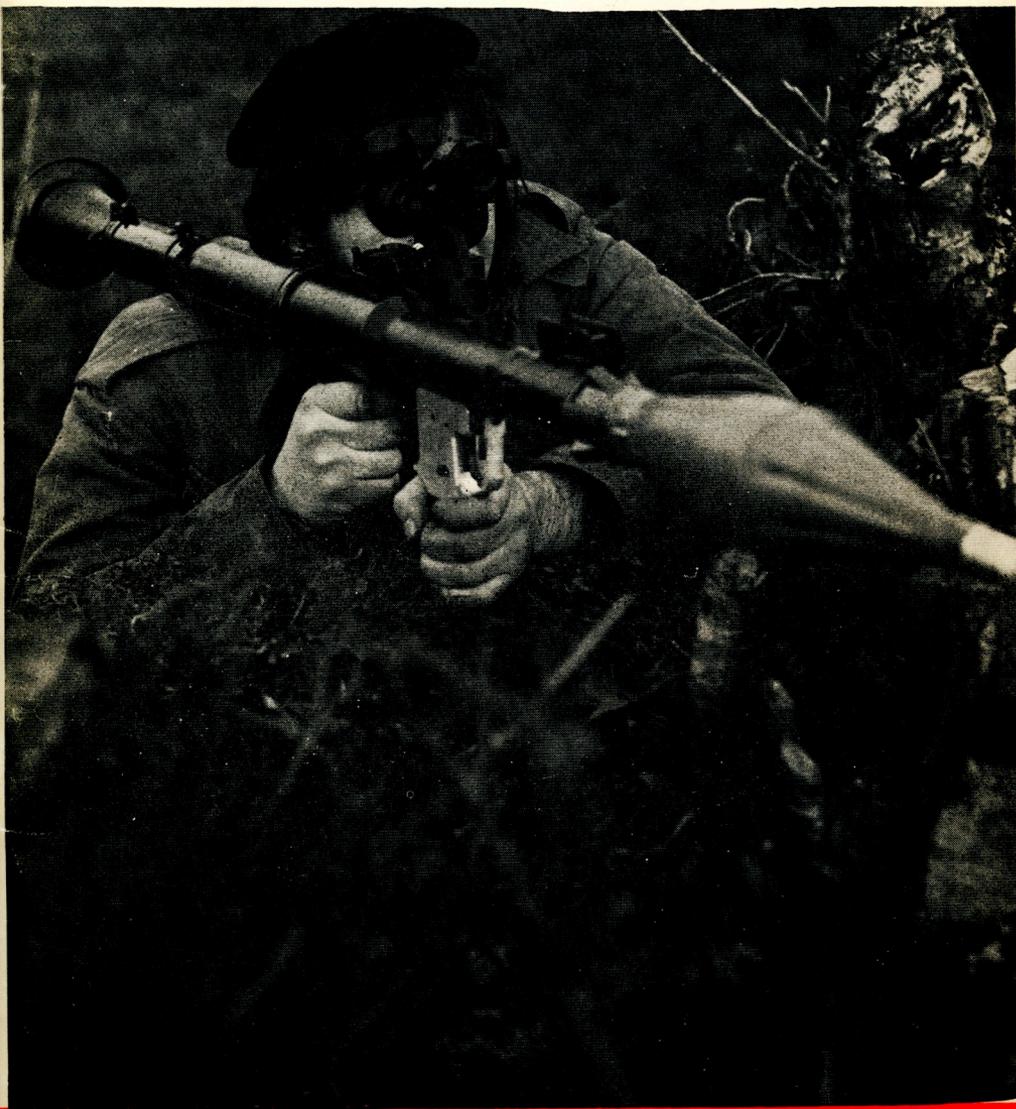


PROVOS

Patriots or Terrorists?



Seán Ó Riain

“Believing that the British Government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, and never can have any right in Ireland, the presence in any one generation of Irishmen of even a respectable minority ready to affirm that truth, makes that government forever a usurpation and crime against human progress.

I personally thank God that I have lived to see the day when thousands of Irish men and boys, and hundreds of Irish women and girls, were ready to affirm that truth and attest it with their lives, if need be.”

**James Connolly,
speaking to the British
Courtmartial which
condemned him to
death, Easter 1916.**

PROVOS:

Patriots or Terrorists?

by

Seán Ó Riain

IRISH BOOK BUREAU

(JOE CLARKE)

33 O'DONOVAN ROAD, DUBLIN 8.
IRELAND

Belfast 1970

"When the Orangemen 'line the last ditch' they may make a very sorry show; but we shall make an sorrier show, for we shall have to get Gordon Highlanders to line the ditch for us."

Padraic Pearse

Ireland 1974

"Let no man attempt to set bounds to the onward march of a nation."

Charles Stewart Parnell.

Introduction

As you read this, the climax of the struggle for an independent and sovereign Irish nation is being enacted in the North-Eastern part of our country. Despite the gallantry of the beleaguered people of the Six Counties, gallantry alone cannot defeat the military and propaganda might of Britain and her allies in this country. Only the entire people of Ireland can achieve that. But the Irish people are not being told the truth about either the Northern situation or the I.R.A. campaign. It is in order that the truth be known that this pamphlet has been written.

It should be pointed out that all references to either the 'Republican Movement' or the 'Irish Republican Army' refer to the 'Provisional' Movement and the 'Provisional' I.R.A. — unless otherwise stated.

The author would like to express his gratitude to Éamonn Mac Thomáis and Joe Clarke for their kind help.

This booklet is dedicated to all those who have given their lives in the quest for the New Ireland. May they not have died in vain.

February, 1974

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One Sovereign Nation

Does Ireland constitute one nation or are there two nations on this island of ours? This is the question on which the Northern situation, to quite an large extent, hinges. The Republican belief in the justice of the concept of a united Ireland is based on the belief that Ireland and her people constitute one sovereign and indivisible nation. Apologists for partition, whether they be Northern Unionists or pro-British Southerners, deny this belief and claim that Ireland is composed of two nations. This latter theory has become known as the 'two-nation' theory and is undoubtedly the most overtly plausible justification of partition to date. The truth lies in both an historical survey of the question of Ireland as one nation or two, and in an examination of the situation today.

It is rightly accepted that Gaelic Ireland constituted a distinct nation, even after the Norman invasion. The Normans, as the old cliché put it, became more Irish than the Irish themselves. They were assimilated into the native population; into the Irish nation and failed to retain any distinguishing characteristics¹ which survived the passage of time. In the process, however, the Gaelic system of government had collapsed as successive English monarchs increased their power in Ireland and strengthened their rule. This did not imply that either the old Irish or the Norman-Irish had conformed to English rule. Indeed, they were prepared to assert their independence when the opportunity arose, as it did in the 1640's.

In the meantime, however, there had been another major migration to Ireland. In the plantation of 1609, the lands of the Ulster chieftains had been confiscated and resettled with English and Scottish planters. This migration differed from the Norman settlement in that the newcomers were separated from the native population by an additional barrier — religion. And in the wake of the excesses committed during the Reformation and counter-Reformation by both Catholics and Protestants, this difference was a crucial factor in preventing assimilation. Also, the settlers of 1609 were much more dependent on the mother country and more attached to it for military as well as religious reasons than were the Normans, who had conquered it barely one hundred years before coming to Ireland.

The rebellion of 1641 and the revenge wrought on the settlers² by those they had dispossessed and driven out thirty years earlier helped reinforce the pre-existing separation between settler and native. The Jacobite wars of 1689-1691 reflected a continuation of this struggle and gave birth to the legend of the siege of Derry when the Protestants of the city successfully withstood the army of Catholic James II. The Jacobite wars ended with the flight of James to France and the Treaty of Limerick which guaranteed the rights of the Catholic Irish.

As we know, the terms of that treaty were never honoured by the English and for the next century Ireland was the victim of the infamous Penal Laws. These laws which were designed to keep the Catholics of the British Isles in a state of absolute subjugation, also imposed severe restrictions on the rights of the dissenter Protestants. And while the Anglican ascendancy prospered under their own Parliament in College Green, the lot of the dissenting Protestants of the North was little better than that of the ordinary Catholics. Thus were the two groups drawn together by the injustices perpetrated on both of them and this mutual bond was soon to be reinforced by the most dynamic political ideology in the history of this island — that of Republicanism.

The advent of the doctrine of Republicanism, of liberty, equality and fraternity, to Ireland followed the revolution of 1789 which overthrew the French monarchy. It was fostered in this country by Northern Protestants through the organisation known as the United Irishmen. The United Irishmen quickly became a force that transcended religious divisions, having both Catholic and Protestant adherents. It failed to co-ordinate its forces, however, or to devise a coherent plot to overthrow British power in Ireland. Worse still, it failed to protect itself against spies and as a result, many of its leaders were arrested when they were most needed. Swift government action established martial law in suspected areas but rebellion broke out, nevertheless, in 1798. Everywhere it was suppressed but not before sectarianism had again emerged.

The 'great rebellion' spelt out several lessons. We are only concerned with those which affect Ireland's nationhood. It gave rise to a tradition which asserted Ireland's right to independence from Britain; the necessity as Tone put it, 'to break the English connection'. It showed that the Ulster Protestants and the Irish Catholics were prepared to unite together in a common cause. And it should be remembered that the anti-Protestant atrocities committed in Wexford were anti-ascendancy rather than anti-Protestant with Anglican rather than Presbyterian victims. But most important of all, the fact that there were pro-government (i.e. pro-British) Catholics as well as rebel (i.e. pro-Irish) Catholics, Protestant militia as well as Protestant United Irishmen shows that by 1798, the 'radical differences between 'planter' and 'native' had been submerged. The old difference had been replaced by a new one between nationalistic Irish and the minority of Irishmen who, for reasons of either personal motivation or government inspired fears and hatreds,³ opposed Ireland's right to independence.

This latter development means that in 1798 there was not a conflict between 'two nations' but rather between two emerging traditions, one of which was dedicated to the upholding of Irish nationhood and transcended all pre-existing religious, racial and territorial divisions. The other tradition was composed of those who for personal gain and under government pressure were prepared to maintain British power in Ireland.

The 'year of liberty' was followed by the passing of the Act of Union and this legislation was vehemently opposed not only

by the remaining United Irish tradition but also by those Protestants who, although they had opposed the '98 rebels and had worked to uphold the British connection, had done so through fear of democracy — the rule of the masses rather than the classes — and of Catholic hegemony but who did support an Irish Parliament and an Irish nationality which they could dominate. The government, of course, recognised this and systematically began to buy off and intimidate, through a propagation of threats and fears, the Irish Protestants. The Ascendancy were well rewarded for their support and the introduction of salaries for dissenter clerics, as well as for the Anglican ministry, helped to sooth the Presbyterians of Ulster.

The implications of this are obvious. Up to the 1790's there were two national backgrounds in Ireland — those of the 'planter' and the 'native'.⁴ During that decade, however, these became fused and the seeds of two different traditions were sown. That is to say, two traditions based on national backgrounds were gradually replaced by what was to become a tradition dedicated to Irish nationalism and by a tradition which was prepared to subjugate nationality to economic, sectarian and social expediency. This latter tradition can be termed Unionism and not until very recently was it ever suggested that it comprised a separate nation. Far from constituting a nation it was merely a tradition fostered by British governments, a part of Britain's 'divide and rule' policy.

We shall say more about this 'tradition' shortly but first let us briefly see whether post-1798 history substantiates our theory. Were there movements which showed that Irish nationalism transcended the old divisions of settler and native, of Catholic and Protestant. Or does history bear out the so-called 'two-nation' theory? The struggle for Catholic emancipation had many Protestant supporters but we have to go to the Repeal of the Union issue for the next phase of the national struggle. And here we find that the nationalist leaders of the Repeal Movement and Young Ireland were almost all Protestants by religion — Mitchel, Smith O'Brien, Thomas Davis etc. Indeed, John Mitchel was born in Dungiven, Co. Derry and spent his youth in Newry. These were men who were motivated by nationality rather than by sectarian fear and suspicion which was the motivation of the Northern Protestants who opposed Repeal and Young Ireland.

The Tenant Right Association for a time had the support of both Southern Catholics and Northern Protestants. And it was a sectarian fear of Catholic domination (as a result of the involvement of the Catholic Tenant Right leaders, Lucas and Duffy, in the Ecclesiastical Titles dispute) rather than any Ulster Protestant 'nationalism' which caused the Northern Presbyterian tenant farmers to shy away from the Association at this stage. 'Loyalism' for the upper classes, Catholic and Protestant, was primarily the result of their desire to uphold the existing class structure, while for the less well-to-do, their loyalism was drummed into them as an implication of their Protestantism. We have seen how this formed part of a 'divide and rule' policy pursued by the government ever since 1798.

It was not until the Home Rule agitation that this division maintained by the government with a view to keeping Ireland pacified, became a much more potent political weapon. The English Conservatives saw Orange fears of Catholicism as a means of bringing down the Liberals. Stirring up fear and hatred amongst Northern Protestants with such slogans as 'Home Rule is Rome Rule', Tories like Randolph Churchill succeeded in bringing Gladstone down and the weapon was later resurrected against Asquith.

The opposition to Home Rule, sincerely voiced by many Northern Protestants not of the ascendancy or upper middle class, was never described as 'Ulster Protestant nationalism'. Indeed, it had a more anti-Catholic than pro-British basis. And right up to the present day, the people of this so-called 'Ulster Protestant nation' have been divided between those who saw themselves as Irish nationalists and those who regarded themselves as 'Irishmen' who supported British rule in Ireland. The same is true of the 'native' Irish and this is clearly demonstrated by the fact that at the Lenadoon confrontation in 1972 were a U.D.A. leader named Murphy and an I.R.A. officer named Bell.

So much for any historical support for the 'Two-Nation' theory. To a certain extent, it is representative of the situation in Ireland up to the 18th century but by 1798 this was no longer the case. After that date there was only one Irish nation, which embraced all Irishmen, Catholic and Protestant, planter and native. Like all other nations it had, and still has, its quota of those prepared to betray its national rights and those too frightened to accept their role in its development.

The question of to what extent the planters of Ulster were nationally different from the native Irish is a debatable one. Undoubtedly they were of a different religious persuasion and came to Ireland much later than the 'native' Irish. But they were not really a racially different ethnic group. As the Rev. James P. Woodburn, the Presbyterian historian, said. "There are not two races in Ireland, the whole population is a mixture of Celtic and Teutonic and the Ulsterman has probably as much Celtic blood as the Southerner."

An examination of the Northern situation today corroborates this. There are certainly two traditions but no two nations. After 350 years, there is no longer even a distinguishable dividing line between those of planter or native ancestry. There is no linguistic difference or physically apparent racial difference. All share the same territory, the same history and the common name of 'Irishman'. Their differences are based on a religious conflict or to put it in current terminology, they are only separated by sectarianism. It was sectarianism, and the fears and hatreds it gives birth to, that for almost a century has caused so many Protestant Irishmen to look to Britain for protection, and in order to ensure getting it, to call themselves 'British' as a pretext for remaining within the United Kingdom. Fear, not loyalty is the motivation of the average Ulster 'Unionist'.

It would be a mistake to underestimate or lightly dismiss this sectarianism. It has been carefully fostered by two powerful

elements; successive British governments and the only real 'loyalists' of Ulster, the well-to-do, upper-class Unionists. These latter are loyal to the British crown and the British way of life in so far as they see it as the most likely system to preserve their rights, privileges and titles. The average 'Unionist' is motivated, not by such preoccupations, but by a much more basic instinct — fear. The upper class Unionists have carefully fostered this fear of a 'papist-dominated Dublin government' in order to maintain misguided popular support for their well being. Successive British governments have helped 'play the Orange Card' as an easy way to keep Ireland quiet. The fear of the 'Protestant backlash' was as exploited in 1912 as it is today. This does not mean that the British after the 1920's were over keen to hold on to the Six Counties. The trouble was that once the Orange card was dealt, it had to be played continuously as there were no other trumps left. From being a British asset it became a liability — to the tune of £300 million today.

The reason for this is clear. Fear and hatred are easier to initiate than to terminate. When sectarianism expired as an aid to Britain, no British government was prepared to face up to the consequences of defying the menace they themselves had created. And attempts to grant even the slightest concessions to the oppressed Catholics were greeted with such violent symptoms of "no-surrender" that they immediately shirked their responsibilities. British reaction was typical. They tried to uphold the status quo and hoped the problems of a divided nation, of oppression and sectarian discrimination would go away. When this did not happen, they instinctively relied on military repression and re-extension of the 'divide and rule' policy to drive it away. The result: Bloody Sunday and the Sunningdale conference.

Ireland is one sovereign nation, but its people are divided and kept apart by the hostility of generations and by the Border. The hostility cannot be removed as quickly as one would desire but the Border can. The ending of partition and the re-unification of Ireland would give us the opportunity to show how unfounded the hostility really is. Only by living together can we discover each other and the tragic lesson of the last fifty years is that it is impossible for the two sides to live together until the decisive issue of partition has been solved; not just postponed once again but finally solved. Irishmen will not be able to regard each other without suspicion until the cause of the mental suspicion — the physical border — is removed.

The national question is therefore the most important facing us today. It must be tackled today. We are now reaping the harvest of the mistake of 1922 — the establishment of partition. Ireland unfree and divided has never and shall never be at peace. Nor should we be deluded by such a ridiculous philosophy as that proposed by Conor Cruise O'Brien which advocates a policy of doing nothing to improve the situation in case by doing so, we should only make things worse! Small wonder the U.N. failed to solve the Congolese problem, with advisers like Cruise O'Brien.

Of course, the Cruise O'Briens tell us that partition can be removed only by the democratic wish of the people of the Six Counties. It must be remembered, however, that one cannot have a true exercise in democracy in an undemocratically constituted area. The border was drawn in 1920 in order to ensure a constant "loyalist" majority in the Six County area. It dismembers the island of Ireland and the historic province of Ulster. It was drawn up against the wishes of the majority of the Irish people and by a commission at which not even the Six Counties were represented. (Its representatives were appointed by Westminster). Therefore since the Six County area was set up so as to destroy the democratic rights of the Irish people, 'border polls' within that area are not an exercise in democracy: they are a travesty of the very concept.

Ireland is an ancient nation. For centuries, generations of Irishmen were prepared to fight, to die, to sacrifice everything rather than compromise their nationality. The fact that Ireland is today a nation is because of their devotion to her nationhood. They struggled on when there was no help, no opportunities no rewards and no prospects. Today there is every opportunity to organise, the means are available but the chance is being squandered by the so called 'leaders' of this country who are more concerned with preserving a half nation than attaining our national rights or achieving our national destiny.

It is up to the ordinary people of Ireland to assume the responsibilities of their nationality and to work for their country's unity and welfare. To do less is to betray the past and to deny the future.

If partition is not ended now, the pattern of events over the past fifty years will be repeated. There always have been and always will be, Irishmen prepared to fight rather than sell out what they believe to be their national right. Unless we resolve to finish the matter now, the deaths and tragedies of the past four years will have been in vain. We have no right to condemn future generations to yet more Bloody Sundays, yet more Long Keshes, yet more Bombay Streets. We must not fail our children — or ourselves.

In this chapter we have seen that Ireland is one nation; one nation with two hostile traditions. This hostility is between two parts of the same nation and neither part is a 'nation' in its own right. The root cause of the present hostility is partition and it must be removed. But there are also hostilities which grew out of partition, and a simple demand for the removal of partition is an oversimplification of both the Northern situation and the solution to the question. For this reason we must turn from the general to the particular and have a closer look at the 'Ulster question.'

REFERENCES

- 1 Other than surname prefixes.
- 2 Several hundred settlers were massacred but this is a considerably less number than is commonly supposed in Protestant 'history' books.

- 3 After the founding of the Orange Order on a small and local level in 1795, General Knox, British Army Commander in Ulster, wrote thus to the English Chief Secretary, Thomas Pelham: "If I am permitted as I am inclined, to encourage the Orangemen, I think I shall be able to put down the United Irish." Pelham replied that he indeed approved the plan "to increase the animosity between the Orangemen and the United Irishmen".
- 4 Although one could argue that racially at any rate, these two groups were never ethnically different since the Scottish planters of 1609 were descended from the Northern Irish who in the sixth century expanded their kingdom of Dál Riada into what is now Western Scotland. This is really only of academic interest, however.

The Northern Situation

The Northern situation, as it is called, is the most fluid to date in Irish history. It literally changes every day but its gradual evolution over the past four years has been towards a lasting solution to the problem. It is time that we all realised that interim or temporary solutions have always led to more bloodshed and violence. We must not repeat mistakes of the past.

Basically, the situation is one of conflicting loyalties—a conflict between loyalty to the Irish nation and loyalty generated by the instinct for self preservation. Partition is an evil perpetrated to stave off a different evil — the subjugation of the Ulster Protestants in a United Ireland. Any solution, if it is to have a hope of working, must therefore ensure that the injustice felt by the majority of the Irish people — the partition of their country — is removed and that the rights and liberties of the Northern Protestants are not interfered with by so doing. An outline of how this could be done is to be found further on in this booklet. Here, however, we shall examine the parties involved in the Northern conflict and what they stand for.

The movement which has been the chief pacesetter is the Republican Movement. Whether for better or for worse is another question and one to which considerable attention is devoted in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to say here that the immediate aim of the Republican Movement is to secure an amnesty for all political prisoners, a withdrawal of British troops off the streets and a dateline for the end of British occupation of the Six Counties. The ultimate aim is, of course, a democratic socialist 32 county Irish Republic, which would guarantee the rights and liberties of all.

The other major protagonist in the Six Counties is the British Army and the government that keeps it there. Britain's role is not that of a mediating force — it is that of a governing force. The Acts of 1920 and 1949 firmly establish, in British law, the Six Counties as part of the United Kingdom. The partition settlement to the Irish 'question' was devised at a time when Britain's outlook on Ireland was still motivated by the imperialist tradition and the strategic requisites of British power. By 1949 this motivation was joined by an attitude of spite — generated by the Declaration of the 26-county Republic, another nail in the Empire's coffin.

Today, however, this outlook has been replaced as Britain's primary reason for upholding the Union by a stubborn refusal to do anything which might involve 'a loss of face'. Britain in fact, despite the old reasons which die hard, probably wants out.¹ The Six Counties are costing her more and more in sterling and in blood. One third of the population have always withheld

their allegiance from Britain and now another third — 'the Loyalists' — are themselves becoming quite rebellious. Britain is looking for a way out but is caught up in the trap of her own making. Withdrawal — the logical course — would mean a 'loss of face' and a 'surrender to terrorism' no matter how clearly disguised or explained away. And rather than face up to reality, the British government has tried successively to ignore the issue, baton down the opposition and failing in this, bribe the opposition.

The Six Counties have witnessed this traditional British policy with tragic results. For fifty years, Britain allowed the Unionists perpetrate every possible injustice on the Catholics, as long as no commotion was caused. When this situation inevitably erupted the British then attempted beating down the Catholics. This also failed so it was continued in conjunction with the granting of concessions on the minor issues in the hope that this 'stick and carrot' policy would leave the greater injustices accepted. This cannot be allowed succeed; concessions of one's own rights anyway can never be accepted in place of justice. Such a barter is the first step to the end of freedom and the equality of men.

The British have been prepared to go to all lengths rather than concede defeat. Military victory over the I.R.A. is still sought and certainly the terrorising of the whole Catholic minority is the only way to achieve such a victory. The introduction of the Paras and their long tours of duty in the North shows the determination of the British government to beat the Catholics into submission to Stormont. Every tactic conceivable has been used against the I.R.A. The events of Bloody Friday illustrate just how ruthless the British are in their quest to destroy the resistance to their presence in Ireland.

On Friday, July 21, 1972, I.R.A. units placed twenty two bombs in various targets throughout Belfast. In the ensuing explosions, seven civilians and two soldiers were killed. All the deaths occurred as a result of two of the explosions, of which the British claimed there had been no warning. They admitted that warnings of the other twenty were received and acted upon. The tragedy sparked off widespread condemnation of the I.R.A. and diverted attention from the growing number of mysterious assassinations usually with Catholic victims.

Only when the clamour had died down did the following facts emerge. The I.R.A. had always claimed that warnings of the Cavehill and Oxford Street bombs had in fact been given to the police, the British Army and public bodies. Now the Public Protection Agency — a Whitelaw established Agency— admitted receiving the warning of the Cavehill bomb one hour and ten minutes before it exploded. It claimed that it had passed the warning to the security forces immediately. Also, several people heard on the British Army radio wavelength a warning of the Oxford Street bomb. Yet nothing was done to clear civilians from the areas involved or to give warning of the pending danger. But while the civilians in the area were not

alerted, the B.B.C. were informed in time for on the spot coverage of the explosions and aftermath. The I.R.A. were responsible for placing the bombs but did give ample warning. The British Army saw fit to ignore the warning and were, therefore, chiefly responsible for the deaths.

This is how the 'Sunday Times' — a British source — reported the events of that Friday afternoon:—

"Mystery of Bloody Friday's Lost Warnings² by Peter Pringle. A disturbing mystery surrounds warnings known to have been given by the IRA of the two bomb explosions in Belfast on Friday, July 21, which killed nine people. Apparently the warnings never reached the security forces.

The Public Protection Agency, set up by Mr. Whitelaw at the beginning of this month to receive calls about sectarian intimidation, confirmed last week that they had received warnings of the two explosions.

The day's log of the calls to the PPA shows that at 2.07 p.m. a caller said that there was a bomb in a car in the shopping centre in Cavehill Road. It exploded one hour and eight minutes later, killing three civilians and injuring 36.

The log also shows that at 2.40 p.m. another caller said that there was a bomb in the Oxford Street bus station. It exploded 22 minutes later, killing six people, including two soldiers. The PPA says the calls were immediately passed on to the Security Forces. But the Army is adamant that it received no warning. The police say each explosion is still being fully investigated.

During the wave of 22 explosions that afternoon, the P.P.A. and the Samaritans Organisation received a total of 21 warnings some of which were duplicated. Both claim that they immediately passed on the warnings to the Security Forces. The Army admits receiving only eight warnings during the bombing spell.

Yesterday the Belfast Provisionals issued a document entitled Friday, the Facts, in which they detail the warnings given to the P.P.A., the Samaritans and the R.U.C. The police dismissed the claims as "propagandist red herring." They say it would have been impossible to check all the bomb calls they received that afternoon — including the hoaxes which are currently averaging 30 to 40 per day.

At times during that afternoon public telephone lines to the Security forces were overloaded. At 2.50 p.m. the Samaritans received a warning that a large bomb was near the Railway Station behind the Europa Hotel. They had to wait five minutes to get through to the police; their only method of contact being a 999 call. The bomb did not explode until 4 p.m. — 1.10 minutes after the warning.

Warnings from the IRA vary from vague to very detailed. One given to the Samaritans that Friday simply said that the bomb was on a "narrow road" leading to the airport. Another said there was a bomb in a bread van in Botanic Avenue, and "don't take it as hoax."

The callers always start: "This is the Republican Army. A bomb is" On another occasion the Samaritans were told: It will your own fault if someone is killed."

While Mr. Whitelaw's office recognise the problem of the warning calls, it is not, at present, inquiring into them.

It is impossible to believe that this premeditated murder could have been committed without the acquiescence of William Whitelaw. And certainly, Whitelaw had a lot to gain from the day's events. The I.R.A. were 'blackened' just after resuming their campaign in the aftermath of the July truce break-down.³ Also, it diverted attention away from the rising number of Catholics being murdered by 'unknown' assassination squads. In British eyes lives were well worth their weight in propaganda just as the almost thousand lives lost to date are considered well worth control over an area with little strategic or economic value. Yet, the British cannot afford 'a loss of face' and so the slaughter goes on. There are growing indications, however, that decent English people are beginning to put human life before 'a loss of face'.⁴ How many more must die before the British government does likewise?

The third most important factor in the Northern situation is Unionism, the various forms of which have been outlined in Chapter One. There are pro-union Protestants who see the link with Britain as in the best interests of preserving their power and wealth. These upper-class Unionists for fifty years ran the Unionist party as a force for the unnatural purpose of securing working class support for a Tory party. It was an alliance maintained by the fear instilled in the working class Protestants of a United Ireland. At last this monolith has crumbled and today the Unionist party in its depleted form still represents middle and upper class Protestantism while the V.U.P.P., the D.U.P. and other 'loyalists' represent the working class Protestants. And for the first time ever, there are now Unionists and Loyalists who see the possibility of the Union being incompatible with their interests. The myth of the Protestant backlash has been exposed at last. Unity between North and South, while still feared by many for different reasons, is seen as a possibility. This would have been unthinkable only five years ago.

The Alliance Party is really only a more sophisticated version of the Faulknerite Unionists. As a possible 'centre' party, it flopped after its stance on the border poll when it openly lined up with the forces of Unionism. A 'holier than thou' sanctimonious Unionist party is the best description of this also-ran grouping which paid the price in the Assembly election of giving Britain a carte blanche on the White Paper issue. The Alliance Party and the Faulknerite Unionist Party are the staunchest

pillars of the Union as in order to safeguard as much of their booty from fifty years of unbridled power they are prepared to throw a few crumbs of justice to the Catholics. The 'Loyalists' by their uncompromising attitude are unwittingly helping to undermine the Union. But these latter would be more likely to accept a just solution guaranteeing them their rights outside the Union in the final analysis, than would the Alliance-Faulknerites who wish to preserve the structure in which they had so much power and wealth. But neither group seems genuinely prepared to fight for the Union, as witnessed by the low recruitment for the U.D.R.

If the average Protestant knew that Britain was withdrawing on a certain date, and if such a withdrawal would cause him no financial loss (through social services, etc.) and no loss of civil liberties, he would not strenuously object to some form of united or federally united Ireland. The latter two conditions have been guaranteed but until Britain sets a definite date for withdrawal, the Unionists do not have to consider satisfying the aspirations or allaying the fears of anyone other than themselves.

On the other side, only the S.D.L.P. rivals the Republican Movement as a force emanating from the minority community. The S.D.L.P. grew out of the turmoil and thrived on issues such as civil rights, internment and partition. Having tasted political power, these issues are now an embarrassment to their chances of sharing power with the Unionists within the partition framework. Of all the minority groupings, only the S.D.L.P. is prepared to take part and is taking part in the Assembly — an Assembly built on internment, the Emergency Provisions (new Special Powers) Act and the sectarian R.U.C. The S.D.L.P. have not only compromised but sold out all their just claims of only a year ago. And by entering the Assembly and engaging in power sharing, they are bolstering partition in a more effective way than the 'B' Specials ever did. They are giving it a facade of legality and acceptability that the old Stormont never had.

Their reason for this can only be a fear that if the I.R.A. succeed in attaining their aims, they, the S.D.L.P., will undoubtedly suffer the fate of the old Redmondites in the next election. Therefore, they are consolidating their personal positions by joining with the British in maintaining the Union — a volte face symbolised by their bowing before the statue of James Craig — one of the chief architects of partition — in the new assembly. They have been "hitched to the constitution" and in return have received meagre concessions of what the Catholics were entitled to, anyway. But the S.D.L.P. has sold out on full equality for the Catholics (discrimination remains in the Six Counties), liberty for the internees and justice for the Irish nation.

The Nationalist Party, the Republican Labour Party and other groups all went under in the Assembly elections. Eddie McAteer and Paddy Kennedy have not always taken a very Republican stance on certain issues but, unlike the S.D.L.P.,

they were never prepared to sell out the internees or the national rights of the Irish people. Their defeat, sad as it undoubtedly is, reflects the ineffectuality of *purely* political methods in a war situation. In their present position, the future of these groups looks dismal. They can never hope to oust the S.D.L.P. — only the Republican Movement can achieve that. It would be a forward step if Nationalists, Republican Labourites and supporters of Frank McManus and the Unity Movement recognised that they are merely clouding the issues and getting nowhere by their present positions and moved to the side of the S.D.L.P. or to the side of the Republican Movement. It is hard to imagine many of them backing the S.D.L.P. and they could make a big contribution to more rapidly achieving the aims of all Republican Irishmen. Loyalists have shown today as they did in 1912 that in unity lies strength. Just as we heeded them then, we must do likewise now. The penalty for not doing so could well be another fifty years of turmoil, injustice and bloodshed. It is too high a price for putting individual vanity before the national good.

Such is the Northern situation as portrayed by the protagonists therein. The lesson that emerges from it, as from history, is that no solution within the framework of partition can prove the basis for a lasting peace. True and lasting peace can only be based on justice and national partition is one of the greatest injustices that can be perpetrated on any race or nation.

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- 1 Today, economic rather than political imperialism is that favoured by the English Government towards Ireland — as is borne out by English control of Irish industries and capital, our dependence on sterling etc.
- 2 The Sunday Times (London) 30-7-72.
- 3 The circumstances in which the truce collapsed clearly showed the British Army to be anti-Catholic and pro-U.D.A. As such, Bloody Friday was a welcome diversion for Whitelaw.
The truce ended when the British Army supported by the U.D.A. violently prevented 16 Catholic families taking possession of houses
- 4 This refers to the rapidly growing support for the "Bring home the troops" allocated them by the 'Northern Ireland Housing Trust'.
campaign in England amongst the public and the families of men serving in the British Army.

In Justification

Everyday when you pick up your morning paper or turn on your radio or television, you are faced with a long catalogue of 'terrorist activities' committed by the I.R.A. in the Six Counties. You find insinuations that the violence could spread into the twenty-six counties. You read condemnations of the I.R.A. campaign on many and varied grounds by many different people. The I.R.A. is invariably referred to as 'a terrorist organisation' by the news media. It is described as a sectarian organisation with sectarian aims and methods. It is said that far from uniting Ireland, the I.R.A. campaign is only further alienating the Protestant community in the Six Counties. In short, the I.R.A. campaign is portrayed as a political disaster and a moral crime.

When you read this, you are in fact the innocent victim of a massive propaganda campaign designed to woo the Irish people away from supporting the struggle in the Six Counties. The British may not have learned much from the 1916-21 war but they have realised the need for an effective propaganda machine. They now have such a machine, operating through every British sphere of influence, news agencies, consulates, embassies and trade missions. It is a machine backed by the enormous financial resources of the British government and is succeeding, not only in blinding world opinion to the truth — as happened after internment, Bloody Sunday etc., — but also Irish opinion. The people of the Six Counties are justifiably angry and bitterly disappointed that their suffering, their hardships, their struggle for survival have been viewed as less important than the price of Guinness in the rest of Ireland. The author will never forget the blunt "do you (the people of the 26 counties) not care that we also are Irish" which a middle-aged Belfast woman put to him. He could make no answer.

The Northern situation exists. It will not go away if we ignore it. Our fellow countrymen are experiencing today what we — and they — went through fifty years ago. Then we were glad of world support. Today they do not even have their fellow countrymen's support. We owe the suffering people of North Eastern Ireland at least the courtesy of examining the rights and wrongs of their campaign against the British forces of occupation. We have the duty of not accepting as gospel the lies of the British propaganda machine and of looking at the I.R.A. campaign from an unbiased point of view before making our judgments.

The primary objective of the I.R.A. is to achieve the freedom and unity of Ireland by forcing a British withdrawal. It is generally agreed that this is a legitimate aim based on Ireland's rights as a nation. The controversy centres on how this is to be done. The politicians, Church leaders and so-called 'moderates'

all advocate unity 'by consent'. This means by the consent of the people of Six County area and is a complete denial of the rights of the Irish people as a whole. This is recognised by the 'moderates' who admit that one cannot have an exercise in democracy in an undemocratically constituted area. Nevertheless, they are prepared to sacrifice the rights of three quarters of the Irish people in order to appease the other quarter. This is a blatant example of putting expediency before justice. So from the very beginning, the main 'alternative' to the policy of the I.R.A. is based on an injustice.

The I.R.A. campaign can be justified politically by a study of our history, the tactics of the I.R.A. and the results of the campaign to date.

Down through the 800 years of British occupation, there was an attempt approximately once every fifty years to assert Ireland's independence as a sovereign nation from Britain. Obviously prior to the 1790s, these attempts were not inspired by nationalism as we know it or Republicanism but were intended to sever the humiliating link with Britain.

Both constitutional and violent methods were used. It is a historical fact that, although initial gains were often made, the constitutional movements were invariably crushed. The case of O'Connell is a good example. O'Connell was able to gain from Britain, concessions which the British were already reconciled to granting and which were also of advantage to influential Englishmen. We are referring, of course to Catholic Emancipation. Accompanying it, however, was the removal of the franchise from the 40s freeholders — O'Connell's most important political weapon. When O'Connell launched his Repeal campaign, he was therefore hamstrung from the outset. He was committed to a campaign of peaceful agitation which had no teeth and to which the British Government was utterly indifferent. O'Connell himself realised this as he began to move closer and closer to the point where physical action must replace verbal force or the entire campaign end in a fiasco. When the government called his bluff at Clontarf, O'Connell had to back down in the face of military strength.

The same is true of the other great constitutional movement in Irish history; the Home Rule movement. It was defeated by deception and slander in the 1890s and Redmond's constitutional tactics were made irrelevant by the military tactics of his opponents. Of course, it can be argued that most of the revolutionary movements failed as well. However, the reason for their failure is different from the reason for the failure of the constitutional movements. The 'physical force' movements failed because of their incompetence in putting the correct theory — that only Irish force could beat British force — into operation. Constitutionalism failed because despite quite expert handling, it was tionally, would not resort to other means. It was based on an tionally would not resort to other means. It was based on an incorrect theory.

This may seem hard to believe, as constitutional agitation has been known to work in other countries with magnificent success. However, Ireland's relationship to Britain made the failure of pacifist agitation inevitable. Such agitation can work only when the majority of a country's population is united against the oppressing government and in the position to bring immediate pressure to bear. But Ireland was always kept under close scrutiny, her population formed but a small section of the combined populations of the enforced union and was by geography removed from the seat of power and thus denied the opportunity to bring direct pressure to bear.¹ And, of course, it can only succeed when the opponents of pacifist agitation are not prepared to introduce the full rigours of military repression. History has often proved that when this happens, (as in Bangla-Desh recently) the sword is the only method of arbitration left to the oppressed.

The Anglo-Irish war of 1920-21 showed clearly that if a small nation used physical force efficiently and combined it with political initiative (both of which the I.R.A. are doing today) although it might not defeat the enemy, itself could not be defeated either, no matter the superiority of the adversary. In 1921 and in 1972, the elite of British politics sat down to negotiate with — and thus ascribed belligerent status to — men they had called murderers only a few weeks before. Such is the power of revolutionary tactics when properly applied.

Today, the I.R.A. is waging a type of war known as urban guerilla warfare. The situation has changed since the Tan War, in which the campaign waged by the famous flying columns was predominantly a rural one. Now, however, instead of large columns, the striking force is usually very small and the action takes the form of hit-and-run sniping, bombing or rocket attacks. As in 1920-21 the intelligence war is of vital importance but the capabilities of today's revolutionaries is no less than those of the men of the Tan War. (Compare the smashing of the British spy ring in Dublin on Sunday, November 21, 1920 to the Four Square Laundry case in Belfast in the winter of 1972). There is no need to elaborate here on just how militarily successful the I.R.A. campaign has been. Suffice it to say that it has cost the British their highest casualty rate since World War II.

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Before the present I.R.A. campaign began, a united Ireland was never even considered or mentioned by either Westminster or Stormont. When the Civil Rights movement began, the

Catholics could have been appeased by a semblance of fair play. We know what they did get at Burntollet and in the Belfast pogrom of August '69. The majority of people in the Twenty-Six Counties knew little and cared less about the Northern situation. The 'B' specials and the R.U.C. were able to enter and ransack Catholic areas at will. This happened in the Bogside and in the Falls with considerable loss of life. The British Army which was supposed to 'protect' the people murdered four innocent men during the military curfew² on the Falls Road in July 1970. It was only then that the I.R.A. campaign began.

The resistance of the I.R.A. has been so successful as to seem incredible when one remembers the campaigns of '39 and '56. The R.U.C. — a fully armed military force — has been well battered by the I.R.A. The might of the British Army, its infantry, armoured divisions and aerial support have failed to beat the I.R.A. Indeed the British have suffered their highest casualties since the Second World War. R.U.C. stations have been abandoned and only last July, an I.R.A. squad slipped a huge bomb past four check points to attack the R.U.C. Headquarters in Derry. Top security British posts have been infiltrated and bombed — such as Gough Barracks in Armagh — while hardly an R.U.C. station or British post has escaped rocket and mortar attacks. British mobile patrols have been ambushed in rural areas throughout the North. In one ambush near Crossmaglen the British were halted and a stand-up fight between I.R.A. volunteers using rifles and the ditches as cover and British troops with armoured cars and heavy mounted guns. The British, who were crossing back from the 26 counties to the Northern side of the border, and who were helped by a helicopter during the engagement, eventually pulled out having suffered four casualties, one fatal.³

The tangible results are just as impressive. Today, the leader of the opposition in Britain, Mr. Harold Wilson, as well as many Tories and Unionists, recognises the inevitability of a united Ireland as the only just solution. The British Government by being prepared to negotiate with the I.R.A. ascribed that army belligerent status. The former Home Secretary, Mr. Jim Callaghan, has said that Britain, 'under certain circumstances' would no longer be bound by her commitment to the Union under the Acts of 1920 and 1949. Political status was obtained for political prisoners. The Catholic minority was united as never before, even if its parliamentary representatives were not, in a determination to take no more from either Stormont or Westminster. The I.R.A. smashed the old Stormont structure and now even the most extreme Unionists admit that a united Ireland is a legitimate political aspirations.⁴

These are the successes to date of the I.R.A. Nobody can be so gullible as to believe that after fifty years of consistent failure, that the constitutional agitators won any of this by themselves. Any such claims are merely despicable attempts to claim the credit due to the men who died or risked their lives in the struggle for these victories.

The I.R.A. is directly in the tradition of 1798, 1848, 1867, the Easter Rising and the Anglo-Irish War of 1919-21. It is an organisation seeking to overthrow British power in Ireland by the only means possible. It owes its allegiance to no puppet government based on six counties or twenty-six counties. The United Irishmen did not give their allegiance to the College Green Parliament. Republicans today will not give it to a Leinster House Parliament. They owe it only to the 32-county independent Irish Republic as proclaimed in 1916 and endorsed by the Dáil in 1919. This is not the Free State; it has yet to be achieved.

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The campaign has also been condemned by those who admit the success it has had but consider that it has been waged too ruthlessly. These critics point to the fact that memories of the campaign could do more to disunify Ireland than the campaign itself could to achieve re-unification. The I.R.A. has also been condemned by Church leaders of all denominations and these condemnations have carried as much, if not more weight in the minds of the uninformed at home and abroad. If the I.R.A. and its activities are to be justified these criticisms must also be dealt with. We shall turn our attention to these in the next two chapters.

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The "Terrorist" Myth

In an R.T.E. interview on June 21, 1973, Mr. Tom Conaty, chairman of the Belfast Central Citizens' Defence Committee, said that the I.R.A. was pursuing the same objectives as the majority of the Irish people wished to see achieved. But, said Mr. Conaty, what separated the I.R.A. from the rest of the Irish people was their methods; their 'use of violence'. This is also the criticism of church leaders and the British authorities. The I.R.A. are portrayed as ruthless terrorists waging an anti-people campaign. Their campaign is regarded with a shocked yet stoic 'horror' by Mr. Pym and the other leading British politicians. They are aggrieved by the I.R.A.'s disregard for humanity and they point to 'Bloody Friday' and the Coleraine tragedy for factual support.

It must be remembered, however, that the British have always been shocked when their 'subjects' resorted to unconventional military tactics. In 1921, Lloyd George was suitably horrified by the 'cowardly Irish' hiding behind their walls and ditches. Of course, nothing was said about the 'gallant British' who used tanks, armoured cars, artillery, machine guns and heavily fortified barracks, not to mention innocent hostages. Today, Whitelaw is shocked by such un-British type tactics as sniping, land mine attacks, etc. It must be remembered that British condemnation of the I.R.A. has always been two-pronged. First, the campaign is intrinsically unjustifiable and secondly, it is all the worse as it is terrorist by nature. We have already seen that the former reason is invalid; let us now consider the latter.

The simplest way to reveal just how hypocritical the British really are is to see what tactics they themselves would use if they were fighting a guerilla war — as the I.R.A. are. The last major conflict the British were involved in was the Second World War and at one stage in that conflict, an invasion of England by the Germans seemed imminent. The Home Guard was formed to supplement the regular army. The British plan was based on a dual concept; everything was to be done to prevent the German invasion succeeding but in the event of failure, plans were made for urban and rural guerilla warfare to be the mode of continuing the struggle.

With this latter plan in mind, booklets, instruction leaflets, etc., were produced for the British Army and the Home Guard on the subject of guerilla warfare. Manuals on the topic were commissioned by the government, published by civilian publishers but distributed by government agencies. Home Guard units received copies and they were available at post offices, recruiting centres and local barracks. One of the best known and most read was Mr. Bert Leavy's 'Guerilla Warfare', published by Penguin Books but distributed as a government 'book for the Forces' and carry-

ing the relevant imprimatur "leave at the Post Office."

Mr. Levy was on the staff of the Osterly Park School for the Home Guard at the War Office No. 1 School and elsewhere. His manual can therefore be taken as official government policy. Here it is proposed to take excerpts from this government manual and compare what the British were prepared to do with what the I.R.A. are prepared to do.

Today, the British make great propaganda out of the 'ruthless exploitation' of youth by the I.R.A. This refers to the fact that some I.R.A. volunteers are aged only 17; the minimum age for membership of the I.R.A. The minimum recruitment age for British troops is 18 years, so there is not a great difference. Despite this, it is a fact much played upon by British newspapers and government propaganda. The English have also alleged that youths under 17 are used by the I.R.A. but have never been able to prove this.

But what was official British policy on this matter? In the manual 'Guerilla Warfare' we find:

"The last issue of the 'Soviet War News' reports that two Soviet Boy Scouts, aged 12 and 14, have been killing Nazi motorcyclists with a wire across the road.

The British Boy Scouts who demonstrated how this should be done at Osterly, when we had not enough older lecturers, were about the same age."

Not only were the British prepared to use children of only 12-14 years to kill Germans but they even used them as lecturers on how the killing ought to be done. Even the British have not accused the I.R.A. of going that far; yet they were that ruthless themselves.

The British have always condemned the very principle of urban guerilla warfare, saying that the I.R.A., by engaging in such warfare, endanger innocent civilian lives. Let us see, however, what was British policy on urban guerilla warfare when it was their country faced military occupation:

"He (i.e. the enemy) will endeavour to occupy the populated centres. Here also you can carry on guerilla warfare, sniping ambushing, blowing him up. You must know the general street plan of the towns or villages"

In other words, the British themselves were prepared to resort to urban guerilla warfare.

You will notice that this latter excerpt mentions 'blowing him up'. The British have been particularly vociferous in condemning the I.R.A. bombing campaign. This bombing campaign has taken two forms; attacks on economic targets and attacks against the military. Obviously the British were prepared to engage in the latter but would they have bombed economic targets? Our informative Home Guard manual supplies the answer:

"Find out about the drainage system of important factories whether by means of it you can enter the factory when the enemy is in occupation, to commit acts of sabotage. Don't forget to examine the coal chutes of the local power station — a hefty charge of explosive can be sent down into the

building by this route.

A lump of clay with explosive embedded in it and coal dust patted thoroughly into the outside looks exactly like a lump of coal. Such a charge can be dropped down a coal chute or into a pile of coal. Firemen will then shovel it into the fire-box with the ordinary fuel and up goes your power house."

There is no mention there of giving any warning. Too bad if the firemen are your own fellow countrymen — the workers the Germans would have forced into compulsory labour. All that mattered was getting at the power house. Let it be noted that the I.R.A. have always given ample warning of the placing of bombs — even if the so-called security forces have often ignored or not acted on such warnings. But we have already seen examples of this.

After the Second World War, Britain as an allied power executed German 'War Criminals' for breaches of the Geneva Convention. The British have tried on occasion to blacken the I.R.A. with charges of breaking the terms of the Geneva Convention — again without any substantiating proof. Indeed the I.R.A., an 'amateur' army, has shown much more respect for the Geneva Convention than have the trained murderers of the Parachute Regiment.

The use of dum-dum or soft-nosed, expanding bullets is expressly forbidden under the terms of the Geneva Convention. After the war, the British executed or imprisoned hundreds of Germans for this and other breaches of the Convention. But in the manual we have been examining we find the following, (the author is talking of ambushes on enemy vehicles):

"An expanding snub-nosed bullet — you can easily make one for yourself — is more likely to shatter the glass, and thus cause the driver to lose control. Then you want to let the occupants have it quick, before they can collect themselves."

There is little need for us to comment further. The ruthlessness of the British speaks for itself. The British would have been as free in their use of dum-dum bullets as they are with rubber bullets today in the Six Counties.

But the British would have gone much further than that if six counties — or any county — of their country had been held in military occupation against the wishes of the British people. Pointing out that private soldiers do not ride in private cars, the manual on guerilla warfare continues:

"The enemy is bound to confiscate and use any private cars that have not been destroyed or disabled. And sometimes he may have a British civilian, male or female, driving him. In Brussels, the Germans forced Belgian women to drive their officers' cars.

If you happen to be standing in a ditch or behind a tree, or some other position of safety, and you have some kind of grenade or bomb in your hand, and a car comes by with enemy officers, driven even by your best friend, YOU MUST

LET THEM HAVE IT. It is what your friend would want you to do. (Sic)¹ And if any of the Britishers driving enemy officers are doing it willingly — it is one more Quisling the less".

Again, there is little need to comment on the small value the British placed on innocent civilian lives. If they put so little value on the lives of their fellow countrymen, it is little wonder that they find it so easy to butcher innocent Irishmen.

Under the Geneva Convention, captured prisoners of war must be well treated. The I.R.A. have always done this. When on July 7th, 1972, a Republican patrol arrested two British officers in the Free Derry area, they were treated courteously and then released. The British, however, tortured the men they arrested — often quite innocent of any political involvement — in Long Kesh, Girdwood Barracks, Ballyinlar Camp and Hollywood Barracks. The facts are well known and some of the details are outlined in Appendix A from a statement by Fr. Denis Faul and Fr. Raymond Murray. This is in keeping with how Geneva prisoners-of-war were to have been treated if England had been invaded:

"... you must capture despatch riders and question them before you "despatch" them, as silently as possible."

A fine example of British 'humanity' and 'clean fighting'!

The I.R.A. have exacted quite a high British casualty toll by using boobytraps. Several R.U.C. were killed when their cars were boobytrapped and blew up on ignition. The British have condemned such tactics as horrific, yet we find in that government manual:

"A good trick is a stick of dynamite with a detonating cap at one end to which a wire is attached when the enemy steps on his starter or turns a switch, he blows his car up, and himself too."

We wonder where the I.R.A. learned that little trick. Certainly, the British would be well advised to look over their old files before they condemn the tactics of the I.R.A. as 'terrorist' etc.

But, perhaps, guerilla warfare would not have been necessary even if the German invasion had gone ahead, for the British had a plan which if effected would be comparable only to Auschwitz or Hiroshima. In his book, 'Operation Sea Lion', Peter Fleming reveals that the British had decided as a last resort to attack the German beachheads and occupied areas with poisonous 'mustard' gas, sprayed from low flying aeroplanes. The gas would have wiped out not only the German invaders but British civilians behind their lines and in their line of advance. Hundreds of thousands of innocent civils would have perished — if the figure did not run into millions! As Churchill put it; "the massacre would have been grim and great we were prepared to go to all lengths".

That is what ruthlessness is all about.² In any war, even the most morally just war conceivable, innocent deaths are inevitable. There have been innocent lives lost as a result of I.R.A. operations, even though in such incidents, it must be said that the I.R.A. did all possible to avoid innocent casualties Despite this,

however, when compared to the British, the I.R.A. would seem not to know what ruthlessness means.

From this it is quite clear that the British description of the I.R.A. as "terrorist" is mere cynical and hypocritical propaganda. The I.R.A. have a political justification of their campaign; a campaign which is carried on as humanely as possible. As Paddy Short of South Armagh put it in an article by Michael Hand in the Sunday Press (17/6/73); "If the Provos have the support of all the people, then it is because of the campaign they are waging. No innocents have suffered, and therefore, they have not alienated the people against them". But is the campaign morally justifiable? That is the last remaining question which must be answered if the I.R.A. is justified in its actions.

REFERENCES

- 1 The author's exclamation.
- 2 It might be alleged here that this chapter deals only with what the British might have done and with what the I.R.A. are doing. The answer quite simply is that British agents or British armed and instructed French agents actually **did** carry out the attacks recommended in "Guerilla Warfare" in occupied France.

Criticism and Refutation

We have already seen that the I.R.A. campaign is politically viable and not based on terrorism tactics. This, however, leaves unanswered the most effective criticisms of the I.R.A. made to date. These are the condemnations made on moral grounds which have been forthcoming from prominent church leaders of all denominations. Those made by the Catholic hierarchy are obviously much more relevant than those by Protestant spokesmen since most of the I.R.A. itself and its behind-the-scenes supporters are Roman Catholics. For that reason, it is with the condemnations emanating from such men as Bishops Daly and Philbin that we shall be primarily concerned.

First, it must be pointed out that there are several well known clergymen — just as well versed in Catholic theology as Bishops Daly and Philbin — who have made no secret of their support for the I.R.A. Several of them have suffered and still suffer for their principles — men like Fr. Patrick Fell and Fr. Bartholomew Burns. The stance of these clerics and the absence of a precise Church pronouncement on the I.R.A. make it clear that those Roman Catholic clerics who condemn the I.R.A. are not acting on behalf of the Church but are merely voicing personal opinions and conclusions.

When, therefore, we come to examine the opinions of Dr. Daly, as expressed in his book "Violence In Ireland", we must remember that they are just that — opinions. This book combines a collected and edited volume of Dr. Daly's statements and articles on the Northern situation over the past four years. Certainly, Dr. Daly has been one of the most vociferous and outspoken churchmen on the Northern troubles and he has neither changed nor concealed his opinions during that period, as others did with the regularity of political chameleons.

"Violence in Ireland" ranges over a wide variety of topics but those most prevalent are general support for present British policy on Ireland and complete denunciation of the I.R.A. campaign. This latter theme is treated on both political and moral grounds so that it is opportune that we examine both.

Dr. Daly's political denunciation of the I.R.A. campaign is based on three precepts. Firstly, the I.R.A.'s tactics are frustrating its own objectives; secondly, the I.R.A. is betraying rather than upholding the 'Republican tradition' and lastly, the I.R.A. campaign is likely to evoke a sectarian conflict. These dicta are to be found right through Dr. Daly's book.

Dr. Daly is not the first to suggest that the I.R.A.'s tactics are frustrating its own objectives, especially that of achieving a reunification of Ireland. In this, he is at one with the supporters of 'unity by consent' for whom any actions calculated to 'further

isolate' the Northern Unionists sets back the cause of real unity. This opinion is epitomised in the slogan: "you cannot bomb one million Protestants into a United Ireland." And, of course, this is true if the unity is to have any greater significance than the removal of the physical partition of our country.

But the I.R.A. are not trying to bomb one million Protestants into a United Ireland and those who use the argument that they are, as a basis for criticising the I.R.A. either do not know what they are talking about or are being intentionally hypocritical. The aim of the I.R.A. is not to bomb anyone into anything but to get the British out of Ireland. Their campaign is not aimed against any section of the Irish people but against British presence in Ireland. They have attacked British military targets and economic targets, the destruction of which make British occupation all the more costly. Innocent lives lost as a result of either I.R.A. mishaps or British Army-R.U.C. malevolence have not been confined to any section of the community. This does not condone the loss of innocent life but it must be remembered that British occupation through the years cost thousands of innocent lives and that unless the I.R.A. succeed in forcing their withdrawal, this pattern is likely to continue.

Dr. Daly states correctly that the I.R.A. objective is national reunification but he forgets that an end to British occupation is a prerequisite of even an end to the physical partition of Ireland. And we have already seen that physical partition has been the primary cause of the other divisions. If it were ended, we would be only one step from reunification in every sense of the word, so that far from frustrating the achievement of its objectives, the I.R.A. is hastening it forward and ensuring its realisation.

But more surprising than Dr. Daly's failure to appreciate the most basic motivation of the I.R.A. is his assertion that the Republican Movement today constitutes a betrayal of the Republican tradition. Not only does he deny that the I.R.A. of 1973 are the inheritors of the tradition of 1798 to 1916-21 but that they are engaged in opposing the "real" inheritors of Ireland's Republican tradition. And this is extremely relevant to Dr. Daly's moral attack on the I.R.A. While he claims that the I.R.A. of 1973 are morally wrong he can justify the actions of the Irish revolutionaries up to 1921.

Dr. Daly resolves this seeming paradox in the following manner: "let us never forget that revolutionary violence (i.e. 1916) was endorsed and the subsequent struggle legitimated by the most democratic and conclusive election perhaps ever held in Ireland. The army that fought for freedom was the Army of the elected Parliament and Government of the Irish people. It fought precisely to establish the patriotic and democratic principle that only an Irish Parliament had the right to establish an Irish Army or to commit the Irish people to a war. That is one of the most sacrosanct principles of the Irish Republican tradition. To violate it is to betray the whole tradition."

Thus is the kernel of Dr. Daly's theory and as it does contain a

certain plausibility let us examine it a little further.

Firstly, Dr. Daly bases his thesis on a blatant incongruity. He claims that the men of 1916 fought to establish an Irish parliament and then justifies the 1916 Rising as having been endorsed by an Irish parliament elected in 1918. How can an action be justified by an 'object' established as a result of the action? Retrospective approval is no justification of an action, especially in the moral sense, as Dr. Daly knows well. An Irish parliament established in 1919 could not justify an action committed in 1916, unless the action of 1916 had an intrinsic justification of its own. An action can be **endorsed** post factum but it cannot be retrospectively justified. Dr. Daly would like to portray the justification of 1916 as being the fact that it was approved by an Irish parliament almost three years later. The correct and only justification of 1916 is that it was a legitimate attempt to establish a democratic government for a 32 county independent Ireland. It did not need approval by the 1919 Dáil to justify its rightfulness.

But why should Dr. Daly choose to ignore this rather obvious moral fact? The answer is that he realises quite well that 1916 is unjustifiable unless one also justifies the present I.R.A. campaign. Wishing not to justify the latter but seeing it advisable to condone 1916, the good Bishop astutely tries to change the real justification of 1916 and to substitute in its place a false one which could be made to exclude the the I.R.A. of today.

This becomes clearer when we remember what even Dr. Daly admits the men of 1916 fought for — an independent Irish parliament. Dr. Daly claims that, since this has been established, (it is to be presumed that here he is referring to Leinster House and not to Stormont Castle) any army not raised by it is acting contrary to the spirit of 1916. This is a more sophisticated version of the old maxim; "In 1916 there wasn't an Irish parliament, now there is".

Dr. Daly states that the establishment of an independent Irish legislature is "one of the most sacrosanct principles of the Irish republican tradition". So it is. But that legislature has yet to be established permanently. The 1919 Dáil was the type of parliament the 1916 Proclamation signatories fought for. It was a 32-county parliament and was determined to break not only the political, but also the economic and cultural links with Britain. Unfortunately, it never succeeded in assuming control of all the national territory and in the then existent situation was never internationally recognised. The Free State assembly in Leinster House never claimed to be the Dáil of the 32 county Irish Republic until Mr. de Valera began to gloss over facts and create myths. Even a cursory study of the destruction of the Republic and the establishment of the Irish Free State from either a historical or a legal point of view will clearly show this.

The Irish parliament fought for in 1916, established in 1919 and destroyed between 1922 and 1923, does not exist today, no more than it did on that Easter Monday morning. Even leaving out the 26 county state's economic dependence and political subservience to Britain and the other E.E.C. states, it is still a

26 county rump state governed by a partition assembly. The goal of the I.R.A. today is the same as the goal of 1916, the sacrosanct principle as Dr. Daly puts it; the establishment of an all-Ireland legislature. Their methods are also the same — physical force.

The I.R.A. are also condemned by Dr. Daly as acting without a mandate from the Irish people. The I.R.A., he states, are acting against the wishes of the 'Irish' parliament and thus against the spirit of 1916. We have already seen his fallacy in this respect. Retrospective mandates just do not exist. So what mandate did Pearse, Connolly and their men have? Certainly they had none from their fellow Irishmen who had democratically supported Redmond's 'Home Rule' policy in the previous election and who jeered and spat at the rebels as they were led into captivity. Indeed, they were far more rejected than are the present I.R.A. But they did have a mandate, but not that invented by Dr. Daly. The men of 1916 had the same mandate as have the I.R.A. today — the mandate of justice, of nationality and of history. To deny this is to say that they — and the present I.R.A. — were wrong. But one cannot condemn one and condone the other. That is what Bishop Daly tries, and fails, to do.

Dr. Daly also speaks of the I.R.A. endangering:

"the whole achievement of half a century of freedom, our hardwon democratic structures our incipient and fragile economic progress".

The achievements of the half century of semi-freedom have been slight and it is generally agreed to be an era of wasted opportunities in almost every field. Does Dr. Daly include the Curragh, the Offences Against the State Acts, Section 31 of the Broadcasting and the Coercion Acts as part of hard won democratic structures? And with the highest inflation and unemployment rate in Europe (excluding Italy) to describe our economic structure as only fragile must surely rank as one of the understatements of the year. In a state of collapse would be a more honest description — especially now with reduced American investment and non-materialisation of the E.E.C. "bonanzas". Just in passing, do the references to "our" hardwon democratic structures, "our" economy and "our" half century of freedom imply that Dr. Daly thinks only in a 26-county context. It certainly seems so.

Dr. Daly's last political basis for attacking the I.R.A. is that he fears their campaign will give rise to a sectarian conflict. The underlying implication here, of course, is that sectarianism is an offspring of the I.R.A. campaign. Speaking about Republicans in general, Dr. Daly says:

"It is no use saying that sectarian conflict is not one's intention when sectarian conflict is the almost inevitable result of one's acts."

Let us be charitable here and presume Dr. Daly is referring to the I.R.A. and not to Fianna Fáil as 'the Republican Party' (Sic). To say the least, Dr. Daly again shows a remarkable unawareness of those historical facts which do not support his own theory. Are we to suppose that he never heard of the attacks

in 1966 and 1968 or the pogroms of 1969 and 1970. The I.R.A. campaign or the I.R.A. itself cannot possibly be blamed for these events as neither the Provisional I.R.A. nor its campaign were in existence before 1970. Sectarian violence will not cease until the injustices and the suspicions which cause such violence are themselves ended. The I.R.A.'s military and (as we shall see) political aims are to do just that.

It is now time to turn to Dr. Daly's moral denunciation of the I.R.A. This is almost entirely based on the I.R.A.'s use of physical force to achieve their objectives. Dr. Daly finds that the I.R.A. are morally unjustified in resorting to force and he bases his case primarily on a personal opinion that force is incompatible with Christian living¹ by virtue of its intrinsic evil. Secondly, the I.R.A. "does not fulfil the conditions necessary for a war to be justifiable under Catholic morality." In this instance, the theology of all the major Christian Churches is similar.

Dr. Daly's "violence under no circumstances" as applied by him to the violence emanating from the Northern minority must be seen in the context of the origins of this violence. For fifty years, the Catholics of the Six Counties were subjected to every conceivable form of institutionalised violence. This usually took the form of religious economic and political discrimination. Often it took the form of overt physical oppression. It was inevitable that this violence would be met by counter-violence (indeed the only effective counter to it) but it was not until this happened that Dr. Daly decided to speak out. This was despite the fact that he was born in the Six Counties, educated there (as well as in Maynooth and Paris) and held positions in Queen's University, Belfast and on various advisory committees to British broadcasting companies. He knew the situation from first hand knowledge.

He did not pronounce on it, however, until the official violence became intolerable and was resisted. Since then he has always condemned the resistance far more bitterly than the oppression which caused it. Let us take a typical example of this which is to be found in "Violence In Ireland". Speaking about Bloody Sunday, Dr. Daly said:

"But we are gathered for prayer, not for bitterness. Talk of vengeance . . . can have no place in a Christian community . . . no words are permitted to a Christian people but the words of Christ: "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing". (Luke 23:24)."

Amongst several other biblical quotations given, "love thine enemy" is the best known. But in condemning the Aldershot explosion, there is no mention by the Bishop of "love thine enemy" or "Father, forgive them . . .". Instead we find such clichés as "barbaric explosion," "horrible crime" and most rasping:

"This . . . deprives its authors for all time of the moral right to condemn atrocities."

Here the Bishop parodies the Almighty himself by making eternal condemnations. There is little evidence of "forgiving and under-

standing". For no matter how terrible Aldershot was, the events in Derry made such actions inevitable and surely its perpetrators at least deserved as much sympathy as the Bishop extended to the "misguided" Paras.

Dr. Daly rightly admits that on the morality of violence "the traditional teaching of the Church is clear and remains valid". This teaching holds that for resort to violence to be justified, the situation must be one of extreme and intolerable injustice, all other means of seeking justice must have been exhausted and there must be a reasonable chance of success. In his book, Bishop Daly does acknowledge that if these conditions are fulfilled, then a war can be said to be morally just. But then he claims that this whole theology needs to be re-examined as it is impractical in today's world. Here again, Dr. Daly blends Church theology with personal political opinion in order to detract from the former and bolster up the latter. And at no time does he attempt to discover whether or not the I.R.A. campaign can or cannot be justified in accordance with his Church's conditions for a morally 'just war'.

This, however, is the only way in which the I.R.A. campaign can be morally justified or rejected and it is this process that we must now put into operation.

It is clear that if the I.R.A. campaign is to be said to constitute 'a morally just war' then it must constitute a war. This cannot be open to doubt as how else can one describe a situation in which people are dying through violence every day, in which the British government sees fit to employ 15,000 troops, including crack combat divisions such as the Parachute Regiment in addition to the 'normal' para-military "security forces", in which the normal civil law is usurped by internment without trial, re-arrest after acquittal and an Emergency Provisions (i.e. Special Powers) Act — war time measures —, in which bombing and shooting are everyday occurrences, in which the British Government has declared itself to be at war with the I.R.A. and in which the I.R.A., an 'illegal' army, has declared itself to be at war on the British forces in the Six Counties — a war they are waging with an uncommon efficiency. Many people do not believe that there is a 'war' in the Six Counties because some of the more published trappings of the "Hollywood screen war" are missing. The war in the Six Counties is a new type of war, resembling the French resistance movement of the last war, in which the guns, tanks and superior numbers of the British are unable to defeat the I.R.A. guerillas. The British could learn from their own part in the French resistance that they cannot hope to effect a military solution.

Having established that there is a war it must now be found to be morally just or not. In order to be morally justified there must have existed such a situation of extreme injustice as to constitute sufficient provocation. For the past fifty years, a system has been in operation in the Six Counties by which over one third of the population have been legally deprived of their political and civil rights, discriminated against in the allocation

of housing, employment and political representation.² For fifty years, the national rights of the Irish people have been ignored and trampled upon. For fifty years, sectarianism between Irishmen has been overtly tolerated, supported and encouraged by a foreign power. These three injustices are inseparable and together must be admitted to constitute a great and extreme provocation — sufficient to justify resort to physical resistance. In the past, the Papacy often went to war for far less.

During that period, the chief method used was peaceful constitutional agitation. It achieved no more in the 1920's than it did in the late 60's. It won sympathy but little else. Only physical force has succeeded in winning any reforms or concessions. But concessions can never be accepted at the price of perpetuating greater injustices than those they alleviate.

The I.R.A. have more than a reasonable chance of success. Already some of their demands have been met, and with mounting pressure in England it is only a matter of time before the remainder are conceded. They have never had as much popular support as they enjoy today and their tactics have never been as militarily sound as today. The I.R.A. do not look like being beaten and anything short of defeat for them, is victory. The I.R.A. campaign seems therefore to fulfil the necessary conditions for a just use of violence and certainly no cleric, theologian or layman has disproved this, or even attempted to.

This can only lead one to the conclusion that Dr. Daly is either exceptionally naive or that he is propping up political opinions on not only political but moral grounds. The author of the astutely constructed "Violence In Ireland" is certainly not naive so the latter description seems the more accurate. While a cleric should interpret God's teaching in God's way, Dr. Daly interprets God's teaching in a very pro-British way. This becomes even more clear when we look at some of the other sentiments expressed in "Violence In Ireland". On page 81 we find:

"nationalists must **renounce** hopes of a united Ireland by force or coercion even and hopes of a united Ireland by **agreement** now."

The reader can interpret this for himself. In all fairness it must be added, however, that Dr. Daly does state, albeit reluctantly, that a united Ireland is the genuine aspiration of the majority of the Irish people.

Then there is:

"The obviously sincere commitment of the British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. William Whitelaw to achieving a just political solution"

We can only inquire as to whether the good Bishop ever heard of the British Four Square Laundry murder squad, of all the unsolved sectarian murders, of Whitelaw's upholding of the Paras as 'fine soldiers' and the fact that neither he nor Heath ever showed the slightest regret for the events in Derry on Bloody Sunday. These things may seem irrelevant to Dr. Daly but they are not to the people of the Six Counties.

This clearly indicates a distinct bias on the part of Dr. Daly

which has been described as pro-British. Certainly Dr. Daly has helped the British by presenting his own unsupportable views under the guise of the teaching of Jesus Christ. Also, he has attacked those priests who disagree with him as being 'in error'. They are under the spell of the spurious "glory and glamour" associated with war. Actually, "glory" is an unfortunate choice of word as two pages later he refers to the Anglo-Irish war as a "glorious chapter in our history". Rather self-contradictory, one thinks, and an indictment of his own gross inconsistency in differentiating between the national struggle of today and that of yesterday.

This inconsistency is summarised when we read of "the different circumstances of fifty years ago, when imperialism was incomparably more ruthless than it is today." But how was it or indeed, how could it have been more ruthless than it is today? Is it necessary to compare event with event, Bloody Sunday with Bloody Sunday (and the British were reacting rather than initiating in 1921), death toll with death toll. Dr. Daly's inconsistency becomes clearer still when we hear that the I.R.A. of 1972 are wrong because unlike the 1919-21 rebels they have not sought a mandate (P.67, Violence In Ireland). But neither the men of 1916 — whom Dr. Daly can justify — nor the Fenians, the Young Irelanders nor the United Irishmen ever sought any mandate other than that of their own consciences. Were they all morally evil men? According to Dr. Daly they were — with the exception of the men of 1916 on whom Dr. Daly seems incapable of making a consistent, let alone a correct, judgement.³

But Dr. Daly is not the only inconsistent critic of the I.R.A. There are others, such as Cardinal Conway and Bishop Philbin.⁴ Nobody denies them the right to disagree with the I.R.A. but to do so is to disagree with the men of the Tan War, 1916 and back along to 1798. In 1916, a rebellion was staged at a time of relative prosperity for Ireland as a result of the Great War, at a time when Home Rule seemed imminent, without a mandate from anybody and without a hope of success. Yet today they are not condemned. Indeed each Easter Sunday we see the hypocritical inconsistency of Cosgrave and Lynch when they pay tribute to the men who used the violence which our political 'leaders' claim to detest, to achieve their end. Cardinal Conway or Dr. Simms do not condemn this open homage to men, who according to their logic in condemning the I.R.A. of today, were terrorists and murderers! When the patriots of 1921 are commemorated, the fact that these same men were excommunicated for their patriotism, is conveniently forgotten. In a pastoral letter in 1920, Dr. Cohalan, Bishop of Cork, launched the sentence of excommunication against the killers of R.I.C. men and British soldiers. The 'Legion of the Rearguard' were anathema to the Hierarchy of their day. Yet when these 'killers' became rulers, all was forgotten as the hierarchy clearly demonstrated how little value they placed on principle.

The attitude of these political and church leaders can only be described as dishonest. If they were honest in their condem-

nation of the I.R.A., nobody could deny them the right to express their opinions or condemnations. But the inconsistency of men who can condemn the killing of British soldiers on Irish soil today but can commemorate the 'killers' of British soldiers of fifty years ago and who can accept without revulsion, a state built by their own logic on arson and murder, is blatantly obvious.

Republicans, however, are consistent in their attitude — they accept 1916, 1867, 1848 and 1798 as the legitimate attempts of one nation and people to rid itself of an oppressor, just as they accept the present I.R.A. campaign as the continuance of that struggle. Those who believe that none of the risings were justified are also consistent and entitled to their views. But the views of the Dr. Dalys and the Jack Lynchs are not justifiable and are invalid, as to put it in a nutshell, one either accepts the I.R.A. and 1916 or one accepts neither. The I.R.A. do accept 1916 and their actions today are the logical conclusion of such beliefs.

REFERENCES

- 1 Would it be unfair to question this presumption on the basis of Christ's violent expulsion of the money lenders from the Temple (Matthew 21:12)
- 2 See Appendices B and C.
- 3 Also, the repression of Republicanism, North and South, ensures the physical inability of Republican candidates to seek a mandate.
- 4 Bishop Philbin's two most noted excursions from the safety of his episcopal palace into the ghetto areas of his diocese were when this year he went to sympathise with the British Army on the death of a soldier and in 1969 when, under British protection, he went to tell 'his people' to take down their barricades. They did, but the Bishop was not in the area during the resultant Orange pogrom.

The Republican Alternative

Because of the urgency of the 'Northern situation' it is no wonder that other pressing questions — North and South — have remained unanswered and, to a degree, forgotten. We are referring not only to problems of a political nature but also to the major social and economic issues that face us. In the North, these have been almost completely submerged by the conflict while in the South, the National Coalition is just as inept as Fianna Fáil was at coping with social inequality, rising prices and unemployment. Indeed, with minor differences, their policies are the same and are based on the same outworn precepts of government.

The Republican Movement has emerged, however, as the only political organisation favouring a new system of government — regionalism. They were not its original designers, for this, the credit must be given to men like Desmond Fennell and Emmet O'Connell. Regionalism is now the official policy of the Republican Movement and of that movement (in the political sense) only. This policy forms the cornerstone of the Republican alternative and its implementation alone would greatly contribute to the solving of many of the problems facing us in all parts of this country.

But first what is meant by regionalism? If asked, the average person could be expected to give one of four fairly well known alternatives. The first of these is the taking away of powers from primary local authorities and the conferring of them on regional boards or other authorities. This meaning is often used in Ireland. Regionalism could also mean the dividing up of the state into economic planning regions, for which the planning is done centrally with some advice from regional consultative bodies that have no powers of their own. The absence of real power and its concern only with one aspect of government — planning, makes this sort of arrangement largely ineffectual.

The best known perversion of regionalism is known as decentralisation. Much water has flowed under the national bridge since the idea of decentralisation was first mooted. At that time, Fianna Fáil was prevailed upon to grant some meagre concessions, such as the undertaking to transfer the Department of Lands to Castlebar. And then, once the pressure eased off, decentralisation was swept back under the carpet of Leinster House, destined only for brief revival just before the last general election. Meanwhile, the problems which first prompted the idea of decentralisation have continued to grow worse — e. g. the unnatural expansion of Dublin at the expense of the rest of the country.

Of course, the sending of the Department of Lands to Castlebar and other such naiveties was not, and is not, the solution to anything. It is not the siting of our present system of government which is wrong but that very system of government itself. 'Decentralisation' does not mean a decentralisation of power but the decentralisation of what is an extremely centralised system of power. All that this policy would succeed in doing is introduce an even more complex bureaucracy and an even less efficient one, at that. The Department of Lands to Castlebar would have no relevance to how the Department of Lands operates. It would not even make a difference to the people of Castlebar as they would have no greater say in their affairs than before and the difficulties of inter-Departmental communication would be multiplied ad infinitum.

While others engaged in such sterile and futile conjecturing the evolution of the fourth form of regionalism had begun. This is the regionalism advocated in the political and governmental sections of the Éire Nua Programme. The idea itself is by no means original — versions exist in several European states like Germany, Switzerland and Holland. The adaption of this system to meet Irish requirements and difficulties is new, however, but is becoming an increasingly more popular concept.

Basically, the Éire Nua plan calls for government at four levels: National, Provincial, Regional and Community levels. The basic aim of the plan is the devolution of power to the people. The National or Federal government would be the executive elected by the Federal Parliament and it would control all powers and functions essential to the good of the whole nation. Regional government, based on 15 clearly defined regional areas would exist to promote and co-ordinate the economic, social and cultural affairs of each region. A system of Community government would replace the existing local government authorities North and South. (See Appendix D.) But it is with the Provincial level of government we are most concerned here as it is this innovation which has the greatest potential.

The two provinces which indicate most clearly the need for the Provincial parliaments advocated in Éire Nua are Ulster and Connacht. In the Six County area, the I.R.A. is ensuring that the old Unionist regime — in any form — will not return. This has created a vacuum with the central question being what form of government is acceptable to all. Total integration into the U.K., an independent Ulster, an independent Six Counties, integration into the 26 county state or the old partition assembly at Stormont have all been advanced and none is acceptable to even a substantial majority of the people of either the Six Counties or of Ireland as a whole. None of them would bring even temporary peace in Ireland.

The ideal solution has to be one which offers something to both sides. So far, the British have offered the Nationalists security and equality while leaving the Unionist the link with Britain. But security has always been the secondary aspiration of the Northern minority; their national objective has always come

first. The security of the minority could never be fully guaranteed except in a national framework. Similarly, loyalty to Britain on the Unionist side stems from their desire for absolute safeguards of their religious, political and civil rights. Equality for the Catholics seeking to overthrow the state, is no guarantee of security to the Unionists as the overthrow of the state implies — as far as Ulster Protestantism is concerned — submergence in a United Ireland. As long, therefore, as the Northern Catholics are left a national injustice to set right, Northern Protestants will view their attempts to do so as attempts to deny them their civil liberties. The only solution which can work, therefore, is one which provides a rectification of the national injustice—partition, and a safeguard of Protestant rights as well.

The federal system of government advocated by the Republican Movement and others would do that. Such a system would satisfy the desire of the majority of Irishmen for national sovereignty but would at the same time ensure that even in the context of a united Ulster, the Protestant population would be in a definite majority. In the province, there would be equal civil rights for all and there would be no danger of Protestant submergence in any 'United Ireland'. Provincial government would give to Ulster the stability and normal life which has not been present there for almost a century now. It is to be concluded from this that politically, Dáil Uladh holds the key by which peace with justice can be achieved now and guaranteed for future generations.¹

Economically, provincial government would mean a rectification of the unnatural industrial partition that the river Bann constitutes. It would mean that regional development could proceed without inhibition and end the situation now existing whereby the border partitions not only the nation and the historic province of Ulster, but also what are geographically obvious economic regions, such as Derry and Donegal.

But provincial government would have advantages outside Ulster, as well. It is a well known fact that, taken as a whole, the 'West of Ireland' is sliding along the path to economic oblivion. High unemployment, falling population, — whether through emigration abroad or internal migration — and an absence of economic enterprise are primarily to blame. As Desmond Fennell so rightly points out in his pamphlet "Take the Faroes, for example. . .", attempts to stop this downward trend by conventional economic cures have failed dismally. The solution to the problems of the West and especially the Gaeltacht lie elsewhere.

Basically the only people who can help the West are the people of the West themselves. Now the opportunity to do just this exists for the people of Connacht. By involving themselves in Comhairle Chonnacht (one of the four provincial organisations promoting regionalism) they can organise to achieve their own Dáil Chonnacht. What the West needs is confidence. The businessman needs the confidence to invest in his own locality. The would-be emigrant needs the confidence to stay at home. The average Connacht man needs the confidence to believe in the

future of his province. Such confidence cannot be supplied from Dublin. It cannot be given — it must be self inspired. Dáil Chonnacht would allow the West to tackle its own problems in its own way, to overcome the feeling of inferiority and the constant reliance on ineffectual help.

It is probable that, at first, the Federal Parliament would have to give some economic aid, but it would be the aid required by the West and not just another Dublin dole-out. Also, the disposing of such aid would be the affair of the provincial parliament and this would ensure the maximum effectiveness. The aid would go where it was most required and not where some bureaucrat not in touch with the situation, would decide. By supporting the concept of regionalism, we are helping the West to help itself. It is vital, however, that Comhairle Chonnacht gets the full support of the people of the West. It is time for the West to awake and go after its own salvation — Dáil Chonnacht.

Nor are the potential benefits of regionalism confined to Ulster and Connacht. The pressure for such assemblies in Munster and Leinster was very significantly indicated by the large and varied attendances at the meetings to establish Comhairlí Laignean and Mumhan². The people of Dublin, who were deprived for so long of any representative local government, should have a special interest in the activities of Comhairle Laignean. It is the aim of Éire Nua to return power to the people (also a stated aim of the U.D.A.), power which has been usurped and abused by successive Stormont and Leinster House governments. If Munster had its own provincial parliament, would the people of Limerick have had to wait so long for their Institute of Higher Education? Would the farmers of North Kerry be prevented for long by some archaic law from taking sand from isolated beaches. If the people of Dublin had a say in their own affairs, would the saving of Dublin Bay be hanging in the balance? Under regional government it is what the people want that counts.

It must be remembered that Ireland has the lowest number of local authorities per head of the population in Europe — and those we have possess little real power. In other words, the people of Ireland have less say in their affairs of local government than any of our new European 'partners'. The time has come to clean up the present anti-people system of local government with all its bureaucratic blundering and bullying. It is time we had a local democracy, a democracy of the people.

Regionalism would not tolerate the many social and economic scandals which are part and parcel of the present system. A look at just one of these and what the regional policy of the Republican movement has to offer will have to suffice, as we are hampered here by lack of space. Housing is a subject which concerns all of us and is in a unique way symbolic of how the present system works in the interests of the profiteer at the expense of the defenceless.

Throughout the country, the housing situation is bad, but nowhere is it as terrible as in Dublin. While land is available

for luxury hotels, office blocks, houses with swimming pools and tennis courts, it cannot be found for the construction of sufficient corporation homes. Young couples have not the slightest chance of getting a corporation house without three children and in the meantime their young family ensures they will get no flat or apartment. So one gets the appalling social conditions that arise when several families have to share a living area hardly sufficient for one family. But there are many families who cannot even live with their in-laws. In a "Hibernia" inquiry,³ the scandal of the Clondalkin caravans was revealed — and there are many Clondalkins.

The Clondalkin situation is that over 70 families — with nowhere else to go — are forced to live in caravans sited either on the side of the road, which constitutes squatting, or on caravan sites whose rapacious owners flagrantly break the bye-laws on sanitation, facilities, etc. One such example is that caravan site owned by prominent Clondalkin businessman, George Cowan. The site consists of a small field in which the caravans are heaped together, so as to leave a large vacant space in the centre, which is rented periodically to circuses and carnivals⁴. The sanitation facilities consist of a small shack with one clogged up toilet bowl. One cold water tap has to supply the whole site — there is no sewerage system or electricity supply. Lighting in the damp caravans is by gas lamp, there are absolutely no recreational facilities and rats abound in the site.

For the dubious privilege of residing on the site, the tenants pay rates of between £5 and £7.50 per week plus £1.50 ground rent. Most of the caravans are rented from the site proprietor who, 'Hibernia' estimated, clears £2,000 to £4,000 per annum in return for a negligible outlay⁵.

Many couples cannot even afford a caravan on a illicit site and are forced to squat on the side of the road. Waterly Lane is one such 'squatting area'. Recently a family, trying to escape the deplorable conditions in the lane, moved to the Council site a Mayfield. They had been told they might get a site and were prepared to pay the stipulated rent. They were forcibly evicted on June 26, 1972 and in desperation they had their caravan towed from the ditch outside Mayfield back to Waterly Lane. Now they have been ordered away for squatting. They have nowhere to go and neither Council nor Corporation has anything to offer. Yet they are able to erect office blocks and give grants to foreign industrialists. Surely people should come first. But such sentiments will not cut ice with the speculators and why should they when elected 'public representatives' and state assisted building societies are rendering every assistance possible to the speculators. Luke Belton knows all about 'property development' but will he make his latest property acquisitions available for the provision of housing for those in the ditches of Waterly Lane? Will anyone in power do anything for them or for the thousands of others lacking roofs over their heads?

Under the present system, the interests of the underprivileged will count for little when in opposition to the affluent

minority who pull the strings. After all, how many Fianna Fáil or National Coalition election posters were paid for by the squatters in Waterly Lane. Under regionalised government, the interests of the people would come first. The down-trodden would be in a far better position to bring pressure to bear on their local representatives and by being closer to the system of government, in a greater position to exert influence. Representatives of the people, working for the people would be better able to get things done in a regional system. In the present set-up, (whereby money, rather than people, is what counts) servants not of the people but of property are elected. Admittedly, making a peoples' priority such as housing a *real* national priority would not make for a larger 'national' cake but would mean a far more equal distribution of the existing wealth — instead of the present situation where 5% of the people own 71% of the wealth. Regionalism would not create any millionaires but would ensure greater prosperity for the greatest number as opposed to the maximum prosperity for the minimum number. And that is the basis of the Republican alternative.

REFERENCES

- 1 It should be remembered that as an alternative to the British link, Vanguard leader, Bill Craig and Unionist, John Taylor favour U.D.I. for the Six Counties. The former chairman of the D.U.P., Mr. Desmond Boal, has of course recently advocated a federal solution to the Northern crisis. As the Republican Movement has pointed out, federalism would give Ulster direct control over her own affairs.
- 2 Popular support for more representative and locally based government is increasing not only in Ireland but also in Scotland and Wales. This trend has indeed, been given an added boost forward by the findings of the Kilbrandon Commission and the victory of Mrs. M. McDonald (Scottish Nationalist) in the by-election on November 8, 1973.
- 3 Hibernia; January 19, 1973.
- 4 This arrangement led to large scale clashes between marauding skinheads and gardaí.
- 5 Such, at any rate, was the case at the time of the 'Hibernia' enquiry and the author's visit a month later.

Conclusion

In this brief survey we have looked at some aspects of the Republican movement, its aims and tactics. We have seen how the aspirations of the Republican movement and the methods employed to achieve them have a firm origin in the history of Ireland, the rights of nationality and the equality of man, whatever his religious or political beliefs. Much of the criticism of the Republican movement is without foundation and more of it valid only if one is pro-British and pro-imperialist. The Republican movement must also be admitted to have an original political philosophy ideally tailored to the traditional basis of Republicanism.

But this does not mean that the Republican movement is beyond valid criticism. On the contrary, it has made many mistakes in the past and will probably commit more in the future. That is inevitable of any movement. Unlike so many other movements, however, it knows what it wants and knows how to get it. Politically that is a good recipe for success.

While military tactics seem the only means by which the basis for the Republican ideal can be achieved, nevertheless, politics also have a vital role to play. And if one were to offer only one criticism of Republican tactics, it would surely be a lack of perception that all that can be won by military means, can be lost all too often by political ineptitude. There is no need to quote precedents in our history. The lesson is clear; that unless due recognition is attached to the importance of political strategy, those who die on the battlefield, die in vain.

For this reason, the tactics of the Republican movement in the Northern Assembly and Local Government elections are questionable. Undoubtedly the new district councils are utterly powerless but participation would have ensured the return of some Republican representatives democratically elected in spite of all the factors acting against any Republicans being elected. This also applies to the Assembly. In 1920, the Republican movement used the elections for the British established 'Southern Parliament'. The difficulties were then almost as great as they are now. Participation in the 'new' Stormont would be out of the question but Republican candidates would have reduced the S.D.L.P. representation. And it is these latter who constitute the greatest veneer of 'legality' that partition ever had. Keeping out and hampering the S.D.L.P. would have helped make the Assembly unworkable. Even more effective than direct participation would have been to support the nomination of one or two internees, standing as internees, in each constituency, many of whom would undoubtedly have been elected and whose participation would have seriously embarrassed the S.D.L.P.

But that is in the past and it is all too easy to be wise and to surmise on what might have been — after the event. The mistake must not be repeated, however, and preparations should

already be under way for the Local Government elections in the South. For success to be achieved, however, it is vital that the full potential of effective publicity and propaganda, be appreciated. We have already mentioned the lack of understanding in the South of what is really happening in the Six Counties. This is partly the result of the massive pro-British bias common to most of the media. R.T.E. daily transmits the opinions of the U.D.A., the British Army and the right-wing Unionists but Republican spokesmen are kept off the screen.

The Irish Independent is unashamedly pro-British and is truly in the tradition of its former owner, William Martin Murphy. The Irish Times is less biased as is Hibernia, even if some of their individual writers are slanted towards the Gardiner Place N.L.F. Of the southern established papers, the Irish Press is the least biased in its attitudes.

To combat this, several newsletters etc., have been produced by individuals or Sinn Féin cumainn but these often tend to carry too many slogans and not enough facts. An Phoblacht under the guidance of Éamonn Mac Thomáis (now a political prisoner in the Free State) became the only Southern journal of consequence to give the full and true story of what is happening in the North. With its limited resources it has nevertheless evolved from a monthly to a weekly newspaper and continues to do the entire nation a valuable service — that of preserving freedom of speech. It is to be hoped that it gets the popular support necessary for it to appear on a daily basis. North of the border, Republican News (Belfast) and Volunteer (Derry) as well as to a lesser extent, the Irish News (Belfast) help to balance the pro-British propaganda disseminated through the Newsletter and Belfast Telegraph.

But these journals need to be supported more and also supplemented by a much greater volume of leaflets, pamphlets, newsletters etc. Posters showing the British Army in action should be displayed throughout the South. With the appropriate photographs blown up they would speak for themselves. All the newspapers should be bombarded with letters for publication. And protests and marches organised by the movement should be better organised and prepared for in advance. The Movement would be well rewarded for investing in the expansion of the Fianna, forming Republican bands and other activities which would facilitate the task of portraying the Movement for what it is — a disciplined and dedicated organisation.

On the whole, however, the future looks bright for Irish Republicanism. The attendance at Bodenstown grows larger every year and the younger faces more plentiful. A sound social and economic policy has been envisaged in conjunction with the forward-looking concept of regionalism. Despite all persecution, there always have been and, thank God, still are men who believe in the Republican ideal of liberty equality and fraternity for a free and united Ireland; men who are prepared to work, and fight, and die for its attainment. Our cause is just, our effort great and our victory assured. Let us go forward.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Reproduction of a leaflet issued by Father Denis Faul, Dungannon, and Father Raymond Murray, Armagh.

REPRESSION OF THE CATHOLIC MINORITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

25 Methods of Brutality by Military and Special Branch R.U.C.

These are the principal methods of torture used in Hollywood and Girdwood Barracks.

- 1 Placing a man in "search position", single finger of each hand to the wall, legs well apart and well back, on the toes, knees bent, for protracted periods.
- 2 Heavy punching to the pit of the stomach to man in "search position".
- 3 Kicking the legs from under a man in the "search position" so that he falls to the ground, banging his head on the wall, or radiator, or ground.
- 4 Beating with batons on the kidneys and on the privates while in "search position".
- 5 Kicking between the legs while in the "search position". This is very popular among the R.U.C. officers and they often do it for periods of half an hour or an hour.
- 6 Putting a man in "search position" over a very powerful electric fire or radiator.
- 7 Stretching a man over benches with two electric fires underneath and kicking him on the stomach.
- 8 Rabbit punching to the back of the neck while in "search position".
- 9 Banging the head against the wall.
- 10 Beating the head with a baton in crescendo fashion.
- 11 Slapping the ears and face with open hand.
- 12 Twisting the arms behind the back and twisting fingers.
- 13 Prodding the stomach with straight fingers.
- 14 Chopping blows to the ribs from behind with simultaneous blows to the stomach.
- 15 Hand squeezing of the testicles.
- 16 Insertion of instruments in the anal passage.
- 17 Kicking on the knees and shins.
- 18 Tossing the prisoner from one officer to another and punching him while in the air.
- 19 Injections.
- 20 Electric cattle prod.
- 21 Electric shocks by the use of a machine.
- 22 Burning with matches and candles.
- 23 Deprivation of sleep.
- 24 Urinating on prisoners.
- 25 Psychological tortures:
 - (a) Russian roulette.
 - (b) Firing blanks.
 - (c) Beating men in darkness.
 - (d) Blindfolding.
 - (e) Assailants using stocking masks.
 - (f) Wearing surgical dress.
 - (g) Staring at white perforated wall in small cubicle.
 - (h) Use of amphetamine drugs.
 - (i) Prisoners are threatened; threats to their families, bribes offered, false confessions are used.
 - (j) Guard dogs are set on prisoners.

- (k) Men taken up in a helicopter are thrown out, blindfolded, from a few feet above the ground.

These tortures of prisoners clearly violate the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and their Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, as well as the European Convention of Human Rights and the Second Vatican council constitution of the Church in the Modern World. Any of these actions inflicted on a person is a civil assault, constituting actual or grievous bodily harm.

Father Denis Faul, Dungannon,
Father Raymond Murray, Armagh.

Author's Note

The men on whom these tortures are usually perpetrated are men interned, that is, detained without trial.

Parts (j) and (k) of Torture 25 are not listed in the original leaflet but are detailed as psychological tortures in other leaflets and pamphlets on this subject by Fathers Faul and Murray.

APPENDIX B

LEGAL REPRESSION — THE SPECIAL POWERS ACT.

Under the Act the authorities are empowered to:

- 1 Arrest without warrant.
- 2 Imprison without charge or trial and deny recourse to habeas corpus or a court of law.
- 3 Enter and search homes without warrant, and with force, at any hour of day or night.
- 4 Declare a curfew and prohibit meetings, assemblies (including fairs and markets) and processions.
- 5 Permit punishment by flogging.
- 6 Deny claim to a trial by jury.
- 7 Arrest persons it is desired to examine as witnesses, forcibly detain them and compel them to answer questions, under penalties, even if answers may incriminate them. Such a person is guilty of an offence if he refuses to be sworn or answer a question.
- 8 Do any act involving interference with the rights of private property.
- 9 Prevent access of relatives or legal advisers to a person imprisoned without trial.
- 10 Prohibit the holding of an inquest after a prisoner's death.
- 11 Arrest a person who "by word of mouth" spreads false reports or makes false statements.
- 12 Prohibit the circulation of any newspaper.
- 13 Prohibit the possession of any film or gramophone record.
- 14 Arrest a person who does anything "calculated to be prejudicial to the preservation of peace or maintenance of order in Northern Ireland and not specifically provided for in the regulations."

— courtesy, the Republican Movement.

Author's Note

The new Diplock proposals as enshrined in the Emergency Provisions Act change the terminology but not the provisions of the Special Powers Act.

APPENDIX C

DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

Discrimination in Northern Ireland against the Catholic-Nationalist population has been a consistent feature of the Six County state. It has been carried on at all levels — political, social, economic and religious and by official government and individual agencies. Here are the facts.

Political Discrimination.

For this, the gerrymander system was devised. This involves the drawing of constituency boundaries in such a way as to favour one political party. The best examples are those of Derry and Fermanagh.

Local Government — Derry.

Table 1.

The No. of Council seats per 'constituency' is indicated in brackets.

City Ward	Unionist vote	Nationalist vote	Un. Majority	Nat. Majority
North (8)	4,380	3,173	1,207	
Waterside (4)	4,420	2,804	1,616	
South (8)	1,474	14,125		12,651
Totals	10,274	20,102		9,828
Council Seat				
Totals	12	8	4	

The figures speak for themselves. It should be remembered, however, that the Derry City electoral area had to be enlarged to embrace rural areas of up to eight miles away, unnaturally constituted, before the Unionist vote could be sufficiently bolstered up.

The reader will understand that no efforts were spared to ensure that Nationalists were restricted to the South Ward. We shall see shortly how this was done.

Stormont Representation — Fermanagh.

Table 2.

Each constituency returned one member.

Constituency	Unionist vote	Nationalist vote	Unionist majority	Nationalist majority
Enniskillen	5,706	4,729	977	
Lisnaskea	5,593	4,173	1,420	
S. Fermanagh	2,596	6,680		4,084
Totals	13,895	15,582		1,687

Here, what has been done is to draw an electoral boundary, giving an unlikely shape on a map, to include as many Nationalist and as few Unionist votes as possible. The rest of the country, with its slight Unionist majority, is then divided in two. Thus an area with a Nationalist majority returned two Unionist and one Nationalist M.P. to Stormont.

Under the revised boundaries the figures are three 'Unionists' and two 'Nationalists'.

How to maintain political discrimination. — In theory:

Mr. E. C. Ferguson, Unionist M.P. in 1948:

"The Nationalist majority in Co. Fermanagh, notwithstanding a reduction of 336 in the year, stands at 3,604. I would ask the meeting to authorise the executive to take whatever steps, however drastic, to liquidate this Nationalist majority."

Lord Craigavon, first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland:
 "I have always said I am an Orangeman first and a politician and member of this parliament afterwards . . . all I boast is that we are a Protestant parliament and a Protestant state."

Sir Basil Brooke, third Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, condemned "the great number of Protestants and Orangemen who employ Roman Catholics."

— and in practice:

Table 3

Summary of Fermanagh County Council Employment	Catholics	Protestants
Administrative and Financial	1	33
Housing Department	1	10
County Library	1	14
Planning and Tourism	0	5
Architect's Office	1	8
Public Works Department	4	60
Education Office	4	120
Health and Welfare Department	21	88
Totals	32	338

In County Fermanagh, the majority of the population is Catholic.

A similar pattern to Table 3 is visible in the employment statistics of the four Fermanagh creameries.

Table 4

	Protestant	Catholic
Lisnaskea Creamery	40	15
Derrygonnelly Creamery	18	4
Enniskillen Creamery	28	7
Springfield Creamery	17	3
Totals	103	29

These statistics show the allocation of employment under public control or under Unionist control. Statistics show that Catholics—if employed—get only the lower paid positions. The pattern repeats itself in the allocation of industry, housing etc.

A much more comprehensive breakdown of the relevant statistics is to be found in such publications as 'Fermanagh Facts' issued by the Fermanagh Civil Rights Association.

Under the Whitelaw/Pym regime little has changed. Even if he wished to, Pym is unable to prevent the discrimination still carried on in areas where the Unionist retain control — such as Cookstown. The religion of the internees proves, however, that under Pym, nothing has changed. The discrimination continues.

APPENDIX D

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN OUTLINE

Federal Government

- 1 The Federal Parliament, Dáil Éireann, would be a single chamber of approximately 150 deputies elected as follows.
 - (a) fifty per cent by direct universal suffrage on the Proportional Representation system.

- (b) fifty per cent in equal numbers from each provincial parliament.
- 2 The Federal Parliament would control all powers and functions essential to the good of the whole nation.
- 3 The Federal Parliament would elect a President, who would be both Prime Minister and Head of State.
- 4 The President would nominate a Government consisting of a limited number of ministers for election by the Federal Parliament.
- 5 Members elected to the Government would relinquish their seats in the Federal Parliament. There would be a provision for electing a restricted proportion of the Government from outside Dáil Éireann.
- 6 The independence of the Supreme Court and judicial system, as the guardian of the Constitution, would be secured.
- 7 National legislation would be initiated by any of the following agencies.
 - (a) Federal Parliament deputies.
 - (b) The Central Government.
 - (c) A Provincial Parliament.
 - (d) Referendum.
- 8 National legislation would be adopted by:
 - (a) Federal Parliament.
 - (b) Referendum in specified cases.

Provincial Government

Four democratically elected Provincial Parliaments (Dáil Uladh, Dáil Laighean, Dáil Chonnacht and Dáil na Mumhan) based on the four historic provinces of Ireland — Ulster, Leinster, Connacht and Munster — would deal with their respective areas.

The establishment of Dáil Uladh would be the first step towards the creation of this new governmental structure for the whole island. By thus creating a Provincial Parliament for the nine counties of Ulster within a New Ireland, the partition system would be disestablished and the problem of the border removed. Dáil Uladh would be representative of Catholic and Protestant, Orange and Green, Left and Right. It would be an Ulster Parliament for the Ulster people. The Unionist-oriented people of Ulster would have a working majority within the Province and would therefore have considerable control over their own affairs. That power would be the surest guarantee of their civil and religious liberties within a New Ireland.

Regional Government (Administrative)

Regional Development Councils would be established to promote and co-ordinate the economic, social and cultural affairs of clearly defined economic regions. For example, East Ulster and West Ulster, having different economic problems, would require separate Regional Development Councils.

The Regional Development Council would be a single chamber consisting of:

- (a) Representatives of Community Councils within the region concerned.
- (b) A Commission of experts appointed by the Provincial Government.

As well as assessing and co-ordinating the work of Community Councils, the Regional Development Councils would be responsible for collection of rates and taxes, Third and Higher Level Education, Hospitalisation, Communications, and development of growth centres.

District Government (Local)

A system of District Government would replace the existing local government authorities North and South. It would consist of District Councils democratically elected by the people on a Proportional Representation basis. A Council would govern an area which has physical and social unity, and on the basis of justice and efficiency would take and implement decisions appropriate to its area, with the minimum control by Central Government, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity of function. In brief, a District Council would be a local people's assembly. Councils would vary in size and

area of jurisdiction, physical and social unity would be the principal factors along with the wishes of the local inhabitants.

The purpose of a District Council would be to foster the social, economic and cultural development of a specific area. Involvement in the decision making process at this level of government would be the key-stone and strength of the new governmental system.

Courtesy — the Republican Movement.

APPENDIX E

THE LITTLEJOHN AFFAIR

In specially segregated cells in the basement of Mountjoy Prison, Dublin, two men, serving sentences of 15 and 20 years for the biggest ever bank raid in the 26 counties wait in quiet confidence for the British government to spring them. The men are the Littlejohn brothers, Kenneth (32) and Keith (27), and their 'escape' will not be by ropes over the wall or by helicopter — it will be perfectly legal and will be approved by the 26 county authorities. The brothers are confident, as they possess knowledge which could break political necks galore on both sides of the Irish sea if publicised. And publicise it they shall — unless they leave Mountjoy as free men in the not too distant future.

The Littlejohns claim that everything they did in Ireland, including robberies, firebombings and attempted murders was done with the full knowledge, consent and direction of the British Ministry of Defence. And the men who signed them up with the British Secret Service were the Defence Minister, Lord Carrington and the then Army Minister, Geoffrey Johnson-Smith, now Ted Heath's top cabinet aide. Their claims have not been refuted in any substantial way — only specific details were haggled over — by the British authorities.

The Littlejohn affair really begins in 1967 when Keith Littlejohn was sent to borstal for robbery after he had committed an offence while on bail. While in custody, Keith was regularly visited by a voluntary 'prison visitor', Lady Pamela Onslow, the widow of the sixth Earl of Onslow, former Tory Whip in the House of Lords. After his release, Keith kept in touch with Lady Onslow and continued to see her quite often. Kenneth Littlejohn was by this time a hardened criminal and following a £38,000 wages snatch in the West Midlands, was put on the wanted persons' list in the 'Police Gazette' while his photograph and criminal biography were circularized to police throughout Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. We now know that for about 18 months after the Midlands wages snatch, Kenneth Littlejohn resided in the 26 county area — first in Kerry and later in Dublin — passing himself off as a prospective industrialist, generally living off his wits and leaving scores of unpaid bills in his wake. It is clear that he also succeeded in establishing links with the Official Republican movement — links he decided to exploit in early 1972.

To put it briefly, Kenneth Littlejohn got in contact with the British Secret Service through his brother Keith's friend, Lady Onslow, who arranged a meeting between the 'wanted' bank robber and the Tory Army Minister Geoffrey Johnson-Smith, M.P. At this meeting, Kenneth Littlejohn offered to work for the Secret Service in return for an amnesty for the pay snatch. To demonstrate his potential usefulness, Kenneth disclosed that Stormont Home Affairs Minister, John Taylor, was facing an assassination threat from the Official I.R.A. and he also gave general details of the sort of information available. Impressed by this, Johnson-Smith had Littlejohn's name taken off the police wanted list and recommended he be seen by top MI6 agents responsible for espionage and terrorism in Ireland. Their names were 'Douglas Smythe' and 'Oliver' who gave him the telephone and extension number of Inspector Cameron Sinclair of the Special Branch and told him to call Sinclair if he ran into any problems with the police.

The subsequent activities of the Littlejohns in Ireland are well known.

They have claimed direct credit for petrol bombing garda stations in Louth and Castlebellingham in September 1972 which prompted Desmond O'Malley, the southern Minister for Justice, to promise tougher action against Republicans. They engaged in and organised armed bank robberies on both sides of the border — it cannot be pure coincidence that there was a 340% increase in armed robberies in the 26 counties from 1971 to 1972. They claim that they plotted to assassinate prominent Republicans and in one case to spread the story that the dead person had flown to Canada with I.R.A. funds. Since then, this tactic has been used by the British authorities in the North. The Grafton Street robbery — in the course of which the brothers made no attempt to disguise their faces or their accents, to wipe out fingerprints or cover their tracks (they even left an electricity bill with Kenneth's Dublin address on the seat of the 'getaway' car) — was the culmination of their activities.

The strategy behind the Littlejohn's activities was aimed at discrediting and destroying the I.R.A. in the Republic. Within a month of the Grafton Street robbery the Offences Against the State Amendment (1972) Act¹ was rushed through the Dáil to the orchestration of British bombs in the streets of Dublin. Under this amendment, all that is required to secure a political conviction in the south is the 'belief' of a garda chief superintendent that the accused is guilty. The Tory strategy had worked.

On December 21, 1972, however, the gardai in Dublin arrested two men — Patrick Crinnion and John Wyman. Crinnion was a Special Branch detective and private secretary to John Fleming, the Chief Superintendent in charge of the Irish Special Branch. He is also related to two British soldiers who served in the North and one of whom was decorated by the British Government in 1972. For months, Sergeant Crinnion had been passing on Special Branch and government information on the I.R.A. to John Wyman otherwise known as "Douglas Smythe", the M16 professional spy. It was their arrest by the 26 county authorities which led to the arrest of the Littlejohns by the English police and their abandonment by the British Secret Service. It is now clear that the British bartered the Littlejohns to the 26 county authorities in return for the release of Crinnion and Wyman.

Crinnion and Wyman were released by the Special Criminal Court in Dublin when the prosecution refused to submit any evidence against them, either for their spying activities or Crinnion's pulling of an illegally held pistol on the arresting gardai. The then Attorney-General, Mr. Colm Condon, S.C., has attempted to justify this by claiming that to have submitted the evidence would have involved allowing Wyman and Crinnion to see 'secret' state documents but this excuse does not hold water as Crinnion had already seen the documents anyway, (they were found on Crinnion when he was arrested) and the release of the pair made a present of all they knew to British Intelligence. And it should be pointed out that in the cases of gardai or civil servants accused of passing on information to the I.R.A., there has been no reluctance by the State to submit the evidence!

Another revelation as a result of the Littlejohn affair was that not only did the Lynch government know about but it tolerated the presence and activities of the British agents in Ireland; even if Jack Lynch temporarily "forgot" that he knew.

Besides admitting their crimes committed in Ireland, the Littlejohns have hinted that they (or other British agents?) may have been involved in the Aldershot explosion — an event which undoubtedly facilitated a more elaborate Scotland Yard crackdown on working class movements in England, just as the Dublin bombs facilitated the passing of the O.A.S. (Amendment) Act. In his pamphlet entitled "Anatomy of a Dictatorship", Alex Mitchell has this to say:

"The link between the Littlejohns and Aldershot was confirmed on August

1 Described by the then Fine Gael spokesman on Justice, and present Minister for Justice, Paddy Cooney, as "repugnant to the basic principles of justice and liberty," "totally and completely obnoxious," "those vast Draconian powers," "a power that turns the rights of the citizens, the very freedom we have to protect, into a nullity," etc., etc.

12 with a statement from the London based Prisoners' Aid Committee, set up to assist in the defence of the Aldershot accused. The P.A.C. called for the unconditional release of Noel Jenkinson, who is serving 30 years in Leicester prison for his alleged part in the bombings, and addressed a series of pointed questions to the Tory Government.

- Is Inspector (Cameron) Sinclair who found the receipt in Noel's flat — a receipt which the defence alleged was planted — the same Sinclair named as a contact man in the Special Branch by Kenneth Littlejohn?
- Where was Kenneth Littlejohn on February 21, 1972, the day when the car used in the Aldershot bombing was hired, if, the day after Aldershot, Geoffrey Johnson-Smith rang him to congratulate him on his good work? Was he, by any chance, in the Nag's Head, Holloway Road, under the name of Joe?
- Is it a coincidence that the Littlejohns lived only a few miles from County Meath — from where the explosives found in Noel's garage came?
- Why was Noel refused leave to appeal against his 30-year sentence?
- Why has Noel's London solicitor so far been unable to supply him with the trial papers necessary for him to take his case to Strasbourg?

If British Intelligence was in any way connected with Aldershot, this would be the most serious revelation yet to come out of the Littlejohn scandal. And why shouldn't the Tories be implicated: a government that sets off bombs in Dublin to provoke the passing of anti-I.R.A. legislation in another country — and, in the process kill two innocent bystanders — would not hold back from committing acts of terrorism in this country (i.e. Britain) if it was thought to be expeditious."

It is extremely doubtful that the Littlejohns will serve out even substantial parts of their sentences but what has passed into history as "the Littlejohn Affair" has exposed to what degree the 26 counties are still controlled by the British; the extent to which the southern authorities are manipulated by Westminster and the level of ruthlessness to which H. M. Government will sink to combat Irish resistance North and South. It is a lesson that must never be forgotten.

APPENDIX F

THE NEW EXECUTIVE

as seen by Claud Gordon in the Sunday Press November 25, 1973

Hey Presto! — Now you see it, now you don't. That was the story of the new Stormont executive as it was pulled out of the hat by Supreme Wizard William Whitelaw in the British House of Commons last Thursday — and as it vanished again into the intangible realms of political imponderables.

And, for his next trick...? Well, Whitelaw himself warned about the difficulties still in the way of a lasting materialisation, and the Labour spokesman, Merlyn Rees, cautioned against any feeling of euphoria — of the sort undoubtedly induced for a while by the druid mist which Whitelaw spun around the last session of inter-party talks at Stormont Castle.

At first it did seem that a magic wand must have been used to produce that first dramatic announcement of agreement to form an executive after weeks of heated and determined stances on irreconcilable and incompatible conditions and demands by the two major parties involved, the Unionists and the S.D.L.P.

In the end, as turned out, it was old necessity who was the mother of invention, and Whitelaw proved himself to be an innovator as clever, imaginative and resourceful as any English politician before him.

Ingenious

The problem — It is deemed imperative to nominate a coalition executive at all costs, but the conflicting attitudes of the parties involved make this impossible.

The solution — Find a formula under which you can have an executive of sorts, but at the same time you don't have one. Ingenious but simple.

That is what we now have. We have had the proclamation in the British parliament of a provisional-embryo-executive-designate which, we are told, will materialise only when all other more thorny problems are settled.

So unquestionably, amidst all the talk about compromise on all sides, the most inspired compromise to date was that decision to have an executive without really having one — except in "embryo." It was almost a stroke of genius to meet the urgent requirements of the situation, as far as the British Government is concerned.

But if the embryo is to be nurtured to maturity, it might be a two-edged question at this stage to ask whether a law to prohibit political abortions would be beneficial or otherwise. It still has to be seen whether the proposed executive will be an abortion in itself or not.

A healthy outcome of all the compromises involved depends rather on the nature of further compromises to be made in more negotiations yet to come. What sort of compromise? That's the crucial question.

A miracle

Admittedly it was a bit of a miracle to get even that amount of agreement among the Stormont parties about the composition of the projected executive on any conditions. And admittedly, as the politicians themselves say, public opinion is largely hoping and praying that the executive will work — and bring peace with justice.

It may well work, in the sense of getting down to its appointed tasks. And it may well begin to function in its allotted spheres as defined by the Westminster Government according to English notions of proper behaviour.

But whether it will work for peace or strife, for good or ill, depends on terms still to be thrashed out, and on political advantages still to be secured, in the next stage of the crucial negotiations — namely, in the coming tripartite talks between Dublin, London and Belfast.

That is where the greatest danger now lies. Who will compromise the most at those talks for the sake of immediate expediency? Will Dublin do so? The predominant suspicion is that Dublin is the party now most ready to yield in the cause of a British peace without justice. But why should it.

Realistic

All those popular hopes, all those ardent wishes and all those pious efforts to invest the projected executive with a sanctity far beyond its intrinsic moral virtues will be betrayed if the next-stage talks fail to produce some realistic proposals for some equal concessions this time on both sides.

It is as simple as this. Either the six-county executive, the tripartite talks and the proposed Council of Ireland will open the way to a new political departure in Ireland, to an advance towards unity and to the breaking of the partition straitjacket — or it will all be a fraud to preserve the divided status quo by united efforts to impose a common "law-enforcement area."

Comparison

Either the new settlement will be designed to create new conditions and new political opportunities, or it will be nothing but a matter of riveting the old system more firmly upon us by different means. Which is it going to be?

An answer may be deduced from a comparison of the concessions already made with the conditions heretofore demanded by the various parties involved in the Stormont power-sharing negotiations. Two significant pointers may be legitimately made.

First, who conceded most and who won the most in the negotiations leading up to the agreement on forming a six-county Stormont executive?

And Second, who is now likely to concede the most or win the most in the forthcoming tripartite talks on the subject of law enforcement and a Council of Ireland?

Concessions so far, have been all one-sided — quite contrary to the spirit of the "power-sharing" notion. And judging by remarks dropped by some Dublin Ministers, the Dublin Government must be suspected of rushing eagerly to yield every possible concession in return for sweet nothing.

The S.D.L.P. had firm demands about internment, the radical re-organisation of the police and a Council of Ireland with powers to "evolve." Is that party now going to be put off with vague phases and vaguer promises in return for

swearing allegiance to the security forces and the R.U.C.? Why should it? So far the S.D.L.P. has got nothing.

Unionist

The Unionist Party had firm demands about keeping the R.U.C. as it is, unreformed and unstructured, about recognising the Unionist veto on all political change in Ireland and about accepting the partition framework and the six-county "constitutional position" as an "integral part" of the United Kingdom. And so far the Unionist Party has got everything it asked for.

The original notion behind the power-sharing proposals, if we can believe the original, was supposed to be much more liberal than the picture now emerging in the six counties. It was not to be merely a matter of token Taigs doling out fair treatment within an accepted political set-up.

Genuine give-and-take was assumed to include give-and-take in its most tolerant form — in the matter of political attitudes. Each party to the proposed power-sharing arrangements was to be entitled to adhere to its own political outlook. Not so now.

Symbolisms

Conformity to the political attitudes of the Unionists Party has been made virtually compulsory for all future participants in the projected executive. "Full support" for the "constitution," for the security forces and for the trappings and symbolism of the British connection.

The chief Whip and the assistant Whip in Brian Faulkner's Assembly Unionist Party, Lord Brookeborough (formerly John Brooke) and Lloyd Hall-Thompson made yet another firm declaration during the week to the effect that even Faulkner would not participate in an executive until the Dublin Government abolished its constitutional claim to six-county territory.

If they are serious, therefore, this embryo ghost executive will depend on the ultimate of all one-sided concessions — the abandonment of all Irish aspirations to national unity and independence at the forthcoming tripartite talks.

Doubts about the present Dublin Governments intentions in that sphere were increased by the appearance in Belfast last week-end of a Dublin Minister, Conor Cruise O'Brien, who addressed a local Labour Party conference on the virtues of respecting British royalty as a symbol revered by a section of the working class.

It must have been the first time in history that even the Northern Ireland Labour Party was told that royalty was a working-class symbol. Some delegates at least must have winced. But apart from that, it was remarkable that O'Brien, panting in his democratic heart for tolerance of symbols — and knowing he was addressing a mainly Protestant audience — failed to make an appeal to them to tolerate that other symbol revered by another section of the working class — namely, the Irish Tricolour.

In politics, mutual tolerance should apply both ways, just as equality is equality. But just as some are deemed more equal than others in certain circumstances, in O'Brien's twisted philosophy also there is one sort of which is more tolerant than another sort.

Brian Faulkner's own notion of tolerance is similar. He is far from being shy in proclaiming his belief that all the talks now going on are for the good of the Unionist cause and for the strengthening of partition and cementing the six-county link with Britain even more firmly than before.

Tolerance

But the same standards of tolerance apparently do not permit the S.D.L.P. to proclaim aloud any belief that the talks either will or should lead to a united Ireland in sovereign control over her own affairs. For they say no such thing. They aren't.

Faulkner goes about daily proclaiming that, as chief executive designate of the Stormont executive-designate, his overriding objective is to secure and strengthen the union with Britain.

How is it that the S.D.L.P. leaders are so inhibited from going around daily and proclaiming just as unequivocally that their major objective and overriding concern is to achieve a united Ireland? Why not? If mutual tolerance,

mutual trust, mutual respect, political equality and even power-sharing itself are to mean anything, there is no reason why they should not do so.

The crunch

And that, basically, too, is the crunch issue which will face the delegates to the tripartite talks on the formation of a Council of Ireland, and the issue which in the long term will decide whether the council will evolve for good or evil, for peace or for continuing strife.

Unless, all the concessions are to be one-sided, simple principles of equality and mutual reciprocation demand that any plans for a council of Ireland must make provision for eventual unity. If the final deal does not open a legislative door towards Irish unity of some sort, no free choice, no equality and no prospect of lasting peace will emerge.

And all the efforts to muster up a ghost executive dominated by the unrepentant ghouls of the Unionist past will collapse in utter failure.

APPENDIX G

SUNNINGDALE — WHAT IT MEANS

"The conspiracy between the British and Dublin Governments, the Alliance Party, the S.D.L.P. and a rump faction of the Unionist Party, which has become known as the Sunningdale 'Agreement', represents an attempt by the parties involved to impose a particular solution to the 'Irish Question' which its apologists claim is based on the necessity to "compromise in the interests of peace". But what are the implications of Sunningdale and what would acceptance of the proposals mean for the Irish people?

These are the facts:

On partition, 'the Sunningdale Agreement' asserts that the border will remain until the majority of the people of the Six Counties decide otherwise. There can be no other interpretation of Paragraph 5, which says: "That there could be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a majority of the people of Northern Ireland desire a change".

According to those at Sunningdale, 'Northern' Ireland's present status is within the United Kingdom. Sunningdale, therefore, constitutes an abandonment of the Irish Nation's right to unity and independence and the right of the Irish people (i.e. the majority of the whole island of Ireland as opposed to an artificially created pro-Union majority in the gerrymandered six county area.) to decide their own future. Such a betrayal must be repugnant to all nationally minded Irishmen.

On cross border collaboration, Sunningdale proposes that persons suspected of having committed "crimes of violence, however motivated", would be prosecuted in either area for their suspected actions in the other. The reactivation of the Victorian Offences Against the Person Act of 1861 by the Dublin government recently is the first step along a road which, in effect, commits the Southern authorities to regard any act of resistance against the British force in the North as a crime under the South's domestic law.

On internment, Sunningdale holds out no hope of release to 600 men, 12 women and 6 young boys interned in the North, let alone the thousand other political prisoners, Loyalists and Republicans.

Those who signed — what does it mean?

Sunningdale represents the first formal recognition of the status of the Six Counties within the United Kingdom by a so-called 'Irish' government and commits the Southern Army and Police to assisting the British Army in maintaining the border and suppressing those opposed to partition and the British Occupation of the Six Counties.

Sunningdale represents the final betrayal of the nationalist people of Ireland by the S.D.L.P.

The S.D.L.P. pledged that they would not participate in any discussions —

let alone play a role in governing the Six Counties for the British — until the last internee was released. They have broken that pledge.

The S.D.L.P. pledged that the Rent and Rates Strike would not end until the last internee was released and that when it did end, no arrears would be paid. Now, however, that Austin Currie is in charge of collecting her Majesty's back rents, both these pledges have also been forgotten. The S.D.L.P. has called for an end to the strike and has said that arrears WILL have to be paid.

The S.D.L.P. were elected to get internment ended, to get the British Army out, to have repressive legislation abolished. They were not elected to become part of the British jackboot administration, to become apologists for the British Army, to aid and abet the policy of internment or to assist in enforcing repressive legislation. They were certainly not elected to bolster up Brian Faulkner, the architect of internment, or Ted Heath, the butcher of Derry.

In 1922, we were told that the Treaty was a "stepping stone to freedom". It was nothing but a stepping stone to the Curragh and the Offences Against the State Act in the South and Long Kesh and Bloody Sunday in the North. Such were the fruits of compromise.

The Irish People must not be duped again. Demand and struggle for peace with justice. We have declared for a Republic and we will obey no other law."

Author's Note: The above leaflet is correct in its analysis of the Sunningdale Agreement. The Sunningdale settlement was greeted by an orgy of approval by the established news media which verged on the hysteric. Nevertheless, Sunningdale has been rejected by Republicans and Loyalists alike. As the concept of Sunningdale as the only solution to the Northern crisis fades Ulstermen are now beginning to explore exciting avenues of political thought. The utterances of Messrs. Craig, Paisley, Taylor and the U.V.F. all have one thing in common:— they demand that all the cards be placed on the table. They want the British Government to 'come clean' and reveal its real intentions. They are not impressed by the political trickery used to evolve the Sunningdale Agreement — an agreement based on deceit and duplicity, intrigue and insincerity, bribery and brutality.

Dr. Paisley has said: "I am quite confident that this country can hammer out a system of government. It has been done in Holland and Switzerland without diluting democracy and it can be done here." Sinn Féin has proposed a system of government which devolves power to the community at a local level. The threads of an alternative to Sunningdale — acceptable to Irishmen whose primary allegiance is to Ulster — are becoming apparent. They have yet to be woven into a sturdy fibre — but the pattern is emerging. And in a situation where such supposedly divergent groups as the I.R.A. and the U.V.F., Republicans and Loyalists, Sinn Féin and Desmond Boal, are finding that they have so much in common, the prospect of a solution guaranteeing peace and based on justice arrived at by consensus looks bright indeed.



“I’LL CRUSH THE I.R.A.”

— **Patrick Cooney, Minister for Justice,**
January 14, 1974.

For almost four years now, the Provisional I.R.A. has been waging what it claims is a war of national liberation in the North of Ireland. Despite the denunciations of clerics and politicians and the determined efforts of the authorities, North and South, to “crush the I.R.A.,” the campaign continues.

“PROVOS — PATRIOTS OR TERRORISTS?” is the first book to examine in depth the present I.R.A. campaign — a campaign which, for better or worse, is changing the course of Irish history.

It looks at the causes of the conflict in the North and attempts to answer the vital questions which the present crisis has thrown up: questions such as —

- Is there any justification of the Provos’ campaign?
- Is Sunningdale the solution to the ‘Irish Question’?
- What was the Littlejohn affair?
- What is meant by a Federal Ireland?

These are questions which must concern the Irish people — they are the questions with which this book is concerned.

The conclusions arrived at are surprising — but inescapable.

Title: Provos - Patriots or Terrorists?

Organisation: Sinn Féin

Author: Seán Ó Riain

Date: 1974

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