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Historical study of the "Irish Question" and the Provisional Irish Republican Army

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HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE "IRISH QUESTION" AND
THE PROVISIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

by

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for the degree of
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Date
The purpose of this thesis is to describe the history of the "Irish question" and the role of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) in attaining peace in the region. This thesis reviews both the Catholic and Protestant positions.

The Protestant population believes that the current wave of violence was caused by Catholic support for the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and the PIRA. Catholics, on the other hand, believe that discrimination against Catholics by Protestants and the government is a significant factor in explaining the violence.

Specifically, this study examines the role that the PIRA has carved for itself in the resolution of the Catholic perception of the problem of discrimination. The argument is made that terrorism is counterproductive in the elimination of discrimination in Northern Ireland because it promotes Protestant and government stereotypes of Catholic distrust and disloyalty. Further, the PIRA will be unable to attain its primary goal of a united Ireland governed solely by an Irish Parliament because its officials are unable to negotiate with the British government.

The troubles in Ireland have been ongoing for 800 years. An historical approach, encompassing the years 1858 to present, was taken because it is nearly impossible to understand the current situation without first reviewing the historical factors. This method allows one to trace the rise and fall of the various paramilitary groups and the coinciding violence and social change.

The PIRA is the main focus of the thesis and is therefore studied at length. Its tactical and strategic goals are highlighted as well as its targets, internal machinery, organization and supporters.

Perceived discrimination of Catholics by Protestants in Northern Ireland from 1968 is also studied. It encompasses discrimination in the areas of housing, employment, income, and education. It is argued that these were legitimate concerns at one time, however due to social change there is presently very little housing discrimination and no education discrimination.

In conclusion, the Provisional Irish Republican Army is working against the goal of equality for Catholics by perpetuating hostility in Protestants and the British government, and eliminating the possibility for peaceful negotiations.
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WE SAW A VISION

In the darkness of despair we saw a vision. We lit the light of hope. And it was not extinguished. In the desert of discouragement we saw a vision. We planted the tree of valour. And it blossomed.

In the winter of bondage we saw a vision. We melted the snow of lethargy. And the river of resurrection flowed from it.

We sent our vision aswim like a swan on the river. The vision became a reality. Winter became summer. Bondage became freedom. And this we left to you as your inheritance.

O generations of freedom remember us, the generations of the vision.

Author unknown
Copied from a plaque at the Garden of Rememberance,
Dublin, Ireland
POLITICAL MAP OF IRELAND SHOWING ALL COUNTIES IN EIRE AND THE SIX COUNTIES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

Fig. 1. Map of Ireland. Reproduced from Robert Kee, The Green Flag (New York: Delacorte Press, 1972), iv.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to describe the history of the "Irish Question" and the role of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) in eliminating discrimination in Northern Ireland. The Protestant population believes that violence is caused not by discrimination against Catholics, but by Catholic support for the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in the late 1960s, and the Provisional IRA presently. Catholics, on the other hand, believe that discrimination against Catholics is a significant factor in explaining the violence.

Specifically, this study will examine the role that the Provisional IRA had carved for itself in the resolution of discrimination against Catholics. The argument will be made that terrorism is counter-productive in the elimination of discrimination in Ulster (Northern Ireland) because it promotes hostility in Protestants and perpetuates their stereotyped images of the disloyal and untrustworthy Catholic. Further, the PIRA will be unable to attain their primary goals of a united Ireland governed solely by an Irish Parliament.
The intent of the IRA in 1969 was a non-violent protest against the occupation of Northern Ireland and the perceived discrimination against Catholics in the areas of housing, jobs, income, and, to a degree, education. It was a campaign of nonsectarian and non-violent political education and activism. But when these non-violent protests led to violent clashes with police and Protestant counter-demonstrators, a split within the IRA occurred, and the Provisional Irish Republican Army emerged.

Arguments have been made that the strife is directly related to religious discrimination against Catholics by Protestants and the Protestant-run government. Padraig O'Malley, a respected scholar on Irish affairs, states that the Ulster government, in response to the threat of external attack and internal insurrection, "demanded that all Catholics be viewed as subversive." Furthermore, any political compromise with Catholics was seen as politically dangerous to Protestant hegemony. Mark Findlay, in "Criminalization and the Detention of Political Prisoners," maintains that social discrepancies, "economic deprivation, discrimination in the provision of housing and employment as well as unbalanced and unrepresentative political representation, are at the heart of the [troubles]."

Thomas E. Hachey, a history professor at Marquette University, proposes that the PIRA was born from this discrimination. "From the Provo (PIRA) perspective," he
states, "the British government turned a deaf ear and a blind eye to the outrages and abuses of the Northern Ireland Storemont government for the roughly fifty years of its existence." Protestant Unionist groups terrorized the Catholic minority at will and routinely denied them their civil rights. The passive resistance of Catholics was easily replaced in the early 1970s by terrorist tactics because "an increasing number of Catholics saw violence as their only means of obtaining victory." 

Richard Clutterbuck, in Guerrillas and Terrorists, maintains however, that families living in Catholic ghettos in Northern Ireland "are becoming exasperated with the continual involvement of their children in the fighting, and it is probable that less than one third support the IRA." In addition, "the violence of the PIRA has succeeded only in alienat[ing] their own Catholic supporters in the North." Further, "the only reunification which the IRA has achieved has been to bring about unprecedented unity between London and Dublin." 

Until discrimination in Northern Ireland can be eliminated there will be little movement toward peace in the region. Some scholars believe that even if discrimination is eradicated, the PIRA will not move toward peace.

The Role of Religion

The misconception held most often about the troubles in Northern Ireland is that it is one of religion. Reverend
Paul Badham, a theologian at St. David's University College in Lempeter, England, asserts that Catholics and Protestants remain estranged due to their wholly separate lifestyles. They attend different schools which promote a separate ethos; participate in different sports and cultural activities; support different political parties; attend different churches; and are strongly opposed to intermarriage. After much consideration, Badham concludes that "the contribution of religion to the continuation of the divisions in Northern Ireland would appear to be very considerable." Further, if we then take note of the part played by explicitly sectarian leaders to frustrate the cautious attempts made by more liberal leaders to lessen the cultural apartheid of Northern Ireland, we can see that religion is a major factor in the current troubles.

Badham is correct when he argues that the contribution of religion is important in the region. The lives of all individuals revolve in some way around the denomination to which they belong. However, Badham overlooks the difference between religious affiliation and religious belief and tends to encompass the two in the term "religion." All the factors he describes can be associated with religious affiliation, not religious belief. The churches have themselves denied that the conflict is in any way doctrinal. Ian McAllister states that in 1973 the four main churches in Ulster published a joint letter contending that "the conflict is not primarily religious in character. It is based rather on political and social issues with deep
McAllister claims that if religion is to be considered a significant factor, then "religious belief should be positively correlated with the strength of political views."  

McAllister studies several factors to measure religious commitment: ritual, the frequency of church attendance and communion; belief in the supernatural, the extent to which the individual subscribes to fundamental religious values; and devotion, religious importance and self-definition. It was discovered that Catholics in Northern Ireland attend church more often than Catholics in any other country except the Republic of Ireland. The supernatural dimension showed that Catholics more readily accept the notions of supernatural belief than Protestants. Although fundamentalist Protestants can be distinguished from the more liberal Presbyterians and Methodists.

McAllister next examines religious commitment and social structure. Age, education, occupation, and location of home are correlated to study the link between social structure and religion. In both denominations, attendance declines after the age of 60; however, devotion grows consistently stronger. Persons with more education will conform to the group norms of religious behavior, however belief in the supernatural tends to decline, because of its liberalizing influence.
In both denominations, residing in an urban environment made it less likely for both religions to participate in ritual, but it did not diminish the other aspects of religion. "Clearly," McAllister states, "religious commitment is to some extent determined by social structure." 

The final variable in McAllister's study is religious commitment and political conflict. The author polled individuals from each denomination, asking them what caused the conflict. The results suggest that Catholics related the troubles to government policies while Protestants blamed the IRA.

Table 1.-- Catholic and Protestant Interpretations of the causes of the Conflict in Northern Ireland.

--- Catholic causes of the conflict:
1. Discrimination over housing
2. Lack of job opportunities for Catholics because Protestants are given preference
3. Influence of the Orange order
4. Existence of the Special Powers Act
5. Activity of the Ulster Volunteer Force
6. Internment.

--- Protestant causes of the conflict:
1. Activity of the Irish Republican Army
2. Catholic disloyalty to the United Kingdom
3. Labour Party's failure to stop the growth of the IRA when they had a chance in 1969
4. Dublin government failed to stop the IRA operating from across the border.

McAllister concludes that "religious commitment is only weakly related to political attitudes for Protestants, and unrelated for Catholics." The strength of religious behavior, devotion and belief, does not influence the strength of political attitudes. Therefore, the lines which divide the Northern Ireland community and perpetuate the conflict are related not to religious belief, but religious affiliation. Paul Badham's claim that religion is important is deceiving because he does not differentiate between belief and affiliation. It is clear that religious affiliation is a major contributor to the ongoing strife in the region, and religious belief plays a very small role.

The roots of the conflict are very complex. They are political, social, and historical. An historical approach to the study of the troubles encompasses these concepts and can best relate the ideas of yesterday as they apply today.
ENDNOTES


5 Ibid.


7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., 73.


10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.


13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 333-336.

15 Ibid., 336-338.
16 Ibid., 339.
17 Ibid., 342.
CHAPTER 2
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TROUBLES

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) had warned the English government about pending terrorist attacks to mark the 20th anniversary of the British military presence in Northern Ireland. On the morning of September 22, 1989, at exactly 8:26, an explosion ripped through the Royal Marines Barracks at the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal, England. Ten people died and twenty-two were injured, eight seriously. The Times reports that "most of those hurt suffered chest injuries, fractures, facial cuts, and burns. Many had been pulled from the rubble."\(^1\)

In what has been called one of the worst atrocities in Britain, the IRA, "using Czechoslovakian-made material ten times more powerful than normal commercial explosives," detonated a fifty pound bomb at North barracks.\(^2\) In a full statement IRA guerrillas said,

Mrs. Thatcher visited occupied Ireland with a message of war at a time when we want peace [referring to the Prime Minister's visit to Northern Ireland one week earlier]. Now we, in turn, have visited the Royal Marines in Kent. But we still want peace and we want the British Government to leave our country.\(^3\)

Danny Morrison, an official of Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing said, "that further deaths could be avoided
if the Government changed its colonial policy on Ireland and agreed to peace talks with the guerrillas." In response, Margaret Thatcher vowed "that the IRA's terrorism campaign to force British troops out of Northern Ireland would never succeed."

The violence escalates. A never-ending battle of guerrilla warfare, terrorism, unlawful executions and long prison sentences. How did this battle begin? More importantly, why is it still being fought today? This chapter reviews the history of the Irish Republican Army, beginning with the formation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1858, and ending with the bombing of the Royal Marines School of Music, on September 22, 1989.

The Protestants of Ulster came to Ireland from urbanized Scotland and England under the direction of King William III in the late 1600s. Ireland at that time was a Gaelic, Catholic, agrarian society which was deeply rooted in tradition. The newly settled people in Ireland viewed Catholics with contempt, which soon led to discrimination. The Catholics, on the other hand, viewed the Protestants as invaders of their homeland, loyal first to the British government with whom they identified. In the eyes of Catholics, the Protestants were Britons, not Irishmen. As the conflicts between the two cultures mounted, the struggle for control of Ireland began.
Irish Republican Brotherhood

In the wake of the Famine of 1845-1847 a radicalized generation of young men, most of them Catholics and of modest social origins, formed a widespread conspiracy to eliminate British rule in Ireland. The Irish Republican Brotherhood, or Fenians as they were also known, were led by James Stephens. He guided this fledgling group in their search for separatism and independence.

Ireland however, was not alone in its struggle and received sympathy from Irish-Americans. John O'Mahoney was the IRB's link to the United States. He organized Fenian groups from New York to San Francisco. Robert Kee, in The Green Flag: The Bold Fenian Men, suggests that the arrival of five hundred men from America, with arms and officers, plus at least fifty thousand rifles, was accepted as the prerequisite of any rising of the Irish people.6

Though support for the IRB was slowly growing in Ireland, one of the measurements of popularity was the degree of acceptance by the Catholic Church. The church had no sympathy for the rising, thus practicing Catholics were leery of the IRB and were slow to commit to the organization.

However, as O'Mahoney increasingly succeeded in persuading former American soldiers, remnants of the Civil War, to take up arms for Ireland, support from those at home grew. Fenian military drilling and marching became much
more prevalent. Stephens had made the decision to strike against the British before the year was out.

Although the IRB was still a "secret society", they had minimal security and were relatively open. The British government had little problem infiltrating the lower ranks and placing informants within the organization. They soon learned of the pending uprising, and on September 12, the British government struck. The Fenian newspaper, Irish People, was suppressed and the office seized. Telegraphic communications with Southern Ireland were cut off and a number of IRB officials were arrested. After baffling the police for two months, James Stephens, the leader of the IRB, was arrested.

In early 1867 another uprising was in motion. Kee states that

the military plan was for guerrilla warfare. In many respects it did not differ in general intention from the scheme of action finally adopted more than fifty years later by the Irish Republican Army of that day. Groups of men were to gather in different parts of Ireland, concentrating in Dublin and the south-west. These fighting men were to destroy rail and telegraph communications, attack police stations and harass government offices and military personnel. On March 5, the day of the scheduled uprising, unknown to the lower ranks, the leader of the uprising, Gordon Massey, was arrested, betrayed by an informer. However the IRB in Drogheda, Cork, Dublin, Clare, Tipperary, and Limerick was on the move. They successfully
carried out few of their missions and fell victim to police. Many men were arrested that night, others the next day. The only success came from the guerrilla tactics of tearing up rails, and cutting telegraph wires. Of those men arrested in the March uprising and sentenced to death, all except three had their sentences commuted to time with hard labor. 

Tom Garvin, in Nationalist Revolutionaries in Ireland 1858-1988, believes that although the Fenian uprising in 1867 was strikingly weak it "did not fail to have an effect. It was the first streak of dawn." The defeat of 1867 did not destroy Fenianism, instead it gradually nudged it on to a quasi-legal, if still conspiratorial path. The IRB eventually permeated all of Ireland and became an integral part of all nationalist movements. The executions of the three rebels in Manchester turned the men into martyrs and perpetuated the cause of Irish separatism and nationalism.

The Land League

Although the Fenian movement declined in popularity again after the rising of 1867, a new movement was quickly underway. Kee contends that "the aim [was] Home Rule, or the establishment of an Irish Parliament to deal with internal Irish affairs within the British connection and under the Crown." The man chosen to represent Ireland was 29 year old Charles Stewart Parnell. His opposition in the House of Commons, the newly elected Prime Minister, was William Ewart Gladstone, who came to power in 1868. Kee
claims that "until his final retirement in 1893 at the age of 86 he was to concern himself with the affairs of Ireland to a greater extent than any other English statesman since the making of the Union." Gladstone believed he could address the problems of Ireland through two measures: "first by disestablishing the Irish Protestant Church and, second, legislating to compensate a tenant financially on eviction." The act which disestablished the Protestant Church in Ireland became law in 1896. Disestablishment of the church was the first measure the Union Parliament had passed solely because the majority of the Irish people wanted it.

The land issue however, was the critical issue of the day. Although introduced in the House of Commons with the Irish interest at heart, Gladstone's Land Bill of 1870 was wholly inadequate. He proposed imposition of a sort of fine on any landlord who evicted a tenant for any reason other than nonpayment of rent. The landlord would be required to pay the tenant for the improvements his occupation had made to the property. This however, was not the goal of the Irish farmer. The Irish tenant did not want compensation for eviction, but freedom from eviction. George Dangerfield, in The Damnable Question, asserts that "the land act of 1870, while insisting that the Irish Peasant had rights, did absolutely nothing to advance them." Although cooperation with the new Land Bill was widespread, it was
believed that only an Irish Parliament itself could give Ireland the justice it deserved.

In 1877, the total membership of the IRB was about nineteen thousand. Unrest and increasing bitterness over the ineffective land bill were the sentiments among the agrarian society. This unrest quickly turned to hatred, when in the years 1877-1897 rainfall was far above average and temperatures well below. The combination of three bad harvests made it impossible for the Irish farmer to sell his crops at a profit. Unable to pay rent because of the slump in prices, the farmers were threatened with eviction.

Violence erupted again in 1879 with the shooting of not only landlords, but Irishmen who moved onto property vacated by eviction. On October 21, 1879, the National Land League of Ireland was founded. Its President was Charles Stewart Parnell. The goal of the Land League was to promote

the organization of the tenant farmers, to bring about a reduction in rents, protect those threatened with eviction, and finally obtain such reform in the laws relating to the land as will enable every tenant to become the owner of his holding by paying a fair rent for a limited number of years.

The Land League, largely supported through the membership of ex-Fenians, scheduled mass-demonstrations to fight for lower rent, physically prevented many evictions, and provided food and shelter for those victims of eviction. The Land League operated through above-ground official action and under-ground violence. The official leadership of the movement deplored violent measures, but they often
were unaware of the extent of its use. Kee claims that the officially correct character of the organization, however, "with its determination to right the poor man's wrongs, made it possible for the Land League to enlist the support of the parish priests, without which no movement in Ireland could flourish."15

In August 1881 the Land Act was passed in the House of Commons. The Land Act, by giving the southern and western renter access to the Ulster custom of fair rent, free trade and fixity of tenure, put him into a state of "dual ownership" with his landlord, however, it ignored the fact that what he wanted was no landlord at all.

**Home Rule**

On October 20, 1881, Parnell and several of his officials in the Land League were arrested and placed in Kilmainham Gaol (jail). No attempt was made to reestablish the Land League; instead Parnell founded the Irish National League (INL). Stimulated by the general anti-government feeling aroused during the recent land agitation, the INL expressed a popular national demand for Home Rule.

For the next several years the Home Rule Bill increasingly consumed the time of the members of the House of Commons. On September 2, 1893, the bill passed by the slim margin of thirty-four. The members of the House of Lords, on the other hand, rejected the bill by 419 votes to forty-one.16
During this time, the IRB began to crumble. It had split internally and was losing American support. Much of the attention of the country was focused on the Boer War in South Africa and with the land agitation calmed down, the IRB found itself losing power.

In 1900, a journalist named Arthur Griffith brought men of different Irish organizations together to unify them as one national society. This small organization was called Cumann na Gaedheal; it was the nucleus of today's Sinn Fein. The movement amounted to little at this point, and its main purpose was to spread dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of Home Rule. Throughout the next ten years, members of Parliament from Ireland fought to no avail for Home Rule in the House of Commons. However, in 1910, the Liberals, backed by Irish Nationals in the House of Commons, came to power and with support from southern Ireland the representatives seemed able to win Home Rule. There was intense opposition by the Ulster Unionist Council however. Kee maintains that the proposed bill set up an Irish legislature with an Irish executive for purely domestic Irish affairs, while reserving for the Imperial Parliament all matters affecting the Crown, peace and war, the army, navy, international treaties, the imposition of most taxation in the first instance, and even for a period of six years, control of the Royal Irish Constabulary. The total supremacy of the Imperial Parliament over such an Irish Parliament was clearly stated and repeatedly emphasized.17

It was quickly pointed out by the Protestants of Ulster that the probability of a Catholic majority in the Irish
Parliament legislating for the good of the minority peoples in Ireland was highly doubtful. Thus, special safeguards were implemented to give the Protestants disproportionate consideration. These were not enough. The Protestants had a conditioned self-perpetuating mistrust of all Catholics, and they simply did not want to be placed in a subordinate position. The solution was an amendment to the Home Rule Bill to exclude six of the nine counties of Ulster.

This exclusion was introduced as a temporary measure. After six years Ulster was supposed to come under the control of the Irish Parliament. However, the Irish Nationalists would hear nothing of it. They wanted a united Ireland, governed by an Irish Parliament. The battle lines were forever drawn.

In January 1913, the Ulster Volunteer Force of one hundred thousand men, led by retired British General Sir George Richardson, was raised. These men carried rifles supplied by supporters in England. By 1914, reserve officers from the British Army were recruited to take command of some of the regiments of the Ulster Volunteer Force. Violence was seemingly inevitable, as the Irish National Volunteers also had a membership of one hundred thousand. Arms for the Irish National Volunteers were supplied from Germany and America.

Meanwhile, Parliamentary debate over Home Rule and the exclusion of the six northern counties had become dead-
locked. The Irish Nationals insisted that Ulster be under Irish Parliamentary rule, however the Ulster Unionists Council, and its English supporters adamantly rejected the idea. On September 18, 1914, the Home Rule Bill was given royal assent as an Act. It was suspended however due to the commencement of World War I. Home Rule was conveniently "shelved" until after the war when a new Amending Bill could be introduced and further debate held.

Most of southern Ireland rejoiced with the news of the triumphant Home Rule Bill. There was however, a group of Sinn Fein supporters and IRB members who believed the Bill to be inadequate because of the Suspensory Act. These men were the "Sinn Fein Volunteers," or as they were officially known, the "Irish Volunteers." They believed it unwise to commit Irishmen to the war effort without being sure that Home Rule would be implemented. As the British war effort deteriorated, the threat of conscription loomed large in Ireland. This threat combined with dwindling Parliamentary support for Home Rule provided the impetus for Sinn Fein Volunteer support from a few Catholic parish priests.

After a failed attempt to purchase arms from Germany, a group of approximately one thousand Irish Volunteers and members of the Irish Citizens Army marched into Dublin in a combined effort later called "the Irish Republican Army." The Easter Rising of April 24, 1916, had begun. The London Times reported that
at noon on that day grave disturbances broke out in Dublin and at nightfall the rebels were in possession of four of five parts of the city. The General Post Office, in the heart of the Irish capital was seized and telegraphic communications cut.  

Crown reinforcements were called in to help the police on Monday afternoon. These men easily out-numbered the rebels by one thousand. There was increased sporadic violence; snipers, artillery fire, and bombnings, directed at the royal troops and policemen as they closed in on the rebels. Kee declares that

basically the pattern of the rebellion which unfolded over the next five days was that the Irish Republican Army remained in most of the positions it had occupied on Easter Monday, inflicting what casualties it could - and these were sometimes substantial - on Irishmen and others in the British Army, who, backed by heavy artillery fire, inexorably closed in on them and eventually forced them to surrender.  

On Saturday, April 29, the rebels surrendered. Casualties among the rebels were low: 64 killed during the uprising. Civilian casualties were very high in comparison: 220 killed, over 600 wounded. Among the crown forces, 134 died, 381 were wounded. 

The uprising was not popularly supported, nor was it effective, but it was the first uprising that had ever been conducted by Irishmen in the single-minded pursuit of an independent Irish Republic. 

On May 3, the first of fifteen executions took place at Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin. Throughout the following weeks, as more rebels were shot in the name of just punishment, resentment toward the British grew.
David Asquith, the Prime Minister of Britain, felt the rising tension and began working again on the Home Rule Bill. Edward Carson represented the Northern Unionists, and John Redmond represented the Southern Nationalists at the bargaining table. At stake again were the Ulster counties. Redmond and Carson negotiated a settlement that would separate Ulster from Southern Ireland, immediately giving Home Rule to the South. In exchange, Northern Ireland was to consist of the six Ulster counties which would not be subject to rule by the Southern Parliament. Without giving either delegate time to consult with his supporters, the Cabinet decided that the proposed settlement was to be permanent. Predictably, negotiations fell through and quickly came to a grinding halt. The Irish Nationalists felt betrayed by Redmond for giving in on the Ulster question. They believed that Home Rule should be enacted as the bill which was passed by Parliament and signed by the King in 1914.

In 1916, Asquith was ousted from power by David Lloyd-George. Lloyd-George had once told Carson there would be permanent Ulster exclusion from Irish Home Rule.

Irish Republican Army

Military maneuvers and drilling began in the south again, and by September 1917, there were over thirty Volunteers in Mountjoy Gaol serving sentences from six months to two years for military drilling or making so-
called insurgent speeches. As the movement grew it divided once again, however Sinn Fein remained a moderate faction. The Volunteers, on the other hand, became an independent group raiding for guns and rustling cattle to prevent hunger within the ranks, all in the name of the Irish Republic.

Sinn Fein's growing support was revealed at the polls in an election in December, 1918. Sinn Fein won 73 out of the 105 Parliament seats. The President of Sinn Fein, Eamon de Valera, took over the fight for Irish self-determination with the support of not only the citizens of southern Ireland, but the Catholic church as well. As Sinn Fein contemplated its next move, the Volunteers began their reign of violence.

It began in January 1919, when two constables were killed while transporting a load of dynamite to a quarry. Robert Kee, in the third book of his trilogy, maintains that "the Volunteers stripped the bodies of their rifles and ammunition and made off with these and the [dynamite]." While most Sinn Fein members did not condone the activities of the Volunteers, Michael Collins was a prominent leader in both organizations. He sanctioned the printing of a journal which directed the Volunteers to inflict death on the enemies of the State. These enemies were soldiers or policemen of the British Government whom every volunteer was entitled "morally and legally...to slay...if it is necessary to do so in order to overcome their resistance." This
policy of terrorism was neither the will of the people, nor the clergy.

As the violence escalated, the government took defensive action. Military restrictions were imposed in many southern cities and counties. In turn, some of the moderate wing of Sinn Fein reacted to this oppression by joining the Volunteers, or Irish Republican Army as they were now being called. The clergy, on the other hand, condemned the Volunteers for their violent means of action.

Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), many of whom were Catholic, were being murdered by the IRA. Civilians, soldiers, and government officials were also being shot in cold blood, then labeled a spy by tying a tag marked "Spy - killed by the IRA" to the corpse. Girls who spoke with RIC men or soldiers would get the hair shaven from their heads or their calves shot off.

On June 24, 1919, Collins' systematic terror against Irish police detectives began. Through the next two years IRA sharpshooters, on Collins' command, executed high-ranking police officials who Collins perceived as threatening. By November, the government outlawed Sinn Fein; however, they again swept the polls in the 1920 election.

By January 1920, fourteen policemen had been murdered, twenty others wounded. Until then they had not fought back, but with the shooting of a Constable in Thurles, the police
began to take the offense establishing a new pattern in the violent situation.

Throughout Ireland, police smashed windows and riddled houses with bullets searching for the perpetrators of the police shootings. Chaos soon followed in a tit-for-tat scenario of violence. Reprisals came as sporadically as the initial murders, primarily in the form of fire. The policemen burned the homes of suspected Sinn Fein members and often burned the local creameries and destroyed businesses and stores. The ranks of the RIC began to thin as policemen resigned their posts. They were quickly replaced however with English, as well as Irish, recruits. By July 1921, the total RIC dead was over 400, with 700 wounded. The total number of civilian casualties is unknown, although in the first six months of 1921, an estimated 707 civilians were killed, 756 wounded. One hundred of these civilians were shot as spies by the IRA.25

The reprisals taken by the RIC only strengthened the will of the nationalists. The burned homes, charred creameries, and corpses of innocent victims were constant reminders of the oppressive British government.

Sectarian violence was prevalent in Ulster. This violence was generally anti-Catholic in nature, although the IRA did shoot a number of Protestant "spies." The IRA declared however, that "no one was to be attacked just because he was a Protestant."26
Martial law was declared in January 1921, in several counties, and internment was now being practiced throughout Ireland. The government was prepared to execute all persons captured while fighting. In February, seven IRA men were executed in Cork. The next day the IRA gunned down six soldiers in the streets of Cork. Something similar to a formal state of war had now indeed come about and was accepted as such by both sides and by the Irish people.

As negotiations between de Valera and Lloyd-George began in 1921, elections were held for the first time in the two Parliaments created by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. Sinn Fein won 124 of the 128 districts in the lower twenty-six counties and 12 out of 52 seats in the North. The partition of Ireland was becoming a reality.

A truce was called on July 8, 1921, and was to be effective beginning at noon on July 11, terminable at seventy-two hours' notice. Negotiations were finally in progress. De Valera did not attend the meeting in London, preferring instead to control the Irish Parliament in Dublin. Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith headed the negotiation delegation.

On December 6, Ireland was formally separated into the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland. Under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, the lower twenty-six counties were no longer under direct British rule. They were now a dominion, able to rule by their own Parliament.
Not only did they control domestic government, but foreign affairs also. Allegiance was not pledged to the Crown, but instead to the newly formed Irish Free State. Northern Ireland was born of the six Ulster counties of Londonderry, Antrim, Down, Armagh, Tyrone, and Monaghan. The Northern Ireland Parliament was retained for maintenance of domestic matters, but Britain had direct control over all foreign affairs, and allegiance was pledged to the Crown.

None of the five signatories from the Republic had liked the compromises of the treaty, but Collins and Griffith believed its advantages far outweighed its disadvantages. The essence of their position was that "it gave the freedom to achieve freedom." 28

Unfortunately, de Valera opposed the treaty. It was ratified by the Irish Parliament however, by a majority of sixty-four to fifty-seven, and de Valera stepped down as President. Arthur Griffith took his place. Again, civil strife broke out in Ireland, this time between pro-treaty and anti-treaty IRA factions.

Rioting in the newly formed North also broke out as Protestants learned that three of the nine Ulster counties had been sacrificed. Bitter fighting between the Catholics, backed by both factions of the IRA, and the Protestants, supported by the Ulster Special Constabulary, resulted in massive losses. In three weeks in February, 138 casualties were reported from Belfast, of whom 98 were Catholics.
Thirty people were killed in a single night. Thousands of Catholic refugees poured into southern Ireland; some even left the country.  

Elections for the Irish Parliament were held in 1922 and reflected the majority pro-treaty opinion of the South. Ninety-four of the 128 members of the new government were in favor of the Treaty. Collins now had unmistakable democratic support for the Treaty.

Nevertheless, fighting continued in the Irish Free State between the anti-treaty and pro-treaty forces. On June 30, under the direction of Collins, the newly formed government army arrested over one hundred anti-treaty activists. In the ensuing battle, sixty-three people were killed, 300 wounded, and a section of Dublin burned or destroyed by bullets. The remaining anti-treaty forces retreated to Cork, but by August, Collins' army, with the help of the British government, dismantled them. Only a handful of militant IRA members were left.

Unfortunately, the calm in the Irish Free State was shattered with the sudden death of their President, Arthur Griffith, and the murder, ten days later, of Michael Collins. Ironically, Collins was killed by the same squad which he at one time had commanded. The new leaders took even harsher steps against the anti-treaty remnants, now called the "Republicans." Within six months the new Free State Government executed seventy-seven Republicans.
to a lack of support, the IRA was forced to go underground. The group fell out of sight and remained largely dormant for many years. Although sporadic fighting continued through the mid-1900s, the IRA did not fully resurface again until the 1960s.

**Provisional Irish Republican Army**

Severely oppressed by the Protestants in Northern Ireland, Catholic tolerance of government sanctioned discrimination waned. In a society dominated by Protestants by two to one, housing, labor, income, and social discrimination was rampant. Voting was permitted only by land-owners, and very few Catholics owned land. Therefore, the North was governed primarily by land-owning Protestants.

As tension began to mount, Catholics emulated the civil rights movement led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in the southern United States. The inspiration of King led several Catholics to develop the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. Catholics marched from Belfast to Londonderry protesting the discrimination under which they had been forced to live. Predictably, they were taunted and beaten by Protestants, as the police, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), looked on.

Alex Greer, in "Nationalism, Internationalism, and the Conflict in Northern Ireland," maintains that the original intent of the IRA in 1969 "was not violent, but a campaign of nonsectarian and non-violent political education and
activism." However, as violence against demonstrating civilians and the IRA continued, a split occurred within the IRA, and the Provisional Irish Republican Army emerged. As fighting and rioting continued, the PIRA turned to more violent means of countering the mobs of angry Protestants.

As the pillaging and burning of Catholic communities continued, the British Army was brought in to restore order. At first the troops were greeted warmly by the Catholics. They were seen as protectors, but soon the Army was viewed as another useless organ of the oppressive Protestant government, which by this time had outlawed all forms of anti-government demonstrations. The PIRA became the guardian of the Catholic ghettos in Ulster, particularly in Belfast. David Schmitt reports in "Bicommunal Conflict and Accommodation in Northern Ireland" that "the internment operation of 1971 in which Catholics were indiscriminately picked up and sometimes abused" to learn information about the PIRA, "radicalized most of the Catholic community." The situation deteriorated even further on January 30, 1972—"Bloody Sunday."

As seven thousand demonstrators, some of whom were PIRA members, marched down the streets of Londonderry, they were brutally attacked by two hundred heavily-armed paratroopers from the British Army. Allegedly, some of the marchers threw rocks and bricks at the soldiers, who in turn launched tear gas and purple dye at the demonstrators, and finally
opened fire. The short, but violent battle ended with thirteen civilians killed, seventeen wounded, and seventy arrested. Anger and hate toward the Army grew as the ranks of the PIRA swelled with volunteers. Padraig O'Malley contends that "by the mid-1970s the PIRA had fifteen hundred members, six hundred of whom were believed to be in Belfast." Killing and maiming by PIRA bombs or snipers was an almost daily routine in Northern Ireland as one bomb after another killed civilians as well as soldiers. Retaliation to the violence was daily also.

On March 24, 1972, the Northern Ireland Parliament was abruptly closed and Britain took direct control of the government giving full power to Westminster. The government was dissolved due to the escalating violence and the judicial system which processed those arrested for terrorism. In Northern Ireland witnesses were considered informers. The incentive for keeping one's mouth shut, eyes closed, and mind blank was a long life. PIRA jury intimidation was wide-spread in the North, leading Britain to establish the Diplock Courts in the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act of 1973.

The Diplock Courts replaced the standard jury trial with that of one judge. The Act also provided for the warrantless detention of suspected terrorists for up to seventy-two hours and wide powers of search and seizure by members of the security forces. Many members of the
Catholic community were harassed by police and soldiers, and some were arrested. More than thirty thousand homes were searched in 1972, sixty thousand in 1973.

In 1972 support was strong for the PIRA. O'Malley maintains however, that by 1975 "the movement had largely disintegrated, gangsterism was pervasive," and feuding between the Official IRA and the PIRA was increasing. In 1976 the PIRA was well encamped in Northern Ireland. They recognized their inefficiency and reorganized their structure from an hierarchical one, based on neighborhood groups, to a cellular organization. This new structure made it very difficult for authorities to infiltrate the organization, and informers were virtually eliminated.

In March, 1976, the British government rescinded the "special category" status of prisoners convicted of political crimes, mainly members of the PIRA. Prisoners responded by refusing to wear prison garb or do prison work. When this strategy failed, the hunger strikes began. The first strikes were abandoned after only a few weeks of starvation. However, five years later, Bobby Sands, the commanding officer of the PIRA within the prison, began his hunger strike. He was starving himself for more than mere political prisoner status, he was starving himself as an expression of the fight "between the oppressed Irish people and an alien, oppressive, unwanted regime that refuses to withdraw from our land." He died sixty-six days later. In
the next three months, nine other prisoners also died of starvation. Despite the casualties, the hunger strike was an effective method of creating martyrs and recruiting support.

On October 13, 1984, the PIRA attempted to assassinate Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a long-time enemy of the IRA. Thatcher escaped without injury, but three people died and thirty-four were hurt as a result of the explosion. This was the first attempt on a Prime Minister's life in sixty years.

Negotiations to end the crisis in Northern Ireland led to the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985. This agreement provided the Republic of Ireland with a direct hand in the governmental affairs concerning minority Catholics in Northern Ireland. Expectedly, the Unionist community was strongly opposed to the Agreement. Protestant para-militaries threatened to kill members of the Secretariat and other participants. Although a courageous attempt by British and Irish officials, Schmitt argues that the result was little more than an "imaginative attempt to create a framework for progress in reducing political violence and generating a sense of legitimacy."37

As the PIRA violence continued, support began again to dwindle in the South. Presently support comes from a small number of Catholics in Northern Ireland. Even so, the PIRA is now one of the world's best equipped and most experienced
According to British security officials, "there are probably no more than forty active gunmen in the North, supported by about 150 Volunteers. However, political support for the PIRA is shrinking. Part of the reason may be the partial ban on Sinn Fein publicity, although the party itself is legal. Another reason is the Catholic church's view that denounces the IRA and says that voting for Sinn Fein is a mortal sin. In the 1984 local election in Northern Ireland, Sinn Fein won only 11.2% of the vote. In the 1984 election for the European Parliament, Sinn Fein received only 2.8% of the vote for the entire island. Roman Catholic opposition to the IRA in Northern Ireland is embodied in the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) founded in 1970. The New York Times reports that the SDLP "represents more than 90% of the nationalist population on both sides of the Irish border."

Richard Clutterbuck claims that since 1969, "nearly 2,000 people, only a third of them in the uniforms of the British Army or the Royal Ulster Constabulary have died in the struggle over the northern six counties of Ireland," and over 10,000 people have been injured. As the PIRA continues to participate in terrorist activities, their popular support shrinks.

Clutterbuck maintains that families living in Catholic ghettos in Northern Ireland are "becoming exasperated with the continual involvement of their children in the fighting,"
and it is probable that less than one third now support the IRA. The overwhelming majority of Catholics support the non-violence of the SDLP. The violence of the PIRA has served only to "alienate their own Catholic supporters in the North."

Alienation had also been the effect of prolonged terrorism not only in the Republic, but also in the USA, where contributions to the "welfare" funds which provide a transparent cover for financing and arming the IRA have fallen to a trickle. Additionally, the IRA has aroused Protestant dislike and distrust of all Catholics to the point where reunification without another civil war is impossible. Clutterbuck states further that "neither the government in Dublin, nor the people of the South have any desire at present to shatter the peace of the Republic by bringing in vicious warring factions from the North, whether Protestant or Catholic." He further states that "the only reunification which the IRA have achieved has been to bring about unprecedented unity between London and Dublin."

Conclusion

The IRB was an organization which garnered support only during crisis and only with the help of martyrs. The rising of 1867 had little popular support, and was a failure. The mobilizing factor for Home Rule was not the movement itself, but the martyrdom of the three men executed by the British for participating in the 1867 uprising. After the Land Act
was passed in 1881, membership again declined because the goals of the members, ownership of the land, had been met with the implementation of "dual ownership."

In the early 1900s the organization not only lost Irish support, but it split into several factions. The passing of the Home Rule Bill in 1914 had little to do with the Irish National Volunteers, but was negotiated by political means, not violence and terrorism. The uprising of 1916, the fight for Home Rule, was neither popularly supported, nor was it effective.

The violence in the early 1920s seems the catalyst for the separation of Ireland into two countries. The IRA was not only fighting the British and the Protestants, but also themselves when the organization split into pro- and anti-treaty factions. The IRA was not the only violent organization however; in retaliation soldiers and police used terrorist tactics also. The only difference was that the IRA was illegal and the counter-movement was not. Regardless of the instigators, the violence of the 1920s caused the emergence of Northern Ireland under the Crown. Again, little was accomplished through the employment of violence.

The only constructive movement thus far seems to be the early civil rights movement of the late 1960s. The movement was initially organized by people who were not affiliated with the IRA and was to be a non-violent expression of
Protestant oppression of Catholics. There is little doubt that the Protestants started abusing the Catholics during the protest marches, and that the Catholics were on the defensive. However, when the PIRA was born and firmly encamped themselves in the Catholic ghettos, whole Catholic communities were reduced to targets for the RUC and the British Army.

It is clear that support for the PIRA declined in the late 1970s and early 1980s until the hunger strikes resurrected the movement through martyrdom. But even this burst of popular support was short lived as the horrors of terrorism hit home in Ireland. Since the last deluge of support in the mid-1980s, the PIRA had been steadily losing its popular and financial support.

There is little doubt that the PIRA is a well organized group that will continue to terrorize Britain, Northern Ireland, and parts of Europe. It seems however, that these activities only strengthen the resolve of the British to rule Northern Ireland and perpetuate the separation of Ireland. The PIRA will therefore fail to rid Northern Ireland of English influence through violent means, and consequently, fail to attain its goals.

The IRA and the PIRA of late have done nothing but hurt the Irish people, mainly innocent civilians who are caught in the cross-fire. It is unlikely that the goal of reunification of Ireland will be met through violence.
Violence only begets violence; the many bloody reprisals of the British and Protestants are proof.
ENDNOTES

1Ruth Glendhill, "Painter Hurled 50 ft. by Blast Escapes with Cuts and Bruises," The Times (London), 23 September 1989, 4.


4Ibid.


7Ibid., 34.


9Kee, Fenian Men, 47.

10Ibid., 57.

11Ibid., 58.

12George Dangerfield, The Damnable Question: One Hundred and Twenty Years of Anglo-Irish Conflict (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), 16.

13Kee, Fenian Men, 71.

14Ibid., 77.

15Ibid., 79.

16Ibid., 125.

17Ibid., 175.

18Ibid., 254.
19"The Irish Disturbances," The Times (London), 26 April 1919, 7.
20Kee, Fenian Men, 255.
21Dangerfield, Damnable Question, 300.
23Ibid., 61.
24Ibid., 75.
25Ibid., 125.
26Ibid., 130.
27Ibid., 139.
28Ibid., 154.
29Ibid., 160.
30Ibid., 170.
36Ibid., 266.
37Schmitt, "Bicommunal Conflict," 279.


42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 73.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3
PROVISIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

All civil violence had a purpose, an end, a goal. James Rule, a noted scholar in the field of civil violence and terrorism, maintains that "the objective and targets of militant collective action [will] reflect pursuit of long term collective interest of the groups represented in the action."¹

This chapter examines the objectives and targets of the Provisional Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland. This examination includes an analysis of the tactical and strategic objectives and collective interests, as well as an examination of the infrastructure of the PIRA and the groups represented by the PIRA. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the accuracy of the representation accorded Catholics by the Provisionals (members of the PIRA).

Tactical Strategies

The universal aim of terror is intimidation, the creation of fear and anxiety. Terrorism is usually not the random use of violence. This violence has a purpose and a goal. Terrorism is merely a tactical strategy used to create a feeling of panic among those who are targeted. It
is also used to attract the media, creating a further feeling of helplessness. Walter Laqueur, a noted scholar in the area of terrorism and terrorist groups, argues that a terrorist organization cannot survive without media coverage, in fact, "the smaller the terrorist gang the more it depends on publicity." The tactical strength of the PIRA is a long war of attrition. The Provos believe that they can reach their ultimate goal of reunification with the Republic by waging a bombing and assassination campaign against prominent citizens in Northern Ireland and Britain.

**Bombings**

There are several ways of achieving tactical success. Terrorist use of bombs is a universal strategy. Since the creation of plastic explosives, bombs are virtually undetectable. They are convenient, many are compact, and can be detonated with the use of remote control. Bombs can be effective even if no one is injured or killed. They wreak extensive structural damage and make a great deal of noise, drawing attention which inevitably results in media publicity. Michael Poole, a lecturer at the New University of Ulster, states that bombings are the incidents that arouse the greatest political and public concern, "they have the greatest impact on the community and, not least, they are the best documented."

Bombings in Northern Ireland were very frequent during the early 1970s, and parts of Belfast have been reduced to
empty, charred structures. Padraig O'Malley explains:

Belfast, ugly and sore to the eye, the will to go on gone, the signs of departure everywhere. In ten years it has lost one quarter of its population. Buildings are boarded up. There is little construction, and no skyline. Business is desultory, pace is lacking, energy absent, burned out housing estates a vivid reminder of the sectarian tensions that mark the quiet expression of the passion in private places.  

Table 2.—Persons Killed in Explosions from 1972-1978 in Northern Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Killed in Explosions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The sophistication of PIRA explosives has grown with increasing commercial technology. In the early days the IRA used unsophisticated devices made from alarm clocks, electric circuits and inflammable material. These days the bombs are often hidden inside cassette tape boxes or gasoline cans and are virtually undetectable.

Incendiary devices, or firebombs, have long been a favorite weapon in the armory of the IRA. They were developed in the mid-1970s as a device for reaching targets with high consumer or passenger traffic. Incendiary bombs
have been found at several London train stations, inside underground trains, and in several Manchester stores. Left intact, the devices would have exploded into a sudden blaze, then created a larger fire, eventually destroying the property and possibly injuring or killing many.

Few are immune from the Provisionals. Then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was the target of a bomb placed in The Grand Hotel on October 13, 1984. This particular explosion created world-wide attention, as it was the first attempt on the life of a Prime Minister in sixty years.

One of the most effective bombings by the Provos occurred in London on July 20, 1980. Six British soldiers on horseback and two civilians were killed, and fifty others were injured when two bombs exploded during ceremonial duties. One company of soldiers in full regalia was making the daily ride from their barracks to Whitehall, the other members were in the band and playing to a lunchtime audience. O'Malley states that "the spectacle of the splendid animals reduced to a bloodied pulp moved the public as much, if not more, than the human dead."  

The London Times reports however that bombs are "used infrequently on the British mainland [and] remain a mainstay of the IRA campaign in Ulster."  Between January and August of 1991, the RUC had recorded 39 incidents involving 169 incendiary devices, and fourteen stores were destroyed in Belfast causing 25 million pounds in damage.
A particularly gruesome method of bombing used by the Provos in Northern Ireland is a "proxy bomb." The PIRA will kidnap a family and force one person to drive a vehicle containing the bomb to its destination while holding the other family members hostage to ensure completion of the mission. If the orders or not carried out, and the bomb is not delivered, the Provos will murder the hostages and detonate the bomb by remote control killing the driver. This method was used on February 4, 1991 to blow up an Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR) base in County Londonderry, causing considerable damage to the base and surrounding homes.

On April 9, 1991, the Provisionals used a woman hostage as a "human bomb" in an attempt to blow up a border police station in County Fermenaugh. The Times reports that the woman, who worked at the station, was forced to carry the bomb in her handbag while her husband and child were held hostage. The bomb exploded minutes after it was delivered, but no one was injured. In October of 1990, six soldiers and a civilian died in similar "human bomb" attacks on military check points in Londonderry and Newry.8

Assassinations

Assassination is another effective strategy employed by terrorists. Assassination is not merely the murder of a high ranking official, but the slaying of any targeted person. Between 1972 and 1978 approximately 625 people were
assassinated in Northern Ireland, however not all of them were victims of the PIRA. Some were victims of the Ulster Defense Force (UDF) and other Protestant paramilitary groups.\(^9\)

Assassinations are useful not only to eliminate the target, but also to warn others that holding similar positions, views, and attitudes could result in the same fate.

Table 3.—Sectarian, Intrafractional, and Interfractional Assassinations from 1972-1978 in Northern Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Assassinated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>144</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>121</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Assassination is an invaluable tactic against the elites, for the execution of prominent officials causes abundant fear and anxiety among those who either govern or support the government. The assassination of Lord Mountbatten by the Provos on August 27, 1979, garnered much media attention as international outcries of sorrow and rage poured forth.
Policemen in Northern Ireland are often PIRA assassination targets. Two were shot in the head in a crowded city center market in Belfast on July 1, 1990. The Times states that the PIRA claimed responsibility for the incident and the Superintendent of the RUC issued this statement of contempt: "Once again this demonstrated the utterly indiscriminate way these people go about their business."\(^{10}\)

Member of Parliament Ian Gow was the fourth sitting MP to be assassinated by the Provos when a car bomb exploded at his house on July 30, 1990. The Times reports that the name of the outspoken anti-IRA MP was found on a "hit list" in 1989, and he was warned to take extra security measures to ensure his safety. The Provos said they assassinated Mr. Gow because he was "a close and personal associate of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher," and because he wielded considerable political influence in the political affairs of Northern Ireland.\(^{11}\)

Contrary to the statement issued by the Superintendent of the RUC, the assassination of the two officers was not indiscriminate. They were shot because they were involved with the security forces in Northern Ireland and because the PIRA knew the murders would garner media attention. Lord Mountbatten, Ian Gow and the many others who have been PIRA victims were assassinated for similar reasons. Simply put, it furthered the Provisionals' goal of tactical success.
Hunger Strikes

Although not detrimental to the lives of those uninvolved in a hunger strike, this tactic is used to garner support for those involved, mainly PIRA members, and capture worldwide media attention. The success of this tactic is debatable. It is true that initially a hunger strike will attract sympathizers and media attention, but that attention and sympathy usually fade as the hunger strikers perish. Sometimes however, a hunger strike can lead to negotiations and tactical success.

As a result of a hunger strike in June 1972, the "special category" status was accorded those prisoners who were convicted of "political" crimes. In essence this meant that political prisoners, most of whom were PIRA and IRA members, were not required to wear prison uniforms, were allowed more visits and food parcels, and had better facilities than ordinary prisoners. This status was revoked in March 1976, prompting prisoners to go "on the blanket." They wore no clothes, and did no work, including cleaning themselves or their cells. This strategy was a failure, and the hunger strike resumed in October 1980. On March 1, 1981, Bobby Sands, the commanding IRA officer within Maze prison began his hunger strike. He attempted, not only to regain special status, but to gather much needed popular support for the Provisionals. He died sixty-six days later, followed by nine others within three months.
Even though the hunger strike did not prompt the reintroduction of the special category status, one scholar believes that it was an unequivocal success. In Padraig O'Malley's words, it allowed the IRA to reestablish itself in the heroic mold and to reaffirm its legitimacy in the historical context, thereby making it more difficult to dismiss the IRA as mere terrorists with no political constituency and representative of nothing other than the fragmented dream of a demented few.12

Desecration

Another form of intimidation is the desecration of certain institutions, churches and especially government buildings. This form of terrorism is implicit, and is often a warning device which advertises future consequences if the present warning is not heeded. This warning can come in the form of graffiti and vandalism. Members of Provisional Sinn Fein, the political wing of the PIRA, have painted slogans advocating violence on the walls of many Belfast businesses. This form of terrorism is useful because of its simplicity. It requires no training or expertise, and the only necessary equipment is a can of spray paint.

Members or sympathizers of both Protestant and Catholic paramilitary organizations painted graffiti on community walls during the hunger strikes in 1981. In Catholic areas elaborate murals began to appear, some depicting bearded hunger strikers in Christ-like images. One person painted "Blessed are those who hunger for justice," high on a gable
Graffiti of quite opposite meaning appeared in several Protestant communities. "Let Bobby Sands Die," "Let Bobby Sands Rot in Hell," and "Don't be Vague, Starve a Taig," (taig is slang for Catholic) were written on walls in loyalist districts.

Harassment

Another tactic harassment of the enemy. Harassment can be either verbal or physical brutality. Although physical brutality is not a common trademark of the Provos, their sympathizers often verbally taunt soldiers and policemen and throw rocks, bottles, and sticks at them. This strategy is meant to invite retaliation, which it does, so the PIRA can justify its existence as protector of the Catholic minority and justify the further use of violence.

On Easter Sunday, April 12, 1981, the PIRA held demonstrations and parades in several towns in Northern Ireland to show support for Bobby Sands. After the ceremonies were over in Londonderry a group of fifty teenagers began stoning policemen and soldiers. As the pelting continued, two army Land Rovers came speeding at the demonstrators at an estimated fifty miles per hour. The vehicles smashed into the crowd killing two boys. The Catholics of Derry and several members of the PIRA retaliated on April 14 and 15 by stealing and burning thirty-one cars and buses and lobbing acid bombs at the security forces. The retaliation of the soldiers made
martyrs of the boys and energized the crowd: in other words, the harassment was a success, despite the deaths of the youngsters.

Kidnapping

Ceremonial terrorism is another effective tactic. Kidnapping and hostage-taking fall into this category. It is mainly used as an attention-grabbing media event. Tactically, hostage taking is a good strategy. Hostages can be used for financial gain through extortion or a bartering tool for arms and ammunition. The possession of hostages may also guarantee safety for the terrorists. The government of the hostages will not employ large-scale violent methods of eliminating terrorists for fear of accidentally killing the hostages. With the exception of those hostages used for proxy bomb and human bomb purposes, the Provos have used kidnapping minimally. Between 1973 and 1978, only eight people were kidnapped, six in the United Kingdom, and two in the Republic.

PIRA Targets

Targets of the PIRA are not chosen at random. To reiterate, these people are chosen to meet specific goals of intimidation. This violence is sometimes viewed as primarily sectarian, but that is not the case because the Provos target only those who will serve their purpose, mainly government officials or members of the security
forces. Unfortunately, accidents happen, and the Provisionals have admitted sorrow when a child is caught by an explosion or in the cross-fire. Certain buildings such as bus terminals, train stations, and army buildings are also targeted by the Provos.

Civilian casualties are very common in Northern Ireland. According to a study done by Michael McKeown, there were 1,163 civilians killed due to the strife in Ulster from 1968 to 1980. One household in fifteen had been touched by the disturbances. The Provos alone are not to blame for this high rate of death though. The Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Ulster Defense Force (UDF), and the British military all have contributed to the high casualty rate. The Protestant paramilitaries have largely been a reactive force. Barry White, in "From Conflict to Violence," states that the Unionists have a siege mentality and they regard any challenge to the status quo as subversive, and a cause for retaliation. This has led them to indulge in openly sectarian attacks [and] to terrorize the Catholic population.

An instance of Catholics becoming PIRA targets occurred around 1972 as they were "persuaded" to leave the UDF. At the insistence of the Provos, the number of Catholics involved in the UDF dropped from eighteen percent in 1972 to an insignificant two percent in 1980. Catholics who are suspected informants are readily assassinated, as are those disloyal to the cause.
Areas where many people gather are easily targeted. Although "not authorized," the PIRA claimed responsibility for a car bomb which exploded outside Herrod's department store in London on December 18, 1983. Six people including two policemen were killed, and seventy-seven people were injured. On February 14, 1991, the Provos claimed responsibility for bombing the Victoria and Paddington train stations, killing one man and injuring forty other persons. The first bomb exploded at Paddington station at 4:20 am, causing extensive damage to the roof, but hurting no one. The second bomb detonated at 7:40 am, just as the morning rush hour was beginning. A platform full of commuters was violently rocked, sending those people into an instant panic. As The Times of London states, "had the device, containing 7 lbs of explosives, gone off twenty minutes later, there would probably have been three times as many casualties."

Prominent members in the British government are also targeted for execution by the Provisionals. Prime Minister John Major and his War Cabinet, meeting at 10 Downing Street, London, were the targets of a mortar attack on February 7, 1991. Four people were slightly injured, and numbers 10, 11, and 12 Downing Street all somewhat damaged as windows shattered and outer walls were scorched. This particular attack was a decisive victory for the PIRA as they have never come so close to 10 Downing Street, and they
had never before used mortars in Britain. The attack was easily carried out because the mortars were launched from an abandoned van parked in front of the Prime Minister's residence. Professor Paul Wilkinson, an expert on terrorism, was quoted as saying:

> the bombing highlighted the IRA's ability to deliver blows that were psychologically and physically damaging. Attacking 10 Downing Street had obviously great propaganda value; but the physical threat had been shown to be very real.¹⁶

Although most assassinations of military personnel take place in Northern Ireland or England, the Provos have by no means limited themselves to those areas. In 1989 a Royal Air Force Corporal stationed in Germany was assassinated by the Provos. He was not alone when gunmen targeted him, and his six-month-old daughter was also killed. The IRA said it expressed "profound regret for killing the child."¹⁷

The group which has taken the brunt of PIRA assassinations is the combined security forces in Northern Ireland. Between 1974 and 1980, 131 British soldiers had been killed, most by shooting or bombing attacks. Between 1970 and 1986, 377 members of the RUC and the UDF were murdered by terrorists, and over 6,000 were injured. The same day that Lord Mountbatten was assassinated, August 27, 1979, the Provos killed eighteen members of the British Army south of Belfast. As three trucks filled with soldiers passed by a vehicle carrying a stack of hay, a bomb, hidden in the hay, was detonated by remote control from a nearby bush.
On November 2, 1991, two soldiers were killed, six injured, and four civilians injured during a bomb attack on the military wing of a Belfast hospital. It was the first bomb attack on a hospital since the beginning of the present troubles in 1968. The Times reports that the PIRA claimed responsibility and said that the intended target was not the civilian portion of the hospital, but what it called "the British Army base next to it," referring to the military wing.\(^{18}\)

**Internal Machinery of the Provisional IRA Organization**

The organization of the Provisional IRA has changed considerably over the years. Before 1977, it was organized on a neighborhood basis. Padraig O'Malley says that "the structure was hierarchical--brigades, battalions, and companies drew their members from the neighborhoods in which they would operate."\(^ {19}\)

This structure made the movement highly accessible, causing much infiltration and high rates of arrest for those suspected of terrorist activities. By the mid 1970s the Provos had fifteen hundred members, six hundred of whom were in Belfast. In 1977, the group reorganized into cellular units. These very active units consist of three or four members drawn from different neighborhoods. Each unit is specialized in its tactical performance; rarely does an
explosives unit use guns, and vice versa. Information is disseminated on a "need to know basis", and only one member is given advance instructions. This new organization has made the Provos less dependent on public support and less vulnerable to informers. In 1988, there were no more than forty active gunmen in the North, supported by approximately 150 volunteers. There were only eight brigades operating from "The North command."\textsuperscript{20}

Membership

Membership is highly selective in the PIRA. A recruit may be scrutinized for up to a year before being allowed to join. Hard drinkers and loud individuals are readily dismissed. Brigadier James Glover, who was the General Commanding Officer of British forces in Northern Ireland, was quoted as saying, "The PIRA is essentially a working-class organization based in the ghetto areas of the cities and in the poor rural areas."\textsuperscript{21}

Contrary to popular theory, the Provos are not made up of the dregs of society. Recruitment is fairly easy, young men and women who grew up in the violent areas on Northern Ireland often aspire to become full-time terrorists, and there is a steady stream of dedicated and embittered terrorists being released from prison. The prisons themselves have a command structure and classes where terrorists can learn "everything from republicanism to weaponry."\textsuperscript{22}
Arms and Financial Support

Armament and financial support for terrorist movements comes from many sources. Dr. Michael McKinley in the essay "The Irish Republican Army and Terror International" claims that by 1973, "at least 282 types of weapons had been discovered [belonging to PIRA members] representing fifteen countries of origin."²³ Czechoslovakian explosives and pistols, and Soviet-made rifles, hand-grenades and rocket launchers are among the large cache of armament in PIRA possession.

In the 1970s, the Libyan government of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qaddafi and the Palestine Liberation Organization also sent shipments of arms to the Provos. In October 1987, a ship was seized carrying 150 tons of weapons from Libya to Northern Ireland. Included in the cargo were surface-to-air missiles, mortar shells, rocket launchers, and Semtex high explosive.²⁴

By 1974, the Provisionals were armed with California-made armelite AR130's and variants of the American military M1 carbine and AR1S semi-automatic weapons. The Provos even had a few American military M60 fully-automatic machine guns which were presumed stolen from a National Guard Armory in Danvers, MA. In addition, explosives were readily diverted to Northern Ireland by sympathizers working on the New York City water tunnel in the 1970s. Arms also came from sympathizers in Canada and the Irish Northern Aid Committee
(NORAID), based in the United States, who sent rifles, hand guns, and ammunition.\textsuperscript{25}

Financial aid comes from NORAID as well. From 1969 to 1981, at least $1,971,796 was sent to IRA officials in Northern Ireland. However, unofficial NORAID sources have boasted of sending as much as $5 million to the IRA over that same eleven years. One anonymous NORAID representative was quoted in 1971 as saying:

\begin{quote}
Our job is to get up the money and send it to the people over there. What they use it for is up to them. We attach no strings. Everything we do in this country is aimed at assisting the final phase of the struggle for freedom in Ireland.\textsuperscript{26}
\end{quote}

In 1975 NORAID claimed to have eighty chapters in the United States with approximately two thousand members nationwide. The largest concentrations are in Boston, New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and other large cities across the country. By 1989, however, donations had dropped off to an estimated $175,000 annually.

The IRA and the Provisional IRA have interior financial capabilities as well. In the early 1970s they ran extensive protection rackets involving local shop owners, publicans (pub owners) and industrialists. James Adams, in his essay "The Financing of Terror," believes that "every major business in [Northern Ireland] has been sucked into the protection racket."\textsuperscript{27} The organization legitimized the protection by claiming that it was merely a security firm. John DeLorean, former owner of the defunct DeLorean Motor
Company, was one of the many who "employed" the security firm.  

One semi-legitimate operation the IRA and the Provos run is their taxi service. It began in 1972 with five "black cabs" purchased in London. Shortly thereafter the IRA stoned and bombed the city-run bus service in Belfast destroying over three hundred buses. The IRA replaced the bus service with six hundred cabs, two garages, and eighteen full-time employees. In 1986, the IRA's taxi companies, Falls Taxis and Peoples Taxis, had approximately 350 cabs, eight full-time employees, and claimed assets in excess of one million pounds.

Other activities to raise money for the IRA and PIRA include fraud on building sites, the sale of legal and illegal alcohol in Northern Ireland's night clubs and armed robbery. In 1973 they stole $42,000 from various Belfast banks. Counterfeit money is another illegal activity in which the IRA participates. 

In September 1988, $2 million in American counterfeit currency was seized in Dublin. On February 7, 1989, an IRA operative was arrested in New York City for attempting to smuggle over $13,000 in counterfeit bills into the United States. Irish authorities claim the money was intended to pay for IRA and PIRA operations. The Times reports that in 1989 the PIRA and IRA generated ten million pounds from "mafia-style operations ranging from protection rackets,
extortion and armed robbery to fraud, smuggling and drug dealing."

From these various attempts to maintain financial and organizational stability, one can draw a picture of a well-organized, established group which intends to keep fighting for its goals at all costs.

**Representation by the PIRA**

The Provisional IRA professes to have the long-term well-being of the Catholic minority at heart when it uses terrorism to attain its goals. They believe that they are the voice of the minority and have its full support and cooperation. They view themselves as protectors of the people and defenders of the cause.

The role of the Provisionals in Catholic ghettos is more than mere representative and protector however. They are a quasi-security force who act as policemen and often punish those Catholics found guilty of crimes against their neighbors. These "ghetto laws" are often issued through directives pushed through residents' mail slots or warnings painted on walls in the district.

John Conroy, an American journalist who periodically spent time in Northern Ireland from 1977-1985, says that residents are allowed to rob a bank or post office, but only to support the movement. Stealing from a neighbor is forbidden, but stealing from the government is allowed and even encouraged. Teenagers are not allowed to steal cars or
trucks, except during riots when they are used as barricades. During a riot one may steal a bus, but not a black taxi.

Policemen are legitimate targets anywhere, anytime, of abuse, harassment, stones, bombs, and bullets. Firemen, however, are always immune. For store owners, dealing in smuggled goods is permissible, dealing in stolen goods is forbidden. Inebriation is acceptable behavior, as is the taking of valium. Serving liquor to a minor is an offense, as is the use of heroin. Rape is a crime with swift and often severe consequences.31

Punishment is meted out according to the severity of the crime. After the first offense one is always given a verbal warning; beyond that punishment is usually swift and very painful. The Provos' sentence is "kneecapping." This is the practice of shooting an offender in the knee. A light sentence is a bullet through the fleshy part of the thigh. A heavy sentence results in the destruction of bones and arteries. These sentences range from the shooting of one leg to both legs, and even both arms and legs, also called "the silver cross." Conroy maintains that between 1973 and 1985 there were 1,110 kneecappings.32 If an offender fails to forego his errant ways, he is executed.

Like the offenses, there are guidelines to punishments. Women are never kneecapped and those offenders under sixteen are beaten, but rarely shot. If the parents of a youngster
are deemed irresponsible, either the father is beaten or both parents are banned from local pubs. While popular in the early 1970s, the Provos have abandoned the practice of tarring and feathering, and no longer douse offenders with paint or diesel oil.

Conroy maintains that the Provisionals relied primarily on kneecapping in 1980 to keep the community in line. It does not always work however and some people are kneecapped on more than one occasion. Andy Tyrie, the leader of the UDA, maintains that the fear instilled by the Provos "never works if it occurs over a period of time. People get used to being threatened." The PIRA continues to kneecap Catholic residents because he ghetto needs policing, and if they did not do it, the people would eventually turn to the RUC. Conroy claims that "acceptance of the police would ultimately result in the rejection of the IRA."

Adrian Guelke, in "Loyalist and Republican Perceptions of the Northern Ireland Conflict," claims that the Provisionals are losing support because they can not protect Catholic residents from the sectarian and random killings by the Protestant paramilitaries.

Support in the South is also lacking. Northern Catholics are often seen as their own worst enemies: petulant, demanding, and insistent. People in the rest of Great Britain are generally disinclined to concentrate heavily on the problems of Northern Ireland, again because
they view it as a distinctively Irish problem. Michael McKinley, a professor of political science at the Australian National University, maintains that "disunity and a revulsion against the violence in both Northern Ireland and the mainland ensured [PIRA] rejection by the majority of the Irish [Catholic] community in Britain, who felt its standing was endangered."³⁶

Condemnation of the violent tactics of the IRA and PIRA comes from the Catholic Church regularly. The IRA was formally condemned first in 1931 and again in 1956, and since 1972, the condemnations have been increasingly harsh and fréquent. The righteousness of the cause transcended even the impassioned pleas of Pope John Paul II when he visited Northern Ireland in 1979 and begged for the cessation of the violence.

There is, of course, a firm lack of support from the Protestants of the North, and in fact, the violence of the Provos, only furthers Protestant hate and discrimination.

The Provos have demonstrated, however, that they are organizationally sound and do not need popular support to carry forth their tactical objectives. One expert estimates that the PIRA can function with as little as three percent support from the Catholic population.³⁷

**Strategic Goals**

The strategic goals of the PIRA seem fluid, shifting with political and social change in Northern Ireland.
Richard Clutterbuck claims that the Provisionals do not have any detectable political ideology and are motivated solely by nationalist aims. One report says the objective is to unify Ireland under a vaguely defined form of socialism; another claims the Provos have a Marxist-Leninist bent. Padraig O'Malley says that the campaign is an effort to get the British troops to withdraw from Northern Ireland, so the North can reunite with the South. Mark Findlay argues that the movement was a reaction not to British military presence, but to blatant economic deprivation and "discrimination in the provision of housing and employment" in Northern Ireland.³⁸

A united Ireland is not an outlandish goal for the Provisionals. The citizens of Britain and the Republic consistently endorse some form of reunification. However, neither group is willing to make concessions to help bring about a peacefully united Ireland. Citizens of the Republic are unwilling to pay higher taxes to initiate reunification, and British citizens remain aloof, claiming that the Irish problem should stay in Ireland.

As a matter of fact, public opinion polls have shown that violence in Northern Ireland has little effect on British sentiment, and violence in Britain raises only minimal concern among the citizens. Furthermore, even though Ulster Protestants see themselves as British, instead of Irish, the feeling is not necessarily reciprocated.
Troop withdrawal is a seemingly simplistic goal of the Provos, however some would argue to contrary. A survey has found that fifty-nine percent of people in the Republic believe that troop withdrawal without the consent of both societies in the North would result in increased violence.

Speculations have been made that a full withdrawal would leave Northern Ireland in the hands of the professional Protestant army and police force whose membership would range from five to fifteen thousand. This scenario anticipates that Catholics would flee to the Republic, creating an immense refugee problem. The Provisionals and the Official IRA would appear as protectors and defenders of the remaining Catholics in the North. Recruitment would skyrocket as would financial support from the Republic, sympathizers abroad, and especially, Irish-Americans. The Republic would stand firm in their quest to protect Catholic communities along the border and perhaps aspire to regain all six counties of Ulster. The North and South in essence would be on the brink of civil war. O'Malley maintains that withdrawal would irrevocably strengthen the position of the IRA and that

there is, therefore, no case for unilateral withdrawal unless, of course, it is assumes the Protestants would accept that British withdrawal made unification inevitable, and that rather than fight the inevitable they would bow to it. 39

The chances of the Protestants giving up without a fight is highly unlikely.
The only viable strategic goal remaining then is the end of Protestant domination in employment, housing and government in Northern Ireland—the original goal of the protests in the late 1960s. This goal too, however, may be out of reach. The process of enlightenment from religious and social constraints and barriers is a long and arduous process. As seen in the United States, as well as Ireland, the conflicts which accompany racial and religious inequality and discrimination are numerous. Some might say even too numerous to comprehend, let alone solve. Religious divisions date back eight hundred years in Ireland. The walls of discrimination are built upon the solid foundations of Protestant industrialism and Catholic agrarianism. Religious affiliation divisions are central to political and social polarization, perpetuating employment and income discrimination. Discrimination will be further analyzed and evaluated in the next chapter.

**Conclusion**

This chapter was based on James Rule's statement that "the objectives and targets of militant collective action [will] reflect pursuit of long term collective interest of the groups represented in the action." The significant feature with the PIRA is that they only have an estimated one-third of all Catholic support in Ulster for their strategic goals. In 1981, the population in the North was approximately 1,750,000 persons. Only one-third of those
are Catholic, roughly 580,000. Of those 580,000 Catholics, a mere one-third fully support the tactical and strategic objectives of the Provos, only 190,000 people.

Rule's hypothesis, however, is still correct because these 190,000 people form the group represented by the IRA and PIRA; these are the men and women who want an immediate withdrawal of all British troops and reunification with the Republic. These people support the tactical objectives of intimidation as the only method of attaining the strategic goals of withdrawal and reunification. O'Malley's contention that the group can survive with only three percent popular support is, therefore, not outlandish. Survival and tactical success, however, are vastly different from strategic success. Although the Provisionals are tactically successful every time another bomb explodes, they are no closer to strategic success.
ENDNOTES


5Ibid., 387.


7Ibid.


12O'Malley, *Uncivil Wars*, 269.


14Ibid., 182.

15Quentin Cowdry, "New IRA Gang Blamed for Station


19O'Malley, Uncivil Wars, 262.


21O'Malley, Uncivil Wars, 263.


24Ibid., 209.

25Ibid.

26Ibid.


28Ibid.


30Edward Gorman, "IRA Raising 10 Million Pounds a Year from Drug Deals and Racketeering," The Times (London), 1 July 1989, 4.

31John Conroy, Belfast Diary: War as a Way of Life (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 68.

32Ibid., 86.
33Ibid., 87.

34Ibid., 88.


36Michael McKinley, Of "Alien Influences": Accounting and Discounting for the International Contacts of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, Paper presented as part of the workshop "Protests Against State Formation and National Unity" at the Conference of the International Society for the Study of European Ideas, Leuven, Belgium, 3-8 September 1990.

37O'Malley, Uncivil Wars, 259.


39O'Malley, Uncivil Wars, 259.

40Rule, Theories, 188.
CHAPTER 4
DISCRIMINATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

There is much controversy surrounding the situation in Northern Ireland. One of the most controversial aspects of the troubles falls in the realm of discrimination. This chapter focuses on perceived discrimination against the Catholic minority by the Protestant majority, Northern Ireland government and British government; however, it will also study the Protestant viewpoint of the allegations of discrimination.

Padraig O'Malley argues that the Protestant government of Northern Ireland demanded that all Catholics be viewed as subversives and all Catholic actions interpreted in that context; any compromise with Catholics in a political sense was seen as potentially undermining Protestant hegemony. The result: widespread discrimination against Catholics, especially for jobs and housing; keeping their numbers down by keeping their emigration up; stereotyping; and a society that put the utmost premium on spatial divisions that developed along close communal lines, and in which religion became the badge of political allegiance.¹

Several authors contend that there is very little discrimination by Protestants, and their opinions will also be considered. Housing discrimination will be reviewed first, followed by employment and income discrimination, and finally the disparity in the education system.
Several steps have been taken to rectify the discrimination that plagues Ulster. Equal housing and employment laws have been enacted, and integration is being tested as a means to end educational disparity. In 1976 the Fair Employment Act made discrimination based on political or religious beliefs illegal and created the Fair Employment Agency (FEA).

The goal of this chapter is to study the prevalence of discrimination in Northern Ireland. Further, an attempt will be made to study the reaction of the Provisional Irish Republican Army to the perceived discrimination against the Catholic residents. In addition, an analysis of the Protestant reaction to the civil rights movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s and the PIRA will be made. It will be proposed that the PIRA has done little to quell discrimination against Catholics because they perpetuate the Protestant and government notions of Catholic disloyalty and distrust.

A major contention among those who study the situation in Northern Ireland, and those who live in Northern Ireland is the amount of discrimination against Catholics. The differences arise in assessing perceived discrimination versus actual discrimination. Thomas E. Hachey claims that throughout recent history, "Ulster's Roman Catholics have shared a plight similar to that of blacks in the United States, as they have been routinely denied their civil
rights and have been discriminated against in education, housing and jobs."² Christopher Hewitt, in "Discrimination in Northern Ireland," argues however that although discrimination against Catholics has occurred, "the extent and severity of this discrimination have been greatly exaggerated."³

This chapter examines four types of discrimination: housing, employment, income and education. A description of the violations, as well as their proposed remedies, is necessary to show that steps have been taken to end discrimination. The purpose is to show that efforts to end sectarian discrimination have failed for the most part.

Bill Rolston, a Sociologist at Ulster Polytechnic, claims that the reforms made in the 1970s may not be fully recognized and implemented due to radical republican ideology and rejection of the very government which enacted those civil rights laws.⁴

Housing Discrimination

Before the civil rights movement of the late 1960s, public housing was in the jurisdiction of local councils: councils run by Protestant officials. Twenty-six percent of all Catholics in Ulster lived in public housing. In *Northern Ireland: A Report on the Conflict*, written by The London Sunday Times Insight Team, it is claimed that the local councils discriminated against Catholics in several ways. One was to put Protestants in better houses than
Catholics, but charge the same rents. In Dungannon, for exactly the same amount of rent, a Catholic on Ballygawley Road estate got forty-two square feet less space than a Protestant in the exclusive Cunningham's Lane estate.

Another tactic was simply to house more Protestants than Catholics. Of the 1,598 houses built by Fermenaugh County Council between 1945 and 1969, 1,021 went to Protestant families. A third practice was to refuse to house Catholics except in areas where other Catholics already lived. Derry before 1969 actually reduced its housing program rather that let Catholics cross the boundary of the Catholic South Ward. Omagh and Dungannon practiced this system as well. An added feature was the strengthening of the local electoral arrangements. Catholics were prevented from living in Protestant wards, thus, the system perpetuated itself in the Protestant dominated council system.\(^5\)

Christopher Hewitt, in "Catholic Grievances, Catholic Nationalism and Violence in Northern Ireland During the Civil Rights Period," maintains that Protestant discrimination against Catholics was undeniable, however, "Catholic councils also discriminated."\(^6\) In Newry, a Catholic governed council allocated 743 council houses to Catholics, and only 22 to Protestants. Awareness of such discrimination, Hewitt claims, "was widespread among Northern Irish Protestants."\(^7\) He claims further that
discrimination by Protestant councils had little impact on Catholics and that "the greatest bias appeared to lie in the treatment of Protestants by Catholic councils."

Table 4.—Allocation of Employment and Housing by Council Type.

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<td>Prots</td>
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<td>Prots</td>
<td>Caths</td>
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<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
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A conventional thought is that Protestant discrimination against Catholics in the area of housing was a great catalyst for mass support of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA). New York Times reporter Peter Maas concluded that one of the many catalysts for the civil rights movement was the jumping of a single, Protestant woman over ten Catholic families in line for public housing. However, when Catholics were asked if they expected "to be treated fairly in dealing with the local council," only ten percent of those living in Protestant dominated council areas said they expected unfair treatment. A similar response was received from those living in Catholic council areas.
In a 1969 "new deal" package set up to reduce discrimination, housing matters were transferred from the local to the national authority. That reform policy was rejected in 1970 by the Unionist Party in Ulster. Unionists believed that formation of a central authority would deprive local authorities of a voice in the building and allocation of houses in its constituencies. The London Times, however, quoted the Minister of Development as saying that "the vote would not change the Government's plans. There would be no going back." ¹¹

The central housing authority was officially created in July, 1970, by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Bill. This proposal created a nine-man decision-making executive body and a council to represent the population in all parts of Northern Ireland and report to the executive.

Although some of the housing discrimination was alleviated, a 1973 study for the Northern Ireland Community Relations Commission identified "twelve areas in Belfast which [were] black spots in relation to overcrowding. All of these [were] Catholic areas." ¹² Hewitt maintains however that overcrowding in Catholic areas is not due to discrimination, but to "larger family size and massive population movements after the communal rioting." ¹³

In 1980 there were over 500 complaints made to the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints regarding the Housing Executive. Bill Rolston states that "452 cases were
investigated, but of these a judgement of maladministration was made in only 23 cases (5 percent)."¹⁴

Paul Arthur maintains, in "Negotiating the Northern Ireland Problem," that in 1986, 1,118 families were driven from their homes in the immediate aftermath of the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1985. "Almost all [were] the result of loyalists attacking Catholics."¹⁵

A May 27, 1988 New York Times article further outlines the sectarian discrimination in North Belfast. Protestant gangs successfully prevented Catholics from occupying five refurbished homes in the Protestant district. Only one Catholic family remained in the loyalist enclave. They have lived there for thirty-two years, and Bernhard Murphy, the 70 year old home owner said, "I'm not a fighting man, not a bit tough, but I'm not leaving."¹⁶ The Murphy's home had recently been the target of three fire-bombs, thrown by angry Protestants who believed that the area belonged in strictly Protestant hands.

It would be foolhardy to claim that there were no attacks on Protestants who lived in Catholic-dominated areas. Children in both areas have been seen throwing stones and bottles into the neighborhoods of their nemesis. John Conroy argues that the difference that Catholic paramilitary groups target the government and the opposing factions of that government, while Protestant paramilitaries target Catholic civilians as well as suspected terrorists.¹⁷
Discrimination in housing has been largely eliminated by the Housing Executive, and the quality of housing has greatly improved. However, housing discrimination has not been totally eradicated in Northern Ireland. The Protestant-run Housing Executive is easily able to cover up any discrimination because the Commissioner for Complaints rarely finds maladministration in the cases brought to its attention. The loyalists in Northern Ireland do not want Catholics living in their midst, and Catholics do not want the Protestants within their communal boundaries. The twenty foot high concrete and barbed wire "peace line" that separates the two communities in Belfast is testimony to this phenomenon.

**Job and Income Discrimination**

Job and income discrepancy remains the most perceived civil rights violation in Northern Ireland. Jonathan Kelley and Ian McAllister suggest that income disparity in 1968 was due primarily to discrimination.

In 1968 a Catholic family equal in family background, occupation and education to a Protestant family, could have expected to receive two pounds and ten shillings less per week. This represents only 88% of the average Protestant family income—a real and significant disadvantage.\(^\text{18}\)

According to Denis O'Hearn in "Catholic Grievances, Catholic Nationalism," there is "overwhelming evidence from the 1971 census that discrimination in employment was the normal state of affairs."\(^\text{19}\) In 1970 there were only 400 Catholics
among 10,000 workers at the Harland and Wolff shipyards, the province's single largest employer. Furthermore, Catholics "numbered only a handful in the workforces of the two major factories located in Catholic area of Belfast—Mackies and Sirocco Engineering Works." Unemployment among Catholics in 1971 was two and one-half times that of Protestants. Further, most Catholics are relegated to unskilled or semi-skilled labor positions, while Protestants are employed in skilled labor, managerial, and government positions.

Christopher Hewitt writes that "one genuine economic grievance of the Catholics was, and is, their higher rate of unemployment." He argues however, that economic differences between Catholics and Protestants are not necessarily an indication of discrimination, but instead are due to the differences in education received by Protestants and Catholics in Ulster.

Joseph Lee, in Ireland 1912-1985, observes that in the late 1960s and early 1970s Catholics became more aware of the occupational discrimination facing them, especially in the civil service. However, he concurs with Hewitt when he states that "Catholic perceptions of discrimination were no doubt exaggerated. But the reality was bad enough." In the civil service in 1972 approximately 95% of senior officials were Protestants and only one Catholic had risen through the ranks to hold the position of Secretary of a Department. Hewitt maintains also that most
discrimination was practiced in the area of government employment. He justifies this discrimination by stating that "since a sizeable section of the Catholic community opposed the very existence of the Northern Irish state it is hardly surprising that they were denied government employment."  

Hewitt also maintains that Catholics and Protestants are in different sectors of the economy and different kinds of occupations. "In and of themselves," he states, "[these differences] are not proof of discrimination (unless one wishes to argue that the remarkable over-representation of Catholic publicans is a sign of anti-Protestant bias in the liquor trade?)"  

It is exactly this sort of flip attitude that gives rise to continued sectarian differences and furthers disparities in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately this attitude often prevails, and Catholics are regarded as lower-class people who would rather sit in a pub all day than go to work. One rarely hears of the "Catholic work-ethic," but we are constantly inundated with the idea of the "Protestant work-ethic." Many would argue however, that there is little difference in the attitude toward hard work between Catholics and Protestants.

Michael Hout, in a paper entitled, "Opportunity and the Minority Middle Class: A Comparison of Blacks in the United States and Catholics in Northern Ireland," studies the 1971
United Kingdom census and the 1974 Office of Population Consensus and Survey in Northern Ireland to get a clear picture of the extent of discrimination in the region. He concludes that the differences between Catholics and Protestants are very clearly divided between community and big business.

Catholics are underrepresented in professional occupations relative to the representation enjoyed by Protestants. Furthermore, Catholics are overrepresented at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy, especially in the laborer category. The concentration of Catholics exceeds that of Protestants by more than one percentage point in acting, nursing, teaching and the clergy. Protestants, on the other hand, are more likely to work in the fields of drafting, engineering and accounting.

While Protestants dominate among the managers in mining and production, Catholics are concentrated in the ownership of retail shops, bars and inns. Within the skilled manual labor category, Protestants dominate as millwrights, fitters and machine erectors, as well as supervisory positions. Hout contends that shipbuilding is the most important heavy industry in Northern Ireland and Protestants have long dominated the workforce. The service industry is heavily dominated by Catholics in the positions of hairdressers, bartenders and cooks, while police and security guards are predominately Protestant.26
Table 5.—Selected Occupations that Contribute to Dissimilarity Within Major Occupational Groups by Ascriptive Group (Entries are percentages within the major occupational group.)

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<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionals and Technicians</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountants</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors, Stage Managers, Entertainers, Musicians</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergymen</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draftsmen</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary and Secondary School Teachers</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers, Owners, and Proprietors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers, mining and production</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors and Managers, retail</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers, other</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicans, Innkeepers</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen and Foremen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreman, manual</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millwrights and Fitters, Machine Erectors</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartenders</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairdressers</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police, Constables</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Guards</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Hout argues that these data disclose something about the process stratifying the minority groups. It shows how the existence of segregation gives rise to ecological niches conductive to the growth of ethnic specialties in employment."
Denis O'Hearn in "Again on Discrimination in the North of Ireland," states that while Protestants hold managerial and professional positions that serve the community as a whole, Catholics tend to serve their own community. Furthermore, 56% of non-managerial jobs held by Catholics are filled by women who are nurses, teachers, shop-clerks, or waitresses. These jobs offer little advancement and the women tend to quit when they marry. O'Hearn continues,

Even within an occupation, such as dock-workers, we find Protestants employed in cross-channel docks where there is more work and better pay, while Catholics are forced to work in the deep sea docks, where occupational conditions and status are much lower.28

Income disparity is also quite prevalent in Ulster. A study done by Jonathan Kelley and Ian McAllister shows that in 1968 the average Catholic family equal in family background, occupation and education to a Protestant family received two pounds and ten shillings less per week. "These differences in incomes could be interpreted as the direct result of religious discrimination against Catholics, with Catholics simply being paid less than Protestants in the same jobs."29

The London Sunday Times Insight Team state that in Londonderry in 1966 the heads of all City Council departments were Protestant. Furthermore, "of 177 salaried employees, 145 - earning a total of 124,424 pounds per year - were Protestant, and only 32 - earning a total of 20,420 pounds per year - were Catholic." On average in the
Derry City Council Protestants earned 858 pounds per year, Catholics earned 638 pounds.30

David E. Schmitt, a political science professor at Northeastern University, reports that in 1976, a British Minister for Northern Ireland said that job discrimination "is a very large problem indeed, and let nobody think otherwise."31 In 1976 the Fair Employment Act made discrimination on the grounds of religious or political belief illegal and established the Fair Employment Agency.

The FEA was developed on the premise that its tasks would include the investigation of individual complaints of discrimination and the investigation of the practices of specific organizations and employers. Unfortunately, many discrimination claims are never reported. Those who contemplate filing claims often do not for fear of reprisals or because they believe nothing will be done. Of those reported, many are not investigated because they fall outside the FEA's jurisdiction, or they lack evidence to warrant investigation. Of those complaintants deemed to have a prima facie case of discrimination, many do not last the course of the filing process because the bureaucratic hurdles are too many, a fact which the FEA itself acknowledges.

Qualitative questions add further burden of proof to discrimination claims: how is one to judge whether discrimination has occurred or not, and if the motive was
based on religious or political bias? Bill Rolston concedes that "as a result of these quantitative and qualitative factors, very few findings of unlawful discrimination have been made by the FEA."\textsuperscript{32}

Table 6.--Complaints on Which Decisions have been taken by the FEA, April 1, 1977 to March 31, 1982 (Source FEA Annual Reports)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization or Employer</th>
<th>Discrimination</th>
<th>No Discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government Departments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authorities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Library Boards</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Social Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Public Boards</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, Drink and Tobacco Industry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical and Allied Industries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Industries</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles and Clothing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing Industries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Industries</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Trades</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Businesses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>144</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Even when respondents are found guilty of discrimination and are required to pay compensation, they frequently do not, and the FEA is forced to bring them to court for the money. "As a result," Rolston reports, "only one of the cases where a finding of discrimination has been
upheld has to date led to compensation in the complainant's hand."\textsuperscript{33}

In 1989 unemployment was two and one-half times higher among Catholics than Protestants. However outside sources have begun to intervene in the cause of the minorities. The\textit{ Economist} reported in 1989 that an effective lobby in America is working to convince parent companies with subsidiaries in Northern Ireland that they often perpetuate discrimination. This lobby has persuaded six American state legislatures to sign the MacBride Principles. These principles commit any firms in which those states have invested money to agree to a much stricter affirmative action program.

An industrial venture in Belfast by a French firm, Montupet, had raised many hopes for Catholic employment. In parts of west Belfast, where the plant is located, Catholic unemployment ranges from sixty percent to eighty percent. Montupet officials claim the plant will employ over 1,000 workers within five years. This number is small compared with the Protestant dominated shipbuilders, Harland and Wolff. In addition the Montupet cylinder-head project will not produce comparable skills for Catholics, however it may help to remove the employment differential.\textsuperscript{34}

Few will dispute that employment discrimination is prevalent in Northern Ireland. The extent of that discrimination however is in contention. Hewitt and Lee
argue that Catholics have overexaggerated discrimination, while O'Hearn, Schmitt, and Kelley and McAllister contend there is rampant discrimination in many employment sectors, extending into obvious income disparities. As Bill Rolston pointed out, the Federal Employment Agency, an arm of the Protestant-dominated government, has done little to help Catholics who file discrimination charges. Christopher Hewitt's claim that discrimination in the government sector is "hardly surprising" given Catholic animosity toward the government is where the heart of the Irish troubles lie. Catholics cannot trust a government that still blatantly discriminates against them in the areas of employment and income, and the government cannot trust a people who hold such arduous and militant Nationalist ideals.

**Education Discrimination**

Education is often an area where scholars look for discrimination within a community. This section consists of two parts: segregation and discrimination. Dominic Murray suggests that segregation reflects societal differences in Northern Ireland rather than creates them. Jonathan Kelley and Ian McAllister argue that segregation within the education system does not necessarily reflect discrimination.

**Segregation**

The primary and secondary schools in Northern Ireland are segregated along religious lines. Protestant children
attend State Schools which reflect the teaching of the Anglican church, while Catholic children attend schools affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. There are many important symbolic differences between the two schools which perpetuate segregation. The Union Jack flies over all state schools. Dominic Murray in "Schools and Conflict," cites a general reaction from staff in an adjoining Catholic school:

They fly the flag down there to show that they are more British than the British themselves. It's also to let us know that they are the lords and masters and that we (Catholics) should be continually aware of it.³⁵

A study of the syllabi shows that Protestant schools focus almost exclusively on British material, while Catholic schools emphasize Irish studies and culture. A case study by A. Robinson in 1971 demonstrates the varying perceptions produced by this education system. Sixty-two percent of Catholic children named either John Hume or Bishop Farren as Derry's most important citizen, while 77% of Protestant children named the Lord Mayor of Derry or Northern Ireland's Prime Minister. When asked to name the capital city of the country in which Derry was located, more than half the Catholic children named Dublin, while more than two-thirds of the Protestant pupils named Belfast. It is erroneous to attribute these variances to the school experiences alone. Robinson concludes however, that the schools do little to moderate them. A study by J. Russell in 1972 demonstrates a greater likelihood for Catholic children to exhibit negative attitudes towards the government. However, it is again
difficult to assess the amount of responsibility to be taken by the schools for the formation of these attitudes.\textsuperscript{36}

These differences extend to the sports fields as well. Most Catholic schools support Irish games such as hurling, Camogie, or Gaelic football and avoid British games like hockey, cricket, or rugby. By contrast, no Protestant schools play any Gaelic games. Other sports appear to be neutral. However, the cultural difference is clear, and cricket, as the archetypical British sport is totally excluded from all Catholic schools.\textsuperscript{37}

Murray argues that these differences in the school systems may promote broader community divisions.

The problem with segregated schools, with regard to community divisions, lies not predominately in the fact that they reflect different cultures but rather in the meanings which are attributed by observers to the overt demonstrations of such cultural affiliation.\textsuperscript{38}

Catholics view the flying of the Union Jack as offensive, while Protestants find the Catholic symbols adorning their schools just as annoying. One Protestant teacher described a Catholic school this way:

We play St. Jude's often in games and visit their school regularly. I never fail to be impressed by the plethora of religious pictures and icons staring at you around every corner. It's hard to escape the view that a special show is being put on for our benefit.... This doesn't just apply to St. Jude's of course, but they must know that these are the very things that we object to, yet still they are flaunted everywhere.\textsuperscript{39}

As demonstrated above, these two cultures are so mutually antipathetic that any demonstration by one is perceived as an assault by the other. Murray contends that
"the actual existence of segregation had less influence on community division than have the meanings which are attributed to it by members of that community."\(^4\)

Christopher Hewitt strongly believes that one's occupational status can be traced to one's education. He suggests that the education provided by Catholic schools is inferior to that of State schools. However, he states that segregation lies with the Catholics, for they were not refused admittance into State schools, but chose to attend Catholic-run schools instead.\(^4\)

**Discrimination**

Jonathan Kelley and Ian McAllister argue that Catholics receive an average of six months less full-time schooling than Protestants. Furthermore, those Catholic children who come from higher-status families receive less education than a Protestant child of the same status. For instance, if the father of a Catholic child held a managerial position, the child could expect to receive slightly under eleven years of full-time schooling, but the child of a Protestant who held the same status job could expect to receive thirteen years of education, a gap of two years. Although higher-status Catholics are at an obvious disadvantage compared to higher status Protestants, Kelley and McAllister note that "the disparities cannot be attributed to discrimination in education, since the educational system in Northern Ireland is rigidly segregated."\(^4\)
Conclusion

A conclusion can be drawn that there is no discrimination in the educational system in Northern Ireland. Segregation is not always synonymous with discrimination. There is little evidence that an education from a Protestant-state school is any better or worse academically than a Catholic school. The two schools offer material which is historically and culturally significant to its students. This difference in education does not necessarily promote discrimination and is, in reality, a reflection of a divided society, not a cause of a divided society.

There are those people, an idealistic few, in Northern Ireland who seek to end segregation. The Economist reports that by 1988 there were only seven mixed-religion schools, teaching a total of 1,000 pupils, or 0.3% of the school population. This is modest progress, but it was achieved against strong odds. These schools must start privately and run for two years before getting financial support from the government. Dominic Murray states that only those people already sympathetic to the idea of integration will support the mixed-religion schools. Furthermore, "when structural change precedes attitudinal change, it is probable that any impact will be restricted to within that structure only." Therefore, it is unlikely that the concept of integrated schools will be widely accepted among either group in Northern Ireland.
IRA Reaction to Perceived Discrimination

The present PIRA movement began on the streets in 1968-1969 as a non-sectarian, non-violent campaign of political education and activism. "Civil rights was an obvious rallying point for all Catholic dissidents, but although the republican movement was heavily involved in the formation of the NICRA in 1967, it chose to stay out of the limelight," states Barry White in "From Conflict to Violence." Nevertheless, by 1968 the PIRA was at the forefront of the movement and therefore involved in the decision-making process. Although the NICRA moderates had called a truce acknowledging government reforms, White explains, "others were ready to test Protestant patience to destruction." In January, 1969, the Peoples Democracy March from Belfast to Derry was ambushed by the "B" Specials, a group of Protestant police reservists. They attacked the student and republican marchers causing numerous injuries and sparking several days and nights of rioting in Derry and Newry.

By concentrating on their goal of non-violent political education and activism, the IRA had left itself defenseless against increasing Loyalist attack. Radical leftists appealed to the South for weapons to repel Loyalist incursions, and capitalizing on sympathy for their Catholic neighbors to the North, money and weapons flowed from the Republic into the violent wing now called the Provisional IRA.
The British Army was called into Northern Ireland in 1969 to quell rioting between the two communities. As housing and other reforms were created by the government however, the PIRA shifted its attention from civil rights toward the Ulster Defense Regiment and the British soldiers. Ironically, the first soldier died in February, 1971, seven months after the implementation of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Bill. The non-violent activism had quickly turned into bloodshed. The campaign rapidly escalated as on-duty as well as off-duty soldiers and policemen were killed and bombs were extensively used to intimidate Protestant civilians. White maintains that

One of these, involving the bombing of a Protestant pub on the Shankill Road [in Belfast], marked the beginning of an openly sectarian campaign, and the Official IRA denounced [the Provisionals] "as fiendish and sectarian bigots, whose motives are obviously to set the Protestant and Catholic working class at each others throats".47

Protestant Reaction to the Civil Rights Movement and the PIRA

The majority of Protestants were very hostile to the civil rights movement. Christopher Hewitt claims that "Protestant hostility to the civil rights movement was undeniably based upon the belief that the movement was the old Catholic enemy in new clothes, summed up by the graffiti slogan CRA=IRA."48 Protestants further believed that the NICRA was not pursuing civil rights, but pursuing nationalism and the unity of Ireland. Hewitt argues that
these goals were attributed to the IRA influence in the NICRA and that IRA members played a significant role as stewards at meetings.

The greatest Protestant fear is that Catholics in Northern Ireland will gain control of the government and unite with the Republic. The Times Insight Team reports that as early as 1954, Protestant Members of Parliament were proclaiming that "the government must ask themselves whether it were safe to employ in government service people who openly advocate treason." 49

When rising nationalism threatened a merger between the North and South, the Protestant wisdom was Unionism: continued coalescence with Britain to maintain the status quo and forestall union with the Catholic Republic.

As the NICRA gained momentum and the government began making concessions to their demands for better housing and employment equality, Protestant radicals became agitated and started taunting, throwing stones at, and beating marchers. The police often did nothing to stop this violence, and when the marchers retaliated, the police clubbed and arrested them.

By 1972, the PIRA had taken full control of Catholic areas in Derry and Belfast and waged a war with Protestant paramilitaries, police, and government officials. At this stage the violence turned openly sectarian, with Protestants reacting to the Republican threat in what Barry White calls,
"the traditional manner—spreading terror among IRA sympathizers by gunning down innocent Catholics in the street."\(^{50}\)

The Protestant paramilitary counterpart to the PIRA is the Ulster Defense Force (UDF), created in 1970 in the Shankill, Dublin. As membership grew to 15,000 the violence in Northern Ireland soared from 174 dead in 1971 to 468 in 1972. The mission of the UDF was to protect Protestants from Catholic violence, maintain the Protestant-dominated government, and destroy the insurgents of the PIRA and their sympathizers.

**Conclusion**

Discrimination is often blamed for the troubles in Northern Ireland. It has been suggested here that housing, employment, and income discrimination were rampant in Ulster before the Civil Rights movement of 1969.

Housing and employment discrimination was not only practiced by Protestants however, but by Catholics as well. Christopher Hewitt maintains that if the NICRA had truly non-sectarian orientations, it would have condemned discrimination by Catholic councils and businesses. Instead, he claims, Protestants in Newry were subjected to "the hipocracy of a civil rights march which ignored the sectarian policies of the Nationalist Council."\(^{51}\)

Protestant suspicions of Republican intervention and leadership in the NICRA were confirmed at the very first
civil rights march where a Nationalist MP and a Republican Labour MP led the march and made speeches. Further, the bands played "Who Fears to Speak of '98," an anti-British ballad, and at the close of the March the crowd sang "A Nation Once Again," the anthem of Irish Republicanism. These moves demonstrate visible and blatant links between the civil rights movement and the IRA. Protestant hostility toward the movement grew from these demonstrations of nationalism.

Supposedly the civil rights movement demanded reforms. Yet the violence escalated after reforms were made. Hewitt argues that there are two reasons for this:

First since the old system was not particularly inequitable, reforms could not have much impact, second the nationalists who predominated in the movement were not really interested in reforms.\textsuperscript{52}

The movement was advertised as non-sectarian. At its roots that may have been the case, but very quickly it became sectarian and nationalist. The demands made by the civil rights association for equal housing, employment, and income have been met to a degree, but Bill Rolston maintains that

if reforms are not operating as fully or successfully as they might, that is due in large part to the continuing irredentist claims of reactionary nationalists and the Left Republicans who tail-end them.\textsuperscript{53}

The PIRA, through its use of violence has turned a civil rights movement into a war of attrition by inciting Protestant hostility from the very beginning of the
movement. In Fermenaugh, in 1969, Catholics were a majority, but were denied housing, representation in county councils, and employment. Instead of turning to violence however, Catholics showed their tenacity peacefully, using their majority in Parliamentary elections to vote in maverick MP's. John Conroy argues that in 1979 "peace was undermined by an IRA campaign." The Provos had been assassinating members of the national guard and police in the area since 1971, but in 1979 that number escalated and for a nine-month period, the area had the highest murder rate in Northern Ireland. Almost every Protestant family had someone in the security forces, and although they did not blame the Catholics in the immediate neighborhood, one Protestant stated, "If there's going to be a civil war, its going to start in Fermenaugh."  

It is undeniable that the Provisional Irish Republican Army is responsible for maintaining Protestant hostility and perpetuating their claims of Catholic disloyalty and distrust. Since the PIRA is supposedly the mouth of the Catholic minority, and the PIRA refuses to recognize the legitimacy of the government, Rolston's claims that the Provos undermine any further civil rights reforms has considerable validity. It is hardly surprising that the government will not alienate its Protestant majority by making further reforms for Catholics who largely reject unionist ideology, the basis of the Northern Ireland
government, in favor of nationalism and reunification with the Republic.
ENDNOTES


7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.


10 Ibid.


O'Hearn, "Catholic Grievances," 442.

Ibid.


Ibid., 418.


Ibid., 448.


Ibid., 220.


Kelley and McAllister, "Genesis," 179.


Rolston, "Reformism," 213.
33 Ibid.


36 Ibid.

37 Badham, "Contributions of Religion," 49.

38 Murray, "Schools and Conflict," 145.

39 Ibid., 146.

40 Ibid.


42 Kelley and McAllister, "Genesis," 180.

43 Northern Ireland's Schools--Still Separate," The Economist, 2 April 1988, 50.

44 Murray, "Schools and Conflict," 149.


46 Ibid., 184.

47 Ibid., 185.


50 White, "Conflict to Violence," 187.


52 Ibid., 377.

53 Rolston, "Reformism," 205.
elfast Diary, 149.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

As this thesis nears the end, a reiteration of the original intent is necessary. The purpose was an historical approach to explaining the situation in Northern Ireland. It started in 1858, although the conflict dates back much further, and progressed through 1991. An attempt was made to explain the role the Provisional Irish Republican Army in the conflict since 1968 and to assess their role in attaining peace in the region.

Perceived discrimination against Catholics by Protestants and the Ulster government was a large part of this thesis. It was offered that there was undoubtedly discrimination against Catholics in the areas of housing and employment, but merely segregation in the area of education. To a large degree discrimination has been eradicated, unfortunately however, there are still employment and income disparities in Ulster. It was argued that terrorism is counter-productive in the elimination of discrimination in Northern Ireland because it promotes Protestant and government stereotypes of Catholic disloyalty and distrust.

It seems that many people who speak about the situation in Northern Ireland have either one of two opinions toward
those involved in the violence. Either they blame the Catholics or they blame the Protestants. However it is much more complicated. As discussed in the introduction, religion itself has very little to do with the violence. Religious affiliation however, is a main key.

Throughout the conflict, one's religion has been a symbol of status and power. It has dictated where one lives, goes to school and works. Religious affiliation is strongly present in social clubs and political organizations. It dominates the lives of all who live in Northern Ireland because, simply stated, it marks Protestants as oppressors, Catholics as terrorists, and all who live in Ulster as potential targets.

Unfortunately, terrorism is perpetrated not only by the Provos, but by the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defense Association as well. Thomas Hachey in "A Courtship with Terrorism," states that the failure of Northern Ireland authorities to

protect their Catholic citizens from Protestant militants bent on revenge for IRA outrages has prompted such Catholics to welcome help from anyone who would provide it. Very often it has been the Provos who have accommodated that need.

The lack of support and Protection for Catholics led to the rise of the Provisionals in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The strategic goals of the PIRA in the 1970s were the end of discrimination against Catholics in the areas of housing, employment, and education, reunification with the
Republic of Ireland and subsequent Parliamentary rule, and removal of occupying British forces in Northern Ireland. The tactical goals of the Provos have been many. Bombings, assassinations, and harassment have been the mainstay of tactical success for more than twenty years. The Provisionals run their terrorist machine effectively and forcefully. The organization is tight and its members focused.

It is probable however, that their strategic goals will not be met. Ironically, it is their tactical success that will forever keep Northern Ireland and the Republic separated. Desmond O’Malley, Minister of Justice in the Fianna Fail (the largest political party in the South) government, speaking to the Emerald Association in New York in October 1972 said:

The major damage done by the IRA violence is, of course, the damage it does to the prospects for a reconciliation between the two traditions in the North. Another major tragedy is what it is doing to the children and adolescents of the stricken cities of Belfast and Derry, young people whose minds cannot but be seared for a generation to come. The damage to the minds of a generation of young people is almost too terrible to bear thinking about.²

In the beginning of the latest conflict the achievements of the NICRA and the Provisionals were considerable. The NICRA had convinced the government, largely through peaceful demonstrations, to implement anti-discrimination measures. The demonstrations resulted in the housing reforms in 1970, and, to a degree, the Fair
Employment Act of 1975. The Provos had unchallenged control of the urban Catholic ghettos in 1971 and 1972. Richard Clutterbuck maintains that their tactical guerrilla strategy provided an overreaction by Storemont "which induced the British Government in March 1972 to bring fifty years of discriminatory Protestant rule to an end."\(^3\)

Instead of turning this success into political opportunity and negotiating with the British to meet their goals, the Provos chose to further their attacks on government officials and began a clandestine war with the British security forces. "Having no political philosophy," Clutterbuck says, "they were unable to take advantage of the political opportunity they themselves had created."\(^4\) The violence of the PIRA unequivocably curbed any progress that was being made through civil right reforms in Ulster.

Throughout Irish history there are instances where legitimate movements and organizations have achieved political and social success. Disestablishment of the Irish Protestant Church in 1866, implementation of the Land Bill in 1870, and government cooperation with the Official Land League created the Land Act of 1881. Additionally, Home Rule was legislated for Ireland in 1910, and the Irish Free State was created in 1914. Due to the moderate ideology of Sinn Fein at the time, their political popularity grew and they won considerable victories in the elections of 1920 and 1922.
Through the years we can trace the popular support of the Republican movement with social change and increased violence. All of the aforementioned achievements were accomplished through legitimate, cooperative measures, not violence and civil disobedience. It is a fact that as violence increased in the Republic during those tumultuous years, popular support for the violent organization waned. The Easter Rising of 1916 was not popularly supported and did very little to help the cause of Home Rule. It seems that this factor is a constant throughout all of Irish history.

In the early 1970s support for the NICRA was high among Catholics in both the North and South, and sympathizers in Britain and America. All wanted to see housing and employment discrimination come to an end. Since this was the main demand of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, which had a significant IRA membership, demonstrations and violence should have stopped when housing reforms were made in 1971 and the Fair Employment Act was passed in 1976.

By that time however, the goals of the IRA and PIRA had significantly changed. The fluidity of the Provisionals' ideology made it possible for them to expand on the ideals of the NICRA and further the cause of freedom and reunification. The governments of Northern Ireland and Britain, however, were not as flexible. They met the original
demands to end discrimination, but would go no further.

The IRA failed to recognize the success that had been gained through the mass demonstration in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As they turned to more violent methods of communication with the government, the security forces and the Protestant population retaliated. Paul Arthur states that

in a conflict where more than 55 percent of the victims have been innocent civilians, republican paramilitaries may have managed singlehandedly to have redefined the Northern Ireland problem as one of terrorism rather than of rights.5

When the Provos moved their fight from the arena of discrimination to freedom from British rule and reunification with the Republic, many Protestants who had supported the original cause withdrew their support and grew leery of the organization. As violence worsened in the 1970s and 1980s, Catholics in the North, South, Britain and the international community felt disgust toward the PIRA. This attitude is evident in the dwindling military supplies and money being sent to the Provos, and the lack of ballots being cast for Sinn Fein.

Not only will the lack of popular support for the PIRA keep them from attaining their strategic goals, but so will Protestant and government hostility. The unfortunate factor in this instance is that this hostility is directed not only at PIRA members, but toward the Catholic community as a whole. Even during the civil rights marches, Protestants
viewed the movement as a mere front for subversive republican activities. At the time English journalists deemed them as paranoid bigots who wanted to perpetuate Catholic oppression. Although the movement professed to be purely civil rights oriented, it was clear from the beginning that there were republican undertones and motivations.

It was the consequent actions of the IRA at civil rights gatherings that confirmed Protestant and government suspicions of IRA infiltration and activity. These actions (the singing of republican songs and the flying of the Irish tricolor) caused already leery Protestants to view the entire civil rights movement with disdain and loathing. Christopher Hewitt maintains that

any intelligent Catholic leader would know that a movement with such conspicuous nationalist and Republican connections would alienate moderate Protestant support and provoke sectarian violence. The handful of Protestants involved in the early stages of the civil rights movement quickly dropped out, making a mockery of the NICRA's pretensions to be a non-sectarian movement.6

Given the history between Catholics and Protestants it is no wonder that Protestants rejected the civil rights movement when they learned of the IRA penetration and influence. As the movement openly changed from civil rights to reunification and grew more violent, that brutality was reciprocated in a more insidious way. While the PIRA primarily target government officials and security forces, the Ulster Defense Association and the Ulster Volunteer
Force attack Catholic civilians they deem disloyal. Conor Cruise O'Brien has observed that the effect of the effort of the Provos to protect Catholics and fight for independence and reunification has been to raise the level of sectarian consciousness. They have encouraged the Catholics and helped them to win important and long-overdue reforms. They have frightened and angered Protestants and if their efforts could be continued on the same lines and with the same kind of success, they would bring the people of the province and island sectarian civil war. And in fact, even at present, language and gestures which are subjectively revolutionary but have appeal only within one sectarian community, are objectively language and gestures of sectarian civil war."

There can be no peace with the Provisional Irish Republican Army. They have reiterated many times that they will keep fighting for their goals at all costs. The Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher and John Major have steadfastly held onto Northern Ireland and maintain security forces in the region. In the unlikely event that the troops are pulled from the region, full-scale civil war would ensue: Protestants against Catholics, both fighting to preserve their land and heritage. Padraig O'Malley is confident that the Provisionals have settled in for the long haul with the means and the resources to sustain the protracted campaign it entails, secure in the knowledge that a majority of Catholics, both North and South, do not regard their actions as merely criminal. So long as the Catholic ghettos exist, they will not want for recruits. So long as they have martyrs, they will not want for a sense of historical continuity. So long as the prison culture prevails, they will no want for the propaganda of repression. And so long as the fear of a Protestant backlash lurks in the collective consciousness of the minority they will not be abandoned."
These are the hopes of the Provisionals. They are counting on violent Protestant and government reactions to their campaign of terror. As long as there is retaliation and continued oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland, the Provisional Irish Republican Army will have enough popular support to maintain their campaign and fight for a united Ireland.

There can be no peace without negotiation, and no negotiation until the Provisionals put their weapons down. History has shown that violence is counter-productive and the only way to achieve equality is through verbal communication and dialogue with the British government.
ENDNOTES


4Ibid.


7Conor Cruise O'Brien, States of Ireland (Frogmore, St. Albans, Herts: Panther, 1974), quoted by Michael McKinley, Of "Alien Influence": Accounting and Discounting for the International Contacts of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, paper presented as part of the workshop "Protests Against State Formation and National Unity" at the Conference of the International Society for the Study of European Ideas, Leuven, Belgium, 3-8 September, 1990.

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