonging fell over the people. Bonfires flickering in the night helped to stoke the tribal quality and both Protestants and Catholics gathered around their separate pyres to seek comfort from the mass of their fellows. The taboos created by this marking of territory go deep. In Londonderry the police seemed totally inhibited from entering the Bogside area, though to the neutral observer there was no evident tactical reason for this reluctance. In the long period of the so-called Free Belfast and Free Derry regimes which operated in the Catholic areas of those cities, these enclaves were run by self-appointed vigilante groups who maintained order and refused all access to government forces. Both The Stormont administration and the British army came under intense pressure to reassert their rule, but the political significance of such action was apparently more than they could contemplate and they held back. When the Army 'invaded' in July 1974, there were few casualties, but the act was condemned by the S.D.L.P. and obviously brought the community closer together again, after a period when Catholic women peace organizers had been trying to persuade the IRA to desist.

The situation that persisted in Belfast for nearly a year was only ended when serious rioting developed and the troops were attacked with explosives. The effect on the Protestants of seeing the lawful authority of their province acquiescing in this territorial victory of their opponents was profound and lasting. In response they set up their own No-Go areas, run by uniformed U.D.A. 'soldiers' during the I.R.A. Truce in 1972. They felt that they had no one they could trust to support them and there was the inevitable increase in their own militancy and readiness to accumulate weapons. Large quantities of arms were seized in the Catholic area and there was an immediate outcry that no search was being made of Protestant homes. The government introduced mandatory sentences for rioting and allied offences, but again the Catholics alleged that only their people had the appropriate charges brought against them while Protestants were brought before the courts on lesser counts which did not carry automatic penalties. 'After the recent riots in Shankill Road when 76 members of the security forces were injured', said one statement by the Catholic defence committee, 'the police prosecutor chose to alter most charges to one which permitted nominal fines to be applied.' There was also the suspicion that Protestant juries would look after their co-religionists.

The cycle of action and reaction was therefore:

The Catholics alleged political and economic discrimination which led to rioting;

Counter riots broke out among the Protestants;

The government moved in to reassert its control;

Protestant action ceased;

The Catholics said that this proved the partisan outlook of the authorities and set up free zones;

The government came under sharp attack from the Protestants for permitting this defiance;

The Catholics reasserted their allegations of discrimination and more rioting occurred;

The authorities moved against it;

The Catholics said that no parallel action was being taken against Protestants who were stockpiling weapons;

The Protestants replied that they could not trust the government to defend them and must rely on their own resources;

The government brought in measures to control both sides;

The Catholics alleged that these were being applied one-sidedly;

Both sides lost faith in the legal authority and further rioting broke out in each camp.

Such a sequence allows all parties to claim that they were acting under duress from the others and it is near enough impossible to break, given a prevailing atmosphere of mistrust.

This mistrust often comes from factors which are beyond the ability of the government to control. A crucial development in Londonderry came through the decision of one manufacturing company to close down its two factories there. It happened that these employed large numbers of men from the huge Creggan housing estate – the home of some 16,000 Catholics – and the loss of the 2000 jobs affected a majority of the families on the estate. The reasons for the closure were never fully explained by the complex turns in the affair, but seemed largely to hinge around the efforts of the management to ensure continued low costs by keeping wages down and by the determination of the employees to achieve more efficient trade union organization to combat this threat. At heart it was an industrial dispute of a type familiar to every advanced country but complicated by the fact that the company received substantial government benefits as an inducement to operate in Ulster. The employees regarded these as enough of a cost-cutting element to resist any encroachment on their earnings. The dispute carried on for months and the government agreed to place certain contracts with the firm to further its development. But, in spite of this, the management declared 500 workers redundant. A strike broke out over the issue and the decision to close the factories was announced shortly afterwards. There were immediate, and quite unprovable, allegations that the government had acquiesced in a fraud which permitted the firm to milk it of the concessionary benefits and close down when these were nearing their end. The government responded by saying that it had done all in its power to keep the plant open. But the fact that it was Catholic families which had sustained the blow, that it was again the men of the family who had fallen out of work (and many found no further employment for years) and that the government could find no alternative work to offer, produced a fierce reaction against the authorities.

It apparently served to show once more that the Protestant majority did not suffer, only the minority, though the government was in fact powerless to exert any real control over events. It is just as powerless to stop industrialists deciding to site their new plants in the east of the province. The hard fact is that the administration is a supplicant to industry; it has to persuade manufacturers to bring work to Ulster when there are often sound reasons for them to go elsewhere. Because three-quarters of the population lives in Belfast and the eastern counties, there is a greater pool of labour there, the communications are better, and that is where the factories tend to go. Houses are built where there are jobs, as are roads and all the rest of the industrial infrastructure. But, because 71% of the people in the east are Protestant, all this is seen as positive discrimination by the Catholics.

Under direct rule the British government has offered substantial grants to attract industry to all parts of the province. Takers have been few and stayers even more rare. The most notorious failure was the De Lorean car plant. John De Lorean, an American car manufacturer, planned to build a glamorous sports car with a fibre glass body at Dunmurray on the fringes of Belfast. The Northern Ireland Office signed contracts with him against the advice of the Treasury. A British Cabinet level decision was taken to gamble on him in spite of the advice of the Treasury experts because the project was glamorous and De Lorean was prepared to go into a poor Catholic area, alongside the notorious Twinbrook estate. If he had succeeded he would have been an example to show to other potential investors. In fact he failed as spectacularly and as publicly as was possible and the government was left facing questions about where its money had vanished to.

The ghetto system goes back so far it would take generations to eradicate. The significant difference in 1968 was that the Catholics seemed ready, for the first time since partition, to leave their mental as well as their physical ghettos and try to work within the Northern Ireland political system. Almost 20 years later however the system, far from being eradicated, is being entrenched.

One of the most depressing side effects of the violence since the civil rights movement began has been the way the destruction has combined with urban rebuilding programmes to push Catholics and Protestants from the inner city slums onto new estates where the sectarian boundaries are even more sharply drawn. There were plans in the mid-60s for a brave new integrated world. Twinbrook was a prime example of what housing estates were supposed to be.

Protestants and Catholics were moved in but when the trouble erupted the Protestants were forced out again partly by fear, partly because of threats from Catholics, but largely because of pressure from Protestant extremists who wanted their own people to stay together. The new estate, which was still without essential facilities like shops and a doctor's surgery ten years after it was built, developed into one of the toughest of the Catholic areas, into a notorious IRA spawning ground.

By the late 1970s the British government had so far abandoned the bright dreams of the O'Neill days that the Poleglass estate, alongside Twinbrook, was deliberately built as Catholic only.

Segregation is much more complete on the new estates than it could ever be in the cramped streets of the inner city. During peaceful periods the streets, particularly on the boundaries of the main areas, always tended to become mixed. People moved out during periods of trouble but then moved back in. The casual meetings that were possible there are far less likely on the big estates where children can grow up, go to school and go to clubs entirely within the estate boundaries. Since most work places remain segregated, too, it is easy to see why some of the young people regard people from the opposite community as something akin to Martians.

The resistance that exists to breaking down the barriers showed itself in one incident in Twinbrook. A girl whose aunt had married a Protestant invited her 'Protestant cousin' to bring a couple of his friends to her youth club. She and her friends described the first evening. All the teenagers were shy at first but soon relaxed. They repeated the experiment the next week. But the local priest, one of the club's organizers, arrived while the visitors were still there. By the next week the club was closed. The teenagers were depressed but resigned.

Because of the nature of politics in Ulster they do not attract many men of real calibre, and this in turn perpetuates the inequities of the system. There have been any number of attempts to galvanize the inert middle classes to see if they cannot retrieve the dwindling moral resources of Northern Ireland. But they have foundered on the rocks of dissociation to which the affluent (and therefore less tense) elements in the community cling as their last refuge. Perhaps this explains the problem of the Alliance Party, which seeks to fill the middle ground, the territory of reason, but has a middle class image rejected by either side. And there is no doubt that any who dare to advance towards the other community face considerable social and economic penalties for their temerity. In an introverted society the nuances of status are all-important and ostracism is a potent weapon. The Orange Order has become a widely-known bogie to the world at large with its institutional dedication to anti-Catholicism. Its tentacles stretch deep into the province's establishment and its often baleful influence acts as a considerable brake on those who might otherwise come forward to work towards a settlement. The Order has the ability not only to expel transgressors, which it has done a number of times, but also affect their business lives extensively. A Protestant businessman who became involved in the Civil Rights movement said that a number of his customers had refused to trade with him as a result.

The same applied on the Catholic side. The government tried at first to bring the minority more effectively into decision-making by a series of appointive commissions and similar statutory bodies. It was a sort of directed democracy but served, at least temporarily, to ease the inescapable political fact that one-third of the population is never going to reach the seats of power while factionalism determines the pattern of voting. However, many of those who agreed to be nominated were dismissed as Uncle Toms by their brethren and lost much of their credibility in consequence. This in turn set up the cry that the government was not sincere in its efforts, making use only of 'tame' Catholics.

Educated and able Catholics are more willing to go into politics in Northern Ireland than are their Protestant counterparts because their sense of identity is with Ireland, and they see their future on the island. But even they are bedevilled by the fear of being condemned as collaborators hence, to some extent, their frequent resort to the boycott and abstention.

The result of this refusal by the talent of the nation to take part in its own government is that decisions are taken by men of little insight or imagination. Their reactions to given stimuli are too often late and wrong, and they tend to make long-term judgements for short-term reasons. Thus the quality of life in Ulster suffers in a thousand subtle ways.

The Two Irelands



Protestants with British soldiers

J. LANGRISH / SIGMA

AN MRG INTERNATIONAL UPDATE • THE TWO IRELANDS

The Framework Document

The political parties from the Catholic tradition accepted that the Framework Document, with its suggested structure of cross border committees, provided the basis for further negotiations. These would build on the six-month old ceasefire, towards a lasting political settlement.

On the Protestant side the reaction was more hostile but, interestingly, the Loyalist paramilitaries and those smaller Unionist political parties closest to them, were far more restrained than the traditional Unionist leaders in the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). These latter were left shorn of their favourite weapon: the threat of paramilitary violence to follow if the union between Britain and Northern Ireland was undermined.

The Framework Document was universally perceived to contain the seeds of an all-Ireland organization – although this was not necessarily either stated categorically or implied. Certainly the cross border committee it proposed to deal with grants from the European Commission on behalf of Dublin and Belfast, without reference to London, was seen as uniting Ireland at least on the Brussels stage.

The determination of the more working class Unionist parties (such as the UUP and DUP) to see

peace continue and their criticism of the established parties for failing to improve the conditions of the poorer classes meant that although they raged that the document was a sell out and that Britain was clearly wanting to withdraw, they looked like lions with missing teeth. Whether they will regain their strength remains to be seen. The next European election, in 1998, will be a litmus test. To date the DUP's Ian Paisley has always managed to turn out the voters in this forum, where he has portrayed himself as Ulster's only real defender.

The reasons that led to the ceasefire and the Framework Document undoubtedly include the determination of the Irish, European, United States and British, authorities to ensure that the six counties of Northern Ireland (NI) benefited from as much sustained investment as possible as well as from the demographic and fair employment changes of the past 25 years.

Investment

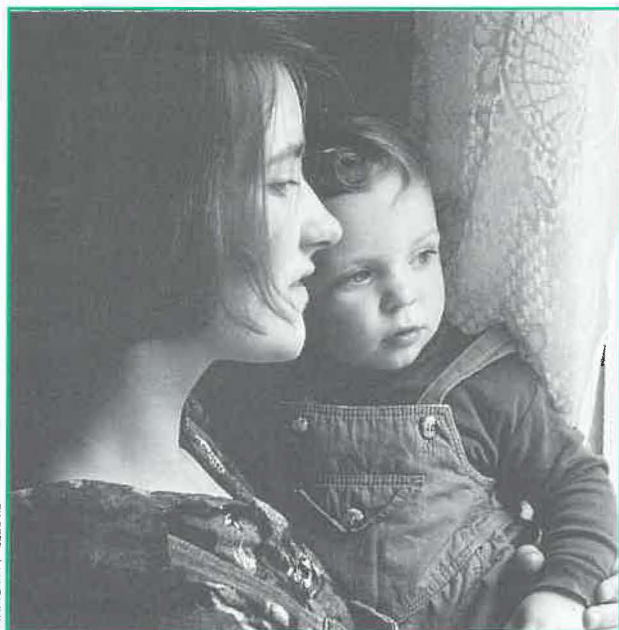
Investment ensured NI a relatively charmed life during the United Kingdom (UK) recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Its public service sector was hardly affected by the cuts inflicted on central and local

public servants in Britain. The resulting higher disposable income of the middle classes helped secure profits for the businesses encouraged into the centres of all the major population centres of the Province, but particularly Belfast. There development was encouraged by London and Brussels – often under pressure from Dublin and the Catholics in Northern Ireland – partly to create in Belfast a city centre that could be the focus for wider foreign investment.

Whether the investment the diplomatic efforts have drawn in will all prove beneficial is in doubt. There are fears some projects may prove no more viable than the De Lorean plant in West Belfast 20 years earlier and this will be as damaging in the long run as no new industry would have been. But by early 1995 NI was looking prosperous, although unemployment was still above the UK average.

Demographic change

Demographic change has followed lines predicted at the start of the violence. By 1995, Catholics, who represented a third of the population of NI in 1968, were over 41 per cent, and growing. Moreover the Catholic population is now younger and tending to stay in the Province, while the Protestant population is ageing. The trend is noticeable at Queen's University in Belfast, where the student intake has become 50 per cent Catholic. There has been a change in areas of settlement too, with many Protestants leaving the border areas, and moving out of parts of Belfast and of Londonderry, where the city council has officially renamed itself Derry, the Catholic name, not Londonderry, the Protestant and British name. It could not legally change the city's name, only the council's, but did that as soon as it gained a majority. The Protestants go to university all over Britain, and some go to North America. Their parents believe that they are voting with their feet. They will not be returning to Northern Ireland. Estate agents spoke of a flurry of enquiries from England after the ceasefire, but it will



Derry

take years to assess the reality of that. Whether a political settlement could alter the outflow of the young Protestant middle classes is the subject of speculation. But many think not.

The prospect therefore is that early into the next century, from being a minority in the north, Catholics will at least have parity, even if they have not actually become a majority. While this will not automatically mean that they will vote for a united Ireland it will certainly mean a greater acceptance of cross border institutions of the type envisaged by the Framework Document, and therefore a greater pressure for integration of the two parts of the island.

In early 1995 the system of social security payments remained different, although some southern levels of benefit, including pensions and benefits to people like Travellers, were more generous. On the whole, however, payments remained higher in Northern Ireland. Certainly, with the UK still not charging university fees, higher education remained cheaper. Different benefits and taxes and the position of the Catholic Church, which remains an important influence on Irish state morals, still means a significant proportion of northern Catholics may not feel British, but neither do they feel Irish in a way that makes them necessarily want to be part of the Republic. The sense of political identity of many Protestants, particularly since Britain is clearly willing to withdraw if consent is forthcoming, is also confused.

Although some geographers suggest that the Catholic birth rate is showing signs of slowing down, and the Protestant of speeding up, the demographic changes will probably mean that Protestants become a minority on both sides of the Irish border sometime early in the twenty-first century. That will have little significance in the south, where Protestants have either left or been assimilated, but is already having an impact in an air of greater confidence amongst middle class Catholics in the north.

Benign segregation

Wealthier Protestants had already started to move out of the centres of Belfast and Derry before 1968, not because of the violence, but rather due to the desire for a different life style that has made the middle classes move out of inner city areas all over the developed world. The working classes too were moving to new edge of city estates because of urban regeneration. In NI violence accelerated this trend, and pushed the people who were migrating out for safety as well as environmental reasons. The 30 year-olds now moving into jobs of influence often tell stories of being bombed or intimidated out of their family homes as children.

This trend which was already further polarizing the two communities by 1984, and the growth of the Catholic populations in both Belfast and Derry, became a cause for concern for the NI Department of the Environment (DoE), which was anxious to avoid both cities becoming as dominated by Catholic councillors as they had been dominated before 1968 by Protestant ones. Hence some of the urban regeneration projects aimed at Protestant areas.

In its attempts to sometimes use development as a



ELI REED / MAGNUM

Schoolboys in Derry

tool of social engineering the DoE was helped by the autonomy the Westminster government gave to civil servants to run NI. This can be seen after the suspension of Northern Ireland's parliament at Stormont and the imposition of Direct Rule from Westminster. The danger of a pendulum swing from Protestant discrimination against Catholics to Catholic discrimination against Protestants, is one of the motives behind some of the urgent drives to regenerate the badly run-down Shankill area of Belfast. Their involvement in this attempted regeneration is one of the significant reasons for the Protestant paramilitaries' attitude to the Framework Document and the prospect of a political settlement. The involvement of people who have been in paramilitary organizations in regeneration and community work is a feature of both sides of the divide, but more striking in the Protestant camp. The paramilitaries, particularly some of those who spent many years inside prison, where they made lasting contacts with prisoners from the opposite culture, are now the community leaders in significant working class areas. The paramilitaries have long been organizers within their communities – their influence now is more benign.

The British government's concern to avoid creating new areas of Protestant or Catholic domination was evident by the mid-1980s, and has been evident in all political boundary changes since, including the creation of extra Westminster constituencies. The big outer Belfast estates were inevitably populated by homogenous communities, as they developed during the 1970s and 1980s. When the Poleglass estate was built on the edge of Belfast but within the borough of Lisburn it was noted that its Catholic population would have an effect on Protestant Lisburn.

Only the most perverse argued strongly that the new estates should be integrated forcibly. Where integration was tried the people quickly left as attacks began. The belief in 1984 was that areas of private housing in places like south Belfast would become more mixed and would provide some basis for an integrated society.

By 1995, however, even the mixed middle class areas were becoming noticeably more Catholic. The area around Queen's University was changing and the new housing being built on the south side of the old hardline Protestant area on Donegal Pass, was being inhabited by middle class Catholics. The same was true of areas like Knockbreda, out on the fringe of the still solid Protestant wedge of east Belfast. Thirty years before it was 70 per cent Protestant and 30 per cent Catholic. By 1995 the figures have been reversed.

Interestingly this effective segregation has its advocates in the community and amongst academics. A strong body of opinion feels that it is far too soon to attempt integration. Education remains over 90 per cent separate. Where integration has been forced by falling school rolls, there has been no integration of culture and curriculum, only of pupils. Many middle class Catholics now send their children to Protestant schools – although regarding one of the most prestigious, in Belfast, the complaint is that it makes no concession to their traditions in its curriculum. They endure it for its better standard of exam passes.

Similarly there are influential planners who believe that experiments in building integrated housing have failed so often that commonsense demands secure segregated estates. People can create strong cross boundary common welfare institutions more easily if they move out from a secure position. The argument is that, since the middle class property owners can sell up and move, the tenants of the Housing Executive should have the same right to choose. If they do not want to see the barriers on the peacelines pulled down they should have the right to keep them. In Catholic Shortstrand, for example, threatened as it is at the base of the Newtonards Road in east Belfast, people do not want to lose the distance between themselves and their neighbours. They have had too many years – generations – living between the Protestants and the river. They want their barrier because of the feeling of security it gives them.

Fair employment

This still does not mean that they do not want the same right to education, housing and jobs as their counterparts across the divide. And here again the changes of the past 25 years are enormous. There were years when nothing seemed to change. Public sector and business jobs still went to the Protestant middle classes and Catholics remained twice as likely as Protestants to be unemployed. It remains true that working class Catholics are still twice as likely as Protestants to be unemployed – there has been a tiny shift but too tiny to be certain of. The Catholic middle classes too, are less likely than Protestants to have jobs. But that said, there have been solid achievements towards a more equal share of employment for Catholics by the Fair Employment Agency (FEA) and by those who have campaigned to have it given more powers and to persuade it to use those powers.

In the public sector, if the security forces are excluded, Catholics are now 41 per cent of the workforce, which matches their percentage in the community. In industry the position is not as good but the numbers of Catholics in the professions, particularly in management, administration, accountancy, and engineering, which were exclusively Protestant, has increased dramatically.

Companies once seen as symbols of Protestant and Unionist dominance, Shorts Brothers, and Harland and Wolf, now employ Catholics. Shorts belongs to a Catholic-owned Canadian company, which may explain its willingness to work with the FEA. But that is not the whole picture. The company has changed its recruitment policy to include advertising in Catholic areas, it has removed the Orange Order bunting and the British flags from inside its building, it has changed its recruitment criteria to remove subjects like mechanical drawing, which were only taught in Protestant schools, and it has moved its first year training centre out of the docks and into a neutral building in the centre of Belfast. The result is that from having a workforce containing only three Catholics in 1979 it now has 13 per cent Catholics, and has achieved that at a time of heavy overall job losses. The effect is not as great as it would have been if the company had not shrunk in size – but that it now employs Catholics remains an interesting measure of change.

The fair employment legislation, which includes annual monitoring for all firms employing more than 11 people, is envied on the British mainland by equal opportunity groups, but in Northern Ireland its weakness is seen to be that it only covers religion, not race. The Race Relations Act has never been incorporated into Northern Irish law. The Province



MATTHEW POLAK / SIGMA

Commemorating 'Bloody Sunday' January 1992

only has a few hundred Travellers – the south has more but they do not seem to encounter the same problems that they do in Britain – and only two other significant minority groups: between 5-10,000 Chinese, (depending on whether you use government or FEA figures) and 1,000 South Asians. They appear not to have suffered as they might have done elsewhere – but that could change with peace.

It will be interesting to see, if the British and Irish continue their steady progress towards a political settlement of some kind, what happens both to the generation of children whose parents grew up with violence and who have never known anything else, and also to the other minorities. At the moment the signs are that there will be the pragmatic growth of all-Ireland institutions within a European context, and London and Dublin will not rush to force the parties to consider the fundamental constitutional question. Dublin has stated its readiness to reconsider its claim in articles 2 and 3 of its constitution to the territory of NI, but will probably not rush to make changes. Britain, whilst it might thunder at times, will not force the issue while peace reigns

Anne McHardy

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THE TWO IRELANDS — THE PROBLEM OF THE DOUBLE MINORITY
Harold Jackson and Anne McHardy

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The British rulers since the suspension of Stormont have all too often shown as little insight as their Unionist predecessors. What they have made up in intellectual ability they have lost because of the cloistered life they lead. The Secretary of State and his ministers live inside the Stormont complex or at Hillsborough protected by searchlights, guard dogs, security fences and security men. They commute once or twice a week to Westminster or to their constituencies. Their meetings with the locals are all formal and their understanding of the situation is, too frequently, academic. They do not understand the gut reactions so they cannot plan for them. The civil servants, including the Foreign Office staff responsible for keeping in touch with local feelings, live very much within their own enclaves. They treat the locals as a problem to be handled, not people to be communicated with.

There is no ready cure for the blinkered attitudes of the Northern Irish people but one will certainly not be found if they are treated without sympathy and understanding. A major change might come if Ulster suddenly found itself with full employment and affluence. But that is a hope on the far horizon and we shall have to wait a long time to see the end of this major aspect of the insecurity which accounts for some of the primitive herding instinct in the province.

As the crisis has developed and quickened in pace its essentially emotional and irrational nature has become clearer and has led to a series of paradoxes which have increased the frustration of the participants. The response of the Catholics to the reforms introduced at the insistence of the Westminster government served to demonstrate that their political demands had been intended to establish that they had a grievance rather than that they were looking for redress. The original campaign for equal voting rights had carried the implicit undertone that they wished to operate the existing system.

That they were prepared as never before to participate in the Northern Ireland system is clear from their subsequent agreement to join the power-sharing Executive. But the reforms came too late to capitalize on their changed attitude. The reforms were rejected and the abolition of Stormont demanded.

The intervention of the IRA in the political fight enormously complicated the picture. At first its aims were simplistic and nihilistic. The removal of British rule and the reunification of Ireland were propounded as total solutions. This changed with the increasing weariness of the Catholic population with the violence and the leaders were forced to look at social and economic conditions too. But, despite the socialist rhetoric, the basic aim remains the nationalist one, the reunification of Ireland. And the weapon remains the gun, not the ballot box, although the Provos are prepared to use the latter too.

The problem of the SDLP, the main Catholic party prepared to reject violence and attempt a peaceful solution, is that it cannot abandon the nationalist ideal completely, and its leaders have to come to terms with the Catholics' ambivalent attitude to violence. Historically all their gains have been made through violence. The leaders are social democrats but they are forced to campaign to join one of the most conservative states in Western Europe. They are people of peace but they cannot advise their followers to support the RUC.

On the Protestant side the Stormont government became enmeshed in an equally impossible dilemma. As violence increased and the climate for a reasoned political solution evaporated, the authorities committed themselves totally to the restoration of law and order. Only when peace had been re-established would its leaders contemplate political negotiations. But the only way they could see to return the province to acceptance of the legal authority was to step outside the law. They introduced internment without trial and immediately sparked off a massive and militant reaction from the Catholic population. The scale of violence increased and, far from producing order, the move nearly threw Northern Ireland into civil war.

The treatment of the internees became a major issue and was eventually subjected to scrutiny by two tribunals appointed by the British government. They first acknowledged that the detainees' allegations of maltreatment were accurate but then lost the issue in a semantic argument of what constituted brutality. The second was notable for a minority report by Lord Gardiner, a former Lord Chancellor, stating flatly that the methods used were illegal – a

judgment apparently accepted by the British government, which promptly banned them. Then a decision of the Belfast High Court held that the actions of the British army in detaining and searching suspects were also illegal, an anomaly which had to be hurriedly righted in an overnight bill rushed through the Westminster parliament. So Stormont's commitment to law and order has simply produced a degree of official illegality, which has gravely undermined its credibility, and even greater disorder.

But the deepest paradox is, perhaps, that into which the British government has found itself dragged. Taking the original Catholic demands at their face value, Westminster insisted on the Stormont authorities introducing reforms to bring the practice of the province into line with accepted democratic norms. The perfectly rational foundation for this policy was that once the minority was reassured about its political and economic position within the community then the steam would go out of its campaign. A sense of bewilderment overtook British people at the apparently capricious refusal of the Catholics either to acknowledge or accept these measures. What the British have evidently failed to grasp is the essential inconsistency of the policy. The reason that Ulster was created was that the Irish Protestants did not believe in the possibility of the two communities living harmoniously together. Indeed, the very basis for the state was that the Catholics posed a threat to the Protestants which could only be forestalled by a separate jurisdiction with a Protestant majority. Since the underlying philosophy of London's policy now is that the Catholics do not pose a threat and can take their full part in the running of the state, it inevitably calls into question the whole basis on which Ulster was created. If the two communities can live peacefully together, why should partition survive?

Yet the Westminster government continues to proclaim its adherence to the existing constitutional position and to finding a form of devolved government acceptable to Catholics and Protestants. It refuses to observe that neither community wholly accepts British rule or wants a devolved Northern Ireland government. The Catholic leaders call for British standards but do not want them administered by the British; the Protestants, avowing their dedication to the British connection, resent the restraints imposed by Westminster.

The government is trapped by its inability to devise a form of devolved government that does not include power sharing in some guise and its fear of contemplating any constitutional experiment more radical than devolution. Power sharing, giving the Catholics a guaranteed place in government, seems eminently sensible to Westminster. In Northern Ireland it is seen as something that failed in 1974 and is unlikely ever to succeed.

The 1974 failure helps to explain not only the almost reflex rejection of any proffered solution but also the British government's caution about taking the constitutional bull by the horns. The power sharing Executive fell because the British failed to break the strike called by Loyalists opposed to it. Having once been defeated by concerted Loyalist action Westminster is chary of risking another confrontation and Loyalist opposition to more radical constitutional restructuring of Northern Ireland would be ferocious.

The wariness built in by the failure of power sharing and similar experiments is not the only reason why Northern Ireland seems more remote from a peaceful solution than at the start of the civil rights movement. The long years of violence, the most sustained period of trouble in the province's history, have helped widen the rifts in the community. As the new housing estates have defined the physical barriers more clearly, so too the mental barriers have been raised. Even those who were prepared in 1969 and 1974 to go halfway to meet people from the other side of the divide have retreated.

Since the suspension of Stormont Northern Ireland has been governed from Westminster by a Secretary of State with almost unlimited powers. The province elects only 17 Westminster MPs, a reflection of its tiny size within the whole of the United Kingdom. They are too few to be able to make the problem a top priority except in a hung parliament. House of Commons scrutiny of the Northern Ireland Secretary's activities is therefore sporadic and, within the province, there is almost no check on him. Local councils were stripped of most of their important functions because of their history of gerrymandering and discrimination, and control given

instead to the Secretary of State. Emergency legislation has removed many of the normal checks on the Executive that operate elsewhere in the UK.

The violence reached a peak in 1972 after internment. Some semblance of order has returned since but what remains is a situation that could not be described as normal or peaceful anywhere else in either Ireland or the United Kingdom.

The Press is frequently accused of exaggerating the violence and portraying the whole province as if it was like the Falls or the Bogside. Affluent members of the Protestant middle classes are most loudly critical. But, as one civil servant acknowledged, their Tourist Board image is often as distorted. A grandfather with a grandchild living in England was travelling out to the Antrim coast with a group of journalists one day. 'Look at that countryside', he said. 'You never write about that.' He paused to point to a pub blown up by Loyalists. 'Nasty business that', he said. 'Protestants bombing Protestants.' Then the car was stopped in an Ulster Defence Regiment road check. As it moved on he told how his grandchild had been terrified, in Belfast city centre, by an abrupt security searcher who shouted at him to put up his arms to be searched.

The altered level of violence reflects both the increased strength of the security forces and the changed fortunes of the paramilitaries. The latter have lost the massive support they had in the early '70s and lost, too, the financial support that went with the sympathy. They avoid the big, indiscriminate bombs that affected their own communities more than anyone else, and concentrate instead on selective attacks on the security forces and politicians.

The security forces have gone through a series of changes in response to the situation. Criticism of the RUC and the 'B' Specials as partisan caused the first to be disbanded and the second disbanded. The British army was brought in to take control and a new, part time local force, the Ulster Defence Regiment set up to replace the Specials but under army control. The RUC, also criticized as inefficient, was reorganized by an imported English chief constable, Sir Kenneth Newman. It had lacked any central planning or control.

Newman, who frequently pointed out that the furthest parts of the province were only a two-hour drive from Belfast, set up fast reaction squads based in Belfast to deal both with riots and with serious crimes. Interrogations were carried out mainly at Castlereagh in Belfast or at two subsidiary centres, Armagh and Omagh. All terrorist investigations were organized and controlled from Belfast and centralized and detailed files established to hold and cross-match all information both on incidents and suspects.

The RUC was disbanded after the early riots because of its obvious bias but was rearmed, with more modern weapons, as it was reorganized and the situation deteriorated. Control of security was handed to the army after it was brought in in 1969 but was gradually returned to the RUC, under the auspices of British Secretaries of State, after 1974. The army had proved politically inept and had, in its turn, provoked an adverse reaction by rough treatment of Republican suspects, and by blanket searches of Catholic areas. A political decision was taken in 1974 to return control to the RUC in an attempt to return some appearance of peace to the province. It was hard to argue that political progress was possible while the streets were heavily patrolled by armed soldiers flown in from the British mainland.

There were high points when the attempts to make the RUC and the UDR effective and respected forces in the British mould appeared to be working. Catholics joined the UDR en masse when it was first set up but left again because of internment and the UDR rapidly replaced the 'B' Specials, in Catholic mythology, as the bogey. A number of incidents in which UDR men were charged with involvement with Loyalist paramilitaries did nothing to help. The reorganized RUC never enjoyed the same popularity with the Catholics as the UDR did for its first few months but by 1977, under Newman, it had begun to gain some respect. Its image was, however, tarnished again by persistent allegations of ill treatment of suspects at Castlereagh which were borne out first by an Amnesty International report and then by the British government-commissioned Bennet Report, in 1979.

The demoralizing level of violence and the growth in the size of the security forces underline the problem. The city centre security barriers, the searchlights at Stormont, and the policemen with

submachine guns are the outward sign of the violence that is endemic in the society and they make any solution seem improbable. But the emergency legislation introduced in reaction to the paramilitary violence has had a more damaging effect. Civil liberties in the Irish Republic and Britain have been eroded as the governments have sought to deal with such violence as has spilled over outside Northern Ireland. But in Northern Ireland itself that erosion has been much more marked.

Internment, which was accepted by the European Human Rights authorities as a necessary derogation from the European Human Rights convention, was eventually ended because it was so politically damaging. It seriously alienated the Catholic community. The law enforcement system that has replaced it – although much less damaging at first sight – has proved to have much the same effect.

The effect of internment was highlighted by the brutal treatment of suspects which the European Human Rights Court ruled was 'inhuman and degrading'. The Court ruled not only that individuals were ill treated but that the whole operation was biased because only Republicans were arrested in the first years of its operation. The RUC in August 1971 had only sketchy files on Loyalist organizations and did not consider them a serious threat.

The initial response to the outcry over internment was to modify it but eventually the whole judicial and law enforcement system was overhauled. The police and army were given much wider powers to arrest and question suspects, a whole schedule of new terrorist offences were drawn up and these were all to be brought before new non-jury courts, the so-called Diplock Courts, named for the law lord given the task of devising a new court system.

The changes were presented as reforms. Suspects were again to be tried in open court. Juries had been criticized as biased and had been open to intimidation. But the long-term effects have been far from beneficial.

The policy behind the return of the control of security to the police was to undermine the paramilitary organizations by showing they were ordinary criminals trying to disguise their motives as political. Government policy is to treat the paramilitaries as a containable threat which would vanish when a settlement was reached between the reasonable people on both sides.

The inconsistency of the government's argument that the emergency legislation was necessary even though the paramilitaries were ordinary criminals does not escape the people of Northern Ireland. The public reaction has been to retreat away from the centre and to give greater support to the political extremists.

The Provisional IRA has lost much of the support it had at the time of internment but Provo Sinn Fein, its political wing, has gained ground steadily as the effects of the emergency legislation have multiplied. People reacted against the violence but attacks are now mostly restricted to the security forces who are described as legitimate targets. The British government, for all its vaunted wish to protect the Catholic community, has failed to achieve much and has imposed a judicial system as draconian as anything the old Stormont Unionist governments could devise.

The government had to take extraordinary steps to control the situation but the extended police powers and the non-jury courts have been allowed to become the norm. And there has been sufficient documented abuse to worry Catholics given the province's history of discrimination.

There are grey areas, too, where the judicial system appears to allow the police to stretch their already extensive powers. A disproportionate number of convictions are based solely on confession evidence and the use of informer, or 'supergrass' evidence has provoked criticism from Catholics and Protestants alike. Judges are obliged to warn juries not to rely too heavily on informers, who may well have been involved in the crimes, and who are buying their own freedom from conviction. It is difficult to take seriously the argument that a judge can warn himself.

The steady erosion of civil liberties and the failure of all political experiments have made people less receptive of new ideas than they were in 1970. The moderate political leaders are afraid to associate themselves with government initiatives for fear of being tarnished by yet another failure. They have retreated away from the centre ground. The extremists have benefited from the general level of demoralization. This is true of both sides. The SDLP have

become more overtly nationalist and the Official Unionists have retreated ever further from the policies of O'Neill and Faulkner. But both have lost votes, the one to Provisional Sinn Fein and the other to the Paisleyites.

Ian Paisley does less well in local government elections than he, personally, does province-wide. One wealthy businessman who admitted, slightly shamefacedly, to voting for him in the European elections said: 'I wanted to chose the toughest negotiator for our side if we were going into negotiations.' He had failed to consider whether Paisley would negotiate at all.

The Provisionals' position is different. They lack a leader as powerful in his appeal as Paisley but are stronger at local level. Until 1980 they would not stand in elections so it was difficult to measure accurately their political support. The changed public reaction to their campaign against the prison system offers the most accurate yardstick.

After internment was ended special category status was introduced to deal with the huge number of extra prisoners the troubles caused. There were too many for the existing prisons so they were housed in the Nissen huts of the Maze army camp. Partly because it was impractical to put Loyalists and Republicans into the same huts, they were grouped according to their paramilitary organization. The special status had the disadvantage, from the government point of view, of looking like political status, particularly as the camp looked like a prisoner of war camp. Special category status was withdrawn from March 1976. Ending it was opposed by the paramilitary organizations but their campaigns gained no widespread public support. The Provos' initial demonstrations became a protest inside the prison with prisoners first refusing to wear uniform, then fouling their cells, and then, in March 1980, beginning a hunger strike.

Even when Bobby Sands, the first of the prisoners to go on strike, began refusing food there was relatively little public support. When he died, two months later, he was a British MP, and his death, and those of the nine others who died before the hunger strike was called off, brought thousands of rioters onto the streets. Besides the rioters, thousands more joined protest demonstrations north and south of the border, and, after Sands was elected in Fermanagh and South Tyrone, two of his companions were elected to Irish Dail seats.

There were many explanations for Sands's Fermanagh victory. The SDLP had neglected the constituency. The Unionists could not agree on a common candidate and so the Protestant vote was split. But nothing could detract from the impact of the Provisionals having decisively won a seat in Westminster. Sands's election agent, Owen Carron, took the seat at the by-election after Sands died and consolidated the Provos' triumph. The seat was lost again to a Unionist at the general election in 1983 but that event was overshadowed by the victory in West Belfast of the Provisional Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams. Again the seat was one neglected by the SDLP over the years, and the SDLP and their former leader, Gerry Fitt, both contested the election, but because Adams was a British *bête noire* the rational reasons for his success were ignored in a hysterical overreaction to his victory.

And, although the reaction might have been excessive, the election successes, consolidated at local and European levels, where their percentage of the vote remained fairly steady, did give the lie to the British government's determined assertion that they were only mindless criminals, to be ignored, never negotiated with.

There have been changes for the better. The churches have worked to achieve greater tolerance between the two communities. On the Catholic side, the Pope, in 1979 during his visit to the Irish Republic, made an overtly political speech in Drogheda, the nearest point he reached to the border. He condemned all killing as murder and powerfully called on all Catholics to resist it. In Down and Connor, the diocese that includes Belfast, the notorious hardliner, Bishop Philbin, has been succeeded by the most powerful advocate of rapprochement, Bishop Cahal Daly, the man who drafted the Pope's 1979 speech. The Church of Ireland and important factions within the other main Protestant churches have taken part in ecumenical conferences and co-operated in joint surveys. Similarly, groups within the trade unions – although these remain segregated – have sought to co-operate to the mutual advantage of the Protestant and Catholic working classes. A group of history teachers has been working to draft a common syllabus that would avoid perpetuating the worst of the historical myths.

But the overall picture is gloomy. The years since the civil rights demonstrations have served to expose and deepen the rifts. The conflicting loyalties of the two communities and the tenacity with which they cling to them are far more apparent than they were. Such tentative attempts as have been made to heal the differences seem, too often, to have widened them.

The likeliest hope seems to lie within the European community, where the economic interests of the two parts of Ireland are the same, and are diametrically opposed to those of Britain. The whole island is food exporting and Britain is food importing. Sadly the Unionists recognize that Europe could be a forum in which the differences within Northern Ireland could be resolved and are prepared, at present, to throw out the baby of economic gains with the political bath water. Time may change that, but it will be a long, slow time.

The violence has, in fact, postponed attempts at a political settlement by frustrating any initiative. But the lack of a settlement feeds the violence and justifies the actions of the paramilitaries. If nothing has been achieved by the ballot box why not try the gun? The governments will listen to no other argument.

The imponderable question throughout has been how high a price people set on their illusions: we do not yet know the answer in Ireland.

Part Two THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

The situation of the Protestant population of the Republic of Ireland embraces another of those paradoxes which many regard as the main product of the island. They are a small and diminishing minority, their legal position is more evidently threatened than that of the Catholics in Northern Ireland, and yet they seem to be as content as can reasonably be expected.

There are now 115,404 adherents of the various Protestant denominations within the 26 counties according to the 1981 census, a noticeable drop from 30 years earlier although the population has grown. The picture is complicated by the growing number who declare no religion but the decline is clearly continuing.

In 1961 the official return showed 145,000 Protestants. At the time of the census taken shortly after the partition of the island in 1920 the Protestants in the south were 221,000 strong. Sixty years before that, at the height of British rule and in the days of what became known as the Protestant Ascendancy, there had been more than 800,000. The present non-Catholic people of the Republic are, as might be expected, concentrated primarily in the counties immediately bordering Northern Ireland – Donegal, Cavan, Monaghan, and Leitrim. (The first three were once part of the ancient province of Ulster, which originally comprised nine counties.) The Protestants also form about 9% of the population of the capital, Dublin. Odd pockets are scattered elsewhere in the Republic, notably in the southern county of Cork, but their numbers are insignificant.

In many walks of life, however, the influence of this 5% minority is out of all proportion to its size. The imposition of Protestant supremacy in Ireland still carries its historic aftermath and affects both groups in the old confrontation. For generations, for example, the banking business in the Republic was traditionally regarded as a Protestant preserve and this has started to break down only relatively recently. It is not true to say that the Protestants act as an identifiable political force in any real sense – there is no such thing as a Protestant vote of any consequence – but they still maintain social distinctions which undoubtedly create irritation among the bulk of their countrymen. It is hard to know how much of this springs from the clannishness of a religious group and how much is really based on the cultural nuances which are preserved in Ireland long after their disappearance in England, from where they were imported. The background of an economy leaning heavily on agriculture – which provides more than a third of the employment in the country – lends itself to the perpetuation of the class system based on land ownership and of all the associated exclusive leisure activities which were a notable feature of nineteenth century England. A social survey has shown that Protestants hold proportionately many more high-status jobs than the Catholic bulk

of the country. There are 6.5% of them working as company directors, managers, or company secretaries compared with less than 1% of the Catholics. The proportion holding professional or technical positions is more than double that of the Catholics. About a fifth of the farmers working more than 200 acres turn out to be Protestants, four times as many as might be expected from their numbers in the whole population.

But there are indications that, like the Catholics in Northern Ireland, they do not wish to ally themselves with the apparatus of the state which took over from their forebears. In the senior ranks of the civil service they are greatly under-represented, holding only about 1% of the posts. Their numbers in the army are minuscule. Only a handful of Protestants have ever sat in the Dail, although the Republic has had one Protestant president, Erskine Childers.

Some of this may arise from a positive rejection of the republican state. Protestants living close to the border remain members of Orange Lodges and hold their own July 12th marches. But there is also a feeling that the heavy nationalist fervour that has characterized the Republic since its birth may well work against a Protestant in jobs with evident political overtones. So they have tended to stay in the private sector.

In many ways their situation is the reverse of that facing the minority in Northern Ireland. There, though there are no overtly discriminatory measures written into Northern Irish law, the practice of the community puts the Catholics at a clear disadvantage. The notorious Special Powers Act, for instance, nominally applied equally to all citizens and allows the Government to detain anyone without trial. In reality it was only invoked against those regarded as Catholic extremists. In the Republic the potential for legal discrimination was much more clearly enshrined, but the affluence and social status of the Protestants largely tempered the effects of the restrictions. The most evident discriminatory measure was in Article 44 of the constitution, which declared that 'the State recognizes the special position of the Catholic church as the guardian of the faith professed by the great majority of the citizens'.

It was repealed in December 1972, after a Referendum, in which 88% of the Poll voted to abolish it. But there remained other measures in the field of morals and religion in which the law of the state has been interpreted according to Catholic doctrine. Divorce is prohibited within the Republic and even the recognition of foreign divorces is not permitted. Blasphemy (which could well be committed by questioning Catholic doctrine) is a crime. A member of one Protestant sect was bound over to keep the peace for saying things 'offensive to the listeners' religious views'. The censorship of books and films has the force of law and the standard by which the judgments are made relate closely to the requirements of the church. The climate seems to have improved noticeably lately and some of the more eccentric excesses to have stopped. But it is not open to a non-Catholic to have a free choice of reading matter.

Agreements between couples about what religion their children will follow are legally binding in the Republic. Since in practice only the Catholic church insists on such understandings in cases of intermarriage here again the reality of the law is discriminatory. The same is basically true of the laws about the adoption of children. The fact is, however, that most of these laws are more or less ignored.

The real problems of discrimination, however, come from the practices of the community rather than from legally-defined areas. The truism offered by southern Catholics that there is little or no discrimination is not entirely accurate. The often repeated 'our neighbours are Protestants and it makes no difference to us' shows how strong the differences remain. If it made no difference it would not be worthy of note. Marriages across the religious divide still cause raised eyebrows even in tolerant circles. Couples may not have to endure the awful persecution suffered by their northern counterparts but the tensions still exist.

On paper the Republic's education system is eminently fair. All the secondary schools are privately owned and managed and the government pays a £38 capitation fee per pupil. The reality is that the organization of the Catholic schools, around which the scheme was built, is such that overhead costs are low because they are integrated into religious orders. The Protestant schools employ lay teachers and because of incidental number of their pupils costs are high. The capitation pays for most of the Catholic pupils' costs but not the Protestants'.

A much knottier problem, and one at the heart of the Protestant situation in the Republic, comes with the question of intermarriage and its consequences. Because of the isolation of so many Protestant families and because of the generally small representation of their religion in the country at large, it is inevitable that many will seek their partners from the majority group. This produces recurring personal crises. The marriage of Catholics to those of another religion is governed by the Papal decree *Ne temere*. This lays down a number of obligations which devolve on both parties and tend to be rigidly applied by the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland. One prominent Protestant cleric, Dr Kenneth Milne of the Church of Ireland, made his attitude to the way the decree is operated plain to an audience of Catholics at a seminar:

'I object to *Ne temere* not because it affects us numerically but because it strikes at the very root of family life. I would go almost so far as to suggest that it is contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the basic human rights. It is the great obstacle that exists to the integration of Catholic and Protestant society in Ireland, whatever it may achieve in terms of unconditional surrender.'

The essence of the decree is that it makes the non-Catholic partner of the marriage a second-class element. In particular it extracts an undertaking that the children of the union will be raised in the Catholic faith – an undertaking, as already observed, enforceable in law. Furthermore the spirit in which many priests approach an intermarriage also creates great tensions and resentments. A special dispensation for the Catholic partner is necessary, and there are often long and unexplained delays in providing it. In many cases an individual priest will simply refuse it altogether, though one in a neighbouring parish may well be more amenable. The ceremony itself is not conducted in the body of the church but in the sacristy and the whole atmosphere has a sort of hole-and-corner quality highly offensive to religious susceptibilities.

The Irish Economic and Social Research Institute estimated that in 1961 something like a third of the Protestant men married that year and a fifth of the women had a Catholic partner, and it concludes that intermarriage is having a major impact on the Protestant population in the Republic. Certainly, the fact that the children of those marriages are almost certain to join the Catholic majority means that there is a steady decline in the number of Protestants. The view taken of this development depends on the judgment of the observer, but it must be regarded as an actively discriminatory factor in normal life. There are sporadic attempts by the Protestant communities to try to counter this trend by social exclusivity. A common instrument in this is the organization of functions whose underlying purpose is to ensure that those of marriageable age have an opportunity to meet their co-religionists away from the influence of the majority group. The churches organize dances and the like at which no invitations are issued to Catholics. Inevitably it sets up hostility, less because it poses any real threat to anyone than because of the long and sad history of the relationships between the two religions. So, one resentment feeds on another.

Here and there are dotted the almost fossilized survivors of the days before independence, the men and women who have been dubbed the West Britons. They are less strident than they were about their continued allegiance to England but they try to send their children to English schools, assiduously maintain as many barriers as they can to normal social interchange, and retain outlooks and intolerances that would make them totally out of place even in the country whose values they claim to follow. They are not numerically significant but the impact of their behaviour is disproportionate. As with the communal tension in Northern Ireland, the perceived reality overtakes actuality. But perception, after all, is what matters in social development and it is foolish to imagine that there is no potential for conflict despite the present reasonably relaxed position. There are few insuperable problems for the Protestants in the Republic because they form only a twentieth of the whole population and because their general standard of wealth and social position is unusually advanced. This happy compromise would change very rapidly if the constitutional claim of the Republic to rule the whole island became reality. The position would then be that the Protestant minority would rise to 25% of the overall population and institutional and informal discrimination would become far more potent.

A change in the provisions relating to the Catholic Church is already a matter of active discussion in the Republic, although it is meeting with considerable opposition. Some changes, minor ones, have been made. The contraceptive legislation may appear bizarre

to outsiders but at least some contraceptives are now available. The position of wives separated from their husbands has improved, largely as the result of one determined woman, Josie Airey, who took the government to the European Court of Human Rights. These are the first signs of a willingness to attempt some sort of compromise in fundamental positions which could lead to better relations. But, like the areas of political difference, over territory, there remain many areas of friction that will take decades to eliminate. The more secular climate, with more people leaving ties with all churches may have an effect, but the whole island of Ireland is remote from the cosmopolitan influences that affect other parts of Europe. Neither part has any other sizeable minority. Both have a handful of Jews and a few coloured immigrants, mostly either market traders or professionals attached to the hospitals and universities, but not enough to tip any balances.

In demographic terms the outlook for the Protestants in the Republic is gloomy. They are a disproportionately elderly group, they are declining numerically, the natural maintenance of their strength is heavily and adversely affected by their age and the pressures from the majority group, and their very problems are accentuating the rate of their decline. Their cohesion is apparently also failing now and there seems to be a far greater willingness to assimilate than when the Republic was founded years ago. Politically this may in the long run turn out to be beneficial. There has been little or no economic discrimination against Protestants as individuals, whatever may have been the case with their institutions, and they have continued to do rather well. Obviously, extremist attitudes towards them may be found here and there but they are far from typical of the broad pattern.

As Protestants become a less consequential element in the community, the pressure against them tends to slacken on the political front. And here may lie the route through the complexities that face the two communities in Ireland. If public opinion in the South can be persuaded that there is no further need to shield itself in law from Protestant encroachment, then there may be a corresponding softening of majority opinion in the North. The rate at which private attitudes will also change is obviously unpredictable, but there is no reason why the Irish should turn out to be all that different from other communities facing tension. Experience has shown that formal changes usually set the pattern for an easing of private intransigence. This will do little to resolve one of the major underlying difficulties – the generally weak economic state of the whole of Ireland and the gulf in prosperity between the North and the South. But a little economic give here and a little social take there might at least produce a more amenable climate in which to start grappling with the fundamentals.

CHRONOLOGY

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| 1801 | Ireland included as part of the United Kingdom and Irish Members of Parliament sit at Westminster. | May 1969 | O'Neill resigns and is replaced by a compromise candidate, Maj. James Chichester-Clark. |
| Mid 19th Century | Growing agitation for Home Rule for Ireland which is resisted by successive British governments. | Aug 1969 | A Protestant parade in Londonderry leads to large-scale rioting which quickly spreads to the capital, Belfast. The British Army is called in to restore order. |
| 1916 | Republicans stage an armed uprising in Dublin and declare a republic. Leaders subsequently executed. | Sep 1969 | The Northern Ireland government embarks on reforms of the franchise, the police, and local government. |
| 1919 | Republicans gain most of the Irish seats in the General Election and proclaim a National Parliament. | May 1970 | The Republic's prime minister, Mr Jack Lynch, dismisses two members of his cabinet and they are put on trial for alleged complicity in smuggling arms into Northern Ireland. Both are acquitted. |
| 1919-20 | A war of independence breaks out against the British. | July 1970 | Armed rioting breaks out in the Catholic district of Belfast and the area is put under military curfew. Mandatory sentences for those causing civil disorders are introduced by the Northern Ireland government. |
| 1920 | The Westminster parliament passes the Government of Ireland Act partitioning the country. | Sep 1970 | The reform of the housing administration, the last of the measures designed to meet Catholic demands, starts its passage through the Northern Ireland parliament, amid considerable Protestant opposition. |
| June 1921 | First Northern Ireland parliament officially opened. | June 1971 | A move by the Stormont government to create special parliamentary committees to increase Catholic participation is first welcomed by Opposition MPs, but they later boycott Stormont altogether after the deaths of two men in a shooting incident in Londonderry. |
| 1922 | The Irish Free State is formed. | Aug 1971 | Internment without trial is introduced and a number of Catholic suspects are arrested. It produces a violent reaction with many deaths and allegations that detainees have been maltreated. |
| 1922-23 | A civil war in the south between those who support and those who oppose the terms of the treaty between England and the Free State. The supporters win. | Nov 1971 | The detainees' allegations are sustained by a Tribunal of Inquiry, and the British government appoints a committee to review interrogation methods. The Dublin government complains to the European Commission on Human Rights. |
| 1932 | The Free State becomes a republic. | Jan 1972 | 13 people shot dead by British troops after a march in Londonderry. The Dublin government recalls its ambassador from London and demonstrators burn down British Embassy in Dublin. Lord Widgery is appointed to inquire into the Londonderry shootings. |
| 1949 | The Republic leaves the Commonwealth. | Mar 1972 | Stormont is suspended, for one year, by the Westminster government; Mr Whitelaw is appointed Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The Vanguard Movement, led by Mr William Craig, organize a two-day General Strike and a demonstration of 100,000 people in protest, disrupting the entire Northern Ireland economy. Catholic opposition leaders and the Alliance Party welcome the change. |
| 1968 | Growing civil rights agitation in Northern Ireland culminates in serious rioting in Londonderry in October. | April 1972 | Cardinal Conway, leader of the Catholic Church in Northern Ireland, appeals for an end to the violence. 73 detainees are released, and Bills affecting the Electoral Law, Industrial Finance and a Director of Public Prosecutions are enacted as orders in Council. |
| Feb 1969 | The Northern Ireland prime minister, Capt. Terence O'Neill, calls a general election to get a mandate for reforms, but the result is indecisive. | May 1972 | The Northern Ireland Advisory Commission, consisting of 7 Protestants and 4 Catholics, is appointed. Catholic women demonstrate against the violence. |
| | | June 1972 | The Provisional IRA, following the Official IRA, declares a truce. Protestants create No-Go areas. The SDLP lift their ban on local council and public bodies participation. A Women's Peace Petition movement has an unsuccessful meeting with the Provisionals' leader. |
| | | July 1972 | The truce is broken, followed by unprecedented violence. A further 4000 British Army troops brings the total to 21,000. Catholic No-Go areas are cleared, re-established and cleared again by the Army, a move condemned by the SDLP. |
| | | Sep 1972 | A Conference on the Future of Northern Ireland takes place in Darlington, boycotted by the SDLP and Democratic Unionist Party (Paisley). |
| | | Nov 1972 | The N.I. (Border Poll) Act. Mr Heath, British Prime Minister, warns that Britain would not subsidize an independent Ulster or independent United Ireland with £200 million a year. |
| | | Dec 1972 | The Diplock Commission Report makes recommendations on the administration of justice in N.I. 1972 closes with a total of 467 dead out of 676 since 1969. |
| | | Feb 1973 | The Vanguard Movement organizes another strike, marked by violence on both sides. |
| | | Mar 1973 | The Border Poll, boycotted by the SDLP, the Nationalists and the Republicans, confirms by 57.4% of the total electorate's vote, the wish of Ulster to remain within the United Kingdom. Direct Rule is extended for a further year. |

- May 1973 Northern Ireland Assembly Bill is enacted, providing for an election on 28 June. An Executive to be appointed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is the main provision of the N.I. Constitution Act.
- June 1973 The Election, with a total of 210 candidates, for 78 seats, produces 22 Official Unionists (Faulkner), Other Unionists 7; Vanguard Unionist (Craig) 7; SDLP 19; Alliance Party 8.
- July 1973 N.I. Emergency Provision Act, implementing the Diplock Commission recommendations, providing for 72-hour detentions, Army arrest powers, and the abolition of the death penalty. The first meeting of the Assembly is disorderly.
- Dec 1973 A Tripartite (UK, Ulster, Republic of Ireland) Conference is held at Sunningdale, an Anglo-Irish Commission on Law Enforcement established. SDLP ends its rent and rates strike, but Paisley puts a motion to the Assembly condemning the participation of the Republic. The 15 member Executive is to be headed by Brian Faulkner, with Gerald Fitt (SDLP) as Deputy Chief Executive and Olivier Napier (Alliance) in charge of the office of Law Reform. The death toll for 1973 was 249, of whom 170 were civilians.
- Jan 1974 Violent scenes in the Assembly. Faulkner resigns leadership of the Unionist party, replaced by Harry West, who withdraws the Party from the Assembly and refuses to recognize the Executive.
- Feb 1974 The General Election in the UK brings Labour to power; Merlyn Rees appointed Secretary of State for N.I. 11 out of 12 Ulster seats are won by the United Ulster Unionist Council, which is opposed to Faulkner, Ms. Bernadette McAliskey (Devlin) loses her seat.
- April 1974 A General Strike called by the Ulster Workers Council in protest against the Sunningdale Conference and the prospect of a Council of Ireland. A State of Emergency is declared by Merlyn Rees. West, Paisley and Craig declare they have no intention of power-sharing. Faulkner resigns and the Executive collapses. Industry at a standstill.
- May 1974 Further British Army troops called to N.I., total now 16,000.
- July 1974 N.I. Emergency Provisions extended, and Constitution Bill passed. UK subsidies published: 71/72 £195m; 72/73 £283m; 73/74 £376m and 74/75 £430m.
- Sep 1974 Rees announces expansion and reform of the RUC, and a Security Conference with the Republic takes place. The Green Paper on the N.I. Economy is published.
- Nov 1974 A Constitutional Convention discussion paper is published, featuring a deliberative non-Executive body. Ulster Freedom Force offensive.
- Dec 1974 The Widgery Report on the Londonderry events of 1971 is published. £41,717 compensation is paid to the relatives of those killed. Christmas ceasefire by IRA after meeting of prominent churchmen of all denominations. Total killed 1974: 215.
- Jan 1975 The Report of the Gardiner Committee on the Working of the Emergency Provisions Act, recommending new wording to overcome difficulties of proving conspiracy to murder, and end of special category prisoners, and detention.
- Feb 1975 Provisionals announce a ceasefire: 'hostilities against the crown forces will be suspended'. Further detainees are released. A further Green Paper on the Constitution, the Chief Justice, Sir Robert Lowry to be Chairman of the N.I. Convention.
- April 1975 Election and first meeting of the Convention. The Ulster United Unionist Council (Official Unionist, Democratic Unionist, Vanguard Unionist) 46 seats; SDLP 17; Alliance 8; Unionist Party of Northern Ireland (Faulkner) 5; Other 2. UUUC declare opposition to power-sharing. Ceasefire broken (160 killed during its course).
- Sep 1975 Craig (Vanguard Party) expelled from UUUC over SDLP participation in future cabinet.
- Dec 1975 Detention ends. Total killed in 1975: 245 of whom 215 were civilians.
- Jan 1976 Special Air Service units sent to N.I.
- Mar 1976 Special status prisoner category ends for crimes committed after this date. N.I. Convention dissolved.
- April 1976 Mr Callaghan succeeds Harold Wilson as Prime Minister of the UK.
- July 1976 The British Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland is killed in Dublin. Inter-party talks in N.I. repudiated by Paisley and West.
- Aug 1976 Three children are killed by an IRA car-hijacker. The Women's Peace Movement begins. Mass interdenominational rallies in Liverpool and Glasgow as well as N.I. 'for the right to live and love and build a just and peaceful society.'
- Sep 1976 The European Commission for Human Rights find five interrogation methods by security forces constituted 'a practice of inhuman treatment and torture'.
- Mar 1977 Leading Irish-Americans, Thomas O'Neill, Edward Kennedy, Daniel P. Moynihan, Hugh Carey, call on Americans not to support IRA.
- May 1977 A Consortium of 10 Loyalist organizations call a strike, which is marked by intimidation, but achieves less support than previous strikes, and is eventually called off.
- Aug 1977 H.M. The Queen visits N.I. amid tight security.
- Nov 1977 Constitutional talks begin again, later suspended. Two new political independence parties formed.
- Dec 1977 Total killed: 112 of whom 69 were civilians. Number of convictions for security related crime rises.
- Jan 1978 The European Court of Human Rights rules that interrogation methods were not torture but 'cruel and inhuman treatment'.
- May 1978 A private members's bill becomes the Education (N.I.) Act, providing for controlled integration of schools with 95% of parents in agreement (98% of schools are not integrated).
- June 1978 Amnesty International alleges maltreatment of suspects by the non-uniformed branch of the RUC. A Committee of enquiry is established.
- Mar 1979 Airey Neave, Conservative spokesman on N.I. killed at House of Commons by INLA.
- May 1979 Conservative victory in UK General Election. Hustings marked by daily killings in N.I.
- June 1979 First direct elections to European Parliament. Paisley (DUP), Hume (SDLP) and Taylor (OUP) elected in pr poll.
- Aug 1979 Earl Mountbatten of Burma, first Royal victim, killed by IRA together with two members of own family. Eighteen soldiers killed at Warrenpoint on same day in biggest single attack in 10 years.
- Sep 1979 Pope in Republic condemns all killings as murder.
- Nov 1979 Gerry Fitt resigns from SDLP because of increasing nationalism. Hume succeeds him.
- Dec 1979 Charles Haughey succeeds Jack Lynch as Irish prime minister.
- Jan 1980 Atkins Constitutional Conference opens without Official Unionists. Adjourns without result March.
- April 1980 All Special Category Status withdrawn.
- June 1980 John Turnley, leader Irish Independence Party, killed by Loyalists. European Commission finds H-Block dirty protest is self inflicted but criticizes British government as 'inflexible'. Dr Miriam Daly, IRSP and leader National H-Block Committee, killed by Loyalists.
- July 1980 Atkins' two-option devolution rejected by all parties.
- Dec 1980 Mrs Thatcher makes first visit of British prime minister to Dublin.
- Jan 1981 Ian Paisley launches Ulster Declaration and begins protest demonstrations and midnight rallies.
- May 1981 Bobby Sands, IRA hunger striking prisoner and MP for Fermanagh South Tyrone dies in H-Block at Maze Prison. Arms found in UDA HQ Belfast.
- Aug 1981 Kieran Doherty, one of two H-Block hunger strikers elected to Irish Dail dies in Maze.
- Oct 1981 Hunger strike in Maze begun March which killed 10 prisoners ends with some minor concessions from government. Nail bomb kills one, injures 40 at Chelsea Barracks, London.
- Nov 1981 Rev Robert Bradford, OUP MP for South Belfast, killed by IRA.
- Jan 1982 Loyalist John McKeague shot dead by INLA.
- Feb 1982 British Government introduces homosexual law reforms for N.I.
- Mar 1982 Gerard Tuite becomes first person charged in Republic with offence committed in Great Britain.
- July 1982 Two IRA bombs kill 8 soldiers and injure 52 people at Household Cavalry Barracks, Knightsbridge, and Regent's Park, London. Three more die later. Northern Ireland Assembly Bill given Royal Assent.

- July 1982 Gerard Tuite, first man tried in Republic for offence committed in Britain, sentenced to ten years imprisonment.
- Oct 1982 De Lorean car plant closed in Belfast. De Lorean charged with drug smuggling in United States.
- Nov 1982 Assembly opens without SDLP. SDLP deputy leader, Seamus Mallon, deprived of seat because he holds Irish Senate seat.
- Dec 1982 INLA bomb kills 17, including 11 soldiers, at Droppin Well pub in Co Londonderry.
- Jan 1983 Catholic Judge William Doyle shot dead by IRA leaving church in Belfast. Republic extends full voting rights to British citizens living in Republic.
- Mar 1983 New British anti-terrorist bill announced with five year life to replace 1973 Act. Labour to oppose law for first time.
- April 1983 Fourteen UVF men goaled on 'supergrass' evidence. Irish Government defeated on wording of abortion referendum.
- June 1983 General Election with new boundaries and five extra N.I. seats. Unionists take 15, John Hume one for SDLP and Gerry Adams one for Sinn Fein.
- July 1983 Gerry Fitt becomes life peer.
- Aug 1983 34 people convicted on evidence of IRA 'supergrass'.
- Sep 1983 Irish vote in referendum to retain constitutional ban on abortion. Mass break out from Maze prison Belfast of Republican prisoners.
- Dec 1983 European Parliament published report on Northern Ireland looking at social and economic problems.
- Mar 1984 Dominic McGlinchey, wanted in INLA suspect, arrested in Irish Republic and extradited to Northern Ireland. Indicates Irish government determination to extradite or use extra territorial courts.
- May 1984 Irish Forum publishes report on options for Northern Ireland. Unitary state seen as first option. Rejected by northern Unionists.
- June 1984 European elections return Paisley, Hume and Taylor. First preference votes give Paisley 230,251, Hume 151,399, Taylor 147,169, Morrison (Sinn Fein) 91,476, Cook (Alliance) 34,046.
- Aug 1984 Martin Galvin, director of Sinn Fein's American fund raiser, Noraid, defied UK government order banning him from country. Sean Downes, 22 year old Catholic, killed by plastic bullet as RUC attacked internment rally in Belfast at which Galvin appeared. Northern Ireland Secretary, James Prior, admitted ban was mistake.
- Sept 1984 Douglas Hurd replaces James Prior as Northern Ireland Secretary.
- Oct 1984 IRA bomb explodes at Grand Hotel, Brighton.

Appendix A: BASIC INFORMATION

Ireland (North and South)

| | |
|------------|--|
| Area | 32,595 square miles |
| Population | 4,921,959 |
| Religions | Catholic 3,614,532 Protestant 1,481,959 |

Northern Ireland

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| Area | 5,242 square miles | |
| Population | (April 1981) 1,481,959 | |
| Religions | Protestant 1,067,427 Catholic 414,532 | |
| Administrative divisions | Protestants | Catholics |
| Antrim | 34,424 | 9,960 |
| Belfast | 218,186 | 77,037 |
| Down | 28,914 | 23,955 |
| Armagh | 31,618 | 16,000 |
| Londonderry | 37,938 | 45,386 |
| Fermanagh | 29,074 | 21,934 |

(The 1981 census figures should be read with care. A large number of people who would be described, politically, as Catholics registered as having no religion thus giving a mistaken impression that the percentage of Catholics was decreasing and a considerable number of Catholics obeyed a Provisional Sinn Fein call for a boycott of the census.)

Republic of Ireland

| | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Area | 27,353 square miles |
| Population | 3,440,000 |
| Religions | Catholics 93.9% Protestants 3% |

Administrative divisions

There are 26 counties and the City of Dublin. The small Protestant population tends to be concentrated in the capital and in the counties of Donegal, Cavan, Monaghan, and Leitrim, which border on Northern Ireland.

Government

There is a bicameral legislature consisting of the Dail Eireann, which has 144 members elected by universal adult suffrage by proportional representation. The Seanad Eireann has 11 members nominated by the government, 6 elected by the universities, and 43 elected by vocational and cultural interests.

Appendix B: SOME ECONOMIC COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC AND N. IRELAND

(reprinted from 'Ireland - Our Future Together' ed. Dr G. Fitzgerald, Fine Gael, Dublin 1979.)

TABLE 1 Average Annual Rate of Growth of Manufacturing Production

| | Republic of Ireland | | | Northern Ireland | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 1959-69 % | 1969-73 % | 1973-77 % | 1959-69 % | 1969-73 % | 1973-77 % |
| Textiles | 8.5 | 7.5 | 3.4 | 6.6 | 11.6 | -5.2 |
| Clothing | 5.7 | 0.3 | -4.9 | 3.8 | 2.5 | -1.8 |
| Engineering | 8.8 | 5.1 | 2.7 | 1.2 | 0.4 | -5.6 |
| Food, Drink and Tobacco* | 5.0 (2.5) | 4.6 (7.0) | 3.9 (2.3) | 2.7 | 2.1 | -0.2 |
| Other Manufacturing | 10.9 | 9.4 | 2.9 | 24.1 | 4.5 | -1.6 |
| Total Manufacturing | 6.9 | 5.9 | 3.1 | 4.8 | 4.9 | -2.8 |

*Figures in parentheses refer to drink and tobacco. Main entry refers to food only.

TABLE 2 Ratio of Gross Domestic Product per person employed in Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland Level

| | Republic of Ireland as a % of Northern Ireland | | | | |
|-------|--|---------------|---------------|------------------|------------|
| | Agriculture % | Industry % | Services % | Public Adm. % | Total % |
| 1972 | 73.6 | 105.3 | 93.5 | 82.9 | 92.1 |
| 1975 | 83.7 | 102.5 | 102.2 | 71.1 | 90.6 |
| 1977* | 92.1 | 108.2 | 107.0 | 71.0 | 97.0 |

*estimated.

TABLE 3 Changes in the Republic of Ireland Yield from Tax Revenue and Northern Ireland Tax Structures*

| | £ million |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| INDIRECT TAXES | -168 |
| of which: | |
| Excise Taxes | -53 |
| Value Added Tax | -135 |
| Motor Vehicles Duty | +20 |
| INCOME TAXES | +266 |
| of which: | |
| Personal Income Taxes | +47 |
| Farm Profits Taxes | +70 |
| Corporation Taxes | +30 |
| National Insurance | +119 |
| TAXES ON PROPERTY | +60 |
| of which: | |
| Rates on Private Houses | +80 |
| Farm Rates | -30 |
| Death Duties | +10 |
| TOTAL NET REVENUE CHANGE | +158 |

*Rates of tax in force for 1978/79.

TABLE 4 Ratio of Certain Irish Social Benefits and Assistance Levels to Comparable Northern Ireland Levels*

| | |
|--|------|
| Non-contributory Old-age Pension | 0.66 |
| Widows Non-contributory Pension | 0.68 |
| Widows Contributory Pension | 0.75 |
| Unemployment Assistance | 0.80 |
| Old-age Contributory Pension | 0.83 |
| Disability Benefit | 0.99 |
| Unemployment Benefit | 1.02 |

*Rates prevailing at end 1978.

TABLE 5 Cost of Introducing Northern Ireland National Insurance and Assistance levels in the Republic*

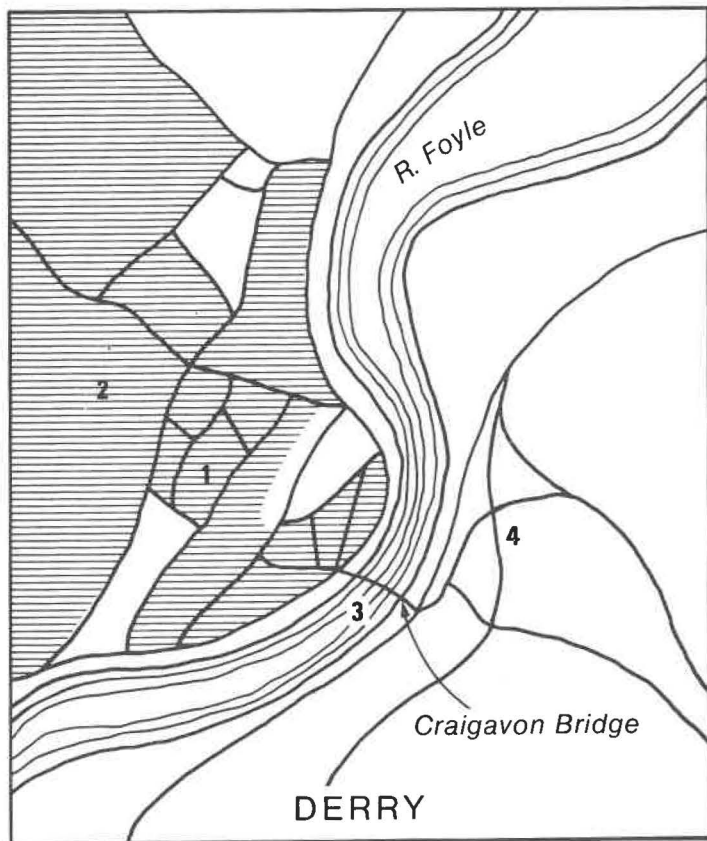
| | £ million |
|---|--------------|
| Non-contributory Old-age Pensions | 52.1 |
| Retirement and Old-age Pensions | 19.9 |
| Widows Pensions | 23.1 |
| Unemployment Assistance | 16.3 |
| Maternity Grant and Allowances | 0.7 |
| Disability and Invalidity | 2.0 |
| Unmarried Mothers, Deserted Wives, Single Women | 0.5 |
| Unemployment Benefit | -1.0 |
| Pay Related Benefit | -5.0 |
| Free Travel, Electricity, T.V., Telephones | -15.0 |
| Net Cost (excluding Child Benefit) | 93.6 |
| Child Benefit | 135.2 |
| Aggregate Cost | <u>228.8</u> |

*Rates prevailing at end 1978.

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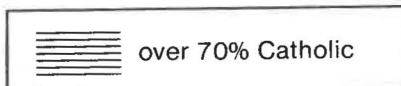
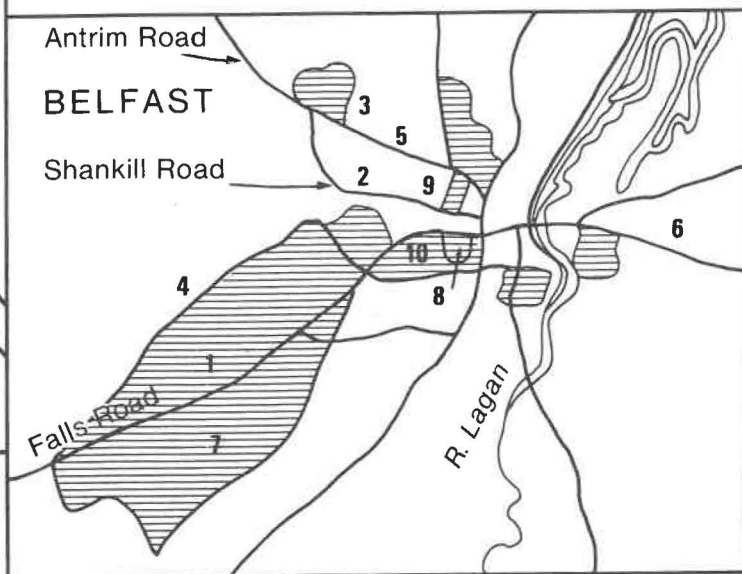


DERRY

- 1 Bogside
- 2 Creggan Estate
- 3 Craigavon Bridge
- 4 Waterside

BELFAST

- 1 The Falls Road
- 2 The Shankill Road
- 3 Ardoyne
- 4 Springfield Road
- 5 Crumlin Road
- 6 Newtownards Road
- 7 Andersonstown
- 8 Divis Flats
- 9 Unity Flats
- 10 Lower Falls



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