Planning in Divided Societies: A Case Study of the Introduction of Regional Planning in Northern Ireland 1964-1970

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Abstract

As it is often the failure of Governments to meet the perceived needs of identity groups in a divided society, the challenge is incumbent upon them to provide a fair and equitable distribution of a variety resources, from land, to infrastructure, to financial assistance to industry. Thus, urban planning can create the physical basis for either ameliorating or exacerbating ethnic conflict, as these conflicts are often manifest in claims on the physical environment. A strong interest in studying the dynamics of planning in polarized societies is reflective of the need to fully understand the implications of urban change in this context.

This research is an exploration of national planning mandates and their effects upon ethnic conflict. Specifically, it analyzes how communal relations can deteriorate even when government leaders make genuine efforts to meet the need and demands of competing groups. This paper is a study of Northern Ireland in the early 1960's during the introduction of regional planning by way of the Matthew and Wilson Plans. These national policies, intended to promote both physical and economic development and better community relations actually contributed to a deepening of tensions between the Catholic and Protestant communities. A series of three case studies, undertaken at the regional, city and neighborhood levels, uncovers how the plans were perceived by *both* groups to potentially to destroy their ability to secure economic opportunity, determine the use of their land and maintain their identity and way of life. Therefore, the plans created a context which instigated the worst collective fears of both communities, ultimately resulting in protest and violence and what had initially promised to be a relatively peaceful decade ended in some of the worst violence the region has ever witnessed.

Chapter 3*

Propaganda and Planning: A Case Study of the New Town of Craigavon, Northern Ireland

"A Development programme -probably greater than has so far been achieved by new town developments in any part of the United Kingdom—is forecast for Craigavon."
Mr. Samuel McMahon, Chairman Craigavon Development Commission
Belfast Telegraph June 6, 1967

" I have felt since the beginning that the New City was pure propaganda."
Edward Richardson, Nationalist MP for S. Armagh: Belfast News Letter Aug. 15,1964

Introduction

Having examined the effects of planning at the regional level in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses upon an analysis at the city level, with the establishment of the new city of Craigavon under the recommendations of the Matthew Plan. Specifically, this case study reveals how Prime Minister Terence O'Neill, despite his intention to promote a new era of community relations by way of the new city, met with such resistance and protest throughout the planning, development and settlement of Craigavon that the end result was:

1. Destabilization the Unionist controlled government
2. Creation of conflict within the Catholic community
3. Creation of conflict within the Protestant community

Prime Minister O'Neill hoped that the new city would provide an opportunity to both further efforts to modernize the province and to establish an environment conducive to the promotion of better relations between Catholics and Protestants (Craigavon New City Plan Second Report, 1967: 64). However many Catholics, from citizens to politicians, were skeptical that the development of Craigavon would in any way change their position in Northern Ireland society. At the same time, hard-line Unionists perceived the new city to be yet another example of O'Neill's desire to change and reform the province, thereby threatening over 300 years of Protestant control. The perceived ramifications of the new city, though divergent between Catholics and Protestants, touched off a firestorm of controversy in *both* communities. This opposition formed a common ground, however, for a series of media campaigns by Catholics and Protestants, Nationalists and Unionists to achieve one goal—to use the new city project as a way to discredit both O'Neill and planning.

***This following research is an excerpt from my dissertation to be completed by**

October,1998 and is therefore still in draft stage..

There is little dispute that what O'Neill and the architects of the new city sought to achieve was a failure. Both Reid (1973) and O'Dowd (1993) have documented the failure of the Craigavon project to successfully integrate Catholics and Protestants in one community. What became evident, however, in my own research was how the *project itself* was used by both Catholics and Protestants to further their own communal interests in the context of the dramatic changes brought about during O'Neill's administration. Based upon the examination of over 63 spools of microfiche of the *Belfast Telegraph* from1964-1967, copies of the *Protestant Telegraph*, the *The Irish Times, The Irish News* and archival data, it is my conclusion the creation of Craigavon, throughout the planning, development and settlement phases was highly controversial within the two ethnic communities. In turn, newspapers, which have historically represented either Catholic or Protestant interests in Northern Ireland, were key players in both *reporting* on the controversies which surrounded all phases of the new city project and *using* these controversies to advance Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Loyalist agendas.

Propaganda and the Media in the Northern Ireland Context

The prominence of the media in the Northern Ireland conflict is not new, having been called as much a propaganda war as a shooting war (Wilkinson, 1981:3). Their role in furthering the Unionist and Nationalist causes can be traced back as far as 1737 with the establishment of Ireland's oldest surviving newspaper, the *Belfast Newsletter*, which was firmly committed to the cause of Unionism. As activism among native Irish increased in the following centuries, other newspapers such as the *Irish News* and the *Irish Bulletin* were successful in publicizing the grievances of Catholics.[1] From the twentieth century, with the onset of the Anglo Irish War and the subsequent partition of Ireland, to the present time the press has been an integral part of the Irish struggle. "The faith and politics of each Northern Ireland householder can still be gauged with some accuracy from the telltale morning print protruding through the letter box"[2] (Oram)

For this reason, I examine the most widely read provincial newspapers as they covered the planning, development and settlement phases of the new city, for as Davis, in his analysis of the role of newspapers in the Northern Ireland conflict notes:

> Periodicals are a vital part of the action, not a mere accessory. They serve to mobilize and sensitize potential supporters and answer the charges if opponents. Newspapers are unrivaled for the detection of shifting ground and inconsistency.

> Though loosely categorized as propaganda …they expose deeply held convictions (Davis,1994:2).

Because of the historical and symbiotic relationship between politics and the press, there has been a significant body of work on the use of propaganda, much of it confined to the late1960's and early 70's to the present time. Tugwell (1981) has analyzed the propaganda techniques of the IRA and paramilitaries on both sides during the height of the violence in the 1970's including misinformation; agitative propaganda; white, black and gray propaganda; and censorship of the electronic media. Miller (1994) presents an exhaustive study, which begins in 1969, of the role of mass communication from the genesis of media strategies to the content of printed and electronic media during the conflict. Curtis (1984) depicts the "propaganda machines" fueled by paramiltaries, as well as the use of censorship and reporting techniques by the electronic media. Her analysis begins in 1971.

My interest is what, if any, media strategies were implemented in those months and years before the late 1960's at the height of the Troubles, particularly as they pertained to the recommendations of the Matthew and Wilson Plans. There is no evidence that there was deliberate, sophisticated and deceitful campaign strategy to sell the merits of regional planning, including the new city. But this does not mean that there was an absence of propaganda for as Altheide and Johnston note, "although the most common usage of propaganda if frequently pejorative, connoting images of distortion, lies, manipulation and deceit, that this is not all that propaganda is" (1980:2). They point to the variety and forms which propaganda can take for a variety of reasons beyond war propaganda. These include scientific propaganda, advertising, movies and in the case of this research, bureaucratic propaganda. As David Miller defines it, "propaganda can simply be the politics of information" (Miller,1994:8).

As a guide in analyzing the complex issues surrounding the use of propaganda and how it shapes public opinion, I utilize the framework set forth by Jowett and O'Donnell (1992) to analyze the origin, forms and outcomes of propaganda campaigns to include identification of:

1. The ideology and purpose of the propaganda campaign
2. The context in which the propaganda occurs
3. The identification of the propagandist
4. The structure of the propaganda organization
5. The target audience
6. Media utilization techniques
7. Audience reaction and counter-propaganda
8. Effects and evaluation

Taken together, these points of analysis asks the following question:

To what ends, in the context of the times, does a propaganda agent, working through an organization, reach an audience through a media to get a desired reaction? By using this framework, my conclusion is that O'Neill, with the assistance of the editor of the *Belfast Telegraph*, sought to sell the idea of a new city. However, in an environment mistrustful of both O'Neill and planning, Catholic and Protestant activists and politicians used other media sources to publicize the negative implications of the plan as they pertained to their own communal interests.

The Purpose and Context of a Propaganda Campaign: The Challenge of Reform in a Divided Society

In the context of this study, planning and the creation of a new city was one element of a larger ideology that O'Neill sought to introduce to the province. "O'Neillism" as it came to be called, was an effort to bring "reform, reconciliation, economic and social equality" to Northern Ireland (Wichert, 1991:87). The basic tenets of O'Neill's ideology included a commitment to self-help, maintenance of citizenship within the United Kingdom, vigorous promotion of trade and investment and the modernization of "a physical and social environment which was not good enough for this day and age." (O'Neill,1969:42).

The new city was an important vehicle by which these objectives could be met. It would serve both to improve and modernize the province, as well as serve as a litmus test to "transcend many of the problems of the past and present and emerge as an integrated and vital community" (Craigavon New City Plan Second Report, 1967: 64)

In his autobiography O'Neill remarked on his passion to address the problem of old hatreds which he claimed were, in part, to blame for an ailing physical and economic environment:

> From the earliest days of the Premiership, one of my main aims was to heal some of the ancient divisions between Catholics and Protestants…the divisions weakened the community and wasted its potential…no man should be imprisoned by his environment. (O'Neill, 1969:100).

In addition, animosities between Catholics and Protestants historically had a marked effect in terms of physical settlement at the neighborhood and city/town level throughout the Province. Strong feelings against each community by the other had had marked effects in terms of physical settlement. Spatial polarization was not just about fear of the opposing community, but from an evolutionary separation of civic, religious and educational facilities.[3] Thus, the plan for the new city included the integration of housing units and social facilities to remedy what O'Neill

called a “segregation of spirit which occurred as a direct result of separate education and separate lives” (O’Neill,1969:14-15)

Figure 3.1
Map of Craigavon

The new city was to be located 22 miles from Belfast adjacent to the south-west side of Lurgan (of whom most of its 18,607 residents by 1965 were Catholic) and to the northeast side of Portadown (of whom the majority of its 17,873 residents were Protestant). Comprising an area of approximately 100 square miles, its composition was the two existing communities linked by proposed residential areas to form an urban corridor containing 120,000 people by 1981 and 180,000 by the year 2000. A city center was planned for construction in 1981.

Aggressive efforts at planned industrial development promised to stand in stark contrast to a declining Belfast economy--5 industrial estates, totaling 700 acres and providing jobs for 21,000 residents. According to plan estimates, the working population over the next 14 years would double from 23,000 to 46,000 (A New City in Northern Ireland, A First Report on the Plan, 1965) In addition a large marina in nearby Lough Neagh was planned to serve as a major tourist attraction.

As was outlined in Chapter 1, because the volume of redevelopment since the war had not been matched by similar development in the planning structures and processes, the existing planning, legislative and administrative structure had to be changed to accommodate such comprehensive redevelopment. Matthew’s legislative reforms to aid in the creation of the new city included The New Towns Act of 1965 and Tribunal Compensation Act of 1964 and the Lands Development Values Act of 1965.[4]

At that time, the new city was one of the most ambitious urban plans of the twentieth century in the United Kingdom (O’Dowd,1993:43). Had it succeeded it would have meant that Northern Ireland was embracing the enormous economic and social changes that were occurring globally. But from the beginning, the project provoked little more than hostility from Catholics, Protestants and particularly conservative Unionists and Loyalists. O’Neill may have sought to use Craigavon as a “major symbol of the regeneration of Northern Ireland,” but he may have failed to consider the political context of his plans. (Belfast Regional Survey and Plan,1962:14)

In examining O’Neill’s purpose behind building the new city, that is its function as a vehicle to promote trade and industry as well as a new experiment in community relations, has been outlined in the previous

section. However, propaganda relates to the existing political and social climate in which the propagandist's policies or actions occur. What is the prevailing public mood as it relates to the policies or actions that are to be undertaken? Does it affect an existing power struggle among individuals and/or groups? What are the historically held beliefs that may constrain or affect the implementation of the proposed policies or actions? It is the ability of the propagandist to understand the answers to these questions that determines how successful both the policies and information campaign which ensues are (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1992: 213). It is my belief that the potential for acceptance of O'Neill's new city was affected by his underestimation of public sentiment. The discussion to follow reveals that the context in which the new city was planned and implemented was characterized by:

1. An aversion and mistrust of planning
2. An unwillingness of local authorities and governments to relegate power to a centralized planning authority.
3. A widening schism within the Unionist Party between conservatives and progressives.
4. Catholic suspicion of promised "inclusion" in a modern Ulster.
5. Long standing grievances by the "West" of persistent economic neglect.
6. Contraction within the agricultural sector

Planning in its relatively short history since World War II had, on the whole, been embraced by neither the people nor the politicians in Northern Ireland. The practice of planning had promised little in the way of substantive change in an economy characterized by chronic unemployment and a narrow economic base. As outlined in Chapter One, many planning documents, because of either a lack of political will or the unavailability of resources to carry out their recommendations, were largely ignored. Among planning's most scathing critics was the previous Prime Minister, Basil Brooke, who had served in the top leadership position for twenty years prior to O'Neill's tenure. As O'Neill explained in his autobiography, Brooke did not share his enthusiasm for either physical or economic planning: "his most notorious pet aversion was to planning, which he regarded as a socialist menace… This had effects on the province as a whole-for most of the people, planning was a dirty word" (O'Neill,1972:47).

Politicians, particularly Unionist politicians, perceived O'Neill's to be a threat to local control of local affairs. Whereas most planning functions were under the jurisdiction of local authorities, the establishment of the Ministry of Development in July 1964, conferred many of these powers to the new centralized authority. This movement toward centralization of power posed the possibility that the political function of local government bodies, as repositories of political patronage

and the linchpin in the maintenance of Unionist control, would diminish. During the 1964 conference of Northern Ireland Local Authorities, representatives were vocal in their opposition to the Ministry of Development. Alexander McNeilly, the conference secretary called for a clarification of the function and powers of local government claiming that "they were becoming the rubber stamp and unpaid publicity officers of the Ministry" (*Belfast Telegraph*, October 14,1964).

This resistance to centralized planning, particularly in regard to the new city project, was also evident in the widening breach between the powerful Belfast Corporation and the Ministry of Development. The Corporation had been steadfast since 1879 in efforts to extend Belfast boundaries to accommodate suburban growth. This was achieved first in 1885 when the boundary was extended by 15,000 acres, then in 1896 when the Belfast Corporation Act was passed. A campaign again in 1947, to meet the tremendous postwar housing needs had failed.[5] The Corporation was vehemently opposed to the new city and the Ministry of Development, for it signified the end to any chance of extending its municipal boundaries. In addition new industry, such as Goodyear Tyre, was already being diverted to the new city and the Matthew stop-line around Belfast assured that government resources, population and industry would be steered to the new city area. In August of 1964 during the early planning stages of the new city, a spokesman for the Belfast Corporation explained:

> The establishment of a single planning authority will be the first decisive step in the erosion of local affairs, while the new Ministry was evidence of the new PM's dictatorial style of governing." (*Belfast Telegraph*, August 14,1964)

But protestations about local vs. central control were only part of a larger, and ultimately more volatile issue. A schism between conservatives and progressives within the Unionist Party was growing as O'Neill prepared to press on with his planning initiatives, but the seeds for this split had been planted in the early days of the O'Neill administration. This was manifest in the animosity between Brian Faulkner and the O'Neill. Faulkner, who had served as a Member of Parliament since 1949 and held cabinet positions since 1959, seemed to be the natural choice to be the new Prime Minister. However when Brooke resigned due to poor health, it was O'Neill who Brooke selected as his successor. Had the process been more democratic Faulkner surely would have been elected. (Bloomfield, 1994:73) Faulkner and O'Neill represented opposing Unionist ideals, though they did agree that revitalization of the Ulster economy was crucial. Faulkner, politically ambitious, protective of the Protestant working class and disinterested in

courting Catholic interests, resented O'Neill's presidential, aloof style. He was not alone, for at the time of O'Neill's appointment as Prime Minister, there were many Unionist Members of Parliament who believed that he was too progressive. Faulkner, a stalwart Unionist, was a more favorable choice. As Andrew Boyd in an article about the growing "Unionist split" commented: "There are those in the Unionist Party who follow Mr. O'Neill and those who believe that O'Neill is a Jacob who robbed another Esau, in this case Mr. Brian Faulkner, of his birthright (*The Irish Times,* September 1,1964).

As a gesture of appeasement, O'Neill had appointed Faulkner to the high profile position of Minister of Commerce. However from the very beginning and within O'Neill's own Cabinet, there were attempts to capture the right wing, led by Faulkner. This rift within the Unionist Party would ultimately widen and affect the Prime Minister's ability to successfully implement his vision for a changed community. An advisor to O'Neill, who wished to remain anonymous, spoke in a 1973 interview for the BBC.

> if Faulkner had backed him up at the time, it all could have worked; from the first minute Faulkner was determined to have him (O'Neill) out. As it turns out the first line of resistance came from ultra-loyalists. In the one large backbench rebellion, of the thirty-six Unionist members of Parliament, Faulkner could have gotten the backing of at least nineteen of them, but he hadn't the courage to go on. (Van Voris:42)

The new city project only drove a wedge into this widening split for the ideal of the new city, as an experiment in better communal relations, drew suspicion from traditional Unionists. As Wichert has commented, "the new city represented a spirit of ecumenism which they perceived to be an attack on Unionism" (Wichert, 1991:95).

It was clear that certain elements within the Unionist Party were not going to allow planning policies to go unchallenged. "Right from the beginning it was clear that resistance from local Unionist power centres would have effects on the implementation of his [O'Neill's] plans" (Bew, Gibbon and Patterson,1995:23).

But Unionists were not the only constituency skeptical of the ramifications of the new city. Many Catholics were deeply suspicion of their promised "inclusion" in a modern Ulster. Despite his rhetoric at reform, there was little evidence early in O'Neill's premiership that Catholics were going to be included into the political power structure of any new planning initiatives. Early appointments to the Housing Trust, the National Assistance Board and the Lockwood Committee for the siting of the second university had not included a single Catholic. The merits of planning as a vehicle to dismantle sectarian structures was challenged in the February edition *The Round Table*:

> Captain O'Neill's speeches on the "New Ulster," stimulating as these have been in terms of a more modern outlook on town and country planning have not further defined what he earlier called a unity of purpose…The impression is that he has decided that material well-being is enough, without running the risk of dissension in his own party through a direct attempt to ease the problem of segregation. (Round Table, February 1964)

Catholic suspicion of the sincerity of O'Neill to include Catholics in a modernized Ulster had also taken on a regional dimension and was related to the ongoing issue of intentional economic neglect by Stormont of the north west, where the majority of Catholics lived. Although the origins of this perceived "run down of the west" have been documented in Chapter 2, this issue was also pertinent to the new city project. Parallel to the planning of the proposed new city, Derry was experiencing other problems in addition to high and chronic unemployment. An increase in population density had put strains on public resources and was a factor in the inadequate and insufficient housing situation there. Urban density figures were climbing to 25 persons per acre and it was estimated that 10,000 current residents would have to be re-housed outside the city boundary. Between 1963 and 1965, the Londonderry Corporation had prepared a number of reports making the case for an extension of the city boundaries. In this process a new steering committee had been set up and an Economic Council had been established, all intensifying the argument to extend the boundary. Their figures translated into a demand for land outside of the city boundary totaling from 800 to 1,000 acres of land. However, Stormont rejected this request, despite the urgency of the situation. When it was announced that the proposed new city and the millions of pounds to fund the project, would be going to the Belfast area, Nationalist Members of Parliament proclaimed that this was evidence that the west would continue to be ignored. (*Derry Journal*, August 8,1964)

In conclusion, the context in which the new city was to be constructed was characterized by mistrust among conservative Unionists as well as Catholics, particularly in the north west of the province. But there was another constituency that would have a dramatic impact on the planning and development of the new city and is worth noting. Almost 68,000 acres of land were to be vested for construction within the new city, the majority of which was owned by farmers. In a region with a strong agricultural history, the previous ten years had seen tremendous changes in this staple industry. Employment had contracted due to urban expansion coupled with increased mechanization. While agriculture had once accounted for one-sixth of all employees in the province and one quarter of all employed males, between 1950 and 1960 employment fell by 28,000, nearly one-third of the 1950 total (Bew, Gibbon and Patterson, 1995:117). This contraction forced some farmers,

many of whom were Protestant, into semi-skilled and lower grade non-manual labor, thereby lowering the standard of living for many (Bew, Gibbon and Pattterson,1995:117).

The existing strain on farmers in the Lurgan/Portadown area was not helped either by the Prime Minister or the planned new city. First, agrarian interests were not well represented in Stormont and O'Neill and the Ministries of Commerce and Development were becoming increasingly viewed as the mouthpiece for multinationals at the expense of local firms, particularly farming and agriculture (Gailey,1995:). Second, Farm Grants in the region had been withdrawn as early as December of 1963 to discourage improvement of farm land, though why they were withdrawn was not made clear to them. By the summer of 1964 the North Armagh Farmers Union requested meetings with the Ministry to discuss the restoration of their grants. (*Belfast Newsletter*, August 15,1964). Their requests were denied.

The "Selling" of a Prime Minister and the Role of the Media

The previous section has described the objectives of the new city project and describing the political and social context preceding its implementation. It is evident that Catholics and Protestants, as well as members of O'Neill's own party, were reticent about the implications of the new city. O'Neill acknowledged that to gain acceptance of his vision for the province, "planning must be sold to the people." (O'Neill,1969:41) This notion of "selling" policy to the voters was a larger undertaking than one might think, for until O'Neill's tenure, there were almost no public relations mechanisms working at the highest levels of government. [6] One of the most prominent reasons for this was due to the relative inertia of the Stormont system in general. Prior to O'Neill's leadership, it was not unusual for Cabinet Ministers, appointed for life, to serve in more than one ministry. Nor was it unusual for them, most of whom already had full time careers and business "concerns" dependent upon their positions in government, to remain away from cabinet duties for weeks at a time. As a result, there was no line of policy at all in regard to the dissemination of information in the Province. Miller accounts for the lack of public relations institutions prior to the outbreak of the Troubles in this way:

> At that time there was no actual message that could be put out other than to say that the Unionist Government was a happy band of brothers who were doing the best they could. (Miller, 1994:74)

All of this changed with the appointment of O'Neill. Even in his early political positions, O'Neill had a reputation for being, as *Belfast Telegraph* editor Jack Sayers described, "obsessed with the press."

(Gailey, 1995:102) In 1962, as Finance Minister, O'Neill had hired former *Belfast Telegraph* journalist Tommy Roberts for the new position of Public Relations Officer to remedy what O'Neill referred to as "the bad industrial press Northern Ireland was getting" (O'Neill, 1972:38).

It was no accident that O'Neill would have concentrated on the print media, for the prime source of information for residents within the province was newspapers. Newspapers, published by both Nationalist and Unionist interests, were central to Northern Ireland political life. Budge and O'Leary's 1973 analysis of media usage in the province indicates that two-thirds of Belfast residents received information on current political issues from the daily newspapers (See Appendix 3.1 for a review of the main Northern Ireland newspapers)

> "political events percolated through the newspapers and served as ninety-percent of their knowledge about local affairs..." (Budge and O'Leary,1973:338)

Table 3.1
Sources of Political Information

(Percentage of all Northern Ireland Residents)

Sources	Politics in General	Local Politics
Personal /Non-Media	0	6
Daily Newspaper	41	61
Sunday Newspaper	12	1
Local/Neighborhood Newspapers	2	1
Television	30	20
Radio	9	5
Magazines	1	1
Not Interested	6	4

Source: Budge and O'Leary , 1973

The largest of the daily newspapers was the *Belfast Telegraph*, with a readership of 59% of the population and a circulation of 219,874. Its editor, Jack Sayers, a self proclaimed liberal was, long before the arrival of O'Neill, a believer in the tenets of "Constructive Unionism." Constructive Unionists rejected the polarization of Northern Ireland society and believed that, despite loyalty to Northern Ireland, sound social and economic development was possible only with a continued connection with the British empire (Gailey, 1995:X). Sayers was committed to the pursuit of reconciliation through economic development. During his life and throughout his thirty years with the *Telegraph,* his most strongly held belief was that if Unionism was to survive it would have to modernize and look toward. This ideology was described in his biography:

> He was forever advocating that Ulsterman look beyond the province to the wider opportunities of the UK, EEC and the USA. For him economic efficiency and social justice necessitated the mobilization of Catholics. This meant the transformation of Ulster Unionism into an inclusive, supra-class political movement.
> (Gailey,1995:79)

Sayers used his prestige as a former member of Winston Churchill's staff during World War II and as *Telegraph* editor to further his political philosophy. Yet despite his unorthodox views, his modesty, seriousness and love of country had earned him a large following across the sectarian divide. The *Irish Times* noted his influence in a November 1962 article:

> Since Jack Sayers became editor, the paper has undergone a liberating revolution. For a number of years the Telegraph has been completely detached from the coattails of Glengall Street [Unionist Party Headquarters.] Always a first class newspaper, it has become an adult newspaper, respected and read by all sections of the community. *(The Irish Times* November 1962)

Sayers was also an advocate of planning, having contributed to the 1955 report *Ulster Under Home Rule* with his close friend Thomas Wilson, the author of the Wilson Economic Plan, which is the subject of this research. But he was not without his critics, particularly among hardline loyalists, the most vocal of whom was Rev. Ian Paisley. Brodie, in *Tele: A History of the Belfast Telegraph* has commented:

> There was a vicious reaction to these changes. Sayers and the *Telegraph* were ridiculed in Paisley's speeches and newspaper articles. There were threats of boycotts in loyalist areas, allegations that it was about to enter the circulation market in the Irish Republic and was, therefore mobilising support from Nationalists. But Sayers continued undaunted. (Brodie,1995:134)

O'Neill's energy, progressive vision and affinity for planning was a natural

match for Sayers. The new Prime Minister and Sayers began a series of regular consultations. The friendship extended to O'Neill's closest political allies; Harold Black, Permanent Secretary of the Northern Ireland Cabinet; Ken Bloomfield and Jim Malley, both Private Secretaries for O'Neill. Together, they sought to mold an ideal of Unionism, which included the plan for the new city. In turn, Sayers promised to "swing the *Telegraph* behind this new dynamic." (Gailey,1995:79)

Developing Consensus in A Divided Society: O'Neill and the Belfast Telegraph.

In Jowett and O'Donnell's framework for propaganda analysis, the propagandist or propaganda organizations directs its efforts to a target audience (Jowett and O'Donnell,1995:217). For O'Neill, the least disruptive means to implement the Matthew and Wilson Plans and in turn, the new city, was to develop and nurture a more moderate constituency which would bridge the sectarian divide. Unionism would remain the dominant party, but would be transformed to a more outward looking, progressive party. As had been the case throughout his political career, O'Neill once again turned to the print media. In his memoir, Cabinet Secretary Ken Bloomfield remembered his strategy:

> His preoccupation with the press, which continued after his appointment as Prime Minister, necessitated a campaign to win the support of the two largest Belfast dailies, the *Telegraph* and the *Newsletter.* The goal was to gain access to that crucial medium in his attempt to shift opinion as well as to protect his policies from noisy minorities. (Bloomfield,1994:72).

This mobilization of the center included a "relentless attack on all opponents of liberal Unionism, particularly the "Ian Paisley establishment." (Gailey,1995:92 See Chapter 1) The confidential letter below from Jack Sayers to Harold Black reveals his commitment to using the *Telegraph* to help O'Neill mould a more moderate constituency.

Figure 3.2
Letter from Jack Sayers to Harold Black

Sayers biographer has noted that support of O'Neill and his policies was evident from his first months in office and that Sayers used various techniques to develop this support.[7] One of the editor's favorite practices was to use *Telegraph* leaders to "inspire and

educate"(Gailey,1995:92). For example, his January 1,1964 New Years Day leader was entitled "Lift Up Our Eyes," in which he asked both Catholic and Protestant Churches not to bring religious differences into politics. In his editorials, he lost few opportunities to boost the standing of O'Neill. It was not uncommon for the new PM to be described with words such as "youthfulness" and "vigour" to symbolize the arrival of a "new order." (Gailey, 1995: 92 and *Belfast Telegraph,* November 15,1965; October 11,1965)

Another method which Sayers used to develop consensus, was to communicate as if this majority already existed (Gailey,1995:92). In a published BBC interview with the Northern Ireland Home Service, Sayers assessed O'Neill's first year in office. He claimed that the changes which the Prime Minister had proposed were already being accepted by a majority of the citizens of Northern Ireland and that the Unionist Party had better adapt to this public sentiment:

> ...I hesitate to say at the moment that Ulster is a ferment, but it can hardly be denied that there is now a feeling for tolerance and freedom of expression among a great many people on both sides of the politico-religious fence. But the Unionist leadership has done little or nothing to come to terms with an intellectual upheaval of this kind which could have far-reaching consequences.

In regard to regional planning, the *Telegraph* reported actual benefits to planning initiatives before they were fully implemented. For example a September 12,1965 front-page headline was 'Ulster is getting better Press, says Premier.' The article stated that the favorable press was due to the "presence of visiting journalists, who were seeing Ulster in a new light." The "entire Province" was now experiencing a "greater spirit of optimism" as O'Neill and the Ministry's was about to implement a "vast capital investment programme...the most imaginative of which is the creation of a new city which will provide a new focus for living" (*Belfast Telegraph*, September 12,1965).

But for Sayers and O'Neill, they both may have over-estimated the power of their words and the media to sway public opinion and underestimated a constituency hostile and fearful of the implications of planning in general. The new city was in its infancy in terms of planning stages and a battle of words was about to be waged in newspapers representing very different interests.

The New City and the Onset of Counter-propaganda: Planning the New City Brings Division

O'Neill, with the help of Jack Sayers, sought to use the *Belfast Telegraph* to promote the ideals of liberal Unionism as well as the policies and plans of his leadership. However, those who believed they would be affected by the development reacted severely and swiftly against it—and

O'Neill. Newspapers representing interests other than Sayers movement toward progressive Unionism used the controversies to discredit the new city plan and O'Neill. Their first opportunity came on August 14,1964 when the chief architect of the new city resigned and what became known as the "Copcutt Controversy," ensued.

In 1964 Professor Geoffrey Copcutt, then principal architect for the Cumbernauld new town in England, was selected to head the design team for the yet un-named new city. However, on August 8,1964, only months after his arrival in Northern Ireland, Copcutt issued a memorandum against the Government in which he both resigned and expressed doubts about the feasibility and practicality of the new city project. (See Appendix 3.3 for Copcutt's memorandum in its entirety.)

The 7000 word document was decidedly critical of both the Stormont Government and the new city plan and echoed early concerns about the effects of the project. Copcutt questioned O'Neill's policy of the "unswerving pursuit" of all aspects of the Matthew Plan and expressed the belief that the new city was merely a "propaganda project" to further O'Neill's ideology, rather than a legitimate planning project. In addition, he criticized the movement toward centralized planning, warning that this trend "was effectively extinguishing activity at the grass roots," leading to an "eventual erosion of local determination of local affairs." The demographic composition of Lurgan and Portadown as "Catholic" and "Protestant" towns respectively would present "special problems for the state appointed Development Commission to integrate both towns properly." In his estimation "Londonderry was the obvious contender for injection and expansion" and would be evidence of "the sincerity of the desire of Ulster to prepare for the 21st century." But he was most scathing in his criticism of the entire Stormont system:

> I have become disenchanted with the Stormont scene and despite the knowledge that there are three times as many employed in central government as there are university students, I am sceptical of its ability to progress with the technical developments necessary…we have watched the date of our legislation recede and its form change, we have seen opposition build up and be optimistically discounted…It is beginning to seem as though we are being asked to engineer propaganda rather than a city. (Memoradum from Geoffrey Copcutt to the Ministry of Development August 14,1964)

The print media, with their own political agendas, seized upon the controversy, producing its own counter-propaganda. An examination of news coverage of Copcutt's resignation reveals how the same event was reported in very different ways by different newspapers. Table 3.2 provides a summary of the major newspapers coverage of the story. The leaders and headers allude to the point of view of each paper and the

"spin" which each took.

Table 3.2
Media Coverage of the Copcutt Report

Newspaper	Religious/ Political Affiliation	Headlines	Leaders*	Article "Spin"
The Irish Times	Modern Nationalism	Ulster's Second Class Citizens	Professor resigns as discrimination protest Savage Tactics	Opportunity to bring attention to issue of religious discrimination
The Belfast Newsletter	Traditional Unionism	New City Inadvisable	Propaganda Anxious Period Dynamite Folly	Portrayal of Ministry as autocratic and secretive
The Belfast Telegraph	Constructive Unionism	Matthew Says His Plan is Best	Not Alarmed Not Emotional Stimulating Reason's Behind Matthew Choice	Rational and Technocratic explanation of the merits of the new city
The Derry Journal		Derry Plans a United Rally: Acclamation is Unanimous	Prospect Delights Farmers	Condemnation Of Ministry and highlight of historical neglect of region

The resignation of Copcutt, as well as his memorandum, became headline news. *The Irish Times*, sympathetic to the plight of Catholics in the North and the cause of Nationalism, reported that Copcutt "opened up a flood gate of criticism on the heads of Government" and called the new city architects memo:

> a 7000 thousand word outburst…which put the controversial cat among the political pigeons… Copcutt resigned as protest against the discrimination of Catholics. (August 14,1964)

The *Belfast Newsletter* (Loyalist/Unionist) used the event to publicize the plight of farmers, to discredit O'Neill and to highlight the perceived usurpation of Unionist controlled local government by the Ministry of Development:

> The Copcutt controversy is stirring up feelings against the Government from Councillors in Derry and Belfast to farmers everywhere. Londonderry was elated, Lurgan and Portadown were aghast, farmers in Armagh, many of whom would have their land vested for the new city were chortling with glee and the rest of Ulster was taken aback by the bombshell… Other than the new city there is one major problem that will have to be considered—one which is political dynamite- the reorganization of local government…Mr Copcutt's reappraisal of the new city project has also provided strong backing for farmers who are protesting the establishment of a new city. (*Belfast Newsletter* August 15,1964)

An August 18,1964 letter to the editor by JM Cox in the *Belfast Newsletter* questioned the wisdom of O'Neill's so-called "brave new Ulster and its new image" and reported that the Copcutt Controversy was rapidly "becoming a crisis."

> It seems to me that the Government have been more interested in image building instead of getting something done. I think Mr. Copcutt was shows quite clearly that the Government were only interested in imagery where this project was concerned. (*Belfast Newsletter* August 18,1964)

Finally, *The Derry Journal* used the resignation-- and Copcutt's call to redevelop Derry, rather than construct an entire new city--as an opportunity to once again draw attention to the neglect of the north-west.

> The siting of the new city near Belfast is the equivalent of shutting the gates of Derry. Mr. Copcutt's suggestion that Derry should be developed as the new second city was unanimously acclaimed by all parties in Derry. The Derry Corporation will approach the Government to implement the ideas of Mr. Copcutt. (*Derry Journal*, August 14,1964)

The *Belfast Telegraph* article, though quoting some excerpts from Copcutt's memo, focused upon the technical merits of the plan by way of an interview with Sir Robert Matthew, who originally recommended the

new city. Matthew spoke of the controversy as nothing more than a manifestation of the provincialism of the region:

> I am not alarmed by anything that he (Copcutt) said… It is symptomatic of this small area that such a report should be regarded as so important. The thing is out of proportion. Copcutt never expressed his anxieties about the project and had ample opportunity to discuss them. (*Belfast Telegraph,* August 15,1964)

Effects of the Copcutt's resignation

The media coverage of the Copcutt controversy both reflected and exacerbated some of the most contentious issues brewing within the region. One effect of Copcutt's report was to widen the breach between the Government and the Belfast Corporation, for the City Council saw in Copcutt the truth of their long drawn out argument against the Governments policy of a definite Green Belt around Belfast. The Corporation also expressed concerns over the costs of the new city project. The proposed development commission was budgeted to run at 50,000 pounds annually, while construction of the new city was proposed to run into the tens of millions of pounds, which the Belfast Corporation, still bitter over rejection of a boundary extension, perceived as a tremendous waste. "The City Fathers are even more convinced that the capital should be extended, not arrested as planning policy in Stormont would have it (*The Irish Times*, August 18,1964). "

The controversy also enabled Derry to once again draw attention to chronic Government neglect, which might have been remedied had the new town been sited near Derry. For one brief moment sectarian issues in Derry were put aside to use the momentum of Copcutt's recommendation to have Derry redeveloped as Northern Ireland's second city. The Londonderry Corporation planned an all-Party approach to the Government and the commitment "to treat this matter with the same urgency as the University issue." *The Derry Journal* reported that "among those who supported Copcutt's report were the Derry Corporation, the Derry Trades Union and the Chamber of Commerce who. According to Edward Richardson, Nationalist MP for South Armagh:

> I believe Derry should be the site for the New City. The reason that it was ignored was that there is a big nationalist element among the population. It was purely a political move to pick North Armagh as the site. It had been decided to treat the inevitably hostile reaction of Unionists in the west of the Province as a price for concentrating resources within the Protestant heartland to the east. (*The Derry Journal* August 14,1964)

This effort to placate Unionists was confirmed in an interview with the *Irish Times.* Copcutt claimed that during the initial planning stages of the

new city “he was told by a source close to the Northern Ireland Cabinet that the Ulster Government “would not countenance any scheme that might upset the voting balance between Catholics and Protestants” (*The Irish Times*, April 24,1967). In turn, the Nationalist Party Representatives reacted strongly. According to Edward Richardson, a Nationalist MP for South Armagh:

> I have felt since the beginning that the new city was pure propaganda and doomed to failure. I believe that Derry should be the site for the new big city. The reason that it was ignored is that there is a big Nationalist element. It was purely a political move to pick North Armagh.

In November of 1965 issued a manifesto which warned of the real effects of planning on Catholics in the North-west by a calculating Government which was responsible for:

> a new and insidious division by playing region against region and town against country. The government has neglected important areas and towns in the area of planning...This could be achieved at a fraction of the cost contemplated by the present government in grandiose, fantastic schemes in areas which did not ask for them. (Archived letter from the Nationalist Party, November 1965)

In addition, farmers from the North Armagh area, whose land was to be vested for new town development, also received support from the *Newsletter*. M. Eric Crozier, Ulster Farmers Union field officer in North Armagh, asserted that “a very large proportion of the townspeople and traders are in opposition to the new city” and vowed to intensify their campaign against the new city. The farmers vowed to continue with even greater “vigour and determination” to fight against the new city.

Copcutt’s description of the crisis ridden Stormont government also brought to the forefront of politics the revelation of the Unionist split. Specifically, it had revived the O’Neill -Faulkner feud and the overarching debate of which way the Unionist Party should go in terms of inclusion of Catholics. Andrew Boyd’s article for the *Irish Times* described both the depth of division within the Unionist party as well as the prominence of certain newspapers in widening the split:

> But more important than the barbs which Mr. Copcutt has been shooting at Stormont, is the revelation that the Unionists, especially the Unionist newspapers are split into those who follow the Prime Minister and those follow Mr. Faulkner. No one ever dreamed of the day when a Unionist newspaper would sustain a campaign against the Prime Minister, yet this is exactly what the *Belfast Newsletter* has been doing. For two weeks the Newsletter has been playing up the Copcutt controversy in the hope that it would become a major political issue to and create such a crisis in the Cabinet that it would split and bring the O’Neill Administration to an end. The *Belfast Telegraph,* however, continues to talk about ‘new images’ and scornfully wonders if Copcutt was ever up to the task of planning a new city *(The Irish Times* September 1,1964)

The Copcutt controversy eventually passed as a news item and O' Neill and the Ministry of Development pressed ahead with their plan. Still, the context in which the new city was developed and settled grew tenser. Every effort at public relations was followed by counter-propaganda from many sides until even the best press could not ease the growing tensions surrounding the new city—and O'Neill.

Naming the New City and its Leaders Brings Division

Perhaps no event during O'Neill's leadership was more significant and controversial than his invitation for the Irish Prime Minister Sean Lemass to visit Stormont in January of 1965. Such a meeting between Prime Ministers North and South had never taken place. Shrouded in secrecy, the event came as a shock to both sides of the sectarian divide. O'Neill had consulted neither his Cabinet nor the press, including his friend Jack Sayers. The visit outraged Unionists, and the Prime Minister found himself facing calls for his resignation. [8] But Sayers took the meeting as an opportunity to achieve his goal of furthering the cause of constructive Unionism. He wrote a torrent of articles in the *Telegraph* to boost the standing of O'Neill. Sayers biographer, observed that it was:

> less willful deception and more unrestrained enthusiasm. He spoke in his editorials as though he was O'Neill's mouthpiece. Sayers had constructed a concept of O'Neillism and felt free to push it further than O'Neill would have gone. His strategy was a relentless attack on all opponents of liberal Unionism and the Paisley establishment . (Gailey,1995:92)

As much as the Lemass visit disturbed Unionists, it had also increased Catholic expectations for inclusion in a reformed Ulster. Though they had lost the battle over the new city location, Catholics would hold O'Neill to his 1963 election promise of "building bridges between the two communities." Thus, great symbolic importance was placed upon both the name of the new city and those who were to appointed for the Development Commission.

In January of 1965 William Craig of the Ministry of Development announced that the new city was to be called Craigavon after Sir James Craig, later named Lord Craigavon, the first Northern Ireland Prime Minister after partition. Craig was despised by Catholics for his promise to make "Stormont a Protestant Parliament for Protestant people" (O'Halloran:41). Though his rhetoric had espoused "fair play for all," historians have noted that his policies were the beginning of the "long history of gerrymandering which had existed up to the present time" (Oliver,1978:84) It was also Craig who had coined the phrases "No Surrender" and "Not An Inch," in reference to Nationalist efforts toward

reunification in Ireland. His slogans had endured through the decades and had become ultra-loyalist Ian Paisley's signature campaign phrases.

Outraged by the selection of Craigavon as the new city name, Nationalist politician Austin Currie promised that the new city would:

> increase divisions within the community and that all eyes were upon who would be chosen for the Commission.The Minister of Development is about to make grave errors. His conduct in relation to several issues from siting the proposed new city and the odious sectarian name chosen for it would suggest that he has been designedly selected to play up the Ulster Unionist Party lunatic fringe (*Belfast Telegraph* January 18,1965).

Realizing the implications of losing the Catholic support for O'Neill so crucial to promoting broadbased support for the Prime Minister, Sayers used his editorials to challenge Stormont and the Ministry of Development to be more inclusive as members of the Craigavon Development Commission were slated for appointment:

> Has the government any considered or consistent on the issue of fostering a common interest in the creation of Craigavon as well as the Wilson and Matthew Plans?..The selection of the Commission is one of the few practical tests of the sincerity of the PM's bridge-building *(Belfast Telegraph* , October 23,1965).

On October 13,1965 the Craigavon Commision was named by the Ministry of Development. No Catholics were included in the Commission.[9] All opposition Members of Parliament called for a full-scale debate in the House of Commons to discuss the make-up of the Commission while Nationalist MP's called the actions of the Ministry:

> a disgrace…this is only the creation of a Unionist City…this talk of building bridges in this new community is nonsense, they might as well call the new city 'segregationville'… community relations have worsened as a result (*Derry Journal*, October 25,1965)

Craig answered his critics in an interview with the *Belfast Telegraph* entitled "End Smear on New City Team. " In the article he stated that the criteria for choosing members of the commission included personal qualities, knowledge of Northern Ireland and the new city area, determination to make a success of the project and commitment to building a city that is both modern and forward looking." [10] (*Belfast Telegraph* October 21,1965)

Effects of the New City Name and Leadership Controversy

Only a few months after the disputes over the naming of the new city, the symbolic importance of place names became evident once again

during the construction of a bridge over the Lagan River in Belfast. In January of 1966 a committee comprised of members of the Belfast Corporation Improvement Committee was established to name the bridge. Prior to the announcement of the name, word was leaked that the bridge would be named the Carson Bridge after Lord Carson, leader of Loyalist troops who battled and defeated Nationalist rebels in the Easter Uprising of 1916. Both Carson and Craig were among the most hated political figures by Catholics in Northern Ireland's history. In addition Carson's son Edward had in recent years joined forces with ultra-Loyalist Rev. Ian Paisley to resurrect the paramilitary group, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), whose mandate was to "protect" the British police, from Catholic paramilitaries.

Fearing controversy similar to the one months earlier in Craigavon, Governor Lord Erskine, the Mayor of Belfast, who had been appointed by O'Neill, asked the Belfast Corporation to name the bridge neither Carson nor any other name of a "controversial nature" (Deutsch and Magowan,1973:4). Moderate Unionists suggested that the bridge be named the Queen Elizabeth II bridge to signify its allegiance to Britain. However, hard-line Unionists wanted the name Carson as a celebration of Protestant leadership and history. Forty-one Unionist members of the Belfast City Council came forward to support Carson as the bridge name.

It is important to note that not all members of the Ulster Unionist Party were for using Carson for the bridge name and the controversy was one more example of the split within the Unionist Party. On one side of the debate more radical Unionists believed that the bridge should reflect Ulster's leadership and heritage while on the other moderates believed that the survival of Northern Ireland depended upon support and allegiance with Britain. Even former Prime Minister, Lord Brookeborough spoke out on the issue saying he "regretted the interference with the name Carson being chosen—Carson was one of the greatest men of their time" (*Belfast Telegraph,* February 16,1966). That the Prime Minister who appointed O'Neill came forward to support the wishes of conservative Unionists only undermined both O'Neill and his efforts to mobilize moderate Unionist support.

However, the *Telegraph* firmly defended Gov. Erskine's conciliatory approach to name the bridge the Queen Elizabeth II and began a public campaign inviting citizens to write in with their own suggestions. Suggestions poured in from the public at large including "the People's Bridge, the Harmony Bridge and the Lagan Bridge" (*Belfast Telegraph*, January 15, 1966). *Telegraph* headlines included "Carson Choice Condemned by Belfast Chamber," while editorials warned that retention of the Carson Bridge "would have shown and unwillingness to move into

the modern world" (February 15,1966). With reluctance, the Improvement Committee of the Belfast Corporation voted in favor of Governor Erskine's suggestion of the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge.

Rev Paisley lead a rally in the Belfast Ulster Hall and warned "(Gov.) Erskine to mind his own business and not interfere with the Protestant lives and liberties of the people of Ulster on the controversial issue of the naming of the bridge" (Deutsch and Magaowan, 1973:4).

During the controversy the *Telegraph,* through its articles and editorials, sought to maintain calm, while defending the actions of the Ministry of Development. Sayers praised O'Neill for his "power of decision" and "mastery of the Northern Ireland situation" (The Round Table, March 1966). The O'Neill administration was grateful for the support, prompting Harold Black to write a letter of encouragement and thanks to Sayers for his efforts.

Letter from Harold Black, Secretary to the Cabinet, 13 April 1966

> My Dear Jack,
>
> I certainly look to you as the most responsible of editors in any context... the PM was tremendously pleased with the treatment you gave... I hope as he does, that it will generate further discussion and a more constructive approach at the grassroots.
>
> Yours,
> Harold
>
> PS We still have a luncheon appointment awaiting a day suitable to you

Effects of the Controversy

As much as the name of the new city and the appointed leadership had infuriated Catholics, early 1966 marked the beginnings of the "almost continuous unrest within the Orange Order and grumblings about Terence O'Neill from his own party" which began to dominate the headlines. Perhaps no single person both exemplified this split within the Unionist Party and articulated such vehement opposition to the ramifications of "O'Neillism" than did Ian Paisley. Paisley understood the close relationship between O'Neill and Sayers and despised *Belfast Telegraph* and its liberal leanings (Gailey,1995:92). Paisley and his

followers regularly protested outside of the *Telegraph* building and Sayers was the frequent recipient of hate-mail. In 1966 he created his own newspaper, the *Protestant Telegraph*. Motivated by blatant hatred and bigotry toward Catholics, he lost no chance to implicate Jack Sayers and the *Belfast Telegraph* in a conspiracy to hand Northern Ireland over to the Catholics. "The principal aim of the *Belfast Telegraph* " he wrote, "was to unite Ireland under the leadership of the Pope. It was time this paper was honest and called itself the *Belfast Roman Telegraph (Protestant Telegraph*, March 30,1968). He also accused the paper of:

> The suppression and views contrary to the 'bigoted ideals of John E. Sayers, the refusal to advertise any condemnation of the Roman Catholic Church, the doctoring of photographs to libel Protestants, the manufacture of news slanted against loyalists… (Protestant Telegraph, February 3, 1968).

Paisley also represented the most militant opponents to O'Neill and his policies. With headlines such as "Cannot Trust O'Neill: Forswears Traditional Unionism," he claimed O'Neill would "lead to the downfall of Ulster." Even planning received his attentions and he was particularly scathing in his criticism of the Ministry of Development. He called William Craig and the Ministry a group of "jack-booted thugs," and claimed that its establishment, had "resulted in the forfeiture of the confidence of the ranks of his own party" (*Protestant Telegraph*, September 6,1966). He never forgave O'Neill for the Lemass meeting and the Lagan Bridge incident and used cartoons to humiliate the Prime Minister.

Figure 3.3

Cartoon from the Protestant Telegraph in reference to the Carson Bridge and Sean Lemass Controversies

The cartoon underscores the crudeness of Paisley's paper and indeed the *Protestant Telegraph* has been described as "a rag, childish and silly" (Bew, Gibbon and Patterson,1995:217). Still, Paisley in his mission to mobilize "every true and faithful Protestant against O'Neill" must have had some influence as the weekly paper enjoyed a circulation of over 7000 (Brodie, 1995:140). As the new city progressed, he would continue to use the paper to showcase what he believed to be the mishandling of the new city project.

But Paisley was only one of planning's vocal critics as a beleaguered

William Craig from the Ministry of Development defended himself against Catholics and Protestants alike:

> I'll never understand why there was such a furor over the name of the new city and the bridge in Belfast...ladies and gentleman, that is sickening and is not the sort of thing we must not allow to become prevalent...Unionists must try to bring their standards to the community and work to maintain Ulster as an integral part of the UK . (*Belfast Telegraph* January 2,1966)

O'Neill sought to once again publicize the merits of Craigavon, while downplaying the growing controversy that surrounded it. In an article in the *Belfast Telegraph*, he explained:

> although the project had run into some difficulties, they were never as great as they were made to appear and reiterated that it was important for Craigavon to succeed. The recommendation to set limits of growth in Belfast is a sound one...we are concerned not just with the economy, but with people. Craigavon represents the chance to build a new environment which will avoid the errors of the past. (*Belfast Telegraph* February 2,1966)

More controversy, however, was on the horizon as the actual development of Craigavon was approaching.

Developing the New City Brings Division

In December of 1965, the Ministry of Development issued a vesting order for 8000 acres of land involving over 800 landowners in the new city area, of which 250 were actively engaged in farming. In addition, work was scheduled to begin in July of 1966 on the 6 ½ million pound Goodyear Tyre factory, estimated to provide 2000 jobs. Although construction was not scheduled to begin for another 1 ½ to 2 years, initial reaction to the vesting order was swift and decisive. Unsatisfied with the prospect of both the loss of livelihood and possible inadequate compensation for their land, they promised to defend their land with guns if the development of Craigavon continued. (*Belfast Telegraph*, December 9,1965) This issue was to become a fight both in Parliament and on the farms to be taken as well.

Three hundred and twenty complaints were lodged against the Ministry of Development, many of them regarding concern over "the sentimental value of so much land" and invoking the "Ulster Tenant Right." The Ulster Tenant Right dated back to the seventeenth century during the settlement of Ulster. Scottish and English settlers could claim compensation for their farms if they were evicted for any reason, which often occurred during the construction and settlement of the twenty new towns developed during the that time. In addition, the criteria for compensation had not yet been disclosed by William Craig. In January of

1966, 250 farmers from the new city area in County Armagh met at Carne Hall in Portadown to pass a resolution to “have nothing to do with the Ministry’s vesting order.” They accused the Ministry of Development of “playing politics with their livelihood” and vowed “to defend their land with shotguns.” (*Belfast Telegraph* January 6,1966) Dinah McNabb, Unionist Member of Parliament from North Armagh, described the strong bond of the farmers to the land which transcended financial interests “ these farmers are freehold owners and feel the land *belongs* to them… this situation is different from the new towns in England where farms are largely rented”(Belfast Telegraph January 20,1966).

Traditional Unionist politicians, seeing another opportunity, on the heels of the Copcutt controversy, to discredit O’Neill, stood in support of the farmers. Unionists of the North Armagh Unionist Association held a rally at the Edenderry Orange Hall to protest O’Neill and the Ministry of Development’s treatment of the farmers. Mr. Joseph Elliot, Chairman of the Tullyrone Unionist Branch called for the resignation of William Craig. The members referred to the secrecy surrounding vesting orders as “legalised robbery” and officially protested the destruction of four Orange Order Lodges Orange Halls for new city houses.

The controversy surrounding the land vestment started in the new city area, escalated to a regional issue in North Armagh county, and by February of 1966 was elevated to a full scale debate in the House of Commons at Stormont. Dinah McNabb of North Armagh resigned during a thirty minute attack on the new city project and O’Neill was pressed by Unionists for a statement on the basis of compensation for land inside Craigavon. Despite the fact that a Lands Tribunal, empowered to assess land value and compensate farmers, had been established, neither O’Neill nor the Ministry would activate the Tribunal. O’Neill would only comment that total compensation would be 100,000 pounds in the first year and 750,000 in the second.

Even the *Belfast Telegraph*, which had been steadfast in its support of O’Neill and regional planning, questioned the handling of the development of Craigavon. The public was beginning to view the Ministry as nothing more than “underhanded thieves” *(Belfast Telegraph*, February 16,1966). Jack Sayers used his editorials to call for “land takeover to be more equitable” and wondered if the treatment of farmers “was going to be a trend in the Ministry of Development.” (*Belfast Telegraph* February 17,1966) Under pressure from the hundreds of written complaints and objections and heeding an opposition MP Sheelagh Murningham’s warning that “dissatisfaction in the new city area would lead to dissatisfaction in other development areas,” the Ministry of Development issued a statement, reducing land to be taken by 500 acres (Belfast Telegraph, February 2,1966).

Between February and June of 1966, the Lands Tribunal eventually began the assessment and compensation process for the owners of the now 7500 acres for the Craigavon site. [11] Anecdotal evidence from articles in the *Belfast Telegraph* and Parliamentary meeting minutes indicates the payment for land was both inconsistent and far below market value, some receiving only twenty to thirty percent of the value of their land. Many land owners had simply taken the money offered, but as construction of the Goodyear site, slated for July of 1966 neared, many farmers took up arms to defend their land.

The first incident began during the first week of July when Edward Gordon refused a Ministry of Development offer of only 4,000 pounds for land valued at 12,750 pounds. Gordon met officials from Goodyear with a loaded shotgun and vowed to defend his farm.

> If the bailiffs come, they are certainly asking for trouble. It will be dangerous for them. This house was built for my wife's grandmother and before she died she made me promise that I would never have it demolished. (*Belfast Telegraph* July 9,1966)

Gordon was joined by another farmer, Joe Hewitt, whose land was also on the Goodyear site. He had been ordered to vacate his property by September 1,1966. The Land Tribunal heard the case of the Joe Hewitt who refused to accept the Ministry's offer of 12,500 pounds for his 52 acres. Hewitt and the other farmers said they would not recognize the Land Tribunal as a legitimate authority and vowed to fight. In defiance Hewitt erected a sign, "Stay off my Land". In turn, William Craig sent a letter by messenger simply stating "development will continue."

To fight the Ministry, Hewitt and Gordon formed the Residents Protection Association and held their first meeting on August 8,1966. Over seventy landowners in the Craigavon area met at the Drumgar Orange Hall near Lurgan to plan a ten day vigil to begin on the day contractors were scheduled to begin clearing land for the factory. Invited speakers included Mr. A. Black, Chairman of the North Armagh Unionist Association and Dinah McNabb, the Unionist Member of Parliament who had resigned in protest of the new city. For these protesters, the fight was not only about land, but about the issue of Government authority. As David Allen, Chairman of the Seagoe Farmers Union, observed "this is a test of Government authority. Farmers will fight to the bitter end." (*Belfast Telegraph* August 4,1966)

Seventy farmers, thirty tractors, a dozen cattle trailers, and two bulldozers were present on the first day of the vigil. Contractors showed up to begin work and the farmers maneuvered their tractors into positions to make sure that none of the contractors could enter the field. The ten-day vigil continued, with growing support from individuals who donated cars and tractors to help with the blockade, succeeding in

keeping excavators from doing any work. By September 18,1966 neither the Ministry nor the farmers could come to agreement and called for Prime Minister O'Neill to intervene. Fearing that these standoffs would continue once construction began, O'Neill replaced the unpopular William Craig with William Fitzsimmons in the hopes of improving the public image of the Ministry and to continue land negotiations. Less abrasive and confrontational than Craig, Fitzsimmons tried to soften the rhetoric surrounding Craigavon. The new Minister arranged for the appointment of a district valuer to devote full time to negotiations on compensation and to handle these cases with a bit more "care and sympathy" (*Belfast Telegraph*, September 1,1966).

The new Minister traveled to the Teghavin section of Lurgan to yet another stand-off staged by three farmers at a 25 acre site of a housing project. They succeeded in blocking the construction of 180 homes for the first Craigavon housing project. The area was "becoming more tense and dangerous every day," and David Allen, who represented the farmers, threatened to go to the Council of Europe to receive help for "the undemocratic approach to the human problem of eviction which has become a deep moral issue" (Belfast Telegraph, February 2,1967). The "land war," as it had been dubbed by the press, spread to Coleraine and threatened the opening of the new university of Ulster. [12]

Not surprisingly, Ian Paisley defended the plight of the farmers and once again used the *Protestant Telegraph* to further discredit O'Neill. In a series of articles, he evoked images of Nazi Germany to describe the Ministry of Development:

> The Nazi methods used by the Ministry of Development to deprive farmers in the area of the rightful interest in his land will not be tolerated by Unionists. Far reaching consequences will result and no further actions for the Craigavon project need be expected...This is but another example of the O'Neill jackboot (*Protestant Telegraph*, October,1966.)
>
> and
>
> On the night of Thursday, September 1, police, the ministry of Development and the sheriffs office swooped on the farm of Mr. Joe Hewitt. All of the cattle in his field were removed without his permission. Such are the jackboot methods of O'Neillism... there will be big trouble in this country from now on. *Protestant Telegraph*, September 10,1966)

By the end of July 1967, 298 claims had been filed with the Craigavon Development Commission. Of these only 183 claims had received compensation offers and only 115 had been settled. [13] Total vested land equaled only 1,862 acres, but O'Neill and the Ministry pushed ahead to

begin housing construction and settlement.

Settling the New City Brings Division

The most notable aspect of planning and settlement phases of the new city was related to the growing dissatisfaction which *both* communities experienced in regard to who stood to benefit and who stood to lose as the project progressed. Catholics, unhappy with the location, selection of leadership, and name of the new city, had gained little. Protestants, suspicious of the powers of the Ministry of Development, the loss of local power, and the prospect of an inclusive Ulster were also unhappy. The Ulster Unionist Party, now deeply divided had lost the most. It was a tall order to hope, in the existing context of mistrust and animosity, that the ethnic divisions, which had been played out in terms of geographical settlement for hundreds of years, would somehow disappear as Craigavon was settled. Indeed, they did not.

The first two development sectors were Brownlow and Mandeville, situated between Lurgan and Portadown, were the first areas planned for settlement To their credit, planners did intend to create an integrated community.Each sector was comprised of six neighborhoods, each subdivided into housing areas which varied in size from 50 to 400 dwellings. Schools, churches and other facilities were to be grouped near the centers of the neighborhoods to enable equal accessibility from all directions to provide an opportunity for inter-communal contact. Incoming residents would be free to choose where they would like to live and rather than row housing, the two sectors would have cluster housing.

From January through July of 1967, the *Belfast Telegraph* promoted the benefits of the new city. As Figure 3.3 illustrates, articles such as " A Chance for all in Craigavon," sought to show that the new city could offer many of the things that were missing in the Province; jobs, space, decent housing and opportunity.

Figure 3.3
***Belfast Telegraph* June 6,1967**

On paper their plans may have been perfectly conducive to an integrated, modern community. However, planners did not consider the existing segregation patterns along religious lines that separated Lurgan and Portadown. Lurgan possessed a high proportion of Catholics, who had originally immigrated from the poorer lands around Lough Neagh

where they had been driven by the incoming planters in the 17th century. These Catholics tended to settle in the northern and western portions of Lurgan. Protestants, on the other hand settled in Portadown. As the towns grew, migrants moved into either Catholic or Protestant areas respectively, thereby extending existing patterns of polarization. There were two reasons for these community divisions. First, fear and mistrust of the “other” community gained a momentum of its own over the years, which in turn led to secondary, more “practical” reasons for segregation emerged which included access to churches and schools. Local housing authorities, both Catholic and Protestant controlled could enforce segregation. The majority in both communities accepted segregation as inevitable and even desirable, given the need for separate schools, churches and civic organizations. Polarization fed upon itself and finally there emerged separate shopping facilities as well as separate employment and recreation opportunities.

The Goodyear Tyre factory was the first major industry to come to the new city after housing construction was completed. It employed predominantly unskilled workers, about 80% of whom were Catholic. As had always been the case in Northern Ireland, the new Catholic residents settled closest to their own “kind” in Brownlow, which was closest to Lurgan. Unfortunately, the provision of new facilities did not keep pace with settlement and it did not take long for this first settlement area to have an image of merely being an extension of the Catholic western part of. On the other hand, settlement in the western part of Brownlow became almost entirely Protestant and thus became an extension of the predominantly Protestant Portadown. It did not take long for housing units to be identified as “Catholic” or “Protestant.”

This alignment of areas was a direct contrast to what planners had envisioned and the initial settlement of Brownlow had far-reaching effects on the entire social infrastructure of the city. Schools, shopping facilities and community halls were patronized separately by either Catholics or Protestants, thereby reducing what planners hoped for: “interdenominational contacts and inter-communal exchange.” In addition, the Craigavon Development Commission was failing to reach their goals as they pertained to residency and job creation. Only 2,000 of 3,000 jobs promised had been reached and only 1500 had moved to the new city. High rents, low paying jobs and a lack of amenities were among the reason cited for low residency. It proved to be difficult to persuade people to move from the Greater Belfast Area, despite grants available to make the move easier. In a special effort to recruit workers, the Ministry of Health and Social Security contacted over 9,700 unemployed men throughout the province to invite them to work at Goodyear. Only 70 showed any interest in relocating to the new city. The new city was

failing, but the province faced larger problems. Divisions between Catholics and Protestants were erupting and policies promoting reconciliation and reform were far from the minds of citizens, politicians and the media.

A Failed New City and the defeat of "O'Neillism

The months between late 1968 and early 1969 were a turning point for O'Neill, for Catholics and Protestants, and ultimately for the new city. In the context of growing sectarian division, Jack Sayers had come under increasing criticism for his steadfast defense of O'Neill throughout his tenure. *Hibernia* magazine observed: Any criticsm of O'Neillism covered in the *Telegraph* was so oblique as to be almost imperceptible"(*Hibernia).* In poor health and facing the sale of the *Telegraph* to new owners, Sayers resigned in July of 1968 and O'Neill was not far behind him. Little by little support for O'Neill fell away as evidenced by the defection of back benchers and the resignation of his political rival, Brian Faulkner, from the Ministry of Commerce. Protestant civilians greeted the Prime Minister with jeers at public events (Bell, 1993:82). Under increasing pressure, O'Neill dissolved Parliament on February 23,1969 and held a general election which named a new Prime Minister. Much had changed in O'Neill's five years in office. Rev Ian Paisley whose political aspirations went beyond his *Protestant Telegraph*, won 40% of the Unionist vote(Wichert,1991:110). Craigavon, eventually became part of the civil disturbances. Lurgan and Portadown was the scene of street bombings, sectarian assassinations and attacks on the security forces. Some families did move to Brownlow to escape the violence, but on the whole families from both communities were reluctant to leave their own territories to the prospect of settling in a "mixed community"(O'Dowd, 1993:44).

Craigavon, the new experiment in community relations was a failure. In July of 1969 a motion was passed in Stormont to cease Government support of the new city. The press had labeled it a "ghost town" and on September 30th 1973 the Development Commission disbanded (*The Sunday News*, January 14,1973). By the mid-1970's Goodyear withdrew from the area and families associated with participating in the sectarian conflict were often "relocated" to Craigavon. Brownlow was no longer the first integrated community, "but a collection of problem housing estates, located between Lurgan and Portadown." (O'Dowd,1993:44). In July of 1979 a plan to create an economic twinning scheme was abandoned due to violence. After the 1981 hunger strike tensions were high in the Lurgan area because of efforts by Republican groups to re-name Craigavon streets after the hunger strikers.

Throughout the 1980's and 90's the city has been the scene of clashes between police and loyalists during memorial parades as well as deaths of both police and IRA members by shootings.

Conclusions *(Expanded upon in Final draft)*

This case study has examined the effects of the Matthew Plan, of which the new city was a major recommendation, at the city level. The planning, development and settlement phases were fraught with controversy and conflict and a key player in both reflecting and instigating these controversies was the print media. Craigavon, the symbol of hope for a modern and integrated community, was a failure. However, for those interested in divided societies and planning, it may be an instructive failure, for there is much to learn from the Craigavon story in terms of the political and spatial dimensions of ethnic conflict.

In the broadest sense, Craigavon was the manifestation of a belief in the efficacy of national planning as a vehicle for social and economic change. It is important to note that the grievances associated with the new city were activated in an environment of immense political change, as manifest in the leadership of Terence O'Neill. Promises of inclusion increased Catholic expectations, while stirring the worst collective fears by Protestants and Unionists of the potential loss of political, institutional and economic control in the province. I believe that it was in this context of both expectation and fear of change that accounts for activation of ethnic grievances thoroughout all phases of the project.

For Catholics, the name, location and leadership of the new city is testimony of the profound influence of historical and cultural memory in ethnic conflict. Selecting the name Craigavon, after Prime Minister Craig the author of discriminatory legislation and policy against Catholics, did little to ingratiate the Prime Minister to their community. So too with the location of the new city, which succeeded in adding one more chapter to a centuries old history of Government neglect of the west of the province, where the majority of Catholics lived. That not a single Catholic was included in the Craigavon leadership was perhaps the worst offense to O'Neill's promise of inclusion and only added to the existing struggle among Catholics to obtain access to political power.

But perhaps even more interesting is the reaction of Unionists to the new city plan. It is my conclusion that probably any planning initiatives would have been met with resistance by virtue of the fact that the Prime Minister sought change for the province. As far as conservative Unionists were concerned, this change was not for the better. The new city, with its goal of integration, represented a spirit of ecumenism that many opposed. As the case study has shown the Ministry of Development was immensely unpopular with this same group of Unionists. O'Dowd

(1995) has noted that in divided societies, where the state is identified with one ethnic group, the specialized functions of the state are coordinated to protect ethnic dominance. The new Ministry of Development, with its ability to supercede local (often Unionist controlled) government, represented a breakdown in this coordination.

As for the role of the press in the Craigavon controversy, I believe that the print media, as divided as the population as a whole, was incapable of supporting either O'Neill or the new city. Hibernia magazine wrote of the relationship between Sayers and O'Neill: "For all of their victories in the battle over principle, they had never won the battle over policy," magazine wrote.

Neither O'Neill nor Jack Sayers at the *Belfast Telegraph* could ease sectarian divisions. In fact, with their emphasis on change and reform, may have inadvertently activated tensions. The vociferous reaction of Rev. Ian Paisley and the subsequent establishment of the *Protestant Telegraph* as counter-propaganda to "O'Neillism" may be evidence of this. In addition, the defection of the stalwart Unionist newspaper the *Belfast News Letter* from O'Neill's ranks and its criticism of the Craigavon project did little to help mobilize Unionist support for either O'Neill or Craigagvon.

Aside from the political implications of the new city, Craigavon holds lessons for the overarching issue of what happens when governments attempt to mandate geographical solutions to ethnic conflicts. The actual settlement of Craigavon is an example of the adaptability and durability of ethnic identity—and of localities to maintain this identity. Despite the best intentions of planners, they could not undo 200 years of settlement patterns. During the initial settlement of Brownlow, Catholics moved to housing estates closest to Lurgan and Protestants moved closest to Portadown. The failure of the Craiagvon Development Commission to provide civic facilities and amenities in timing with settlement probably did not help the proclivity of new residents to gravitate to "their own kind." In the end the new city was merely an extension of Lurgan and Portadown.

There are, then, three main lessons that I believe emerge for planners from my examination of the new city. The first pertains to the inherent difficulties of constructing an overarching identity which a divided community can maintain allegiance to. The second is related to the significance of historical memory and un-remedied grievances as a legitimate issue in planning divided societies, rather than what outsiders may view as an irrational and pathological fixation. Third, planners must take into account the existing spatial and segregation patterns in the localities where they work. These three point to the last lesson for planners. One of the main criticisms of the new city plan and indeed the

Matthew and Wilson Plans as whole has been the lack of mechanisms for citizen participation. From planning to settlement, Craigavon was implemented by a relatively small number of bureaucrats without the guidance or input of the citizenry.

Notes

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[1]*The Irish News* was established under the guidance of the Catholic Bishop of County Down during the campaign for Home Rule during the 1890's (Home Rule was under Charles Stuart Parnell to advance the rights of native Irish to remain under Irish rule). *The Irish Bulletin* was prominent in the Anglo-Irish War of 1919-1921 to present the nationalist case to Britain and the rest of the world.

[2] See Hugh Oram's **The Newspaper Book**

[3] The allocation of public housing was also a factor in community polarization as over half of all housing in the Province has been financed by the Government since 1945. Depending upon the area Housing Authorities were either Catholic or Protestant controlled and most continued to allocate housing along ethnic lines.

[3] Under the New Towns Development Act a new town was established in the Lurgan/Portadown area in July of 1965. Growth towns, which were existing cities and towns slated for redevelopment included Antrim in 1966 followed by Ballymeena in 1967. Also makes provisions for the expansion/enlargement of existing towns. Established New Town Commissions as temporary local authorities for new or expanded towns with powers to buy land, employ planning and administrative staff. The Lands Tribunal was established and empowered to determine certain questions relating to compensation in the compulsory acquisition of land. Provisions were made with respect to assessment and payment of such compensation taking into consideration the depreciation in value of land.

[3] Belfast failed to get the boundary extension the second time because a 1944 Planning Advisory Board Report drew attention to the population imbalance within the province with 2/5 of the population living in the Belfast Area. They recommended that the housing needs of the Belfast Corporation could not be met by a mere extension of the city boundaries, but in a reduction in the population in inner city Belfast to 300,000.

[3] PM Basil Brooke did create a Cabinet Publicity Committee in 1943 followed by an Information Service in 1955, but they were relatively inactive.

[33] Jowett and O'Donnell suggest analysis of a general understanding of *how* the selected media promotes the propagandist's policies and actions provides a context in which to examine specific and specialized media techniques. For example, is there a consistency of apparent purpose? Is the output of the media consistently related to the ideology that the propagandist needs to promote? What are the general ways in

which a message is presented?

[3] MP's Nixon and Edmond Warnock lead this campaign, with a call for Brian Faulkner to succeed O'Neill

[3] Composition of the Craigavon Development Commission
Mrs.Shirley Lord, wife of industrialist Cyril Lord columnist for the London evening News
Mr. James V.C Malcolmson- A new York-based Ulsterman and vice-president of America's Texaco Oil Group.
Mr. Samuel McMahon- named chairman and member of the Larne Chamber of Commerce Capt.
Michael H. Armstrong- Vice Chairman of the Armagh County-CouncilMrs.
Elizabeth Gilpin- wife of a local farmer from Gilford, County Down.Vice Chairman of the Iveagh Unionists and as Chairman of the Gilford Unionists
Mr. Francis G. Gukian -Executive Member of the Londonderry Senior Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Robert J Hunter from Brackagh, County Down. Treasurer of t theMullahead Branch of the U.F.UMr.
William BJ Tougher- Belfast business owner
Mr. Joseph Twyble- from Lurgan and member of the Armagh County Council. Master of the Lurgan District Orange Lodge

[3]He also denied allegations that Samuel McMahon, the new chairman of the CDC, had been appointed because he was slated to challenge Craig's seat in Larne in the next election

[3]The Government assumes responsibility for payment of compensation under the Planning Acts. Part One of the Act defines the "development value" of the land as:
the difference between the "unrestricted value" that is what a purchaser would have paid or the land on the 25th of February 1963, taking into account **both** the existing use of the land as well as its market value that is the potential for future profit
and:
the "restricted value" that is what a purchaser would have paid if he were permitted only to continue the existing use.

[4].Over the previous six days farmers had blockaded a 12 acre field where work was scheduled to begin on a 40,000 pound office block. The Portstewart Urban District Council accused the landowners of trying to obtain compensation in excess to what they were rightfully entitled, especially since negotiations had been underway since June of 1966

In January of 1967, William Fitzsimmons appointed Mr.Charles Cooper, the former

Mayor of Portadown, as Public and Social Relations Officer for the Craigavon Development Commission. As Portadown was the community with the majority of Protestants, Opposition MP's accused Fitzsimmons of creating the post for him to gain Protestant support.

[4]Faulkner finally resigned in protest of O'Neill after the PM appointed a Scottish Judge to an independent inquiry of the events in Derry during the summer of 1968.

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