

COMPETITION IN THE MARKET FOR POLITICAL VIOLENCE: NORTHERN IRISH
REPUBLICANISM, 1969–1998

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**COMPETITION IN THE MARKET FOR POLITICAL VIOLENCE:
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ABSTRACT

There has been considerable debate within the literature about how competition influences violent political organizations (VPOs). Applying economic theories of competition to the production of violence by terrorist or other VPOs yields considerable insight into their strategic behavior. Subversive groups cannot survive and continue to operate without a reservoir of political support, both active and passive, within the constituent base they claim to represent. These constituents exchange their support for the groups' violence when it is perceived to advance a preferred political agenda. However, violence also generates opposition from those constituents who perceive violence to be misguided, counter-productive or illegitimate. VPOs seek to maintain or increase their power within the constituent community by choosing the type and amount of violence that maximizes support and minimizes opposition. As such, VPOs are subject to the same forces of supply, demand and competition as firms in a market. Indeed, a qualitative time-series analysis of Republican groups in Northern Ireland finds typical market strategies employed, including attempts at product branding, productive outbidding, and reductions in violence by monopolistic groups. As the Northern Irish case demonstrates, violent monopoly power is an understudied but critical path to decreasing the levels of violence and achieving comprehensive conflict resolution.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
ILLUSTRATIONS	xiii
FIGURES	xiii
TABLES	xv
PART I: Theoretical Methodology	1
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	1
CHAPTER 2: Theory	10
I. Defining Political Violence	12
II. The Political Economy of Violence	15
A. Downsian Models of Political Competition.....	17
B. Model Modifications.....	20
C. Supply and Demand	24
1. Demand for Violence	25
2. Supply of Violence.....	28
3. Disrupting the Normal Market.....	32
D. The Five Forces of Competition in the Production of Political Violence	35
1. Buyer Bargaining Power	36
2. Supplier Bargaining Power	38
3. Threat of Substitute Goods	39
4. Rivalry between Existing Firms.....	41
5. Threat of New Entrants	44

III. Testable Hypotheses	48
IV. Conclusion.....	51
CHAPTER 3: Methodology	54
I. Methodology.....	54
II. Case Selection	56
III. Potential Cases.....	59
IV. Measuring the Variables.....	63
A. Dependent Variables.....	65
B. Control Variables	66
C. Independent Variables.....	68
1. Supplier Power	68
2. Substitute Threat	69
3. New Entrant Threat.....	70
4. Rivalry.....	71
PART II: Historical Narrative	72
CHAPTER 4: Background to the Troubles	74
I. Anglo-Irish War and Partition	75
II. Irish Civil War.....	78
III. Northern Ireland.....	81
IV. Civil Rights Movement	84
CHAPTER 5: Opening the Market.....	93
I. The Genie Out of the Bottle	94
II. The Final Straw	101

III. A Tale of Two Armies	105
IV. Republican Competition	111
V. Birth of the SDLP	121
VI. Escalating Violence, Escalating Competition	123
VII. Internment	129
VIII. Direct Rule	140
IX. Ceasefires.....	144
X. The End of Free Derry	152
XI. Sunningdale and the Loyalists.....	155
XII. The Rise of the Irps	160
XIII. The Second Ceasefire	165
XIV. Ulsterization and Criminalization.....	169
XV. The Long War	173
XVI. Conclusion	176
CHAPTER 6: The Stalemate Years	179
I. A New Regime	179
II. Not Yet Beaten.....	180
III. Prison Protests.....	184
IV. The Rise of Sinn Fein	189
V. Twin Evils: Sectarianism and Supergrasses	190
VI. Another Northern Ireland Assembly	196
VII. War Averted	199

VIII. The Splits	200
IX. Blood on their Hands.....	204
X. Conclusion	208
CHAPTER 7: A Decade of Change	211
I. Thatcher Resigns	212
II. Brooke-Mayhew Talks.....	216
III. Night of the Long Knives	219
IV. The Unionist Impasse	222
V. A Broad Nationalist Front.....	225
VI. Downing Street Declaration	227
VII. The First Ceasefire	231
A. International Mediation.....	232
B. Costs of Peace	234
C. Framework for Peace	236
D. Peace Process Stalls	237
VIII. Return to Violence	239
IX. Labour's New Opportunity	241
X. Good Friday Agreement	244
XI. Omagh Bombing.....	246
XII. Epilogue	248
PART III: The Market for Republican Violence.....	251
CHAPTER 8: Demand for Violence	253

I. Demography	254
II. Social Equality	257
A. Improved Housing Conditions.....	257
B. Economic Opportunities	262
III. Experience of Violence.....	272
IV. Opinion Polls	276
V. Combined Measure	287
CHAPTER 9: Supply of Violence.....	290
I. Public Reaction.....	291
A. The First Ceasefires	292
B. Peace People	295
C. A New Peace Movement.....	296
1. Proxy Bombs	297
2. Warrington Bombing.....	298
3. Shankill Bombing.....	301
4. PIRA Ceasefire	303
5. Omagh Bombing.....	305
II. Opinion Polls.....	307
III. Informants	319
IV. Own Goals	323
V. Security Measures	325
A. Financing	326

B. Weapons Seizures	328
C. Human Costs	331
1. Republican Fatalities.....	332
2. Internment and Detentions	334
3. Prosecutions	337
4. Sentencing.....	341
D. Marginal Costs.....	345
VI. Combined Measure.....	349
CHAPTER 10: Competition.....	352
I. Threat of Buyer Power	353
II. Threat of Supplier Power	355
III. Threat of Substitutes	363
A. Alternative Social Control	363
B. Nonviolent Politics.....	371
III. Threat of New Entrants.....	376
IV. Threat of Rivalry	387
V. Combined Measure	411
CHAPTER 11: Empirical Analysis	414
I. Measures of Violence	414
II. Empirical Results	417
III. Theoretical Analysis	419
IV. Sunningdale versus Good Friday.....	425
V. Conclusion	430

CHAPTER 12: Conclusion.....	431
I. Theoretical Implications.....	431
II. Policy Implications.....	433
III. Future Research	436
A. Measurements	437
B. Cases	439
C. Methods.....	440
APPENDIX A: Nationalist Organizations.....	442
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	444

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

1.1	Map of Northern Ireland.....	4
2.1	Ideal party position in a voting population with normally distributed preferences on a single political dimension.....	18
2.2	Party ideological positions within a divided society	19
2.3	Production levels in a competitive and monopolistic market.....	35
2.4	Porter’s Five Forces of Competition.....	36
2.5	Implications of the Five Forces of Competition in the market for political violence.....	49
2.6	The “Spiral of Peace”	52
8.1	Change in Sectarian Demographics 1961–2001.....	257
8.2	New House Building, by sector 1971–1996.....	259
8.3	Distribution of number of rooms in dwellings, by religion, over time	260
8.4	Home Ownership Rates, by Religion	261
8.5	Percent growth of GDP per capita.....	263
8.6	GDP and GDP per capita in real terms and average gross weekly earnings for full-time workers, deflated using the Retail Price Index	265
8.7	Unemployment rate in Northern Ireland	266
8.8	Catholic representation in significant Northern Irish sub-populations.....	268
8.9	Percentage of Catholics in Workforce by Sector by Year.....	269
8.10	Catholic Participation in Employment Process	270

8.11	Catholic conflict-related fatalities.....	273
8.12	Catholic support for Republican violence	278
8.13	Catholic opinion of how courts treat Catholic and Protestant terrorism suspects	283
8.14	Catholic opinion of how courts treat Catholic and Protestant non-terrorism suspects	284
8.15	Catholic confidence in the police contribution to the fairness of the system ...	285
9.1	Catholic attitudes toward the IRA	310
9.2	Catholic Terrorism Reporting Behavior	312
9.3	Change in Catholic support for length of life sentences for terrorist crimes....	317
9.4	Informants killed by Republican paramilitaries, 1969–2000	322
9.5	Catholics killed by premature explosions, 1969–2000.....	324
9.6	Number of firearms and kilograms of explosives seized.....	329
9.7	Republican paramilitaries killed by other actors	332
9.8	Logged number of Republican internees, August 1971–November 1975	335
9.9	Persons Detained for Terrorism-Related Offenses	336
9.10	Persons charged with terrorist and other serious offences, 1972–2002.....	338
9.11	Persons Charged with and Convicted of Scheduled Crimes	339
9.12	Number of individuals prosecuted, convicted and placed in immediate custody for scheduled offenses at the Crown Court 1978–1999	341
9.13	Average sentence length in months for scheduled offenses and offenses under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 1993–1999	342

9.14	Licenses granted to Republican ‘Lifer’ prisoners.....	344
9.15	Weapons seized per attack.....	346
9.16	Fatal cost of violence production per attack	347
9.17	Nonfatal cost of violence production per attack	348
9.18	Combined nonfatal cost of violence production per attack	349
10.1	Republican punishment attacks 1973–2002	368
10.2	Republican feud fatalities 1969–2005	388
11.1	Number of Republican attacks 1992–1994.....	416
11.2	Republican violence 1969–2003.....	417
11.3	Republican attack success rate.....	418
11.4	Republican attacks and fatalities, 1973–75	427
11.5	Republican attacks and fatalities, 1990–98	428
A.1	Nationalist Political Organizations over Time	442

TABLES

3.1	VPO constituent market characteristics.....	60
I.1	Northern Irish political ideologies and perspectives on violence	73
8.1	Catholic perceptions of the security forces.....	279
8.2	Catholic belief that paramilitary violence is justified to attain political goals and in retaliation for other paramilitaries' violence	282
9.1	Catholic support for length of life sentences for terrorist crimes and proportion of support compared to non-terrorist crimes.....	314
11.1	Comparison of market conditions and violence, 1969–2003	421

LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AIA	Ango-Irish Agreement, a.k.a. Hillsborough Agreement
ANIA	Americans for a New Irish Agenda
AP/RN	<i>An Phoblacht/Republican News</i>
ASU	Active Service Unit
B Specials	Auxiliary police, part of the Ulster Special Constabulary
CAIN	Conflict Archive on the Internet
CAS	Community Attitude Survey
CIRA	Continuity Irish Republican Army
CRF	Catholic Reaction force
CSU	Central Survey Unit, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
DAAD	Direct Action Against Drugs
DSD	Downing Street Declaration
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party (in Northern Ireland)
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GFA	Good Friday Agreement, a.k.a. Belfast Agreement

GHQ	General Headquarters
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
HAI	Hume-Adams Initiative
IICD	Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
INLA-AC	Irish National Liberation Army-Army Council faction
INLA-BB	Irish National Liberation Army-Belfast Brigade faction
IPLO	Irish People's Liberation Organisation
IPLO-AC	Irish People's Liberation Organisation-Army Council faction
IPLO-BB	Irish People's Liberation Organisation-Belfast Brigade faction
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRSP	Irish Republican Socialist Party
LVF	Loyalist Volunteer Force
MI-5	British internal security service
MI-6	British foreign security service
MP	Member of Parliament
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Authority
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIWC	Northern Women's Coalition
OIRA	Official Irish Republican Army
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PR	Proportional Representation Voting System
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PTA	Prevention of Terror (Temporary Provision) Act
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party (of Northern Ireland)
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary
RIRA	Real Irish Republican Army
ROI	Republic of Ireland
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
RSF	Republican Sinn Fein
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SAS	British Special Air Service
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party (of Northern Ireland)
SF	Sinn Fein
SP/AC	<i>Starry Plough/An Camchéachta</i>
SSNI	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

TD	Teachta Dala (Irish Member of Parliament)
TLPI	<i>Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland</i> by Sinn Fein
TOPs	Terrorist Organization Profiles
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDP	Ulster Democratic Party
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters
UK	United Kingdom
UKUP	UK Unionist Party
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
VPO	Violent Political Organization
WP	Workers' Party
32CSM	32 County Sovereignty Movement

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PART I: Theoretical Methodology

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

On the evening of Saturday, March 7, 2009, the soldiers of the British Army's 38 Engineer Regiment were making the final preparations to leave their temporary home at the Massereene Barracks in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, for a six-month deployment to Helmand, Afghanistan. At the time, Helmand was one of the most violent theaters in the war in Afghanistan.¹ Already dressed in their desert camouflage, the young soldiers were packed and ready to begin their long journey at 1:00 the following morning.² Craving one last 'normal' meal before going into a combat zone, four soldiers ordered pizzas from the nearby Domino's. Twenty minutes later, at 9:40 pm, two deliverymen arrived at the front gate with their orders. One of the deliverymen was a 30-year-old Pole named Marcin, who had come to Northern Ireland to take advantage of the booming economic opportunities; the other, Anthony Watson, was a 19-year-old Antrim native. Neither they, nor the soldiers they met that night, had any idea they were about to be part of the worst attack on the security forces in Northern Ireland since before the Good Friday Agreement ended the Troubles over a decade earlier.

As Sappers Mark Quinsey and Patrick Azimkar, aged 23 and 21, respectively, took delivery of their pizzas, two gunmen opened fire with semiautomatic weapons.³ The driver stayed with the car while the other man sprayed bullets into the group

¹ Stephen Grey, "Cracking on in Helmand," *Prospect*, August 27, 2009.

² David Sharrock, "Massereene Barracks attack started with pizza order," *The Times*, March 9, 2009.

³ The two men currently charged with the attack are Colin Duffy and Brian Shivers; however, their trial has been repeatedly delayed.

clustered around the gate and into the façade of the barracks. Despite being preoccupied with the impending deployment, the soldiers reacted instinctively. Watson recounts that “[t]he soldiers shouted for us to get down before we even knew what was happening. . . . Then one of the soldiers just threw himself on top of me as the bullets were still firing.”⁴ Marcin, the other deliveryman, was a little further from the gate when the attack occurred:

I remember seeing soldiers running into the barracks and away from the bullets. . . . I didn't see that much because I collapsed on the ground. I think I lost consciousness for a few seconds. What I remember about waking up was the unbearable pain. I was trying to work out what was happening. I was lying focusing on myself. By then I knew I had been shot, and I was wondering if I was going to survive. . . . I didn't realise what had happened to the other people at all. I heard the shots and saw the bullets bouncing off the gate. I was terrified at that stage. I had only one thing on my mind then, and that was to pull through. I didn't know what injuries I had, but I was thinking about my girlfriend, about my son.⁵

After the first long burst of gunfire, at least one of the gunmen walked up to the fallen men and fired a second long burst into them before running to the waiting car and peeling away as the base's emergency klaxon began to sound.⁶ The attackers had fired roughly 60 bullets in just 30 seconds.⁷

Given the relative peace of the past decade, locals were shocked by the violence. One person was confused by the loud noise of the first burst of gunfire and looked up

⁴ David Sharrock, “Massereene Barracks attack started with pizza order,” *The Times*, March 9, 2009.

⁵ Claire McNeilly, “The night I was riddled with bullets at barracks,” *The Independent*, August 21, 2009.

⁶ “Shootings were attempt at mass murder, says PSNI,” *The Irish Times*, March 8, 2009.

⁷ David McKittrick, “Policeman killed in new Ulster attack,” *The Independent*, March 10, 2009.

expecting to see fireworks.⁸ This naivety quickly passed as emergency vehicles flooded the area. A witness described the aftermath of the attack:

One of the soldiers must have been killed instantly. He was lying spread-eagled in the road with blood pouring from his head, yet none of the police or medics was attending to him. There were several other bodies lying still in the road and there was blood everywhere, it was horrific. The whole place was complete chaos.⁹

Quinsey and Arimzak were killed and four others, including the two pizza deliverymen were badly injured. One of the injured soldiers' wounds were so severe that he was recently given a medical discharge from the British Army.¹⁰

A dissident Republican group, the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA), claimed the attack the next day and promised more violence to come.¹¹

The following Monday night, March 9, a distraught mother called the police emergency number to report an attack by unknown assailants on her home in the Lismore Manor estate in Craigavon, County Armagh, roughly 30 km south of the Massereene Barracks.¹² The area was a hotbed of Republican support and the police responded with due caution by sending the Tactical Support Group (TSG) to cover the responding officers. One of the members of the TSG was Police Constable Stephen Paul Carroll, a 48-year-old Catholic, a husband, and a grandfather. At 9:45, while he was

⁸ Roya Nikkhah, "Two soldiers dead in attack on British Army base in Northern Ireland," *The Telegraph*, March 7, 2009.

⁹ David Sharrock, "Massereene Barracks attack started with pizza order," *The Times*, March 9, 2009.

¹⁰ *BBC News*, "Medical Discharge for Massreene Attack Soldier," October 10, 2010.

¹¹ *RTE News*, "Real IRA claims responsibility for attack," March 8, 2009.

¹² Nick Allen, "Pc Stephen Carroll shooting: How a routine night shift ended in murder," *The Telegraph*, March 11, 2009.

seated in his unmarked gold Skoda Octavia, he was shot in the back of the head by a single bullet fired through the car's rear window by a .223 automatic rifle.¹³



Figure 1.1 Map of Northern Ireland

This attack was claimed by the even smaller Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA). CIRA warned that “[a]s long as there is British involvement in Ireland, these attacks will continue.”¹⁴

The two lethal attacks shocked the sensibilities of the Northern Irish community, which had grown used to the appearances of normality following a devastating 30-year

¹³ Ibid.; Nick Allen, “Sniper ‘used laser sighted rifle to kill Pc Stephen Carroll,’” *The Telegraph*, March 12, 2009; *BBC News*, “Continuity IRA shot dead officer,” March 10, 2009.

¹⁴ Nick Allen in Craigavon and John Bingham, “Continuity IRA claims responsibility for Northern Ireland policeman killing,” *The Telegraph*, March 10, 2009.

conflict and a 7-year period of slow disarmament by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), the main paramilitary organization fighting against British rule in Northern Ireland. Their critics had bitterly complained about the slow pace of decommissioning, which was viewed as the quid pro quo for participation in the political process. However, the continued shadow existence of the PIRA until 2005 had helped to keep the lid on hardliners who remained committed to the use of violence. The dissidents subsequently became more active, especially from the early summer of 2008 on.¹⁵

The timing of these attacks highlights two critically important aspects of political violence. First, the producers of violence rely on a core base of support, however small it may be. A survey completed in May 2010 demonstrates changing public opinion about the peace within the Nationalist community since 1998: despite widespread condemnation of dissident Republican violence, 14 percent of Nationalists express at least “some sympathy for the[ir] reasons.”¹⁶ As the author of this study noted from his university in Liverpool, this finding “disturbs the orthodoxy found on my side of the Irish Sea that Northern Ireland lies securely in the box marked ‘solved.’”¹⁷

Second, competition is a key determinant of groups' violent behaviors. It is impossible to ignore the temporal proximity between these attacks by two rival groups, which share

¹⁵ United Kingdom, House of Commons. *Twenty-Second Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission*, 4–5.

¹⁶ Tonge, *ESRC Northern Ireland 2010 Westminster Election Survey*. While this level of sympathy is potentially ominous, it is important to note that the amount of sympathy does not necessarily translate directly into support. Moreover, the level of sympathy expressed is significantly less than it was during the Troubles.

¹⁷ Jon Tonge, “‘Surprising level of sympathy’ for perpetrators,” *Belfast Newsletter*, October 6, 2010.

virtually identical ideologies and political goals. When the RIRA finally managed to capture the public attention through a bloody attack on their sworn enemy, the CIRA immediately staged a roughly comparable attack as if to say, ‘look at me too!’ Indeed, the escalating violence produced by the dissident Republicans in the last two years has clearly been driven in part by competition between them.

* * * * *

Violent political organizations (VPOs) operate within a two-level game: 1) they must simultaneously engage with the enemy in a coercive bargaining process and 2) win support from their constituency. This two-level game should be true of every type of VPO, ranging from terrorists to insurgents, religious radicals to leftist and ethno-nationalist groups. While it is usually fairly straightforward to determine VPOs' enemies and the causes of conflict underlying the coercive negotiation, it is harder to identify the boundaries of their potential constituencies. This is especially true because these boundaries may shift over time and individuals may adopt new salient identities. Ideologies linked to race, ethnicity or geography tend to be somewhat more stable, but even these do not necessarily provide immutable constituencies. Nevertheless, these constituents provide the basis for VPOs' power and thus serve as the ultimate arbiter of what is an acceptable win-set vis-à-vis the external enemy.

Earlier work primarily focused on the first level, but recent scholarship has begun to emphasize the second. Although these violent groups are clearly engaged in a dynamic process of overcoming states' counter-violence efforts through innovation and learning, this dissertation argues that the second level is far more important as a

determinant of VPO strategic behavior. Admittedly, groups must create and maintain the belief that they can potentially win favorable terms from the enemy in order to secure support from the population that shares their political goals. But, on a more fundamental level, these groups simply cannot survive and continue to coerce their enemies without a minimal level of constituent support. As such, groups must adopt at least one of two strategies, and usually a combination of both, in order to survive. First, they can align their political agenda to reflect the underlying distribution of preferences within the constituent population. Second, they can produce the level and type of violence that makes attainment of the political goals more likely.

Rarely if ever is a violent group the only political entity claiming leadership over a constituency. Instead, violent groups face challenges from rival violent groups, more moderate political organizations, and cooption of the constituent population by the enemy. Given these complex set of factors governing the level of support violent groups enjoy within the second level, it is useful to apply the framework of the political market.

Within this conceptualization, VPOs are essentially businesses producing a product, i.e. violence, in exchange for support. Like businesses, VPOs seek to maximize their political power (profit) by increasing the level of support (revenue) and decreasing the level of opposition (cost) within their community. In addition to the basic law of supply and demand, VPOs' production of violence may be influenced by state and external actor interventions (taxes and subsidies) and the competitiveness of the market. Thus, the political market frame neatly encapsulates the two-level game, but with additional specificity: while the first level dynamics shift the demand and supply

curves, the second level is determined by both the underlying preferences of the constituency and the competitive strategies that VPOs use.

Although this dissertation will primarily focus on developing and testing a theory of VPO competition, the application of this market frame has a number of much deeper theoretical implications. First, by drawing heavily on the literature from economics and business management, it expands these domains and provides the opportunity to test existing theories on novel data. Second, it challenges the dominance of pure economics within the field of political economy. Instead of examining how political power structures influence flows of financial capital, this political market approach concentrates on what this money can sometimes buy: political power. Third, it provides a parsimonious yet robust theoretical framework to serve as the core for other peripheral theories on the behavior of violent political actors.

Perhaps more importantly, the market framework offers a number of policy implications as well. First, the centrality to the theory of supply and demand emphasizes the critical importance of the support structures for violent actors within society. This encourages the development of policies that address the root causes of radicalization and violence without appearing to give credence to the belief that the violence works, i.e. caused the reform itself. Second, the emphasis on market competition calls into question the wisdom of policies designed to fracture violent groups. While it may be easier for states to limit the capacity for violence of these smaller individual groups or even eliminate them entirely, a more competitive market may actually lead to an increase in violence. It also highlights the direct connection between the political

market conditions and what is attainable through negotiations: an unchallenged VPO will likely settle for less than one who faces a significant rival. Third, the influence of taxes and subsidies retains the traditional cost-benefit calculus of violence suppression: while it may be possible to “tax” violence out of the market, undifferentiated repression can lead to a boomerang effect that boosts demand for violence.

The remainder of this dissertation consists of eleven chapters, divided into three parts. Part I, the theoretical methodology section, is made up of two chapters. Chapter 2 explores the existing literature on political economy and political violence competition and develop a new adaptation of Michael Porter's Five Forces of Competition. Chapter 3 provides methodologies for both case selection and a longitudinal case-study analysis. In Part II, the historical narrative section, Chapter 4 provides a brief historical background to The Troubles, then Chapters 5 through 7 analyzes each of the three decades of conflict. In Part III, the market analysis section, Chapters 8 through 10 explicitly draw out the changes in demand, supply and competition, before the Chapter 11 compares those changes to the empirical record. Finally, Chapter 12 concludes the dissertation by reviewing the performance and validity of the model, examining its theoretical and policy implications, and making suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: Theory

As the killing of Sappers Quinsey and Azimkar and Police Constable Carroll by the Real and Continuity IRAs in 2009 demonstrated, competition is a key driver of the way violent political groups behave. Competition has long been recognized as important for explaining the behavior of violent sub-state organizations, but there is considerable disagreement about the exact nature and effect of this competition. Historically, the most developed models of this type of violent competition examined the coercive bargaining process between insurgents and the state. More recent scholarship has begun to emphasize competition between the sub-state political actors. Proponents of the outbidding theory argue that as the number of violent groups competing in the same political space increases, so too does the amount of violence they produce.¹⁸ Others highlight the radicalizing effect that splintering has on political movements, which can lead them to embrace more extreme violence.¹⁹ A third group emphasizes the role of violent groups in “spoiling” agreements reached by more moderate actors (e.g. Hamas becoming more violent to undercut the Oslo Agreement reached by Fatah in 1993).²⁰ In

¹⁸ Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*; Bloom, “Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding,” *Political Science Quarterly*; Dutter, “Changing Elite Perceptions of the Northern Irish Conflict, 1973–1983,” *Political Psychology*; Kaufman, “Spiraling to Ethnic War,” *International Security*; Chenoweth, “The Inadvertent Effects of Democracy on Terrorist Group Proliferation,” PhD diss., University of Colorado, 2007; Kydd and Walter, “Strategies of Terrorism,” *International Security*; Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 2nd ed.

¹⁹ Weinberg, “Turning to Terror: The Conditions under Which Political Parties Turn to Terrorist Activities,” *Comparative Politics*; Weinberg and Eubank, “Political Parties and the Formation of Terrorist Groups,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*; Bueno de Mesquita, “Terrorist Factions,” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*.

²⁰ Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” in Zartman, ed., *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*; Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” *International Security*; Kydd and Walter, “The Strategies of Terror,” *International Security*, 74; Pruitt, “Negotiation with Terrorists,” *International Negotiation*; Pearlman, “Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation and the Middle East Process,” *International Security*.

contrast, policymakers tend to emphasize the positive benefits of competition that dividing of resources between multiple uncoordinated actors makes each of them less capable of producing large-scale violence and more susceptible to interdiction. The Anbar Awakening in Iraq in 2006 is a prominent example of the benefits from splitting the violence producers. Finally, although it is admittedly rare, violent groups occasionally cooperate with each other in a variety of ways, including sharing weapons and expertise or even conducting joint operations.²¹ Thus, there is a clear division within the literature between the escalatory and resource-constraining effects of competition.

This dissertation seeks to provide a theoretical framework for integrating the variety of observed competitive behaviors by violent political organizations (VPOs) through the construct of a political market. The political market metaphor has often been used within the field of political science, but it has only rarely been developed into a coherent model for explaining the behavior of its component actors. As will be developed further below, the political market involves the exchange of political support by individuals within a community for acts that advance their preferred policy agendas. Such a model allows one to draw on the insights into the competitive behavior of firms from the microeconomic and business literatures, most notably Michael Porter's seminal Five Forces analysis.²²

²¹ Oots, *A Political Organization Approach to Transnational Terrorism*, 41–44; Desouza and Hensgen, “Connectivity among Terrorist Groups: A Two Models Business Maturity Approach,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*; Asal and Rethemeyer, “Islamist Use and Pursuit of CBRN Terrorism,” in Ackerman and Tamsett, ed., *Jihadists and Weapons of Mass Destruction*.

²² Porter, *On Competition*.

The remainder of this chapter consists of four sections. The first defines the concepts of political violence and constituent support. The second builds from the extant theory on the economic rationality of VPOs to construct a “political market” model based on the exchange of political goods for support and power. The third identifies testable hypotheses about the production of violence under various competitive conditions. The fourth provides implications and extensions of the model.

I. Defining Political Violence

This study focuses on a subset of violence produced by non-state actors that deliberately attempts to influence the existing political environment. Other forms of violence may have both positive and negative externalities, but these larger changes are the core feature of political violence. In Ted Gurr's *Why Men Rebel*—perhaps the most cited volume in the study of political violence—political violence is defined as

all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime, its actors—including competing political groups as well as incumbents—or its policies. The concept represents a set of events, a common property of which is the actual or threatened use of violence, but the explanation is not limited to that property.²³

The political intent behind the act transforms it into a distinct phenomenon. Although this point may seem obvious, political violence is the threat or use of force in pursuit of a political goal, i.e. it is purposive violence intended to produce or prevent a specific change in the political environment. The term “political” is intended in the broadest sense of controlling or affecting societal resources and/or processes—it can include social, religious, ideological, and Nationalist sub-types if these agendas include

²³ Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 4.

some kind of redistribution of power. Unlike criminal violence, wherein the violence is directly linked to the financial profit of the perpetrator, or psychotic violence, which satiates a need within a mentally disturbed perpetrator, political violence is inherently a social act.²⁴ As such, the perpetrator does not act individually when he creates the violence, but does so as a representative of a wider community—or at least believes he does.

For decades, the dominant models in the study of political violence have been of various coercive relationships between violent political organizations (VPOs) and the state.²⁵ One subset of these theories on VPO-state dynamics, the coercive bargaining model, formalizes an iterative negotiation during which both sides attempt to impose sufficient costs on the adversary to make a compromise solution preferable to ongoing conflict.²⁶ As such, the two key features of such models are the demonstration of

²⁴ Bruce Hoffman makes a similar distinction in separating the terrorist from the lunatic assassin: “Whereas the terrorist’s goal is again ineluctably *political* (to change or fundamentally alter a political system through his violent act), the lunatic assassin’s goal is more often intrinsically idiosyncratic, completely egocentric and deeply personal.” Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 42.

²⁵ See for example, Atkinson, Sandler and Tschirhart, “Terrorism in a Bargaining Framework,” *Journal of Law and Economics*; Lapan and Sandler, “To Bargain or Not to Bargain: That Is the Question,” *AEA Papers and Proceedings*; Lake, “Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century,” *Dialog-IO*; Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *The American Political Science Review*; Bapat, “State Bargaining with Transnational Terrorist Groups,” *International Studies Quarterly*.

²⁶ Lake, “Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century,” *Dialog-IO*; Bapat, “State Bargaining with Transnational Terrorist Groups,” *International Studies Quarterly*. These models draw on an even more extensive literature on interstate and intrastate war bargaining models. Wittman, “How a War Ends: A Rational Model Approach,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” *International Organization*; Morrow, “Capabilities, Uncertainty, and Resolve,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process*; Wagner, “Bargaining and War,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Smith, *Stopping Wars: Defining the Obstacles to Cease Fire*; Werner, “Negotiating the Terms of Settlement: War Aims and Bargaining Leverage,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Filson and Werner, “A Bargaining Model of War and Peace: Anticipating the Onset, Duration, and Outcome of War,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Filson and Werner, “Bargaining and Fighting: The Impact of Regime Type on War Onset, Duration and Outcomes,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Powell, “Bargaining Theory and International Conflict,” *Annual Review of Political Science*; Powell, “Bargaining and learning while

resolve to absorb the ongoing costs of conflict and the ability to harm the adversary. However, just as Putnam's two-level game drew attention to the importance of domestic factors for international relations,²⁷ recent work has begun to renew the interest in analyzing the impact of intraconstituent dynamics on VPO activities.²⁸ Within this two-level framework, VPOs have a dual purpose: coercing the enemy and winning constituent support. Without an external enemy to engage with on the first level, the group ceases to be politically violent; without constituent support on the second level, the group simply ceases to exist. As Crenshaw notes in a discussion of terrorist groups, “the fundamental purpose of any political organization is to maintain itself.”²⁹ As a result, competition at this second level has been increasingly recognized as a crucial causal variable affecting VPO behavior. Indeed, it is a core assumption of the following theory that this organizational survival instinct makes the second level of much greater direct importance than the first in groups' decision-making calculus.

fighting,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Reiter, “Exploring the bargaining model of war,” *Perspectives on Politics*; Reiter, *How Wars End*; Slantchev, “The Power to Hurt: Costly Conflict with Completely Informed States,” *American Political Science Review*; Slantchev, “How Initiators End Their Wars: The Duration of Warfare and the Terms of Peace,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Smith and Stam, “Bargaining and the Nature of War,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Fortna, “Scraps of Paper?: Agreements and The Durability of Peace,” *International Organization*; Werner, “Negotiating the Terms of Settlement: War Aims and Bargaining Leverage,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

²⁷ Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” *International Organization*.

²⁸ For example, Boyle (2008) explores the implications for the bargaining model by the large number of violent groups within each of the sectarian communities in Iraq. However, earlier scholars, like Crenshaw, observed that the number of groups may have a significant effect without developing a more formal analysis. Boyle, “Bargaining, Fear, and Denial: Explaining Violence Against Civilians in Iraq 2004–2007,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*; Shabad and Ramo, “Political Violence in a Democratic State: Basque Terrorism in Spain,” in Crenshaw, ed., *Terrorism in Context*, 452–53.

²⁹ Crenshaw, “Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches,” in Rapoport, ed., *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, 2nd ed., 19.

This constituent audience is often modeled as a pyramid of support, in which the VPO exists at the apex of a much larger social movement dedicated to the same political agenda.³⁰ The higher echelons of the pyramid tend to be more radical and supportive of violence, providing material support and a membership base for the VPO. The less radicalized base of the pyramid is just as important for the long-term longevity of the organization, providing cover for the more radical members of the movement and a strategic reserve of individuals who may be mobilized to violence given the right circumstances and inducements. Consequently, a supportive constituent community is the *sine qua non* of political violence.³¹

II. The Political Economy of Violence

If the support of a constituency is vital for a VPO to survive and produce violence against the external enemy, it is important to examine how this support is transferred from the population to the producer. Most of the existing political economy

³⁰ Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*; McCauley, "Jujitsu Politics: Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism," *Collateral Damage: The Psychological Consequences of America's War on Terrorism*; McCauley and Moskalenko, "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*; U.S. Departments of the Army and Air Force, "Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict," *Field Manual 100-20/Air Force Pamphlet 3-20*. A comparable alternative model is the "onion model," in which a terrorist group is embedded within an aggrieved population in a series of successively larger rings: 1.) Terrorist group; 2.) Active supporters; 3.) Inactive supporters; 4.) Goal sympathizers, but reject violence; and 5.) Opponents who reject both goals and means. Pruitt, "Negotiation with Terrorists," *International Negotiation*, 375.

³¹ This need for constituency support is especially interesting when there are multiple subversive groups competing for the same support. Very few communities are monolithic in their preferences for political outcomes or methodologies for achieving them, especially as the size of the community increases. Although political violence can be an extremely effective means of catapulting a particular viewpoint to the fore, there may be multiple agendas being advanced by different groups, more than one of which may also be using violence. It is this intraconstituent competition that is the foundation of Mia Bloom's outbidding theory for why some groups turn to suicide terrorism. Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*; Bloom, "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding," *Political Science Quarterly*.

models of violence concentrate solely on the material components of violence production, i.e. direct donations or recruitment. However, this is merely a subset of a more meaningful market exchange. The unique characteristic of producers of political violence is that they have a relationship with the larger community; if VPOs were only interested in financial gain and recruitment, they would be nothing more than criminal gangs. Instead, they seek power—both within their community and over an external enemy. It is therefore necessary to construct a political market model that incorporates the exchange of this larger conceptualization of support for violence production. Within this model, VPOs act as firms aggregating and concentrating the power within their community to fundamentally alter the balance of power between the community and the external enemy.

The following theory is built upon a core assumption that VPOs are simply political organizations that have chosen to produce violence instead of or in addition to other political goods. The most basic and defining shared attribute between these two types of organizations is that they each seek to promote a particular political agenda; it is simply the means that differs.³² This assumption is bolstered by the fact that not only is there commonly a close connection between VPOs and political parties and

³² Admittedly, there is often a difference in the scope of the political change within that political agenda. However, just as there are many radical nonviolent actors that espouse extremely radical, transformative agendas, there are also violent groups that militate for relatively modest ones, e.g. bombers of abortion clinics or “enviroterrorists.”

movements, but many groups transition between violent and nonviolent politics over the course of their organizational lives.³³

A. Downsian Models of Political Competition

Since Anthony Downs' seminal *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, the Public Choice School has produced many insights into the dynamics of competition between political parties.³⁴ The essence of the Downsian model is that political parties are purely rational, self-interested actors who adopt positions within an ideological space in order to maximize their political support. Within these models, parties' ultimate goal is to take or retain control of government, and they compete to achieve this goal by selecting ideological positions that maximize their support vis-à-vis their rivals.

The Downsian model assumes rationality by both the individual voter and the political party. This means that the constituent will vote for the party that maximizes his benefit—tangible and intangible—from government. In a two-party election between Party A and Party B, the voter compares the expected utility each party promises. The voter then chooses whichever party will give her the most benefits; if they are equal, she will simply abstain.³⁵ These individual preferences can then be aggregated and visually represented in a distribution density to determine the features of the political market (see Figure 2.1).

³³ Weinberg and Eubank, “Political Parties and the Formation of Terrorist Groups,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*; Weinberg, “Turning to Terror: The Conditions under Which Political Parties Turn to Terrorist Activities,” *Comparative Politics*.

³⁴ This work is primarily within the context of free democratic political competitions, although Downs leaves the door open to its application to more authoritarian regimes. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 11.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 39. Most Downsian models incorporate some sort of discount function for past performance into the individuals' measurement of expected utility so that voters are not assumed to be naively basing their evaluation solely on promises about the future.

At the same time, the party is modeled to act rationally by adopting a political position that will maximize its overall level of support. Assuming that politicians receive a variety of private goods from their attainment of positions of power, Downs argues that “parties formulate policies in order to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies.”³⁶ Thus, politicians are far more interested in getting into office and enjoying all the benefits of the position (prestige, income, power, etc.) than they are in enacting any particular policy. Despite their personal indifference to policy, they are constrained in their selection of policies by the imperative to hold on to office and win the next election. To this end, they enact the policies that will win the support of a majority of their constituency.

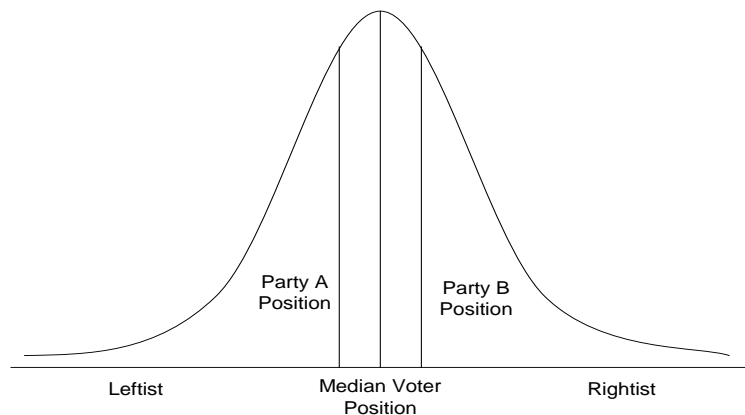


Figure 2.1 Ideal party position in a voting population with normally distributed preferences on a single political dimension

As a result of this power-maximizing characteristic, Downs was able to apply economic theory to explain political behavior. He used Hotelling's spatial competition theory about the ideal locations for competing vendors on a beach to predict a convergence of policies to just off of the position of the median voter in a two-party

³⁶ Ibid., 28.

system with a normal distribution of voter preferences.³⁷ The two parties cannot both adopt the exact same position or else voters have no incentive to participate; so they must differentiate themselves. But they must be careful not to differentiate too far for fear of creating an advantage for their rival. Thus, while there may be marginal differences, especially on less salient policies, “all parties espouse whatever policies an overwhelming portion of the electorate agree upon and strongly desire.”³⁸ However, when the underlying voter distribution is heterogeneous, parties may choose widely divergent ideological positions in an attempt to maximize their support by appealing to different combinations of groups within society.³⁹

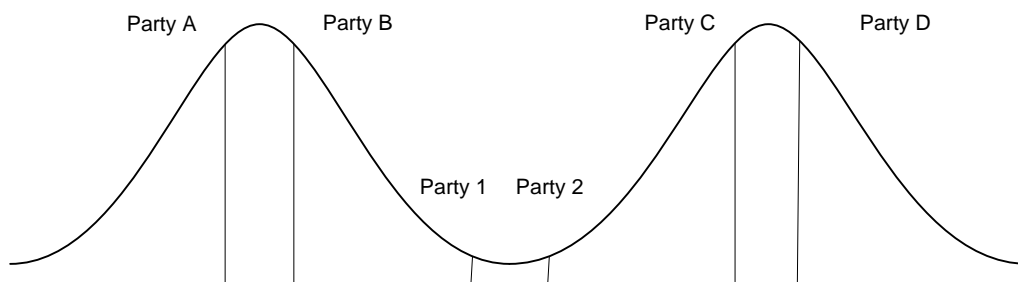


Figure 2.2 Party ideological positions within a divided society

This divergence should be especially problematic in the case in a deeply divided, conflicted society in which multiple parties may be competing for the median voter of a sub-population (see Figure 2.2). If there are still just two parties competing for support in a polarized market, they should still adopt a position around the median voter (Parties 1 and 2 in Figure 2.2). However, if more than two parties enter the

³⁷ Hotelling, “Stability in Competition,” *The Economic Journal*.

³⁸ Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 97–98.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 101. This point was developed further by Geoffrey Evans and Mary Duffy, Evans and Duffy, “Beyond the Sectarian Divide: The Social Bases and Political Consequences of Nationalist and Unionist Party Competition in Northern Ireland,” *British Journal of Politics*.

market, there will be strong incentives to adopt a position around the median voter of the sub-population (Parties A, B, C, and D in Figure 2.2).

B. Model Modifications

These Downsian models provide the basis for a political market in which support is exchanged for quantifiable, if generally intangible, political goods. However, it is important to note that this dissertation on political violence is a fairly radical departure from traditional Downsian models.⁴⁰ Because the production of violence is neither an intermittent, winner-takes-all market exchange, e.g. biennial or quadrennial elections, nor a legal process, the cost/benefit analysis of the Public Choice models are too simplistic. The Downsian models discussed above focused solely on the maximization of power in the form of votes, whereas actors in the model below behave much more like the commercial firms that originally inspired Downs. Actors in the forthcoming model must weigh costs and benefits of the production of political goods, not just concern themselves with ideal positioning within a geographic/political space—although this is also a critical feature for determining the size of the market. To make the transition to a more traditional political market, the Downsian model must be modified in two critical ways: 1.) by changing how support is measured, and 2.) by relaxing the assumption that ideological distance is the only determinant of support.

⁴⁰ Most obviously, the focus on political violence is a direct violation of Downs' Assumption 6: "The losing parties in an election never try by force or any illegal means to prevent the winning party (or parties) from taking office." Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 24. It is worth noting that subsequent work has expanded the Downsian model to examine positional competition in elections between more than two parties and in more than just a single ideological dimension, but these share the same focus on peaceful, electoral political markets. Thus, Downsian models are now much more sophisticated than presented here, but the simpler model serves the purpose of bridging the gap between economics and political violence sufficiently well.

In the Downsian model, a voter either gives her one vote to a particular party or does not. Thus, the value, or expected utility, of an ideological position shift must be calculated as the benefit of the additional voters minus the cost of voters lost to abstention or the opposition. This simplistic measure of support directly leads to Downs' primary contribution of the median voter convergence. However, this binary measure of support downplays the significance of passionate blocs: "because of one man, one vote, all are equal regardless of intensity of his political views."⁴¹ Yet this is clearly not the case even for the most democratic of political systems—some voices are louder than others.

Moreover, the winner-takes-all assumption of the model is flawed because the loser often still receives a number of benefits from participating in the political process, albeit not to the same extent as the winner. The loyal opposition still has the ability to affect policy even though it may have no direct power over the state's agenda. For example, the leader of opposition parties, often even relatively minor ones, are frequently sought after by the media and other salient actors for an alternative perspective on current events and politics. As such, they retain an agenda setting function despite being out of government. Similarly, there are also a number of private benefits that accrue to political leaders beyond the political influence out-of-power parties have. Leaders may receive psychic or prestige benefits from heading a sizable organization, even if it is a fringe one. Also, there are often opportunities to mobilize contacts within the network for economic benefit, either directly to the individual or to

⁴¹ Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 66–67.

party cooffers the individual controls. Thus, a significant portion of the private benefits motivating parties in Downs' model can accrue to leaders of political organizations proportional to their levels of support regardless of electoral victory—although the victors will still get substantially more.

To overcome these theoretical weaknesses, the following model assumes that an individual can give different levels of support (or opposition) to various political actors. This non-binary approach much more closely approximates the way standard economic models function. The individual may devote himself entirely to one political organization (PO)—including VPOs, split his support between different POs, give all of his support to a PO or coalition of POs that opposes a particular ideological position or PO, or simply abstain from participation in the market. Thus, POs must choose a strategy that maximizes their political support while simultaneously minimizing their political opposition—a more complicated process than simply maximizing binary votes. In other words, POs must act like firms to maximize their political profits, i.e. find the point where the benefit of support minus the costs of opposition is the greatest. As a consequence, in a political market that has significant extremist elements, moderate positions may not be particularly profitable to a PO.⁴²

The second major departure from the traditional Downsian model is that the strategic behavior being described is the level and type of production rather than spatial

⁴² This mirrors Downs' insight about the importance of heterogeneously distributed voter preferences.

positioning of the organization.⁴³ The ideological spatial distribution is critically important because it defines the market in which POs and VPOs compete, and the ideological proximity between them is a major determinant of the competitive environment. However, unlike most Downsian models, the one developed here emphasizes the possibility of comparative advantage, one of the bedrocks of modern economics.⁴⁴ Downsian models emphasize the distance between consumer and producer as the primary determinant of voter selection. While this is undoubtedly important, not all political organizations are the same. Some POs may have a brand image that automatically engenders political opposition; others may have a more innocuous image that even if it wins little support does not produce knee-jerk hostility. Likewise, some POs may be more efficient or effective in producing the political goods that the constituents desire. As an extreme example, just as a communist party would have a hard time building a free market economy, a libertarian party might have equal difficulty in delivering universal healthcare. They would simply lack the credibility, resources and necessary ways of thinking to do so. However, a conservative party that has had substantial experience in overseeing and regulating, however loosely, a healthy economy might be more appealing to a libertarian-inclined voter than a fringe party more closely aligned with her interests but with no experience governing. Thus, a

⁴³ As will be made clear below, ideological spatial proximity between VPOs is a major determinant of the competitive environment. Thus, I am not dismissing this behavior as unimportant, but analyzing it as a causal variable.

⁴⁴ Downs included expectations about the ability of the party to actually deliver the policies they promise in the voter utility function. However, subsequent scholarship has generally downplayed or ignored this component of the model and primarily focuses instead on positional moves. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 43.

constituent may give far greater support to a PO that is more ideologically distant but highly competent than one that poorly promotes a more preferred agenda.

These two differences combine to provide an admittedly complex version of political competition. However, the loss of parsimony is more than compensated for by the improved power of the model. This approach allows traditional microeconomic analysis of the supply and demand curves for political goods being produced by POs within a given market. The Downsian model provides an excellent framework for determining the characteristics of these curves, as well as demarcating the boundaries of a constituency, i.e. the size of the political market.

In sum, the theory below retains the Downsian model's emphasis on the exchange of constituent support for political goods and the importance of the underlying distribution of constituent preferences. It modifies the way in which this support is measured to allow for simultaneous non-binary support of multiple organizations, and it also introduces the concept of comparative advantage for the producers of these goods. These alterations change the model from one of simple positional competition to a much more dynamic model in which ideological positioning is just one component of a much larger competitive space.

C. Supply and Demand

As with any other economic good, there are both benefits and costs to political violence. Constituents demand a certain amount of political violence because it provides

some value to them and they are willing to pay for it in one way or another.⁴⁵ VPOs produce their violence to meet this demand and reap the reward, but also incur significant costs through this production. On the one hand, violence can dramatically propel a political agenda forward and thus win considerable constituent support, with all of the power, prestige, and other benefits that attend it. On the other hand, violence can delegitimize an agenda and mobilize considerable opposition to it. In addition, the production of illegal violence requires the consumption of considerable resources, both material and intangible, to avoid detection and interdiction. This consumption requires replacement, which may itself be a costly process. Thus, as Frisch notes, “violent organizations are no different than business firms who seek maximum sales at minimum cost.”⁴⁶ As a result, the expected payoff, i.e. the aggregated level of constituent support, must exceed these potentially high costs or else the VPO will not produce any violence.

1. Demand for Violence

The demand for political violence within the constituent community is the product of a wide variety of complex processes. There are many reasons why an individual might support the use of violence to promote a political goal, even if that goal is somewhat utopian and is objectively extremely unlikely to be achieved. At the most basic level, there are some individuals who are likely motivated by a sociopathic

⁴⁵ The amount demanded may be zero if there are no constituents who receive a benefit from political violence. In this case, the market for political violence will not form or will be extremely short-lived.

⁴⁶ Frisch, “Motivation or Capabilities? Israeli Counterterrorism against Palestinian Suicide Bombings and Violence,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 852. Similarly, Gunaratna notes, “Terrorism itself is supplied and demanded. The market for terrorism will remain vibrant until governments learn to address its two sides effectively.” Gunaratna, “The Terror Market: Networks and Enforcement in the West,” *Harvard International Review*, 66.

delight in violence for which a political agenda simply provides cover. Others may assign such a massive benefit to the VPO's promised public good that it overcomes the low probability of success.⁴⁷ Some may support the violence out of a psychic need for justice or revenge for personal or social wrongs inflicted upon them.⁴⁸ Still others may receive certain side benefits and private incentives from participation in an organization that produces violence—and/or expect punishment for subsequent attempts to defect.⁴⁹ In addition to these purely rational calculations, both prospect theory and relative deprivation theory indicate that individuals might prefer an unknown gain to a certain perceived loss, and thus support extreme acts to achieve it.⁵⁰ All these different sources and intensities of individual motivations then aggregate to form the demand for political violence that motivates VPOs' production.

As previously mentioned, there is a wide variation in terms of intensity of political preferences for VPOs to tap into for support within the political market. Latent supporters are those who share an affinity with the VPO, but have never been mobilized or had the opportunity to make more substantial contributions. They can be thought of as a strategic reserve for future action; their preexisting low-level support makes

⁴⁷ Muller and Opp, "Rational Choice and Rebellious Collective Action," *American Political Science Review*.

⁴⁸ De Figueiredo and Weingast, "Vicious Cycles: Endogenous Political Extremism and Political Violence," Working Paper 2001-9, Institute of Governmental Studies; Hayes and McAllister, "Sowing Dragon's Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland," *Political Studies*; Hayes and McAllister, "Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland," *Terrorism and Political Violence*; Bueno de Mesquita, "The Quality of Terror," *American Journal of Political Science*.

⁴⁹ Chai, "An Organizational Economics Theory of Antigovernment Violence," *Comparative Politics*.

⁵⁰ Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," *Econometrica*; Masters, "Support and Nonsupport for Nationalist Rebellion: A Prospect Theory Approach," *Political Psychology*; Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*; Atran, "Mishandling Suicide Terrorism," *Washington Quarterly*.

recruitment for more active roles significantly easier. Other supporters assist the VPO through passive means. They may possess knowledge or witness VPO activities that could be damaging if revealed but do not cooperate with the VPO's enemies. By turning a blind eye, they provide a friendly environment and lower the costs of maintaining the VPO's clandestine profile. Constituents with a stronger intensity of support may be willing to contribute intelligence, skills, money, weapons, vehicles, safe houses, etc. to the cause. The most extreme supporters may take up arms themselves and even devote their lives to the cause. In addition to these political supporters, VPOs may also use the services of individuals who are not at all politically motivated but are attracted by the entertainment value or side benefits from membership in the VPO.⁵¹

The demand curve should be downward sloping.⁵² Given its destructive nature, violence beyond the point of necessity reduces the value of the post-conflict state irrespective of which side wins. In addition, the state response is likely to impose hardships on the broader community and the higher the violence, the more severe the likely response. This communal crackdown will undermine the support of constituents for whom the violence is not worth the cost. Moreover, each act of violence gives additional ammunition for the constituent opposition's attempts to delegitimize the VPO. Increased repetition of violence reveals patterns of behavior that may have a cumulative effect on the constituent audience.

⁵¹ For the purposes of this study, this category is of minimal importance beyond the fact that it requires other resources to mobilize these thrill-seekers or mercenaries.

⁵² The exception to this might be apocalyptic or nihilistic organizations seeking to end the world. However, even these might temper their violence at any given point in order to make sure they last long enough to complete the full task of annihilation.

2. *Supply of Violence*

Just as there are many factors driving the demand side of the equation, assessing the supply side of political violence is also a complex task. There are three main types of cost associated with the production of violence. First, the loss of political support and/or generation of political opposition as a result of increased violence is the most important component for this model. Second, there is the loss of material resources necessary for production that must be replaced for future attacks to be possible. Thus, latent and passive political support must be translated into physical resources, which may not be a costless enterprise. Third, a hybrid of the first two, the elimination of human agents, through either death or capture, simultaneously removes fervent supporters and imposes material costs in terms of finding replacement manpower.

VPOs must be cognizant of the fact that violence can have a significant counter-mobilizing effect within their constituencies.⁵³ As one prominent scholar notes, “although violence impresses people, it has a severe limitation in the formation of movements, for it restrains and frightens off sympathizers.”⁵⁴ Furthermore, just as there may be a boomerang effect to state violence, a VPO risks alienating its constituents through apparently indiscriminate violence.⁵⁵ The direct inflicting of pain on one's own constituents—even if accidental or incidental to an attack on the enemy—is unlikely to

⁵³ There are three types of potential opponents within the constituent community who can be mobilized: ideological, strategic and moral. Ideologically-motivated opponents dislike the specific political agenda the VPO is advancing and want it to fail. Strategically-motivated opponents may be supportive or indifferent to the political agenda, but believe that the violence is counter-productive for the attainment of their preferences. Moral opponents simply condemn the use of violence as normatively wrong.

⁵⁴ Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd ed., 96.

⁵⁵ Crenshaw, “The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice,” in Walter Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, 17.

win over hearts and minds. Overt opposition within the community is especially damaging because it can serve as a lightning rod for passive non-supporters and erode perceptions about latent support—diminishing the VPO's power within the community and against the external enemy.⁵⁶ As a result, VPOs that are better able to target the enemy while reducing collateral damage against those considered illegitimate by their constituents should be more efficient producers of political violence.⁵⁷

Although the model presented here focuses on costs and benefits in terms of political support, this rather intangible concept often has critically important physical manifestations.⁵⁸ VPOs cannot operate without the money, secure locations, arms, and manpower necessary to actually produce the violence. With each act of violence, they diminish the resources they have at their disposal and must replace them for future production. When a bullet is fired or a bomb is exploded, it cannot be used again. When VPO agents use a safe-house or vehicle, it will not be usable for the next operation without increased risk of detection. Thus, a VPO must have the ability to translate political support into material capabilities. This represents an opportunity cost because that support may no longer be available for other purposes. For example, if a latent supporter is activated and resources are spent to train her to become a VPO member, not only has the VPO used up resources it must replace but she may no longer be able to be

⁵⁶ Funes, “Social Responses to Political Violence in the Basque Country: Peace Movements and Their Audience,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

⁵⁷ Note that the definition of a legitimate target and the sensitivity to collateral damage can vary between constituencies. The resulting differences in production costs can severely limit the ability of VPOs to enter new markets by expanding or contracting its constituent base.

⁵⁸ For a clear and comprehensive examination of the pure economic factors and decision-making of political violence, see Enders and Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism*.

activated for alternative nonviolent political purposes. Alternatively, VPOs may seek material resources through criminal behaviors, e.g. bank robberies or kidnaps for ransom, that delegitimize the organization in the eyes of their supporters. Either way, the consumption of the material elements of violence production has a significant potential cost for VPOs' levels of political support.⁵⁹

While it is possible to conceive of manpower as strictly a material resource, given the essential political nature of violence production, doing so would be inappropriate. Human agents are the most important resource VPOs have, primarily because of the simple fact that a sufficiently-motivated individual will generally be able to produce violence even in the most resource-deprived conditions. Where one lacks bombs, one can use bullets; where one lacks bullets, one can use stones; where one lacks stones, one can use his or her body. When a VPO agent is captured or killed, it reduces the size of the constituent community.⁶⁰ Furthermore, given his probable extreme fervor, it causes a disproportional loss of market share for the VPO. It may also cause a ripple effect of support loss as perceptions of the futility of continued violent struggle increase. At the same time, the loss of this human agent forces the VPO to expend resources to recruit, train and deploy a replacement. Although the marginal cost of each lost individual is fairly small, it may have a sizeable cumulative effect in larger

⁵⁹ The increase in passive opposition is particularly important because it increases the transaction costs of converting political to material support.

⁶⁰ Unless this is done "cleanly," such eliminations may simultaneously feed into a sense of grievance and produce a significant martyr effect. Thus, the VPO may experience increased revenues and costs at the same time.

campaigns of violence. VPOs that are able to reduce their risk of human resource loss will thus face lower production costs.

A second critical aspect of the manpower cost resulting from and reinforcing a reduction in political support is the likely decline in the quality of the VPO. As the pool of potential recruits shrinks, the VPO becomes less selective in meeting its personnel requirements.⁶¹ With less capable individuals filling the ranks, the organization becomes less efficient. They may be less able to ward off infiltration and interdiction by their enemies. Furthermore, the VPO will be less able to tailor its product to deliver both the appropriate type of violence and the accompanying resonant political discourse to match the constituents' preferences. Thus, the sacrifice of VPO agents has enormous potential costs to the organization in both the short and long terms, especially if the support base is not regularly replenished.

Most terrorism scholars model VPO material cost functions as increasing and convex—which should apply equally to the highly correlated political production costs.⁶² In addition to the fairly high fixed costs of engaging in this dangerous and illegal activity, each unit of violence costs more than the last. The rationale for this curve shape is most obvious in terms of the state response to violence. The initial act of violence automatically brands the VPO as illegal and its members are liable to criminal punishment. Each attack reveals more information about the organization and its members to the state, increasing the likelihood that the security forces will be able to

⁶¹ Bueno de Mesquita, “The Quality of Terror,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

⁶² Siqueira, “Political and Militant Wings within Dissident Movements and Organizations,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Bueno de Mesquita, “The Quality of Terror,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

infiltrate, weaken and actually punish the VPO. Larger weapons caches or more exotic lethal materials are similarly more likely to be detected. The element of political support that is directly convertible into material support and manpower should therefore mirror this curve. Moreover, excessive violence may delegitimize the VPO and shock constituents into opposition, making that element of the supply curve at least upward sloping, if not also convex.

3. Disrupting the Normal Market

Both the cost and demand curves for violence in a political market approximate those of standard goods in traditional economics. Traditional free market analyses would therefore put the level of violence production at the point where supply meets demand. However, there are three forces that disrupt this natural equilibrium: external sponsors, the state security apparatus, and competition. The first two are essentially exogenous to the market and shift the supply and demand curves much like subsidies and taxes/tariffs. The last is primarily an internal force that allows producers to potentially maximize their political power by producing sub-equilibrium levels of violence.

Both security forces and external patrons can radically affect the profitability of violence production within the market. There is a vast literature on effective counterterrorism policy that addresses the trade-offs between public opinion, civil liberties, economic development, and security.⁶³ The fundamental finding of this

⁶³ See for example, Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers*; Arce M., and Sandler, "Counterterrorism: A Game-Theoretic Analysis." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Rosendorff

literature is that changes in security policy that make the state response more focused on the actual producers of violence can increase production costs; those that more broadly target the population can increase demand.⁶⁴ Similarly, external patrons—either state sponsors or influential diaspora communities—can provide international legitimacy and material resources that lower production costs or condemnation that increases those costs.⁶⁵

One of the most basic insights from economics is that competitive markets produce more than non-competitive ones. There is a growing literature about terrorist “outbidding,” where terrorist groups compete with each other for the support of their community by producing violence against the external enemy.⁶⁶ Competitive outbidding is in contrast to a monopolistic market, which would produce less violence, as seen in

and Sandler, “Too Much of a Good Thing? The Proactive Response Dilemma,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

⁶⁴ Fromkin, “The Strategy of Terrorism,” *Foreign Affairs*, 687; Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson, “The Propaganda of the Deed: Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and Mobilization,” *American Journal of Political Science*; Bandura, “Mechanisms of Moral Disengagement,” in Reich, *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*; Crenshaw, “The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice,” in Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*; De Figueiredo and Weingast, “Vicious Cycles: Endogenous Political Extremism and Political Violence,” Working Paper 2001-9, Institute of Governmental Studies; Rosendorff and Sandler, “Too Much of a Good Thing? The Proactive Response Dilemma,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Siqueira and Sandler, “Terrorists Versus the Government: Strategic Interaction, Support, and Sponsorship,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson, “The Propaganda of the Deed: Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and Mobilization,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

⁶⁵ Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism*, 70–73; Korteweg, “Black Holes: On Terrorist Sanctuaries and Governmental Weakness,” *Civil Wars*, 66; Weinstein, “Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

⁶⁶ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 2nd ed.; Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*; Boyle, “Bargaining, Fear, and Denial: Explaining Violence Against Civilians in Iraq 2004–2007,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*. Contra Bryman and Araj, “Palestinian Suicide Bombing Revisited: A Critique of the Outbidding Thesis,” *Political Science Quarterly*; Chenoweth, “The Inadvertent Effects of Democracy on Terrorist Group Proliferation,” PhD Dissertation, University of Colorado, 2007; Clauset, Heger, Young and Gleditsch, “Strategic Substitution and Complimentarity in the Israel-Palestine Conflict,” Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 164–65.

Figure 2.3. A producer maximizes its profits at the point where marginal revenue equals marginal costs, i.e. at the point where any additional units would produce greater additional costs than additional benefits. Thus, a monopolist can maximize its profits, or political power, by producing a lower amount of violence (Q_M) than it would under competitive situations (Q_C). Where a firm faces rivals, each seeks to capture whatever additional profits it can to prevent the other from doing so. Firms may even adopt a dumping strategy, wherein they flood the market with cheap goods at loss to themselves in order to drive out their less resilient rivals.⁶⁷ Such economic behavior ties in well with the idea of “spoiler” violence, in which VPOs undercut their more moderate rivals' attempts to negotiate a peace by temporarily producing excessive violence.⁶⁸ These attempts to undercut rivals, in turn, drive all firms in the market to produce at the point of zero profitability.⁶⁹ In other words, competitive producers have to make more of their product, i.e. more violence.

⁶⁷ Gruenspecht, “Dumping and Dynamic Competition,” *Journal of International Economics*; Mastel, *Antidumping Laws and the U.S. Economy*.

⁶⁸ Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” in Zartman, ed., *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 1–29; Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” *International Security*; Kydd and Walter, “Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence,” *International Organization*; Kydd and Walter, “The Strategies of Terrorism,” *International Security*; Greenhill and Major, “The Perils of Profiling: Civil War Spoilers and the Collapse of Intra-State Peace Accords,” *International Security*; Pearlman, “Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation and the Middle East Peace Process,” *International Security*.

⁶⁹ Zero profitability includes opportunity costs, so firms still collect more revenues than their actual costs of production. Therefore, zero profitability does not imply that the POs and VPOs have no power.

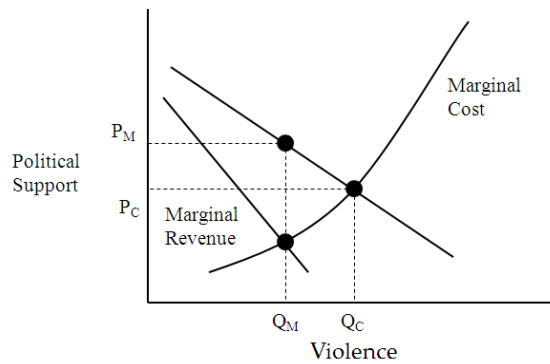


Figure 2.3 Production levels in a competitive and monopolistic market

While the extant literature on political violence has identified competition as a major driver of VPO behavior, it has done a poor job of identifying what competition means. Many scholars simplify competition to a single dimension: the number of groups. Using the political market model developed above, it is possible to draw on the far more developed understanding of competition from the economics and business strategy literatures.

D. The Five Forces of Competition in the Production of Political Violence

Much like within the field of political violence, early work in economics gave primacy to market structures, including the number of firms operating within the same market, as the driver of competitive behavior. As a result, economists developed an entire taxonomy to address possible deviations from competitive models based on the number of suppliers and buyers.⁷⁰ However, later analysis revealed that firm behavior in these noncompetitive markets shows considerable variation that requires additional explanation. Michael Porter revolutionized the field with the introduction of his “Five

⁷⁰ Prior to the work of Joan Robinson and Edward H. Chamberlin during the early 1930s, the literature had an essentially binary view of monopoly (single supplier) and monopsony (single buyer) power. They added a more nuanced understanding: duopoly (two suppliers), duopsony (two buyers), oligopoly (a few dominant suppliers), and oligopsony (a few dominant buyers). Case, *Competition: The Birth of a New Science*, 278–79.

Forces of Competition” in 1980.⁷¹ Later scholars have built upon his more nuanced approach to produce a reflexive and dynamic model that can be readily applied to the competition between co-constituent political organizations.

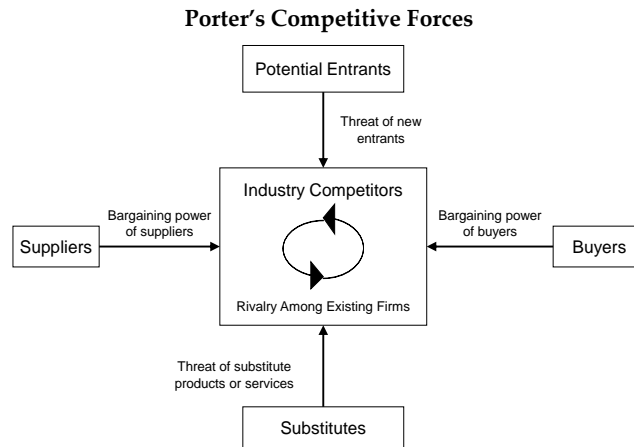


Figure 2.4 Porter's Five Forces of Competition⁷²

Porter's Five Forces of Competition are easily converted into a rigorous means of measuring the level of VPO market competition and illuminating the strategic implications of different types of competition for violence producers. Porter argues that a firm must make strategic decisions based on the full competitive environment. As Figure 2.4 shows graphically, this requires taking into account the bargaining power of buyers and sellers, the possibility of new entrants to the market, the effect of substitute goods, and the interaction the firm has with its rivals in the market.

1. Buyer Bargaining Power

Buyers generally want more of a good at a lower cost and will attempt to bargain and manipulate producers to achieve this goal. Porter notes that their ability to

⁷¹ Porter, *Competitive Strategy*.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 4.

capture part of the firm's profits is primarily a function of their market power.⁷³ If buyers are more organized or concentrated than the producers, they can play rival producers off of each other. This is more easily done, and thus a more credible threat, when there are low costs to switching between producers or even beginning self-production. Another major component of buyer bargaining power is their access to full information about the market. Knowledge of the producers' costs and revenue functions and market demand allows the buyer to set a more favorable price and capture a greater portion of the producer's profits.

Applying Porter to the market for political violence, a buyer of political goods is an individual who exchanges his or her support for the good being produced. In other words, buyers are the constituents for whose support VPOs are competing.

Within the market of political violence, generally buyers have extremely little bargaining power. Given the way the market is modeled, buyers are diffuse and so lack the coordination necessary to engage in bargaining themselves. However, a strong media can be an organized consumer that wields considerable leverage over the VPOs' activities. The media has an enormous influence over the polity by establishing the political agenda and filtering the meaning of events.⁷⁴ It also has an interest in attracting viewers/readers through the publication of sensational news stories, making its interests

⁷³ Porter, *On Competition*, 24.

⁷⁴ Entman, "How the Media Affect What People Think: An Information Processing Approach," *The Journal of Politics*; Jacobs and Shapiro, "Towards the Integrated Study of Political Communications, Public Opinion, and the Policy-Making Process," *PS: Political Science and Politics*; Gandy, Kopp, Hands, Frazer and Phillips, "Race and Risk: Factors Affecting the Framing of Stories about Inequality, Discrimination, and Just Plain Bad Luck," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*.

often align with the publicity-seeking VPOs.⁷⁵ Because of these incentives for a race toward the bottom in order to scoop the biggest and worst news in an effort to boost ratings, a free press is generally unable to organize sufficiently to exert buyer power. However, a state-controlled or legally-restricted press in a more closed society may exert considerable influence, forcing VPOs to produce considerably more violence to break through the censorship and reach its constituents. The only other buyers who are organized within this market are members of the VPO, one of its rivals, or a producer of a substitute.

2. Supplier Bargaining Power

A firm's suppliers can potentially exert significant bargaining power to capture a greater share of the firm's profitability.⁷⁶ This is a particular threat when the suppliers are themselves organized, especially if the suppliers' market is more monopolistic than the producer's. In addition, supplier power is limited by the uniqueness, importance or substitutability of the production input it provides. For example, if the firm cannot produce without a specific supplier's input, that supplier has enormous leverage and can capture a large share of the firm's profitability. Porter further notes that it is important to consider the supply of labor as one of the critical factors for production.

In the political violence market, a supplier is an entity that provides the material capabilities necessary to actually produce the good. For example, suppliers to a VPO

⁷⁵ Dowling, "Terrorism and the Media: A Rhetorical Genre," *Journal of Communication*; Schmid and de Graaf, *Violence as Communication: Insurgent Terrorism and the Western News Media*, 53–54; Cohen-Almagor, "The Terrorists' Best Ally: The Quebec Media Coverage of the FLQ Crisis in October 1970," *Canadian Journal of Communication*; Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 183–96.

⁷⁶ Porter, *On Competition*, 27.

would include arms dealers, providers of safe havens, muscle, etc. In contrast with buyers, who generally have extremely little bargaining power within this model, suppliers may often have quite a bit.

Most VPOs are extremely sensitive to the needs and demands of their suppliers. Although many weapons can be self-manufactured from everyday items, the source of more sophisticated weapons, such as plastic explosives, may be much more limited. If the relationship is an extended one, these suppliers may require the group to adopt or proscribe certain strategies to ensure future deliveries, a particular problem for state-sponsored VPOs.

3. Threat of Substitute Goods

Substitute products are those that “can perform the same *function* as the product of the industry.”⁷⁷ As such, these goods are potentially direct competitors for those of the firm, even if this relationship is not always obvious. A perfect substitute is one that can be used interchangeably with the product without any cost or loss of value to the consumer. However, the range of substitutes is much broader and can include a number of products that function similarly to the product in question. For example, Coca-Cola and Pepsi are near perfect substitutes whereas a bicycle and an automobile are substitutable only under certain conditions. However, most perfect substitutes are goods produced within the same industry and so are bundled as part of the market analysis. Therefore, the effect of substitutes on market competition is usually focused on imperfect substitutes produced by other firms outside the industry in question.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 23.

In this conceptualization of the market for political violence, different forms (bombings, shootings, kidnappings, etc.) and targets (civilian, politicians, soldiers, children, etc.) of violence are considered to be such close substitutes that they are essentially the same product. Thus, a substitute good would be something that is a nonviolent activity that supports or furthers the group's stated political or social goal or it is violence that is not intended to achieve the political goal vis-à-vis the enemy.⁷⁸ The first kind of substitute includes peace marches, other forms of civil disobedience, or participation within the existing political system. The second is any kind of activity that increases the group's power within the constituency without simultaneously advancing the coercive bargain with the enemy, e.g. provision of alternative social control through punishment attacks or economic or criminal enterprises.⁷⁹ This latter type of substitute also imposes potential constraints on the VPOs' ability to produce externally-directed violence by diverting limited resources.

This substitutability would indicate that as political violence goes up, the demand for nonviolent politics and alternative social control will go down and vice versa. The more violence there is propelling an agenda forward, the less need there is

⁷⁸ Political violence in support of a different constituent community may be a substitute if it also promotes the same agenda. For example, the anti-government violence of the Naga, Bodo, Sikh and other ethnic groups in India may have spillover effects in delegitimizing the state; thus, each ethnic group can produce less violence than it would if it were fighting the Indian government alone. However, this extraconstituent violence may also be complementary if it increases the intraconstituent demand. For example, the violence of Northern Irish Loyalists or Algerian French against their respective nationalist opponents likely increased the perceived legitimacy and demand for nationalist violence. Although very important for determining constituent demand, these are forces external to the market, therefore are not included in this model of internal competition.

⁷⁹ The latter two enterprises pose a considerable risk for VPOs of devolving into apolitical and even nonviolent organizations.

for alternative methods. Inversely, the more nonviolent politic acts are able to set the agenda, the less perceived need there will be for violence.⁸⁰

4. *Rivalry between Existing Firms*

Rivalry between existing firms is the strategic interaction between firms jockeying for power. This is what most people think of when they discuss competition. Firms engage in behaviors they believe will lead to an edge that will provide greater profitability. Within this rivalry, there are two basic strategies: expand production or differentiate oneself. In economics, the first is often self-defeating as rivals match the behavior and saturate the market, driving the price down. The second, branding strategy is limited by the sensitivity of the consumer to relatively minor differences between different firms' products and the ability of others to mimic these differences. Both strategies can improve profits, but Porter warns that almost invariably,

competitive moves by one firm have noticeable effects on its competitors and thus may incite retaliation or efforts to counter the move... This pattern of action and reaction may or may not leave the initiating firm and the industry as a whole better off. If moves and countermoves escalate, then all firms in the industry may suffer and be worse off than before.⁸¹

⁸⁰ This emphasis on substitutability is in contrast to Siqueira (2005), who holds open the possibility that violence and nonviolence may be complementary at times. Siqueira, "Political and Militant Wings within Dissident Movements and Organizations," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Admittedly, association with violence can push a PO to the forefront of politics and a PO can serve as a legitimate mouthpiece for attracting recruits to a VPO. While this may be true at the individual organization level, deeper market forces determine the relationship between the demands for each product. The size of the markets for violence and nonviolence are determined by how effective each method is perceived to be in advancing the political agenda. Violence is inherently the rejection of status quo politics and signals rejection of standard nonviolent means. Likewise, nonviolence signals increased willingness by the constituency to bestow legitimacy on the existing institutions—a direct rejection of violence.

⁸¹ Porter, *On Competition*, 17.

As such, rivalry is a strategic interaction that may or may not have a Nash equilibrium. Thus, rivalry can lead to suboptimal behaviors that may appear irrational to the outside observer.

In the market for political violence, the behavioral options under rivalry are slightly more expansive than for traditional firms. A VPO can increase its production, divert violence production from the enemy to the rival, change positions in the ideological space, or attempt to improve their “brand image”. The violence expansion option bears the same costs and benefits as in standard markets, although the more tenuous supply chain for the production of violence may make such an increase an especially risky move. Similarly, attempts at branding one VPO's violence from another may also be quite limited because of the ability to easily mimic it. Nevertheless, groups may attempt to do this by demonstrating their technical prowess through attacks on harder targets, or show greater ruthlessness in pursuit of the “cause” through attacks on less legitimate or civilian targets.

The suicide terrorism that results from Bloom's outbidding mechanism can be viewed as a combination of these two strategies.⁸² Not only does the group increase both the physical and psychological violence it produces by using ‘human smart bombs’, but it is also a crude form of “branding” behavior within a competitive market. Groups use suicide terrorism in order to distinguish their violence from the very similar products of rivals. However, if multiple groups use suicide terrorism, the differentiation

⁸² Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*; Bloom, “Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding,” *Political Science Quarterly*.

benefit is eliminated, and the groups must maximize their revenues by increasing production to the competitive market level.

The other two rivalry options are potentially much more significant and enduring. First, Downsian positional shifts along the ideological spectrum may dramatically alter the constituent boundaries for a given group.⁸³ As a result, a sufficiently large shift could remove the VPO from the same constituency as another and remove the rivalry from consideration. Alternatively, the shift could make the VPO enter the province of a previously non-rival VPO. Thus, a simple nationalist group that moves toward socialism may gain access to a new group of potential supporters, but lose some of its former base as a result. Similarly, it could escape rivalry with another nationalist group only to take on a new rivalry with a socialist one. Less dramatically, smaller positional shifts may simply solidify niche markets within the larger market and offer limited protection from one's competitors.

Second, because VPOs exist in a self-help environment, the use of violence against one's competitors is a viable strategic option. In contrast, most firms operate under some semblance of a legal structure that curtails such direct competitive behavior

⁸³ However, this is probably a more uncommon strategy in a market for political violence than Downsian models might predict. Successful firms often experience an exploitation bias of decreased search and risk taking at least in part because past successes alter intraorganizational power structure and organizational identity. Greve, "Performance, aspirations, and risky organizational change," *Administrative Science Quarterly*; Lant and Mezias, "An Organizational Learning Model of Convergence and Reorientation," *Organization Science*; March, "Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning," *Organization Science*. Burgelman, "Fading Memories: A Process Theory of Strategic Business Exit in Dynamic Environments," *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Moreover, Christensen and Bower (1996) note that most firms have a bias wherein they build up such a loyalty to existing customers that it may prevent the discovery of more profitable new ones. In the political market, these biases translate to an uncertainty about the relative losses and gains from an ideological position shift and a more conservative positional strategy. Christensen and Bower, "Customer Power, Strategic Investment, and the Failure of Leading Firms," *Strategic Management Journal*.

against their rivals. Anti-rival violence has all of the same physical attributes of anti-enemy violence, but it is an entirely different phenomenon within the political market. Anti-rival violence is not produced to win over constituents, but rather raise the costs for a rival or eliminate it outright. Thus, while each act of violence against a rival consumes resources necessary for the production of violence intended to coerce the enemy, it does not increase constituent support. Worse still, attacks on co-constituent groups may delegitimize the VPO, resulting in a net loss of constituent support. As such, using violence against competitors is a strategic behavior with a potentially significant detrimental impact on the VPO's cost curve for the production of externally-targeted violence. On the other hand, complete elimination of a rival means the VPO does not have to share the marketplace, and thus can enjoy a larger share of the potential profits.

5. Threat of New Entrants

Greenwald and Kahn drastically simplify Porter's analytical model by arguing that in most markets, threat of entry is the single strongest determinant of competition.⁸⁴ A standard rule of thumb in economics is that when a firm earns large profits, others will be attracted by this excess and will set up shop to capture some of the surplus.⁸⁵ In

⁸⁴ Greenwald and Kahn, *Competition Demystified: A Radically Simplified Approach to Business Strategy*.

⁸⁵ There is a very well developed literature on the market entry behavior of firms. Ironically, although entrepreneurs are essential for developing new markets, most firms are relatively conservative and end up mimicking their rivals. As a result, there is usually an inverted U shaped relationship between market entry and the number of existing firms in the market. Moreover, these new firms will frequently model their organizations and products to imitate those firms that are easily observable, similar to them, or socially prominent. Davis and Greve, "Corporate Elite Networks and Governance Changes in the 1980s," *American Journal of Sociology*; Galaskiewicz and Burt, "Interorganizational Contagion in Corporate Philanthropy," *Administrative Science Quarterly*; Greve, "Patterns of Competition: The Diffusion of a Market Position in Radio Broadcasting," *Administrative Science Quarterly*; Haveman, "Follow the

the long-run, this increased competition leads to zero profitability within the market.

However, this increase in market competition is tempered by the ability of new firms to actually enter the market. If new firms are unable to enter once the market has been defined, the first firm is protected from their competitive influence and can hold onto its monopoly power.

Porter defines the level of new entry threat as a measure of both the barriers to entry and expected reaction of existing firms. Structural barriers to entry are those market features beyond the firm's control that limit the profitability of the market for new entrants. Examples of structural barriers include large start-up costs, entrenched customer loyalties, large economies of scale, steep learning/experience curves, significant switching costs for consumers, limited access to raw materials, proprietary technology, and government regulation. In contrast, reactive barriers are the expected or likely reaction of existing firms toward the new entrant. A firm producing in a non-competitive market may invest in excess capacity and not use it simply to signal its ability and willingness to engage in a price war against new entrants. If there are no structural barriers and no credible reactive barriers, market players will have to behave as though the market is more competitive than it appears in order to reduce the allure of market entry.

In the market for political violence, market entry could mean the creation of a new VPO, the splitting of an existing group, or the strategic alliance/merger of an

Leader: Mimetic Isomorphism and Entry into New Markets," *Administrative Science Quarterly*;
Haunschild and Miner, "Modes of Interorganizational Imitation: The Effects of Outcome Salience and Uncertainty," *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

existing group with another political party or VPO.⁸⁶ Here, structural barriers to entry include the high costs of clandestinely setting up and arming a new, illegal VPO. Reactive barriers include attempts to demonize the new rival among potential supporters, as well as threats and physical attacks by existing groups.

The production cost advantages that come from experience and government policy are two structural barriers worth noting within a market for political violence. The first major structural barrier to entry is government policy. In a pure economic model, governments may be able to significantly shrink or even completely shut down select markets through extreme regulation or “taxation.”⁸⁷ In a market for political violence, a state's counter-terror policy can affect overall production costs across the entire market or the policy can be targeted against a select group or groups. For example, the state may want to crush all violent resistance or it may especially target a Marxist-oriented group through heavy-handed policies while being much more tolerant of a religious VPO. The government may make market entry easier by fostering divisions within the constituency and encouraging rival VPO formation. States can intervene in the relationship within and between groups to force each to adopt a more competitive strategy. For example, it can undermine cooperation by planting false rumors or even committing violent acts under a false flag in order to encourage

⁸⁶ The first two are fairly obvious types of entry because they produce new organizations, but the third may require additional discussion. This third entry type parallels the market entry of international firms into domestic markets through strategic partnerships with local companies. The substantial organizational change and the many new resources brought to bear by this merger represents a significant alteration of the market akin to the entry of a completely new firm.

⁸⁷ This model assumes that there is no black market option for economic exchanges outside the purview of the state.

members of groups to desert their current VPO. Thus, the importance of government policy in shaping the size and scope of terrorist activity cannot be overstated.

Whereas a new entrant may have to expose itself to interdiction by the state or a rival in order to find access to materials, manpower, safe houses, etc. to be able to produce violence, enduring VPOs generally have already developed technologies and/or methods that give them an advantage over competitors in effectively resisting counterterrorism efforts. Similarly, political violence is an inherently risky task and some elements are more dangerous than others. For example, a novice bomb-maker is much more likely to seriously injure or kill himself and possibly others than a master engineer who has rigged thousands already. The value of experience and learning extends to the strategic and tactical decision-making of a terrorist leadership, who probably have a better understanding of the capabilities and weaknesses of the state, the competitors, and their own organization—not to mention the preferences within the constituency. Unlike normal firms, because there are no legal protections for VPO innovations gleaned through this experience, defection of members to another group are especially dangerous and damaging. As a result, VPOs will likely rely on reactive barriers to prevent members from leaving, i.e. credible threats to punish or kill defectors.

Given the hostile environment and lack of legal protections for VPOs, reactive barriers are likely to play a much greater role in the production of political violence than in other industries. There are two important indicators for potential entrants that the existing VPOs will employ such a reactive barrier to entry. The first indicator of a

future willingness to punish new entry is past elimination of a rival. Strategies for this elimination include extreme outbidding, actively turning the constituency against the new group through propaganda, passing critical information to the security forces, and/or direct attacks on the new group. The second indicator of reactive barriers to VPO entry is the level of violent social control in which the existing group engages. Thus, VPOs punishing individuals within the constituency who pose a potential threat or are critical of the VPO serves two purposes. First, dissenters with an instinct for self-preservation will engage in a process of preference falsification, i.e. hiding their true preferences, which makes it much harder to identify co-dissidents and form a rival organization.⁸⁸ Second, any rival group that forms will have to emerge with a significant capability for protecting itself and its members, which raises the start-up costs of new entry. Both of these reactive strategies limit the attractiveness of market entry and help to preserve existing VPOs' power within the market.

III. Testable Hypotheses

As Figure 2.5 demonstrates, the Porter analysis can easily be adapted to provide testable hypotheses about the strategic production of violence within a political market. *Ceteris paribus*, where the five competitive threats from suppliers, substitutes, new entrants and rivals push toward a more competitive environment, one should expect to see more violence against the enemy. However, the VPO's limited access to material resources necessary for violence production may temper this escalatory strategic behavior. The resource constraints argument notes that the diversion of violence-

⁸⁸ Kuran, *Private Truths, Public Lies*.

producing resources to intense rivalries and punishment attacks on co-constituents will cause the amount of violence directed at the enemy to drop. Moreover, if feuds are the pinnacle of competitive behavior and are not just random events, this theory would predict a pattern of spikes in externally-directed violence production immediately preceding VPO feuds and a significant decline in such violence during them. In addition, if the VPO is itself directly involved in the production of substitute goods, the amount of violence it produces will decline as a result of resource constraints—although rival VPOs may make up the difference.

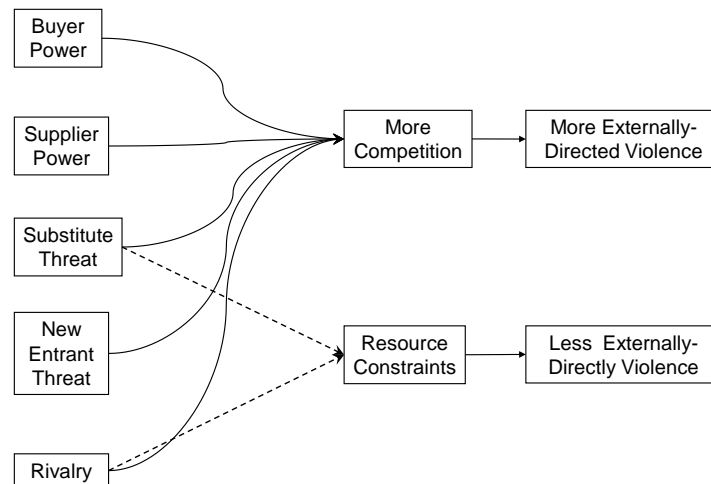


Figure 2.5 Implications of the Five Forces of Competition in the market for political violence

Hypothesis 1: Increases in demand for violence within the market leads to more violence being produced against the external enemy.

Hypothesis 2: Decreases in the cost of violence production within the market leads to more externally-directed violence.

Hypothesis 3: More competition within the market leads to more violence being produced against the external enemy.

Hypothesis 3a: An increase in buyer power leads to more externally-directed violence.

Hypothesis 3b: A decrease in supplier power leads to more externally-directed violence.

Hypothesis 3c: An increase in substitute threat leads to more externally-directed violence.

Hypothesis 3d: A decrease in the barriers to entry leads to more externally-directed violence.

Hypothesis 3e: A more intense rivalry with other VPOs leads to more externally-directed violence.

Hypothesis 4: Resource constraints from extreme rivalry, i.e. feuds between two or more groups, will cause each of the VPOs involved to produce less violence against the enemy.

Hypothesis 4a: Immediately prior to a feud, the VPOs involved should produce more violence.

Hypothesis 5: Increased production of substitute goods by a VPO itself will lead it to produce less violence against the enemy.

Hypothesis 5a: Increased production of alternative social control leads to less -directed violence.

Hypothesis 5b: Increased production of nonviolent politics leads to less -directed violence.

IV. Conclusion

The competitive environment for violent political groups is far more complex than previously modeled. Because VPOs behave very similarly to firms in an economic market, we should expect to see an increase in the production of violence when there is an increase in demand, a decline in costs, or a reduction of monopoly power within the market. This dissertation contributes to the understanding of this third element. More importantly, it provides a framework for the extant literature on violent political competition in which VPOs may compete directly with each other, with producers of nonviolent political goods, and even with potential internal splits or new group formations.

In addition to this model's advancement of theory, its policy implications are significant. Traditional counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency strategies emphasize weakening the VPO opponent by highlighting existing differences within the organization or community and/or creating artificial cleavages. Not only do rivalries weaken and split the anti-state capabilities of the constituency, but it may give leverage to the state during negotiations by playing factions off of each other.⁸⁹

As this model explains, such a strategy may be deeply flawed if it does not increase the level of competition to full-scale violence between co-constituent VPOs; indeed, it may increase the violence problem instead of reducing it. Moreover, because of the substitutability between peaceful and violent politics, monopolist VPOs may be sowing the seeds of their own destruction. When VPOs produce sub-competitive levels

⁸⁹ Bueno de Mesquita, "The Terrorist Endgame: The Terrorist Endgame: A Model with Moral Hazard and Learning," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

of violence, this should increase the demand for nonviolent means of promoting the political agenda. This may provide a significant opportunity for peaceful initiatives to transform the market. In the unlikely event that the VPO is not sufficiently aware of the substitution threat, it may not react quickly enough and lose significant support. Given the large literature on spoilers, this does not seem to be a common occurrence.

A much more promising path to conflict resolution is the inclusion in negotiations of a monopolist VPO that has diversified into production in the political markets for both violence and nonviolence. If it sees greater potential profits from nonviolent politics, it can maximize its political profits through the deliberate manipulation of production and demand in both markets. Theoretically, this could produce a reverse conflict spiral, a spiral of peace (see Figure 2.6).

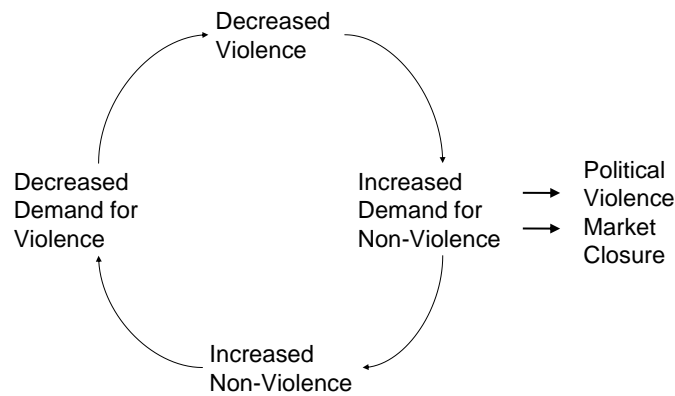


Figure 2.6 The “Spiral of Peace”

A spiral of peace builds off of the inverse relationship between demand for a good and the supply of its substitute. Thus, if the VPO cuts its violence production, demand for nonviolence will increase. As the producer of the substitute, it will be better able to take advantage of the shift in demand and can capture additional market share.

By increasing the production of nonviolence, the demand for violence will be reduced. So long as the VPO retains significant monopoly power, it can repeat these strategic moves until the violence market has been eclipsed by the market for nonviolent politics. Although this spiral of peace may require concessions from the VPO's enemies to bolster the expected payoff of nonviolence and may take considerable time, it also offers a path to comprehensive conflict resolution. Moreover, a monopolist VPO may be willing to settle for terms far short of what would be acceptable in a more traditional coercive bargaining model.

In sum, this application of economic competitive theory provides a deeper understanding of how the internal dynamics within the constituent community influence violent groups' behavior. It explains when violence will increase and provides a variety of potential mechanisms for violence reduction. Perhaps of equal importance, the formalization of the political market concept can be used as a gateway for the application and integration of well-developed economic theories into the study of political violence.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

The theoretical model developed in the preceding chapter is relatively straightforward, but requires a significant amount of data to test. As a dynamic model that allows for strategic interaction between the agent and the system, the best test of this theory is a qualitative analysis. This endogeneity makes it exceptionally difficult to control all of the variables necessary to adequately compare VPO behavior in different contexts. Therefore, the research design below embraces the recursive nature of the model and includes an examination of the interaction effect within the same market over time.

The remainder of the chapter consists of four sections. The first provides a justification of the choice of a longitudinal, qualitative methodological approach. The second explains the case selection process. The third assesses the potential cases for testing the theory before selecting the Northern Irish Republicans as the ideal choice. The fourth operationalizes the theoretical analysis within the Northern Irish context.

I. Methodology

This dissertation will test the Five Forces of Competition through an in-depth, qualitative, longitudinal case study of a single market for political violence. As is so eloquently expressed in Brady and Collier's *Rethinking Social Inquiry*, choices of methodology and case selection involve substantial trade-offs.⁹⁰ The measure of market competitiveness is dynamic, complex and based on many interacting—not to mention latent—variables, which makes the traditional economic tool of statistical analysis less

⁹⁰ Brady and Collier, ed., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*.

appropriate.

Given the large amount of data necessary to code the independent and control variables, there is naturally a tension between generalizability and accuracy in choosing the number of cases when resources are finite. A cross-sectional analysis might provide more universality, but a comparison of competitive behaviors within different contexts may be deeply flawed if it does not adequately account for confounding variables.⁹¹ For example, a proxy variable for the level of grievance may interact with other unmeasured variables like culture or geography that will distort the measure of actual feelings of grievance—and by extension demand for violence—in different contexts. Although the correlation between the proxy and latent variable may still vary across time within a single case, it should be more stable than the correlations across both time and place. Therefore, the current research design primarily focuses on relative changes across time rather than absolute measures of the competitive forces. A second advantage of a time-series approach is that it helps to control for the first-level dynamics and other cultural variables that can affect the competitive equilibrium, cost and demand functions for violence, and substitutability of different political goods. Thus, a qualitative study across time is best able to isolate and capture the unique effects of competition on the production of political violence.

This interrupted time-series qualitative methodology not only permits the identification of significant changes in both conditions and behaviors, but places them

⁹¹ An additional factor to consider is the cost of performing such an in-depth analysis in multiple places. Once this dissertation establishes the validity of this research paradigm, future research should develop ways to perform cross-sectional tests of its generalizability.

in an analytic context that allows for causal inference. In contrast, a quantitative analysis would have difficulty in identifying the tipping points of history that permanently affect the relations between the variables.⁹² Thus, a cross-temporal qualitative methodology is an ideal tool for analyzing a dynamic and recursive system like the market for political violence.

In sum, the methodology chosen for testing the Five Forces of Competition is an in-depth qualitative study, incorporating within-case comparisons over time. This allows the identification of important changes in the independent and control variables while controlling for potentially confounding contextual factors and the endogeneity inherent in the recursive theoretical model.

II. Case Selection

Collier, Mahoney and Seawright find that there is no or little selection bias problem for within-case analysis because this methodology focuses on identifying causal pathways rather than correlative inferences.⁹³ However, they recommend choosing cases with higher values of the independent variable to avoid overgeneralizing the findings from a within-case study.⁹⁴ The ideal case should have at least one period in which there is a very high degree of competition, but for the sake of comparison also should have periods of low competition.

⁹² Griffin, "Temporality, Events, and Explanations in Historical Sociology: An Introduction," *Sociological Methods and Research*; Tarrow, "Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide," in Brady, Henry E. and David Collier, ed., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*.

⁹³ Collier, Mahoney and Seawright, "Claiming Too Much: Warnings About Selection Bias," in Brady and Collier, ed. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*.

⁹⁴ Collier, Mahoney and Seawright, "Claiming Too Much: Warnings About Selection Bias," in Brady and Collier, ed. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, 98.

There is no pre-existing standardized measure of competition in the market for political violence. Given the more nuanced measurement of competition within the Five Forces model, it is not particularly easy to construct a preliminary measure for the purposes of cases selection. Because the extant terrorism literature emphasizes violent rival competition—not to mention the relative ease in preliminarily coding this variable—the selection process focuses on cases with different numbers of active VPOs over time, as well as different relationships between them as measured by violent feuds. Clearly, this is just one of the five forces of VPO competition; there are obvious limitations to the use of these proxies. This case selection process may also introduce a bias against conflicts with lower levels of competition. However, the analysis over time should compensate for this potential bias by including periods of low or no competitive rivalry. More fundamentally, an in-depth analysis of the remaining forces at this preliminary stage would defeat the resource-maximization purpose of the research design.

A second criterion for the case selection is that the conflicts should no longer be active—whether formally terminated or simply lapsed—in order to minimize a potential propaganda bias. Individuals involved in past political violence may still have an interest in misrepresenting their decisions and contexts, but this should be less of a concern than overcoming the security imperatives of safeguarding an active rebellion or manipulating history to bolster a current political position. The historical record is likely to be much more accurate and clear for conflicts that are not ongoing.

Therefore, the case selection is confined to an enduring, but lapsed, ethno-

nationalist conflict in which there are identifiable periods of both intense rivalry and, if possible, cooperation or monopoly between 1968 and 2001. The temporal restriction is designed to make this dissertation relevant by including the forms of political violence that are currently most significant, i.e. insurgency and terrorism, but eliminating the potentially massive disruption to political markets resulting from the global response to 9/11. Although the theory should be applicable to all forms of political violence, the case selection is limited for this initial test to ethno-nationalist conflicts because a geographically concentrated, ethno-nationalist constituency is generally much more clearly delineated. The more obvious “us-them” divide makes it far simpler to identify and study the forces of competition within a given market. This decision involves a tradeoff in that the analysis will be more straightforward, but somewhat less generalizable to different ideological bases of political violence.

In addition, cases that involve links to Islamist terror networks like al Qaeda are excluded. The existence of multiple geographic constituencies within a much larger global movement severely complicates the analysis because these VPOs may behave more like franchises in a multinational corporation. Thus, the market entry strategies, the payoff calculations, and the perceived audience of this type of political violence may be very different from truly local VPOs. However, these globally-linked VPOs may be excellent cases for further expansion of the theory, and the dissertation's conclusion will offer suggestions about how the model might be applied to them for future research.

III. Potential Cases

The sample of potential cases based on an ethno-nationalist ideological orientation and activity between 1968 and 2001 is drawn from the Terrorist Organizational Profiles Database (TOPS).⁹⁵ Of the 339 groups identified in TOPS, 15 were randomly selected.⁹⁶ TOPS provides text explaining the origins, activities, and current status of groups as well as a classification of related groups as allies, rivals, or splinter factions. These tools provide a preliminary insight into the VPOs' competitive environment, summarized below in Table 3.1. Because of the summary nature of these profiles, some cases lack specific details. Therefore, these were coded as “uncertain.” The ideal case is one that is geographically concentrated, has multiple VPOs with a rivalry that produced at least one feud, and does not have connections to global Islamic movements. Of the random sample of cases examined for preliminary analysis, only the Nagas in India (1980–2001) and Irish Republicans in Northern Ireland (1969–1998) fit this specification. The Indian case is complicated by the existence of multiple independence movements that at different times were enemies and allies to each other. As a result, attacks by one ethnicity's VPO may alternate between acting as a substitute for violence by another ethnicity's and a driver of greater demand for retaliatory

⁹⁵ “Terrorist Organization Profiles (TOPS),” *START: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism*, Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT), University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

⁹⁶ Some of the selected VPOs were replaced for three reasons: first, the VPOs duplicated constituent groups already selected; second, the TOPS data misidentified a constituent group as ethno-nationalist; or third, they were part of one of Bloom's constituent groups (Kurd, Tamil, or Palestinian). While the justifications for the first two are self-evident, the third is to fulfill the requirement of use novelty, i.e. not building and testing the theory on the same empirical evidence. Lakatos, “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes,” in Lakatos and Musgrave, ed., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, 91–196.

Table 3.1 VPO constituent market characteristics⁹⁷

Constituent Group	Lapsed	Multiple VPOs	Rivalry	Feuds	Splits	Concentrated	Islamist-linked
Uygurs	No	No	No	No	No	Uncertain	Uncertain
West Papuans	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Karen	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Basques	No	Yes	No	Uncertain	No	Yes	No
Santhals	Yes	Yes	No	Uncertain	No	Yes	No
Moros	No	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malays/Pattanis	No	Yes	Uncertain	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Armenians	Yes	Yes	Uncertain	Uncertain	Yes	No	No
African-American	Yes	Yes	Uncertain	Uncertain	Yes	No	No
Kashmiris	No	Yes	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bodos	No	Yes	Yes	Uncertain	No	Yes	No
Corsicans	No	Yes	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes	No
Nagas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Irish Republicans	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tripuras	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

⁹⁷ “Terrorist Organization Profiles (TOPS),” *START: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism*, Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT).

violence.⁹⁸ Although not insurmountable, this obstacle does increase the difficulty of the analysis. In contrast, Northern Ireland had two major constituent groups whose the relationship was consistently conflictual.

The Irish Republican case has two additional advantages over the Nagas. First, the Troubles lasted significantly longer than the Indian conflict, giving more opportunities to observe different market conditions. Second, the Irish conflict has been more comprehensively resolved after the primary Republican VPO decommissioned its weapons in 2005; the Naga community still has close to 10,000 armed militants despite a ceasefire. This relative peace in Northern Ireland allows for the collection of better quality data.

After conducting additional preliminary research, it became clear that Northern Irish Republicanism was an ideal case study because there is a great deal of variance in both the independent and dependent variables. There were changes in each of the competitive forces: changes in suppliers, organization of buyers, new market entrants, intense rivalries and cooperative arrangements, and occasionally influential producers of substitute goods. Similarly, the amount of violence produced ranged considerably over the course of the conflict.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ For example, if two ethnic groups are both seeking a change in the legal status of a piece of land to which both lay claim, an attack on the government serves the purpose of weakening the current system for both. However, if they are hostile to each other, a direct attack between the groups would likely enflame ethnic hatred and drive up demand for retaliatory violence.

⁹⁹ Northern Ireland is also a particularly interesting case because *voluntary* suicide terrorism, one of the ultimate forms of outbidding behavior, never took place despite some strong indicators that perhaps it should have. A cult of nationalist martyrdom developed around the fallen “Volunteers,” especially the ten hunger strikers who starved themselves to death in 1981, yet a visceral negative reaction arose from the Nationalist community against the use of *involuntary* human bombs in 1990. Bloom and Horgan, “Missing Their Mark: The IRA’s Proxy Bomb Campaign,” *Social Research*, 579–614.

Moreover, the Republican Movement in Northern Ireland provides a hard test case for a theory about the importance of competition. Most accounts of the Troubles focus primarily—or often exclusively—on the Provisional Republican Movement and its predominantly hostile interactions with the state and sub-state Loyalist actors. There is some merit to such a narrative given the pivotal role the Provisionals played in escalating the initial violence and eventually ending the conflict, not to mention their ability to endure and produce violence for three decades under extremely hostile conditions. However, to ignore other groups within the Republican Movement removes much of the contingency of history, which, in turn, reduces the impressive accomplishment that is their surviving and thriving in such a harsh political environment. The competition from violent rivals and new entrants was often quite fierce—and at times existentially threatening; the Provisional IRA (PIRA) faced competition from groups like: the Official IRA (OIRA), the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), the Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLO), the Continuity IRA (CIRA), and the Real IRA (RIRA). Similarly, following the collapse of the Northern Irish civil rights movement, new parties emerged that were often highly critical of the Provisionals and offered an alternative to them, most notably the Social Democrat and Labour Party (SDLP). The suppliers, in the form of the Irish government, the Irish-American diaspora, and Colonel Gaddafi of Libya, often wielded considerable power over the production of violence in Northern Ireland. Even the buyers were at times moderately influential through the attempted imposition of a broadcast ban.

IV. Measuring the Variables

Estimations of the supply and demand curves within a market for political violence will be less precise than in a standard economic analysis for three reasons. First, there is no single unit of political currency. As a result, the actual ‘price’ of any given act of violence is impossible to measure directly. Second, largely as a result of this lack of quantifiable currency, there are impediments to information flow that produce considerable uncertainty within the market. The decision to produce political violence is functionally similar to centralized command economies, where the producer only has limited or lagged feedback from the consumer; VPOs may temporarily produce too much or too little of a product compared to the ideal market equilibrium. This makes drawing direct causal conclusions between changes in the market environment and the group's behavior much more difficult. Third, the dynamics within VPOs, between VPOs, and between VPOs and other actors in the market tend to be shrouded in secrecy because of their illegal nature. This secrecy is a potentially serious impediment to determining the new entry threat from splits, the level of rivalry or coordination between existing groups, the suppliers and how much power they have over the VPO, and the nature of the relationship with producers of substitute political goods. Consequently, such an analysis may place too much importance on major events or shifts in market conditions and understate the importance of low-level changes.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ This secrecy could produce an analytical bias in either direction. On the one hand, it could indicate an overly cooperative environment as violent feuds are very visible but lower-scale rivalry or intimidation would not be and might be actively hidden to avoid appearing weak to an external enemy. On the other, it could indicate an overly competitive environment because minor differences may be played up for

Given these difficulties, it is imperative to find sufficient proxies to estimate the supply and demand curves within the market with as much accuracy as possible.

Fortunately, there is a massive amount of primary and secondary source material available for the Northern Irish Republicanism case that overcomes the three issues outlined above. First, it makes measuring the variables considerably more practicable. Regularly attained objective measures of economic and social development—or lack thereof—make estimation of the level of demand possible even without a currency. Second, data on the actual decision making process of these groups allow one to identify the producer's beliefs about the market conditions in addition to the more objective measures. Third, as one of the most studied cases of political violence—and one that has essentially been over for a decade, the remaining level of secrecy is far less than in other conflicts.

Northern Ireland is an open democracy with a free press, and thus electoral results, a wide variety of official government statistics and surveys, and a plethora of journalistic accounts of the conflict from many different viewpoints are readily obtainable. Nearly all of the Republican groups published regular official newspapers or newsletters: *An Phoblacht/Republican News* for the Provisionals, *United Irishman* for the Officials, *Starry Plough* for the Republican Socialists, and *Saoirse* for Republican Sinn Fein.¹⁰¹ Because groups generally manage their public images fairly consistently

rhetorical purposes while cooperative behaviors or coordination of efforts against the shared enemy are taking place behind the scenes.

¹⁰¹ A large number of smaller periodicals were published by local groups. For the most part, these neighborhood newsletters will not be part of the analysis for three reasons: 1) they primarily deal with very particular local issues; 2) they are not adequate representations of the viewpoint of the VPO as a

over time, insight into how they perceived and reacted to their environment should be discernable through careful observation of their words at the time.¹⁰² In addition, Northern Ireland has been a hotbed of academic study on a range of factors linked to the violence, which has produced a massive amount of available data. In some ways, the hardest part of testing this theory will be wading through an over-abundance of information.

A. Dependent Variables

Measures of *externally-targeted violence production* (total number of attacks and fatalities) are provided by multiple sources. The primary measure of VPOs' attempts to violently coerce their enemies comes from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which is the most inclusive dataset on political violence currently available. However, it is missing data globally for the year 1993, underreports many of the smaller attacks, occasionally attributes events to the wrong group and adopts a different coding schema starting in 1998. While its global orientation leads to the occasional error, it also makes it easier to compare Northern Ireland with other places.

To compensate for the weaknesses of the GTD, two other variables draw from the Sutton Index of Deaths and Republican newspapers. The Sutton Index provides information on victims, perpetrators and details of fatal attacks related to the

whole; and 3) their coverage is much less regular and consistent. However, these newsletters may be useful to fill gaps in representation by the main periodicals, especially during the initial formation of the market in Northern Ireland.

¹⁰² Indeed, detecting nuanced changes in these groups' self-narratives within the larger contextual developments is one of the main justifications for adopting the longitudinal rather than cross-sectional research design.

Troubles.¹⁰³ Although this source is limited only to fatal attacks, it allows the differentiation between different types of violence, i.e. feuds, alternative social control,¹⁰⁴ informant-elimination, “own-goals,”¹⁰⁵ or externally-targeted. The first two are aspects of the independent variables for rivalry and substitutes, respectively; the third and fourth are a component of the costs of production; only the fifth is the dependent variable of interest for this study. The second source is a database of claims made in the Republican press, specifically the weekly article entitled “War News” in the Provisional Republican Movement's *An Phoblacht/Republican News*. These data were only coded from 1992 to 1994 to provide bookended baselines of comparison for filling in the missing year of GTD data.¹⁰⁶ Many of these self-claimed events were coded for non-GTD variables, such as whether it was a punishment attack, making it a more refined measure. However, this measure is inherently somewhat problematic because there are incentives for violence-producers to be untruthful, both to exaggerate and understate the amount and severity of violence they produce.

B. Control Variables

I qualitatively control for the *demand* and *supply* curves within the market.

¹⁰³ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

¹⁰⁴ Alternative social control primarily refers to “policing” or punishment attacks by VPOs against their own constituency as a means of gaining political support within the community without simultaneously coercing the external enemy. However, it can also include other types of services provided by the VPO and its affiliated organizations, such as welfare, health care, etc.

¹⁰⁵ Own goals are accidental killings of members or supporters of a VPO, e.g. premature explosions killing the person placing the bomb.

¹⁰⁶ This data was coded solely by the author. This self-claimed event data for earlier years is also available, but coding it would have been prohibitively time-consuming. Given the other measures available, it also proved to be unnecessary for the purposes here. However, considerable value exists for a future, more formal coding project with a rigorously-designed manual and multiple coders to provide greater reliability for the measures.

Although there is difficulty in precisely measuring these costs and benefits because there is no currency of political support, general measures are possible and changes over time are empirically observable. One key determinant of demand will be the constituency's experience of attacks and fatalities from state or other enemy groups, i.e. British authorities or Loyalist paramilitaries. These deaths heighten a sense of grievance and legitimize the use of counter-violence.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, a major indicator of the costs—both material and political—that a VPO incurs is the number of members killed during production. Ineffectual and incompetent violence production is unlikely to win much from the constituency other than pity or ignominy. At the same time, the dead must be replaced by new recruits, which are much harder to acquire when there is a perception that they are more likely to die. These casualties are measured by the Sutton Index.

A second approach is to estimate the aggregate revenue and cost functions for VPOs from a combination of polling data and attendance estimates for anti-VPO political events. The polling data offer the greatest potential for accuracy by asking specific relevant questions about individuals' political views, but its usefulness is limited by the inconsistency in the questions, sample size and composition, and timing between different polls. This weakness is especially pronounced by the lack of relevant polling data during the most intense years of the conflict: 1969–74 and 1980–82. The attendance estimates, when available, effectively capture the cost of opposition to the VPOs, but such opposition is often not targeted at specific groups, but rather at the violence as a whole.

¹⁰⁷ Hayes and McAllister, “Sowing Dragon’s Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland,” *Political Studies*.

A third approach is to estimate the degree to which the VPO is hindered by informants. This measure builds off of the finding that “[h]igh levels of support for an insurgent or terrorist group decrease the number of government collaborators and informants among the populace. Without collaborators and informants, the government finds itself unable to strike out at the insurgents who, like Mao’s fish in the sea, disappear into the local population.”¹⁰⁸ This is unfortunately exceptionally difficult to measure precisely, but can be approximated by expert assessments and the number of alleged informants punished by the VPO. The number of informant executions is drawn from the Sutton Index.

The combination of these three sources with an in-depth historical analysis of community reactions to specific state counter-violence policies and peace initiatives should provide reasonable approximations of the supply and demand for violence. However, if there are insufficient data available, it will be noted and the analysis will proceed with the assumption that the quantity of violence produced is at the competitive equilibrium unless there are strong indicators of a less or non-competitive market from the independent variables below.

C. Independent Variables

The forces of competition will be measured through qualitative and descriptive statistical data.

1. Supplier Power

Determining *supplier power* requires unraveling the clandestine sources of VPO

¹⁰⁸ Grynkewich, “Welfare as Warfare: How Violent Non-State Groups Use Social Services to Attack the State,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 355.

materiel. An assessment of where the VPO gets its arms and what relationship it has with the source is possible based on the type and amount of weapons that are seized by the authorities. Moreover, suppliers occasionally express their support and intentions publicly, e.g. Gaddafi's radio broadcasts in support of the Provisionals or the open Republican fundraising within the Irish-American Diaspora. However, this measure relies primarily on secondary sources that describe the money trail and arms shipments different Republican groups used.¹⁰⁹

2. *Substitute Threat*

Substitute threat includes two types of good: alternative social control and nonviolent politics.

Alternative social control is a form of internal policing that requires very similar resources and produces both communal support and opposition, but is of a fundamentally different nature from externally-targeted violence. This will be measured by official police statistics on “punishment assaults” and “punishment shootings” as well as by the Sutton Index and self-claimed data described above.

Nonviolent politics can advance the same political agenda through different means. This is measured by the type and level of participation of the community in different forms of nonviolent political activity. Emphasis will be on election results,¹¹⁰ civil rights-type demonstrations, and peace process negotiations. These substitute

¹⁰⁹ Primarily drawn from Oppenheimer, *IRA—The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*.

¹¹⁰ Use of voting results, especially for groups linked to the paramilitaries, may involve some conflation with demand. For example, some voters may vote for a paramilitary-linked party as a sign of support for its violence production, while some may vote for it despite their opposition to its violence. Therefore, the electoral analysis will primarily focus on how the linked parties do vis-à-vis the non-linked parties.

producers include only those groups that promote a similar agenda and not those whose purpose is to express opposition to the VPOs or violence in general, e.g the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) but not Women for Peace/Peace People.¹¹¹ The analysis will also include a subjective element of VPOs' perception of the threat from these nonviolent activities based on their actual behavior and their public statements. It is important to note that a VPO can also be a producer of this nonviolent good. It—or a closely aligned political party—may produce nonviolent political goods through participation in elections and peace negotiations. These will be measured in an identical fashion to non-VPO substitute producers.

3. *New Entrant Threat*

New entrant threat will be measured two ways. First, in an admittedly *post hoc* process, there is an assumption that where a new entrant does emerge, other actors in the market were aware of the possibility beforehand. Given the size and close-knit nature of most constituent communities, especially ethno-nationalist ones like the Republicans of Northern Ireland, and the resources needed to create a viable violence-producing organization, this assumption is not unreasonable.¹¹² Second, potential splits or divisions that are discussed in the primary and secondary literatures, even if no subsequent split occurred, will be included. At least some of these occasions may be a result of a state disinformation campaign, but even these artificial pressures will likely make VPOs respond in a more competitive fashion.

¹¹¹ Groups like the Peace People are part of the measure of supply.

¹¹² None of the new entrants in the Republican market appear to have been a surprise to the existing producers. However, this assumption may be more problematic in other cases where the VPO is geographically and socially further removed from its constituent base.

4. Rivalry

Rivalry is measured by the level of hostility expressed between groups. For the most extreme levels of rivalry, this will include the number of attacks and casualties from feuds reported by the Sutton Index and secondary sources. On the opposite end of the spectrum, joint statements, the sharing of weapons and technology and even joint operations or campaigns would be obvious indicators of a more cooperative relationship. The public statements of each group with respect to each other in the press provide the evidence for intermediate levels of rivalry.

PART II: Historical Narrative

The history of the Troubles is a long and complicated one, especially because Nationalism and Unionism have distinct, often contradictory narratives. As such, the date one chooses to begin the historical analysis is fraught with meaning. Rather than engage with the deeper ideological or normative issues underlying the conflict, it is sufficient for the current purpose to provide an understanding of the appeal of the Republican ideology, including the use of violence, to individuals of the Nationalist persuasion. Therefore, this section is intended solely to provide an introduction to the actors and political structures that helped to create the market for Republican political violence in Northern Ireland in 1969.

The following four chapters will concentrate on a single community within Northern Ireland, but it is important to recognize that there are two distinct, antagonistic political traditions that overlap considerably with religious identity. Most, but certainly not all, Catholics are Nationalists to one degree or another, meaning they believe in a united Ireland independent of British rule. In contrast, most Protestants are Unionists, i.e. identify themselves as British and seek to maintain political union with the British mainland. As Table I.1 demonstrates, both political traditions have an extremist wing that embraces the use of violence: Republicans and Loyalists, respectively.¹¹³ As a result of these close correlations between political ideology and religion, the Troubles are often referred to as being between the Catholics and Protestants as a result of the

¹¹³ The embrace of violence is not the only distinction between Republicans and Nationalists—Republicans also tend to have a very specific concept of what political structures the united Ireland should have.

sectarian divide between them. This is technically inaccurate because the conflict is only very tangentially about religion; but the religious references are enduring because they provide a convenient short-hand—and the majority of the most applicable data are collected on the basis of religion rather than ideology.

		What country has a legitimate claim to sovereignty over Northern Ireland?	
The use of force is a legitimate means of promoting/defending claim of sovereignty?		United Kingdom	Republic of Ireland
	No	Unionist	Nationalist
	Yes	Loyalist	Republican

Table 1.1 Northern Irish political ideologies and perspectives on violence

CHAPTER 4: Background to the Troubles

Northern Ireland was created by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 after a long and bloody war between the Irish Republican Army and British forces. The Act established the country as a bastion for predominantly Protestant Unionists, who feared becoming a minority in a Catholic-dominated Irish state and remained ideologically committed to union with Great Britain. However, the Nationalists in the South never relinquished their aspirational claim on the whole of Ireland, and the Republicans occasionally attempted to use force to reunite Ireland. This naturally produced a siege mentality in the North. As a consequence, the politics of Northern Ireland never developed the standard left-right spectrum and were instead dominated by the central issue of Unionism versus Nationalism.¹¹⁴ With a permanent majority and lax, if any, oversight from the central British government in Westminster, the Unionists were able to institutionalize their dominance, often to the detriment of the minority Catholics. Fueled by experiences of both institutional and personal discrimination, a movement for civil rights gained considerable traction in the 1960s and threatened to undermine the Unionist monolith. The use of violence by reactionary elements within Unionism confirmed for many the naked sectarianism of the regime and reinforced the Republican mythos. In the wake of escalating violence in 1969, many Catholics turned to the IRA for defense and the Troubles were born.

This chapter begins with two sections examining the war for Irish independence that resulted in a politically partitioned island and the subsequent civil war over

¹¹⁴ To some degree, the left-right spectrum developed within each community, but these issues remained only of secondary importance.

accepting such a political compromise. The following two sections explore the entrenchment of Unionist rule in the North and the attempts of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s to soften the most oppressive features of this regime. The threat this nonviolent approach posed to Unionists' political control sparked a violent Loyalist backlash that directly led to the beginning of the Troubles in 1969.

I. Anglo-Irish War and Partition

Drawing on a long history of Irish resistance to British rule, Republican militias seized downtown Dublin and declared Ireland to be an independent, socialist republic in what became known as the Easter Rising of 1916. Given that this amounted to an act of treason during World War I, the British crushed the revolt with swift and overwhelming force. However, the severity of the response helped to plant the seeds for future rebellion. A relatively obscure party, Sinn Fein, took up the Republican mantle of the Easter Rising and quickly attracted a large number of adherents. After the war, Nationalists and Unionist positions continued to polarize until the outbreak of open hostilities on January 21, 1919. The Anglo-Irish War lasted until the ratification of a peace treaty on January 7, 1922.

The election a month after the close of World War I saw a sweeping victory for Sinn Fein: of the 105 Irish seats in parliament at Westminster, Sinn Fein won 73 compared to the Unionists' 26 (almost all of which were from Ulster).¹¹⁵ Rather than take their seats at Westminster, the 26 SF members of parliament who were not in jail

¹¹⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 19.

as suspected German sympathizers set up their own legislative body, or Dail, and elected Eamon de Valera as the first president of the Irish Republic.¹¹⁶

That same day, the recently formed Irish Republican Army (IRA) fired the first shots of the Anglo-Irish War. The militias involved with the Easter Rising were reconstituted as the IRA under Michael Collins, who acted as the Adjutant General, Director of Organization and Intelligence, and also Minister of Finance in Dail Eireann.¹¹⁷ The war began with the shooting of two constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) who were guarding a shipment of explosives. For the next two years, the IRA waged a bloody guerrilla war against the RIC and their fairly brutal auxiliary force, the Black and Tans.¹¹⁸ The guerrillas disrupted communications, army transport, and the judicial system to such a degree that the British gradually evacuated the more isolated garrisons and focused their forces in the major centers, leaving much of rural Ireland in the control of the Republicans.¹¹⁹

As the war dragged on, the level of brutality on both sides escalated. The mayor of Cork was allowed to die in jail after a 73-day hunger strike. Before dying, he issued a statement that would inspire generations of Republicans to come: “It is not those who can inflict the most, but those who can suffer the most who will conquer.”¹²⁰ In another foreshadowing, government forces killed 12 when they opened fire into a large crowd at

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 19; Coogan, *The IRA*, 23.

¹¹⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 19.

¹¹⁸ The auxiliary forces were composed of demobilized World War I veterans who were so hurriedly assembled that they were neither trained nor issued uniforms. Instead, they wore a hodgepodge of army and police uniforms, which is how they derived their name.

¹¹⁹ *Handbook for Volunteers of the Irish Republican Army: Notes on Guerilla Warfare*, 5.

¹²⁰ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 20–21.

a sporting event on November 21, 1920, which would eventually be known as “Bloody Sunday.”¹²¹ By the time a truce was agreed between the British and Irish combatants in July 1921, 600 members of the security forces, 752 IRA volunteers, and 700 civilians had been killed.¹²²

To address the sources of the conflict, the British attempted to revive previous compromises that had failed to overcome Unionist opposition before the war. The Government of Ireland Act (1920) set up two independent parliaments: one in Belfast and the other in Dublin. While this was now acceptable to the Unionists, the Republicans rejected it because the Crown retained the power to nominate members. Only four non-Sinn Fein MPs were elected to this new southern parliament, and when they met with the four Crown-nominated senators, the Parliament only sat for fifteen minutes before adjourning indefinitely.¹²³

With the failure to either crush the rebellion or impose a viable political solution, the British began exploring options for a negotiated settlement. During these negotiations, Prime Minister Lloyd George convinced Collins that he would rather escalate to “immediate and terrible war” than accept a solution without partition.¹²⁴ Instead, George offered the South dominion status within the British Commonwealth. The proposed Irish Free State would have a Crown-appointed governor-general and a constitution that included fealty to the British sovereign. This latter element of swearing loyalty to the Crown was especially galling. Recognizing the weakness of the

¹²¹ Ibid., 21–22.

¹²² Ibid., 22; Coogan, *The IRA*, 26.

¹²³ Coogan, *The IRA*, 27.

¹²⁴ MacBride, “Anglo-Irish Relations,” *International Affairs*, 261.

Republican position after such a grueling war, Collins accepted the partial solution, but recognized that by doing so, he was signing his own death warrant.

After extensive and heated debates, the Anglo-Irish Treaty was narrowly ratified by a margin of 64–57 on January 7, 1922. Rather than accept a compromise solution that could be used to regroup for future battles as Collins envisioned, the minority, led by de Valera, walked out of government. For these die-hards, the Treaty was an act of treason against the Republic declared in 1916 and acceptance of the partition was a political cul-de-sac from which a united Ireland could not possibly emerge.

II. Irish Civil War

The ensuing 10 month civil war proved to be very costly in terms of both human losses and property damage. Roughly 500 people were killed, including Michael Collins. Despite these losses, a stable democracy with two parties was established in the South, and a broader sectarian war was averted in the partitioned North. More importantly for the Republican tradition, the civil war provided a pantheon of heroes and foes for future generations to emulate and revile, respectively. It also highlighted both the potential for and significance of splits resulting from political compromises.

Despite attempts to prevent it, the IRA called a General Army Convention on March 26, 1922, which only anti-Treaty volunteers attended. They refused to recognize or swear allegiance to the government; instead they remained devoted to the concept of the Republic. This decision was illustrated most prominently in the enduring, and at times controversial, policy of abstentionism, wherein Republicans elected to positions would refuse to take their seats. They drafted a new constitution for the army, stating:

The Army shall be known as the Irish Republican Army. It shall be on a purely volunteer basis. Its objects shall be:

1. To safeguard the honor and maintain the independence of the Irish Republic.
2. To protect the rights and liberties common to the people of Ireland.
3. To place its services at the disposal of an established Republican Government which *faithfully upholds the above objects*.¹²⁵

Moreover, the Volunteers elected a sixteen-person Army Executive, which in turn appointed an Army Council of seven. This executive was to be supported by the General Headquarters (GHQ) staff in running operations. Importantly, the General Army Convention, composed of representatives of all the Volunteers, had the power to mandate a state of war or peace.¹²⁶

On April 13, the IRA started the civil war by seizing control of strategic points, including the seat of juridical control, the Four Courts in Dublin. Yet despite the best efforts of the anti-Treaty faction, the elections in June returned a large pro-Treaty majority and half of the IRA volunteers decided to join Free State army. Two weeks later, Collins ousted his erstwhile comrades in the Four Courts with heavy artillery borrowed from the British. The leaders of the captured contingent were executed, setting the tone for a heavy-handed suppression of the anti-Treaty forces.

The Free State army had the advantage of marrying British arms with Irish political savvy. Having fought side-by-side with their former comrades, they knew how they thought and, more importantly, who supported them. Thus, they were able to better target the large-scale lethal force afforded by British support against anti-Treaty fighters

¹²⁵ Coogan, *The IRA*, 30, emphasis added.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 30–31; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 27.

and sympathizers. As a result, de Valera was quickly left with few options. In May 1923, he finally ordered the IRA to dump arms.

Many Volunteers ignored this call and continued to fight between 1924 and 1927, but it became increasingly obvious that the Republicans were losing mainstream public support. While Sinn Fein continued to pursue an abstentionist policy after the end of the war, de Valera decided to reenter politics in 1927 and formed a new party, Fianna Fail (Soldiers of Destiny). De Valera's decision was in part the result of the 1925 settlement of the partition border in the North's favor. More immediately though, the ex-IRA Volunteers needed a voice in Southern politics. Upon their release from detention, the Volunteers were often at a social and economic disadvantage. They had lost and to the victor went the spoils. The few available jobs were given preferentially to demobilized Free State soldiers. In an attempt to reclaim their former significance, the IRA dissociated itself from Sinn Fein, splintering the Republican movement into three additional groups: a short-lived radically socialist group, Saor Eire; the Republican Congress; and Fianna Fail. Of the four, only Fianna Fail and Sinn Fein had significant staying power.

Fianna Fail won 44 seats in the 1927 election, and after considerable wrangling over the oath of allegiance, they eventually took their seats in the Dail.¹²⁷ Through a loose, informal alliance with the IRA, Fianna Fail grew its support base to the point that it formed a government in 1933. Foreshadowing Sinn Fein's eventual approach in the

¹²⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 51–55.

North, Fianna Fail pursued a typical Labor-type party platform, while emphasizing an emotionally resonant “Release the Prisoners Campaign.”¹²⁸

The success of the IRA-Fianna Fail joint campaign ushered de Valera into the government. Once in office, de Valera drafted a new constitution that abolished the oath of allegiance and laid claim to the whole of Ireland in 1937. This set the stage for full Irish independence in 1949. However, the relationship between Fianna Fail and the IRA quickly became antagonistic.¹²⁹ By 1940, relations were so hostile that de Valera allowed two IRA prisoners to die during a hunger strike.¹³⁰

III. Northern Ireland

Meanwhile, in Northern Ireland, Unionists learned to embrace their new political situation. Originally, hostile to the concept of Home Rule,¹³¹ even within the partition of Ulster, they quickly came to see the benefits of having their own perpetually dominated Parliament. However, the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 laid the groundwork for eventual reunification through all-Ireland institutions. In 1921, the Anglo-Irish treaty left the issue of the territorial integrity of Northern Ireland in question through the establishment of the Boundary Commission. Thus, Northern independence from the South was neither fully permanent nor guaranteed, making

¹²⁸ Ibid., 60–61.

¹²⁹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 46.

¹³⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 143.

¹³¹ Home Rule is the term used for a devolved Irish parliament separate from the British parliament in Westminster, i.e. semi-autonomy. It is in direct contrast with Direct Rule, which is centralized rule from Westminster.

security the dominant issue in Northern politics. As a result, “Unionism was an ideology that thrived on a sense of siege.”¹³²

The Unionists set up new institutions to protect themselves from this perceived threat of reunification. First, in a move that was heavily criticized at the time, they replaced the recently imposed proportional representation voting system (PR) with a plurality system.¹³³ This effectively rolled back the British-imposed electoral reforms of 1920 that had installed the proportional system and redrawn local wards in a deeply unpopular move among the Unionists. Nationalists gained control of important local authorities, and in 1921 a significant number refused to recognize the authority of the Northern Irish Parliament at Stormont.¹³⁴ In response, the Northern Ireland government dissolved these bodies and replaced them with commissioners. They redrew the boundaries such that by 1927, the Unionists had regained their dominant position in local politics. Moreover, they pursued a housing, development, and employment policy to contain and reduce Catholic populations in favor of Protestants, ensuring the permanent control of the Unionists.¹³⁵ As one prominent commentator on the Troubles noted, “Majority rule meant Protestant rule until the day when Catholics outnumbered Protestants and in 1921 that day was too far distant to cause Protestants any concern.

¹³² Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 39.

¹³³ Whyte, “How Much Discrimination Was There Under the Unionist Regime, 1921–1968?” In *Contemporary Irish Studies*, edited by Gallagher and O’Connell, 4–8.

¹³⁴ Barton, “Northern Ireland, 1920–25,” in *A New History of Ireland Vol. VII: Ireland, 1921–84*, 171.

¹³⁵ Ruane and Todd, *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict, and Emancipation*, 119–20.

Northern Ireland's parliament at Stormont became known as a Protestant parliament for a Protestant people.”¹³⁶

In addition to restricting Catholics' ability to influence Northern politics, the Unionists set up a number of institutions designed to quell any seeds of dissent. In 1922, while the IRA was struggling against the pro-Treaty forces in the South, Stormont passed the Civil Authorities (Special Powers Act), investing the Minister of Home Affairs with vast emergency authorities to curtail the standard rights of individuals.¹³⁷ This act provided the backbone of Unionist and British security policy in Northern Ireland for the next eight decades, including internment without trial. Indeed, it was renewed annually until 1933 when it was made permanent.¹³⁸

The actual coercive arms of the state were largely drawn from the Protestant community defense associations that had formed prior to and during the Anglo-Irish War.¹³⁹ The successor institution to the RIC in the North was the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), which served as both police and border patrol. The RUC was heavily dominated by Protestants, but it also included a sizable proportion of Catholics. However, the police auxiliary, the Ulster Special Constabulary (USC),¹⁴⁰ whose primary purpose was to provide “patrol work as an armed force against I.R.A.-type

¹³⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 30.

¹³⁷ For a full analysis of the provisions and application of the act 1922–72, see Donohue, “Regulating Northern Ireland: The Special Powers Acts, 1922–1972,” *The Historical Journal*, 1089–120.

¹³⁸ Ruane and Todd, *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict, and Emancipation*, 120.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁴⁰ Although the USC was organized in three sections—A, B, and C—the second section was the most visible, earning the nickname “B Specials.”

threats,¹⁴¹ was virtually devoid of Catholic membership. The Protestant character of the USC resulted from its being formed directly from the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), which had been the armed wing of Unionist opposition to Nationalist aspirations before the war. Like the Black and Tans, the USC gained a negative reputation in the minority community by occasionally carrying out unofficial violent attacks on the Catholics, who they viewed as “potential traitors and Sinn Feiners.”¹⁴²

Thus, through a dual system of political and armed coercion, the Unionists maintained the viability of the partition. Although the Nationalists had little recourse to alternative forms of redressing their grievances, the intermittent campaigns by the IRA certainly helped to justify the continued existence of a quasi-police state in the North. In the face of these IRA campaigns, the Unionist regime regularly resorted to using the Special Powers Act, such that internment was imposed every decade from the 1920s to the 1970s.¹⁴³

IV. Civil Rights Movement

After a series of failed campaign over the decades, the IRA began moving away from the armed struggle in the 1960s. In line with the changing *zeitgeist*, Republicanism was increasingly coming under the influence of Leftist thinkers. Inspired by the American Civil Rights Movement, the IRA joined with other Nationalists to begin pushing for reform within the system rather than revolutionary overthrow of it. These demonstrations attracted significant numbers of Protestants as well as Catholics and

¹⁴¹ Public Record Office Northern Ireland (PRONI), CAB/4/1427 Cabinet Meeting 15.01.1969.

¹⁴² Coogan, *The IRA*, 37, 722.

¹⁴³ Ruane and Todd, *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict, and Emancipation*, 120.

drew international attention to the inherent unfairness of the system. Furthermore, because these demonstrations remained peaceful, the siege narrative justifying the Stormont regime became seriously undermined. Reactionary Loyalist elements began to use violence to prevent the erosion of the Unionist grip on power. As this violence escalated, the Catholic community turned to the IRA for protection.

Although the Irish Free State had remained neutral during World War II, its lopsided neutrality weighed in the favor of the Allies. The IRA's 1939–40 campaign, including the bombing of London, was thus an unwelcome turn of events.¹⁴⁴ The de Valera government came down hard on the IRA and imposed internment in 1940, effectively quelling the campaign.¹⁴⁵ Following this suppression, the IRA essentially fell dormant for the next decade or so.¹⁴⁶

After the declaration of the Republic of Ireland, the IRA issued General Order #8, prohibiting the use of force against the now fully independent Irish state “under any circumstances whatsoever.”¹⁴⁷ Although the IRA continued to consider itself the embodiment of the true Irish Republic, this de facto recognition of the legitimacy of the South turned IRA attention to the North. This attention culminated in the Border Campaign of 1956–1962, whose failure to resonate with Northern Catholics convinced the IRA to move away from violence.

In the early 1950s, the IRA initiated a number of arms raids in the Republic and the United Kingdom to prepare for an offensive in the North, most of which failed.

¹⁴⁴ Coogan, *The IRA*, 208.

¹⁴⁵ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 63–64.

¹⁴⁶ Rose, “From Sunningdale to Peace?,” *Peace Review*, 142.

¹⁴⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 257.

Despite their general failure, these raids represented the first signs of life for the IRA since the end of World War II. Even more importantly, these raids produced some of the leaders responsible for the split of the IRA in the 1960s, including Cathal Goulding, Sean MacStiofáin, and Ruairi O Bradaigh.¹⁴⁸ For example, after the IRA split in 1969 discussed in the next chapter, Goulding became the Chief-of-Staff of the Official IRA while MacStiofáin became the head of the Provisional IRA Army Council, the top military post, and O Bradaigh became the head of the Provisionals' political wing.¹⁴⁹

The Border Campaign began with a flying column of roughly 150 men sweeping across the border on December 12, 1956.¹⁵⁰ The cross-border agitation failed to spark the expected popular uprising among the Northern Catholics. Whatever support may have been in the offing, RUC and especially the B Specials were aware of locals' political persuasions and were able to target potential sympathizers and possible safe houses.¹⁵¹ Without support, the initial campaign quickly collapsed and the authorities on both sides of the border clamped down on the IRA, including de Valera's imposition of internment yet again in July 1957. However, even with a majority of the Republican leadership under arrest, the campaign continued, albeit at a fairly low level. The IRA occasionally blew up bridges, roads, and custom posts. As the campaign ground on with little appreciable effect, morale sank and the Army Council finally called an end in February 1962.

¹⁴⁸ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 11.

¹⁴⁹ See Chapter 5.

¹⁵⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 303.

¹⁵¹ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 29.

The failure of the 1956–62 campaign transformed the IRA into a shell of its former self. Many of the imprisoned Republicans became disillusioned with the armed struggle and left to pursue their private lives.¹⁵² The remainder was forced to reconsider their previous strategy in light of the lack of popular support and loss of so many activists. John Kelly, one of the released prisoners who stayed with the IRA and a future member of the PIRA GHQ staff, stated in an interview, “Perhaps the armed struggle was not the way forward on its own and that, quite rightly, there had to be politics. An armed struggle on its own was getting nowhere unless you had the political support of the population.”¹⁵³

Thus, the IRA and Sinn Fein became actively involved in the political process. As part of this restructuring, the leadership began to impose a more coherent political philosophy by adopting a more Marxist form of socialism.¹⁵⁴ Goulding replaced O Bradaigh as Chief-of-Staff in September 1962, thus marking the beginning of a radical change in IRA policies. Under the influence of a leftist scholar, Roy Johnston, Goulding developed the “Stages Theory,” in which a civil rights campaign in Northern Ireland would create an awareness of class identity instead of sectarian division, leading to a class revolution that would unite all of Ireland regardless of religion.¹⁵⁵

As part of the resulting political engagement, Goulding led a failed push to end the Republican's policy of abstentionism. Unfortunately, if Sinn Fein were to take a more proactive role in the Irish Parliament by taking its seat, it would be a *de facto*

¹⁵² Ibid., 31.

¹⁵³ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 33.

¹⁵⁴ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 33.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 35.

recognition of the legitimacy of the Southern state, ergo the illegitimacy of the IRA as the vanguard of the true Irish Republic. Despite being overruled on the abstentionism issue, Goulding still pushed for a more politically involved, nonviolent IRA. However, the imposition of these reforms from above further disillusioned the rank and file volunteers and led to total inactivity in a large portion of the Army.

Given the IRA's new political role and overarching strategy, Goulding attended the meeting of Nationalist Stormont MPs and Catholic community leaders that gave birth to the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) in August 1966.¹⁵⁶ Since at least 1963, a series of community organizations had begun forming to seek reforms based on specific issues, but especially housing.¹⁵⁷ Because NICRA unified nearly all of the opposition to the Unionist regime into a single organization with relatively limited demands, it represented the most determined and “sophisticated assault on Unionist domination . . . since the creation of Northern Ireland.”¹⁵⁸

Although the IRA was far from the driving force behind NICRA, its involvement made the push for civil rights even more threatening than it would have been otherwise to the Loyalists. As such, the UVF reemerged to fight to maintain the “Orange Order.”¹⁵⁹ On May 21, 1966, the UVF declared that “from this day on we

¹⁵⁶ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 47.

¹⁵⁷ Purdie, *Politics in the Street: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland*, 82–83; Lynch, “Turbulent Times: Bloody Sunday and the Civil Rights Movement,” *Journal for Cultural Research*, 278.

¹⁵⁸ Purdie, *Politics in the Street: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland*, 81. However, NICRA was riven with by arguments between the various component organizations over the best strategy for attaining reform. Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 56.

¹⁵⁹ The Orange Order is a Protestant fraternal organization that is primarily religious in nature, but is very closely linked to the political ideology of Unionism.

declare war on the IRA and its splinter groups. Known IRA men will be executed mercilessly and without hesitation.”¹⁶⁰ In just three months, the UVF was responsible for the accidental petrol-bombing death of a 77-year-old Protestant widow, the shooting death of a Catholic singing Republican songs on his way home from the pub, and firing upon four Catholic youths, killing one.

As the threat of Loyalist violence increased against the NICRA marches, the IRA stepped in to help keep the peace. Given their preexisting discipline and training, IRA men acted as stewards at all the major marches. Despite these seemingly important positions, the IRA remained largely marginalized within NICRA as Goulding recognized the inflammatory effect a more prominent IRA role could have on the larger political situation. As such, they remained one of NICRA’s less extremist elements, a point commented upon by one of the NICRA leaders in condemning the more radical fringe: “[I must] point out how correctly republicans have adhered to the spirit of our movement, never at any time trying to promote their own political views.”¹⁶¹

To some degree, the IRA’s acceptance of a secondary role became dictated by practical concerns. The IRA did not possess a legally recognized political wing in Northern Ireland like Sinn Fein in the South. There was an attempt to set up “Republican Clubs” to fill this void, but these too were proscribed in 1967.¹⁶² NICRA therefore provided a useful medium for the IRA’s political expression and allowed them to create new links and alliances. Moreover, NICRA served as a vehicle for the

¹⁶⁰ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 44; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 42.

¹⁶¹ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 53.

¹⁶² Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 57.

realization of the IRA's interest in creating a separate political identity, because one of the first things that NICRA did was to call for the repeal of the Special Powers Act, by which the Republican political organizations were banned.¹⁶³

As systemic violence spread, civil rights became a mass movement. The graphic depiction in the media of the overzealous and violent RUC suppression of a NICRA march on October 5, 1968, led to a swelling of the ranks by outraged Catholics.¹⁶⁴ This violence prompted Westminster to take note of developments in Northern Ireland and begin promoting reform. On November 22, Northern Ireland's Prime Minister Terence O'Neill, under British pressure, announced plans for comprehensive reforms that would address most of the Catholic grievances.¹⁶⁵ He pledged to have local housing councils base their allotment on need and a clearly defined point system rather than on sectarian bias. Also, he pledged to set up "grievance investigation machinery" and bring in an Ombudsman. He replaced the gerrymandered Londonderry Borough Council with the Derry Development Commission.¹⁶⁶ By the end of 1971, local government would be reformed to improve the individual franchise. Finally, the worst elements of the Special Powers Act would be withdrawn "as soon as the Northern Ireland Government considered this could be done without undue hazard."¹⁶⁷ Despite their marginalized role, Republicans embraced the prospect of rapid change; as a Sinn Fein representative expressed two months after the movement's takeoff: "The civil rights movement had

¹⁶³ Ibid., 55.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 59; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 55.

¹⁶⁵ Carmichael and Knox, "Devolution, Governance and the Peace Process," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 595.

¹⁶⁶ Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 59.

¹⁶⁷ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 59.

done more in a few weeks to damage the unionist structure than decades of IRA activity.”¹⁶⁸ Unfortunately, these reforms alienated the more extreme elements within Unionism, leading to the ouster of O'Neill and an increase in Loyalist violence.

Despite the fragility of O'Neill's position, some extreme elements within NICRA organized a deliberately controversial “Long March” from Belfast to (London)Derry on January 1, 1969. After near constant confrontations with Unionist counter-demonstrations,¹⁶⁹ on January 4, 500 marchers, with an escort of 80 policemen, arrived at the Burntollet Bridge and were immediately assaulted by a Loyalist mob lying in ambush. One of the participants described the initial attack as a “curtain of bricks and boulders and bottles.”¹⁷⁰ It quickly became obvious that the RUC was either incapable of protecting these marchers or, more sinisterly, was in cahoots with the attackers, many of whom were B Specials.¹⁷¹

The Burntollet Bridge attack and the apparent complicity of the RUC in it signaled the end of the peaceful civil rights movement. Rather than admit defeat, Catholics began to erect barricades, formed community self-protection committees, and turned to the IRA for aid.¹⁷² Although the IRA proved ineffectual during the actual attack at Burntollet, they began to reclaim their historic place as the “defenders of Catholics against Protestant violence.”¹⁷³ Arms caches from the 1956–62 campaign

¹⁶⁸ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 56.

¹⁶⁹ Purdie, *Politics in the Street: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland*, 213–14.

¹⁷⁰ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 66.

¹⁷¹ Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 61.

¹⁷² Mulholland, “Irish Republican Politics and Violence Before the Peace Process, 1968–1994,” *European Review of History: Revue européenne d' Histoire*, 399.

¹⁷³ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 59.

were dug up and armed IRA men took up their vigil over Catholic areas, which became known as “no-go areas” for the security forces.

Thus, the Catholic demands for protection after the attack on Burntollet Bridge and sweeping Loyalist mobs created a political market for Republican political violence. The IRA and its successors initially donned the mantle of defenders of the Catholic community, but leveraged this initial self-protective instinct into support for a much larger revolutionary agenda. This demand for Republican violence fueled nearly 30 years of protracted, intense conflict that left more than 3,500 people dead and inestimable levels of economic and psychological damage. The end result of all this fighting was a far cry from the united socialist Republic declared in 1916, but it is also a far more politically and economically inclusive state than was the case for the first 50 years of Northern Ireland’s existence. Whether the current power-sharing proves to be the promised stepping-stone to the Republic or not, very little support now exists to continue using violence to accelerate the process.

CHAPTER 5: Opening the Market

The erection of barricades in the Bogside of Derry and declaration of an independent “Free Derry” after the Burntollet Bridge attacks marked the beginning of the market for Republican violence in Northern Ireland. Where the Northern Catholics had previously been largely disinterested in the IRA, there was now a clamor for them to rise up and protect the community. Few, if any, within the Catholic community actively opposed the efforts to provide self-protection in these early days.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, the appeal was so strong that many commentators describe the early Troubles as being at least “on the brink of civil war,” if not actually crossing that line.¹⁷⁵

The IRA was initially unprepared to meet the demands of the community, both ideologically and logistically. Consequently, a significant amount of the early violence was produced by self-starting entrepreneurs and there was intense competition, including bloody feuds, as newly-formed paramilitary organizations attempted to capture the unrealized market potential. British security policy during the decade, most notably the lopsided application of internment and the policy of criminalization, imposed significant personal and organizational costs on the producers of violence but also increased the demand for radical change. By the mid-1970s, the British were exploring options for political compromise, some that included the paramilitaries and

¹⁷⁴ The Catholic Church did speak out against the IRA, but this was primarily because of its ideological connections to socialism rather than the illegitimacy of violence. O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 243.

¹⁷⁵ Devlin, “Northwest Westminster MP Predicts Civil War: Interview on ‘The Week;’” Dutter, “Northern Ireland and Theories of Ethnic Politics,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 614; McCann, *The British Press & Northern Ireland*, 5; Ripley, *Security Forces in Northern Ireland, 1969–1992*, 3; United Kingdom, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1482 7.10.1969.

some that did not. Finally, external supporters in the Irish-American diaspora, Libya and the Communist Bloc expressed no desire to limit the Republican paramilitaries' use of violence.

As the decade wore on, optimism about the prospects of armed revolution faded and opposition began to form within the Catholic community. The British began to adopt better tailored policies that targeted the paramilitaries and separated them from their base of support. By the end of the decade, it looked like the Republican paramilitaries were in a state of decline, possibly even terminal decline.

I. The Genie Out of the Bottle

In the immediate aftermath of the declaration of Free Derry in January 1969, the Unionist government made valiant attempts to regain control of the situation, but the tide had already turned. Northern Prime Minister Terence O'Neill, whose prior willingness to reform the system had fueled the Loyalist backlash, responded by offering additional marginal concessions. These limited reforms failed to mollify the by-now heavily mobilized Catholic population and merely incensed the Loyalist wing of the Unionist party, which perceived them to be acts of surrender. This continued Loyalist backlash made it clear that paper reforms simply led to increased unofficial brutalization, further alienating Catholics from the Northern Irish state. By May, the futility of O'Neill's campaign to liberalize the Stormont regime gradually in the face of Loyalist intransigence had become apparent and he resigned.

On January 15, O'Neill created the independent Cameron Commission to determine "the causes and nature of the violence and civil disturbance in Northern

Ireland.”¹⁷⁶ This was not an idealistic move toward reform, but rather a calculated political one to ensure the continued viability of Unionist dominance. He stated in a memorandum:

I know full well that if and when we make this change [to the franchise], control in certain areas will be lost. But our loss of prestige, authority and standing since 5th October has already been catastrophic, and in my view the most cold-blooded appraisal of the situation shows that in resisting this molehill of reform we are allowing a mountain to fall upon us.¹⁷⁷

O'Neill understood that the Unionist Party could not maintain its control if the security situation deteriorated further, especially not if they had to resort to calling in support from the British Army. Such a move would increase both the interest and the leverage of Westminster over regional affairs. It was thus strategically preferable in the long-term for Unionists to accept Catholic participation and simply rely on the natural Protestant majority to maintain their dominance.

In response to O'Neill's decision, the fervent Unionist Brian Faulkner, O'Neill's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce, resigned, citing weak government. He was followed by a number of other Unionists, forcing the Prime Minister into a corner. O'Neill then took a political gamble and called for a General Election on February 24. He and his supporters won, but it was a brief victory.¹⁷⁸

O'Neill's attempts at reforms also were undermined by the Nationalists, both in the South and the North. By this point, there was considerable Nationalist disillusionment in O'Neill's ability to deliver the reforms he promised in the face of

¹⁷⁶ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 69.

¹⁷⁷ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, "The Political Situation," CAB/4/1427.

¹⁷⁸ *RTE News*, "Sturmont Election: Northern Ireland 1969," 1969.

pressure from Rev. Ian Paisley, the most vocal and incendiary Loyalist leader.¹⁷⁹ Some of the more moderate elements within Nationalism were still willing to give him a chance, e.g. Independent Nationalist John Hume, but extremist voices were increasingly coming to the fore. Chief amongst these voices were Neil Blaney, the Southern Minister for Agriculture and a staunch Fianna Fail Republican, and Bernadette Devlin (later assumed the married name of McAliskey), who was one of the leaders of the radical People's Democracy (PD) group responsible for the march that ended in the Burntollet Bridge ambush. In the spring of 1969, Blaney publicly denounced O'Neill's reforms and called upon the government to prepare to enforce the constitutional claim of sovereignty over the North, undercutting much of the cross-border good-will O'Neill had built over the previous decade.¹⁸⁰ Meanwhile, Devlin continued to push an antagonistic agenda and ran for a seat in Parliament.

Ironically, the IRA served as a relatively moderate voice during this period. Under Goulding's leadership, which still clung to the belief that the civil rights movement could deliver a non-sectarian united Ireland, the IRA resisted calls to re-arm in defense of Catholics. The official line was that "the time is not yet ripe for military action."¹⁸¹ As such, Goulding repeatedly denied requests to begin retaliatory strikes against policemen and refused to provide armed IRA protection to civil rights marchers. Instead, he favored the formation and support of citizens' defense committees that would remove the IRA from responsibility and liability for the violent protection of

¹⁷⁹ Purdie, *Politics in the Street: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland*, 33–34.

¹⁸⁰ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 2–4.

¹⁸¹ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 69.

Catholic communities. He agreed to work with these committees to supply them with weapons, including a few Thompson submachine guns. This lukewarm response from the Dublin-based leadership naturally angered the Northerners, but as Goulding points out, “We were broke in every way. We just hadn't got the stuff, and feared that the limited amount that we did have would just produce the reaction that the attackers wanted—and they had more guns than us.”¹⁸²

It appears that this lament about the lack of sufficient arms was more of an excuse to cover an ideological commitment to the path of nonviolence. In February 1969, the South Derry commander had apparently been approached by an intermediary for an anonymous source, which turned out to be Blaney and two other Southern cabinet ministers, Charles Haughey and Kevin Boland.¹⁸³¹⁸⁴ These three ministers wanted to simultaneously undermine the IRA's position in the South while gaining a foothold in the North for Fianna Fail.¹⁸⁵ As part of the proposal, the IRA would have to form an independent Northern Command in Belfast. Goulding was certainly interested in the acquisition of desperately needed cash but was quite cautious about the implications of dividing the Northern and Southern commands. He put off a decision until he was approached again in June. Again, he postponed a decision while a fierce debate raged inside the IRA. While the Dublin GHQ waffled, the Orange marching season approached, portending more violence.

¹⁸² Ibid., 70.

¹⁸³ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 90.

¹⁸⁴ This secret encouragement was likely a good indication of the Irish government's stance regarding the conflict in the North, but *Taoiseach* (Irish Prime Minister) Jack Lynch failed to make any official moves one way or the other.

¹⁸⁵ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 4.

Given the political atmosphere and the unwillingness of the leadership to embrace violence, the Republicans could not afford to ignore the opportunity afforded them by the death of the Unionist MP at Westminster for Mid-Ulster in early 1969. Sinn Fein proposed to run on an abstentionist platform, but this caused six prominent Republicans to resign their membership in protest of the continued refusal to take seats once elected. The Nationalists also sought to field their own candidate, which would split the Catholic vote and ensure a Unionist victory, which was not an uncommon feature of previous Northern elections. Rather than face the defeat of their candidate or risk alienating the Catholic population by forcing the issue, the IRA leadership waffled and arranged support for the independent Devlin. This move failed to ameliorate those elements who wanted an increased political role for the IRA, but did manage to further alienate the traditionalists, i.e. those who rejected participatory politics in favor of the armed struggle, especially in and around Belfast.

On April 17, 1969, Devlin was elected in a by-election for the Westminster seat for Mid-Ulster, largely because of IRA influence. Her election increased sectarian tension because it showed the power of the Catholics when they overcame their internal divisions.¹⁸⁶ Two days later, civil rights activists engaged in a sit-down in North Derry, sparking a riot from a mob of Loyalists. Again, the RUC responded with inappropriate force, initiating a lawless and violent push back into the Bogside.

In the process, the RUC created a Republican martyr when they beat Samuel Devenney in his own home while pursuing fleeing rioters. Although the youths escaped

¹⁸⁶ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 74.

out the back door, the police used excessive force on several members of the family, resulting in Devenney being hospitalized for a badly cut scalp. Devenney died three months later. He had preexisting conditions, and there is no clear evidence to connect his death directly with the beating he received, but his death helped to enflame sectarian tensions.¹⁸⁷

More important than Devenney's beating, or even his death, was the fact that no one was held accountable. The Stormont government initiated an investigation into the incidents of the night, but the result was highly unsatisfactory to the Catholic community.¹⁸⁸ While this lack of accountability may have been largely a result of poor record keeping—police officers from other jurisdictions had come pouring in, and the log of who was where was improperly kept¹⁸⁹—the perception was that the government was complicit in a cover-up.

On April 20, 1969, civil rights activists played an audiotape of one of Devenney's children describing the attack at a protest in Belfast. This naturally incited the crowds and led to the first major riot in Belfast. Up until this point, nearly all of the violence had centered around (London)Derry, where the Unionists were demographically less secure in their position. The use of roughly 10 petrol bombs (Molotov cocktails) during the large ensuing riot was blamed on the IRA, but apparently

¹⁸⁷ Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, "Police Ombudsman Releases Findings on Devenney Investigation."

¹⁸⁸ The Baillie Report was minimized by the Stormont cabinet, which called for a statement in conjunction with the report's publication that "would be helpful to the morale and to the image of the R.U.C." Furthermore, they decided the Devenney case did not warrant a special inquiry, choosing to rely instead on the inquest. The Attorney-General stated that "the inquest itself would provide an adequate investigation though the result might not be satisfying." United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1467, 1469.

¹⁸⁹ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 76.

was actually the work of a group of teenagers with ties to the PD, who called themselves the Belfast Housing Action Group.¹⁹⁰ Similarly, the main supply of Belfast's water, the Silent Valley reservoir outlet, was wrecked by Loyalists as the riot raged on but was incorrectly blamed on the IRA.¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, the immediate identification of the IRA with the attack helped to polarize sectarian relations even further.

Two days later, O'Neill pushed through Stormont an election reform bill to provide 'one man, one vote.'¹⁹² Although this was a central rallying cry of the civil rights movement, the reform was too little, too late, and many Nationalists, including John Hume, doubted the Unionist commitment to these reforms.¹⁹³ Moreover, the timing of this decision in the wake of such violence gave the impression of capitulation and severely undermined O'Neill's standing within the Unionist Party.¹⁹⁴

At the end of April, O'Neill resigned the Northern premiership, accepting his personal inability to effect peace. He was replaced by his cousin, who had dealt his administration the final blow by resigning as Minister of Agriculture on April 23 in protest of O'Neill's insistence on pursuing voter reforms.¹⁹⁵ James Chichester-Clark gained the Unionist party nomination for the premiership by one vote: O'Neill's. He later claimed to have supported Chichester-Clark not for familial reasons, but rather a

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 78–79.

¹⁹¹ It was not until after direct British intervention that the initial blaming of the IRA was discredited by the conviction of Samuel Stevenson for the explosions at Silent Valley. Samuel Stevenson was the Chief of Staff of the UVF, thus placing the blame on the Unionists rather than the Republicans. He later openly admitted that "the explosions were designed to bring about the downfall of the then Prime Minister, Mr. Terence O'Neill, and the release of Mr. Paisley from jail." "Loyalists' Blasted Water Mains: Police Chief," *The Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, March 13, 1971 (Irish National Archives 2001/42/3).

¹⁹² *RTE News*, "On One Man, One Vote Passed," April 23, 1969.

¹⁹³ *RTE News*, "Interview with John Hume," April 23, 1969.

¹⁹⁴ *RTE News*, "Interview with Brian Faulkner," April 23, 1969.

¹⁹⁵ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 86.

blind hatred of the more radical Faulkner, who was as a longtime enemy within the party and the person O'Neill blamed for his fall from power.¹⁹⁶ Thus, the voter reforms (one man, one vote), though controversial and costly to O'Neill personally, were secured in law.

Chichester-Clark was a fairly simple man who was not an adroit politician, which was at once his saving grace and his downfall. For a time, his honesty and simplicity won him the respect of both Catholics and Protestants. At the same time, he was unable to create the consensus necessary to deal with the burgeoning crisis. Although understandable given his weak position within the party, Chichester-Clark's decision to allow the Orange parades to continue in the summer of 1969, despite increasing violence, proved a terrible mistake.

II. The Final Straw

The summer of 1969 saw a further escalation of tensions as the Loyalists continued to flex their political muscle and Catholics became increasingly estranged. Summertime, especially in July and August, is the traditional "marching season" for the Orange Order and has often been the source of sectarian conflict.¹⁹⁷ These inherently Protestant processions are frequently routed through traditionally Catholic areas and serve as reminders of the Protestant victory over Catholic forces in the Seventeenth Century. Given the already dangerously tense atmosphere, the marches of 1969 were

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ These marches had been problematic before the Troubles and continued to be a source of violence throughout the conflict. It is therefore interesting to point out that the Troubles are book-ended by issues with marches. In 1969, the inability of the Stormont government to control these marches led to a major escalation. In the late 1990s, the determination to prevent the marches at Drumcree nearly split the Unionists apart but ultimately helped to deliver a workable power-sharing arrangement.

the match dropped on the powder-keg. Despite the disinclination in Westminster to become embroiled in the internal politics of Northern Ireland, by August 1969, there appeared to be no other choice but to deploy the British Army to help restore the peace.

The first of these marches failed to incite a riot, but this proved to be the calm before the storm as pressure continued to build. The second, on June 28, also passed without violence, although the Catholics took a slightly more confrontational stance by hanging banners along the route with slogans along the lines of “We allow you to walk, do you?”¹⁹⁸ However, by the third major march in Belfast on July 12, the Catholics had reached a breaking point and attempted to prevent the march. They were cleared out by the police and a night of vandalism ensued. The Belfast Catholics were joined in rioting by Catholics in (London)Derry, where 40 Molotov cocktails were thrown by Catholic rioters and 16 police and 2 civilians were hurt.¹⁹⁹ In response, the Inspector General of the RUC, Anthony Peacocke, and the Minister of Home Affairs, Robert Porter, activated the B Special police reserves for riot control. They were to be armed with batons instead of the military weapons on which they had been trained. However, in one of the many clashes of July 13, a contingent of B Specials fired on a group of Catholics, although no one was hit.²⁰⁰ A week later, a British War Office intelligence briefing noted that both sides were openly displaying their arms and “the present peace therefore

¹⁹⁸ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 98.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ Purdie, *Politics in the Street: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland*, 214–15.

is uneasy and the situation could easily deteriorate seriously at the slightest provocation.²⁰¹

Stormont's decisions not only to allow the marches to continue, but to protect them with the same force tainted by the Burntollet Bridge ambush, was strongly criticized by Westminster. British Prime Minister Harold Wilson (Labour) and his cabinet mostly favored banning the Protestant marches to demonstrate parity with the civil rights marches that had previously been banned.²⁰² However, the Home Secretary, James Callaghan, persuaded the cabinet that Chichester-Clark would not be able to survive the fallout from such a ban. His ouster would likely usher in a new Stormont government under Faulkner, who had proven himself to be a staunch opponent of the reforms. Thus, the political choice seemed to be either accept the lesser of two evils or prepare for abrogation of the Stormont regime through imposition of Direct Rule from Westminster. The latter option was deemed to be far less pleasant, since it would probably entail a major drain on military resources and be a political disaster.

Despite this desire to avoid being sucked into a political quagmire, the Wilson government came up with a creative half-measure. The British Army would be used to assist in the maintenance of law and order without imposition of Direct Rule. This freed Westminster from direct political responsibility and theoretically involved fewer resources. However, without Direct Rule, the Army had to be authorized to use force in an oddly circuitous manner: as 'common law constables,' i.e. engaging in citizen's

²⁰¹ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, Intelligence Reports dated July 25, 1969, WO 305/3756/18 Intelligence Reports 25.7.1969.

²⁰² Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*.

arrests.²⁰³ This classification would eventually cause significant problems for the army in terms of the rules of engagement and the army's credibility.²⁰⁴

While Wilson was exploring his options, the crisis came to a head. The RUC had deployed a large contingent of regular and USC constables to serve as a barrier between Catholic and Protestant mobs during one of the more controversial marches along the Shankill Road in Belfast on August 2.²⁰⁵ Rather than prevent the conflict, these police ended up bearing the brunt of both sides' hostility as they were caught in the middle. Ten days later, an even more divisive march by the Apprentice Boys in (London)Derry was scheduled. On August 10, the Derry Citizens Defense Association, under the leadership of Sean Keenan, a prominent veteran of the IRA, began preparing for a major confrontation using "sticks, stones and the good old gasoline bomb," but ruled out the use of firearms.²⁰⁶ Confronted with clear evidence that the march would likely result in significant violence, Chichester-Clark pleaded with the Orange Order to reroute the march, but to no avail; he was too weak to influence them, much less survive the fallout from the prohibition of such a high-profile march.²⁰⁷

As predicted, the march provoked a massive reaction. In what has been called the "Battle of the Bogside," Catholic riots raged for two days as they successfully

²⁰³ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, Military Aid to the Civil Power in Northern Ireland (Chief of the Defense Staff, 12.12.68), CAB 164/576.

²⁰⁴ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 105.

²⁰⁵ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, Documents dated August 3, 1969, CAB/4/1455 3.8.1969.

²⁰⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 63.

²⁰⁷ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1456 4.8.1969.

warded off assaults on their neighborhood by Loyalist mobs and the RUC.²⁰⁸ During the riots, there was massive property damage as houses were engulfed in flames, police (nonfatal) casualties mounted, and for the first time in British history, the use of CS gas was authorized.²⁰⁹ In a move that only fueled Loyalist fury, *Taoiseach* (Irish Prime Minister) Jack Lynch went on television to denounce the treatment of the Bogside residents and announced that the Irish Army was setting up field hospitals by the border to treat injured people afraid of further retribution in Northern hospitals.²¹⁰ It quickly became apparent that the RUC were incapable of restoring order themselves and the British Army was called in.²¹¹

III. A Tale of Two Armies

The deployment of the British Army on August 14, 1969 in response to the Battle of the Bogside was initially a fairly neutral event for the IRA, given the obvious discomfort it brought to the Unionists. Nationalists, including most factions within the IRA, welcomed it as the first step to Direct Rule, the destruction of the Stormont regime and eventual Irish reunification. A minority viewed it as mere reinforcement of the unjust Protestant-dominated system and therefore greeted the Army's arrival with hostility. Whether welcome or not, the troops bought time for the IRA to rearm, reorganize and reorient to the new political reality. Within just a short period, the IRA would split and the Army became a primary target for Republican violence.

²⁰⁸ Coogan, *The IRA*, 333–34; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 256. Participants in this violence included MP Bernadette Devlin and future PIRA Chief of Staff Martin McGuinness.

²⁰⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 64.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 66; Coogan, *The IRA*, 334.

²¹¹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 102.

Despite urging to fight on by extremists like Devlin,²¹² troopers were warmly greeted, offered more tea and food than they could possibly consume, and idolized by the Catholic children.²¹³ Soldiers could freely mix with the population with no concern for their personal safety. Most of the soldiers were young, between 17 and 20 years of age, motivated by clearly righting a wrong. However, although they perceived the Catholic population as the victims, the political and religious geography, especially of Belfast, led to confusion. Sectarian enclaves often existed on different ends of the same street, and it was the duty of these soldiers to “stand in the middle and assert Her Majesty's authority.”²¹⁴

Despite Wilson's reluctance to impose Direct Rule, the expanded role of the British Army inherently meant a loss of autonomy for the Northern government. The warm greeting Catholics gave these troops only reinforced the impression that the British were intent on dismantling the Unionist-dominated system in a massive sellout to the Catholics. The negative view of the Army was compounded by the publication of the Westminster-backed reform package on October 10, which called for disarmament of the RUC and the replacement of the USC with the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR).²¹⁵ From Westminster's perspective, the new force more than adequately respected the special needs and interests of Northern Ireland. The restructuring of the RUC as a civilian police force brought it closer in line with the police standards

²¹² Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 67.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 74–76.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

²¹⁵ *Report of the Advisory Committee on Police in Northern Ireland: Hunt Report*, Cmnd. 535 (October 1969).

elsewhere in Britain. The UDR and the Army would share responsibility for its border patrol duties, leaving the police force an apolitical and unarmed entity.

The Loyalist response was two days of fierce rioting. During this riot, the RUC was attacked with petrol bombs; the Army moved in to reinforce them and were shot at by the UVF before returning fire and killing two people.²¹⁶ During the firefight between the Army and UVF, an RUC constable was shot and killed by a Loyalist gunman.²¹⁷ Thus, the first police casualty of the Troubles was ironically the result of Loyalist extremists, not the IRA. This fact emphasized the very delicate balance and the powerful forces at work in maintaining the peace in Northern Ireland. The apparent abandonment of prior norms, including steadfast support for the security forces, inherent in this civil disorder further reinforced the threat the Protestant community posed to the Catholics and the role of the army as protectors. This would eventually change as higher politics forced the Army to adopt a tougher line with the Catholic community.

Recognizing their weaker position, the Stormont Cabinet Ministers acquiesced to Westminster's demands for reforming the security services. However, they pressed home their concerns about adequate and enduring protection and the promptness of replacing the USC. The Unionists also undermined the UDR reform by taking no action to promote the recruitment of Roman Catholics, leaving that instead to the Army. They justified this decision to the Home Secretary by claiming that "as it would be undesirable to bring the new Regiment into the political arena neither Government

²¹⁶ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 71–72.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 71–72; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 85–86..

should become directly involved with recruitment.”²¹⁸ The tacit agreement was that in exchange for Stormont's relatively quiet acceptance of Westminster's demands, the Unionist leadership expected the Army to take much tougher line in enforcing law and order, especially in the no-go areas.

Despite the threat to Chichester-Clark's political base from these tough reforms, the new peaceful atmosphere seemed to be developing into something more permanent. By February 1970, three of the eight additional army units had been withdrawn to Britain, confident of having accomplished their goals. This is largely because of the major reforms Westminster had forced Chichester-Clark to swallow. However, the situation was deceptively peaceful.

Like many of the reforms of the previous few years, the timing of the deployment was a few months too late to prove effective. The IRA had already begun a process that would lead it to a return to its traditional role as a political violence producer. In July, the traditionalists' position of resisting Goulding's reforms achieved greater respectability when Jimmy Steele, a well-respected, older member of the IRA and Belfast native, openly attacked the “alien influences” on the direction of the IRA, a none-too-subtle reference to Goulding's Marxist leanings.²¹⁹ That such a distinguished leader within the movement gave voice to the dissatisfaction felt by many was crucial for the legitimacy of the upcoming split. He was almost immediately forced out of the IRA by the leadership in Dublin, exacerbating the tensions between the Northern and Southern halves of the IRA.

²¹⁸ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1494 20.11.1969.

²¹⁹ London Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster*, 92.

As both the IRA's internal division and the Loyalist violence increased over the summer of 1969, the Fianna Fail ministers made yet another approach to the IRA in August: if the Northern Command agreed to separate from GHQ in Dublin, the IRA would receive £200,000,. Given the worsening relations, it is impossible to say if the Northern Command would not have broken off without this additional inducement; traditionalists, led by Billy McKee among others, initiated a coup on September 22.²²⁰ Despite the display of blatant insubordination, the official Belfast Battalion staff and the mutineers managed to reach a compromise whereby the two sides would share power for a trial period. If this arrangement proved unsatisfactory, four members of the Army Council, including Goulding, would be removed, the North would create an independent GHQ, all socialist programs would stop, and finally the Northern group would not attend the Army convention.²²¹ Over the course of the next few months, each side attempted to increase their grassroots following for the impending show-downs at the Army convention and Sinn Fein Ard Fheis.

Finally, in November 1969, the traditionalists could no longer tolerate the obsequious dedication to Goulding's nonviolence program and initiated a formal split between the Provisionals and the Officials. The Belfast contingent boycotted the IRA Army convention at which Goulding supporters finally won the battle to recognize partition and to participate in elections on both sides of the border. Inspired by Jimmy

²²⁰ Ibid., 184.

²²¹ Ibid., 192.

Steele's speech in July, Sean MacStiofáin²²² and other traditionalists walked out to form the Provisional IRA (PIRA).²²³ A month later, Sinn Fein split along the same lines. The policy of abstentionism was critical to Republican legitimacy: according to the hard-liners' analysis, previous Republicans who had made that compromise quickly became enemies of the IRA and helped to entrench the partitionist system of British imperial rule. As Billy McKee put it:

If you start to recognize the Twenty-Six County Government, you've no right to have an IRA there. You've no right to take a life because they're your people and they're your government. If you recognize them as a government, you must fall in line with them. You've no authority to take a life. Then it would be murder.²²⁴

He went on to deny that frustration with the South for failing to provide for the defense of Catholics in the North was the cause of the split. However, this is rather disingenuous in light of the many traditionalists who simply walked away from the movement in the early 1960s. If the defense of Northern Catholics was not a critical factor, why did the split not occur sooner?

Indeed, the veracity of this ideological justification for the split is further undermined by the official reason given by the Provisional Army Council on December 28, 1969:

²²² MacStiofáin was introduced in the previous chapter. *See* Chapter 4. Born John Stevenson in Essex, England, it is possible that one of his grandparents was of Irish descent, but he was raised an Englishman. Nevertheless, he was attracted to the Republican cause and took part in the pre-Border Campaign raids. During his resulting imprisonment, his Republican fervor increased, bordering on the fanatical. After prison, he moved to Dublin where he rose up the ranks of the IRA before the 1969 split. Obituary, *The Telegraph*, May 19, 2001.

²²³ Both wings of the IRA maintained organizations in both the North and South, but the Provisionals' base of support was initially primarily in the North.

²²⁴ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 84.

[The split is] . . . the logical outcome of an obsession in recent years with parliamentary politics, with the consequent undermining of the basic military role of the Irish Republican Army. The failure to provide the maximum defense possible of our people in Belfast and other parts of the Six Counties against the forces of British Imperialism last August is ample evidence of this neglect.²²⁵

While the traditional commitment to abstentionism was certainly important—if for no other reason than it provided a coherent *post facto* justification—the main driver of the split was the desire to respond to the Northern Catholics' demand for protection. Nevertheless, the linkage between the split and abstentionism would further enshrine the policy in the realm of the ideological sacred, making future attempts to deviate from it that much more difficult.

This difference in ideology naturally had a major impact on the strategies pursued by both the Officials and the Provisionals. While the Provisionals were solely focused on the use of force, the Officials had an equal or greater interest in pursuing nonviolent politics than producing violence. Thus, the Provisionals were able to specialize in violence production, while the Officials had to divide their resources in order to simultaneously produce in two substitute markets.

IV. Republican Competition

Although the split had been relatively civil and bloodless, it did not take long for the relationship between the two IRAs to sour. This rivalry was especially pronounced in the Provisional hotbed of Belfast, but gradually expanded. The analysis of the competition in terms of violence production is hindered somewhat by the tendency

²²⁵ Ibid., 85.

during this period for groups either not to claim an attack, or to do so under the IRA banner. There are several potential reasons for such a lack of differentiation. First, both sides were clearly trying to lay claim to the legitimacy of the IRA name rather than create a new brand identity. Second, members of the close-knit Catholic community would generally have an idea of which faction was responsible through the grapevine even without an explicit claim. Third, lack of differentiation promoted a fiction of Republican unity that would enhance their position as they attempted to coerce the Unionists and later the British.

Despite the Provisional emphasis on force, the split was fairly even in terms of the breakdown of raw power between the two factions. In Belfast, the Provisionals had a nominal edge on paper over the Officials: 14 companies to 12. The actual difference was even greater because the Provisionals' companies were stronger and more secure. In (London)Derry, they did not fare as well, although they did manage to set up both an IRA and a Sinn Fein command. However, (London)Derry was a special case in that it took a long time for the split to seep down to the ground level.²²⁶ As a former member of both the Provisionals and Officials put it, “‘In Derry you never had the Stickie Provo thing like in Belfast.’ It was almost as if the Derry Officials were still refusing to accept that the movement had split.”²²⁷ Other than those two cities, the Officials largely maintained their control of Northern Ireland during the split.

²²⁶ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 360.

²²⁷ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalities*, 241. Stick, Sticky and Stickie are slang terms for the Official Republicans, a reference to the use of adhesives rather than pins to secure the traditional Republican symbol, the Easter Lily, to one's clothing. Despite the Officials' best efforts, the nickname of

The PIRA took a much more proactive strategy now that they were unencumbered by Dublin. The Provisionals were convinced that the course of reforms was now set, at least on paper, and that Protestant violence would increase in protest of these concessions and reforms. This Loyalist backlash could even possibly lead to a coup, in which case the Catholic community would be afforded no quarter.²²⁸ Given this vision of intense threat, they formed three Battalion areas for greater strategic defense under the coordinated command of the Belfast Brigade. Volunteers came pouring in and the PIRA rapidly became a significant force. Many of the prominent Provisionals had had been part of the minority who viewed the introduction of British troops as a prop to the Unionist regime. When they were proven correct by the indiscriminate use of CS (tear) gas by the British army against Catholic rioters, their numbers swelled even more. When General Freeland announced that anyone seen with a petrol-bomb would be shot, the Provisionals responded with the threat that for every Irishman shot, one soldier would be killed.²²⁹

In contrast, the Officials pursued a course that endeared themselves to neither the young Republicans nor the Protestant majority. Before the split, Dublin had issued a statement claiming that the replacement of Stormont with Direct Rule from Westminster would be detrimental to the cause, based on the belief that direct British influence would stifle the nonsectarian proletariat consciousness by reinforcing the

“pinheads” for the Provisionals did not stick. *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, September 25, 1997. Provo is simply a derivation of Provisional.

²²⁸ Garrett, “Ten Years of British Troops in Northern Ireland,” *International Security*, 98.

²²⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 92.

disparate identities of British versus Irish.²³⁰ However, to those fighting in the streets, it seemed to be a sellout to the unjust Protestant government. The Officials also continued their support and active participation in the civil rights movement, including attempts to minimize violent confrontations with either the Protestants or the British military. At the same time, they realized the need to engage in at least token violent action or else lose all credibility. This dual strategy left them largely hamstrung: they dared not alienate the few Protestants who remained committed to radical reform, but at the same time, they could not afford to lose the Catholics to the more aggressive PIRA. Given the much larger size of and historical identification with the latter, there were strong pressures to compete with the Provisionals on their own terms.

Despite their experience and better access to resources at the beginning of the split, the Officials quickly began to lose ground to the Provisionals. In early 1970, they reversed their previous policy of building alliances and providing military training to the radical Left. As a result, unmet demand for violent action steadily built within the radical Labour and Republican youth organizations. OIRA's limited violence despite worsening conditions left many disillusioned and they subsequently left to join the PIRA.²³¹ Given OIRA's comparative reticence about the use of violence during this period, it is especially interesting that the Provisionals “were not identified as a malevolent or ‘sinister’ force by mainstream Catholic political opinion in Derry and that the Officials were seen as far more threatening and destabilizing to public order.”²³²

²³⁰ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 119.

²³¹ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 201.

²³² *Ibid.*, 205–06.

This competition for prestige and legitimacy gradually descended into a territorial feud. The Provisionals accused the Officials of selling out, while the Officials denounced them for inflaming the sectarian tensions and recruiting for quantity rather than quality. At the end of April 1970, a Provisional unit fired on a group of Officials, wounding Billy McMillen. In response, the Officials tried to kill one of the leading members of the PIRA. A temporary truce was called in June, but it only lasted about a month before escalating again in the face of increasing British Army pressure on the paramilitaries.

In early 1970, Loyalist pressure was on the rise as seen by Rev. Ian Paisley's election to Westminster on April 16, replacing former PM O'Neill. In response, the British felt the need to buttress Chichester-Clark's regime. Easter 1970 (March 29) saw the removal of the kid gloves and the Army began a campaign that would alienate it from the Catholic community. This linkage between Stormont and the Army largely destroyed the image of the latter as the Catholic saviors and made soldiers legitimate targets for Republican violence.

Republicans marked the anniversary of the Easter Rising with marches, most of which turned into riots. In (London)Derry, a RUC station in the city center was attacked after a march, sparking a major riot, and the Army sealed off the Bogside.²³³ In Belfast, the march was followed by an appeal to raise money for weapons for the IRA. In Armagh on Easter Monday, a Loyalist crowd attacked the marchers. The next day marked the most significant rioting of the week: a Protestant march past the Catholic

²³³ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 104.

estate of Ballymurphy in West Belfast sparked three days of violent nationalist protest. In response to the stones thrown, the British troops replied with CS gas and snatch squads.²³⁴ This was a far stronger response than had previously been felt by the Catholic community. On the third night of rioting, Loyalist mobs followed the soldiers into the estate to tear down a tricolor.²³⁵ The IRA remained largely uninvolved: the OIRA tried to calm the situation, while the PIRA was simply unprepared to mount a significant defense at that time.²³⁶ However, the response of the Catholic rioters to the troops caused GOC Freeland to publicly announce the policy that petrol bombers would be shot.²³⁷

Not only had the British troops lost their claim to being neutral peacekeepers, but the very administration changed beneath them. The national election of June 18 was very important for Northern Ireland because it replaced the much more sympathetic Labour Party with the Conservatives, who were firmly allied with the Unionists. In exchange for their political loyalty in Westminster, the Tories were much more willing to grant Stormont greater freedom.²³⁸ It is therefore ironic that this new Westminster government with Edward Heath as Prime Minister, Reginald Maudling as Home Secretary, and Lord Carrington as Defence Secretary was to preside over the ultimate collapse of Stormont.

²³⁴ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 86.

²³⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 92.

²³⁶ There is evidence that a young Gerry Adams was especially strategic in crafting the PIRA response to provocations in order to extend the length of encounters with Loyalist and British elements, thereby increasing the sense of grievance and radicalization of the ordinary Catholics involved in the rioting. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 88.

²³⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 92.

²³⁸ Coogan, *The IRA*, 345.

Not even two weeks later, the first major violence of the marching season began in Belfast. On June 26, the first parade along Crumlin road, which separates Protestant Shankill from Catholic Ardoyne, was accompanied by the standard abuse and throwing of bottles and stones. This was merely a prelude to a much larger march the following day that wound through the city, past a number of the most sensitive Catholic enclaves. A previous Orange Order march in the beginning of June had forcibly been redirected to a less turbulent route, but it resulted in significant riots nonetheless.²³⁹ The reason for not banning or rerouting the June 27 march appears to be that Stormont government was not willing to further alienate their grassroots base and the new Conservative cabinet knew too little of the specifics of Northern Ireland rule to force the issue.

The resultant rioting was to be expected. However, the scale and the ferocity was significantly greater than had been predicted. Ballymurphy was yet again the center of the violence, but this time the PIRA was better prepared and more willing to act. Petrol bombs were thrown to protest the marches, escalating the conflict. More significantly, gunmen from both communities exchanged fire and there were several deaths and a large number of injuries.²⁴⁰ There were rumors that a massive Protestant mob was threatening to overrun a small Catholic enclave in East Belfast, the Short Strand. In response, the PIRA took up positions in the churchyard of St. Matthews in the Short Strand. They killed three attackers, losing one of their own, and Billy McKee was wounded. The standoff proved successful, and the Loyalists were held at bay. The

²³⁹ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1521 2.6.1970; United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB 4/1522 3.6.1969.

²⁴⁰ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 89.

Army was called in to restore order, but with the demands on its resources throughout the city, they were neither able to provide a significant presence, nor to separate the sectarian combatants. They remained aloof while 800 rounds were fired by the PIRA alone.²⁴¹ This helped to firmly establish the PIRA as the defenders of the Catholic community, and remove the stigma of IRA meaning “I Ran Away” from their failures the previous summer.²⁴²

This escalation of conflict to a shooting war put enormous pressure on both governments to take an even tougher stance against the IRA. Armed paramilitary groups indicated that Stormont could not ensure law and order, shaking its claim to legitimacy. Furthermore, the civilianization of the RUC as forced by the British Labour government left the RUC unable to handle severe riot situations, and created an even greater sense of impotence.²⁴³ To prevent further violence, the Stormont cabinet arranged with the Orange Order to cancel all marches until July 13, with the exception of church services and the July 1 Battle of the Somme commemoration.²⁴⁴ To head off accusations of giving in to the Catholics, the Unionist leadership pushed the Army to take more aggressive action against the Republicans. The Army obliged by performing a series of arms searches and seizures.

²⁴¹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 95.

²⁴² English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 135.

²⁴³ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1530 28.6.1970.

²⁴⁴ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1531 29.6.1970.

On July 3, obviously acting on a tip-off, British troops seized a sizable arms cache in the Lower Falls.²⁴⁵ Not only would this have serious consequences because of the sheer scale of the operation deep into the heart of a Catholic area, but it raises serious questions about the Army's intelligence and motivation. The area was openly under the control of the OIRA, headed by Sullivan, who claimed “to have risked life and limb on many occasions to prevent trouble being created in that area by the provisional IRA.”²⁴⁶ At this point in time, the Officials did not pose a serious threat to Stormont or the security forces; the Provisionals had been actively engaging Loyalist gunmen and were a far more immediate threat.

The initial raiding party was cut off from retreat by an angry mob, incensed by the accidental crushing of a local man. More troops entered the area in force to deal with the escalating situation. As in previous situations, they used CS gas, which merely escalated the riot; people responded by throwing gelignite bombs at the Army. The onsite commander, Brigadier Hudson, ordered his troops to withdraw and reform along the perimeter. Reinforced to a strength of roughly 3,000 soldiers—two-thirds of the entire Belfast garrison, he declared a curfew. The troops were actively engaged by both the OIRA and the Provisionals' D Company. Fifteen British soldiers were wounded, as

²⁴⁵ Considering the historical significance of the raid, the initial seizure was actually quite small: 15 pistols, a rifle, a sub-machine gun, and ammunition. Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 98. The total weapons yield from the Falls Curfew was reasonably large in comparison: 100 firearms, 100 bombs, 250 lbs. of explosive, and 21,000 round of ammunition. Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 102. However, the value of these weapons is somewhat questionable. According to the Minister of Education, “the age and variety of weapons captured suggested...that there had been no recent organized supply of arms to the Lower Falls area at least.” United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1532 7.7.1970.

²⁴⁶ Republic of Ireland, Irish National Archives, “(Secret) Conversation with Mr. Paddy Devlin M. P.,” December 13, 1970. INA 2001/42/2.

were countless civilians, plus four killed. The troops sealed off the area, then performed intensive house to house searches, often with little regard for private property or people's sensitivities.²⁴⁷ The conflict forced at least 1,073 people to seek shelter through private and public welfare institutions.²⁴⁸ The curfew lasted until Sunday afternoon, when it was broken by a support column of roughly 1,000 women from neighboring estates who brought in food and supplies.²⁴⁹

Given the existing competitive dynamics, it appears that the Provisionals orchestrated the Army's provocative search to weaken the Officials and to spark greater resentment of the military, producing more recruits to the PIRA banner. The initial riot was initiated by the Provisionals, who then withdrew, letting the Officials bear the brunt of the outcome. One OIRA member felt forced into the conflict by the PIRA: "We heard the order issued for the British Army to move in and a decision was taken by the IRA that night to fight. The way we looked at it we were not going to put up our hands and let them take the weaponry. We didn't want the confrontation but we couldn't surrender."²⁵⁰ The Falls Curfew was a disaster for the security forces, and the Officials, who did almost all the work, received little benefit as most of the recruits went to the PIRA. The troops on the ground understood the full impact of the event and knew that the damage had already been done. One officer explicitly called it the turning point,

²⁴⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 100.

²⁴⁸ United Kingdom, Public Record Office Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1532 7.7.1970.

²⁴⁹ Gerry Adams claims that these women, following the distribution of the groceries, collected the unseized weapons and smuggled them out, where they then fell into the hands of the Provisionals. Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 102.

²⁵⁰ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 122.

where they had “found the weapons and lost the people.”²⁵¹ The depth of this feeling is seen in the local name for the Fall Road curfew: “The Rape of the Falls.”²⁵² According to Gerry Adams, the communal anger resulted in numerous new recruits for PIRA: “Thousands of people who had never been republicans now gave their active support to the IRA; others who had never had any time for physical force now accepted it as a practical necessity.”²⁵³ Major riots became an even more frequent occurrence, and the violence therein rose to a significantly higher level.

V. Birth of the SDLP

Originally proposed in February 1969, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) was only publicly announced in August 1970.²⁵⁴ The SDLP fundamentally transformed Nationalist electoral politics by unifying several disparate traditions. Largely influenced by the thinking of John Hume, the SDLP offered a fundamentally different vision of the role for Catholics in Northern Ireland than the Republicans. While still aspirationally dedicated to eventual Irish unity, Hume and the SDLP argued that it could only happen once the Unionists were convinced it was a good idea. Thus, where the British were the fundamental stumbling block to unification for the Republicans, it was the Unionists (and those Nationalists who antagonized them) that were preventing a united Ireland for the SDLP. The criticism of Republican violence inherent in such a philosophy and the claim to leadership of the community resulting

²⁵¹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 101.

²⁵² Coogan, *The IRA*, 345.

²⁵³ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 103.

²⁵⁴ McLoughlin, “. . . it’s a United Ireland or Nothing?” John Hume and the Idea of Irish Unity, 1964–72,” *Irish Political Studies*, 161.

from the SDLP's strong election results made for a tense—at times, downright hostile—relationship between the two major camps within Nationalism.

The SDLP united Hume and Austin Currie of the Nationalist Party and Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin of the Social Republican.²⁵⁵ This consolidation of the historically divided political landscape turned the SDLP into the Catholic community's “most effective political organization ever.”²⁵⁶ Unlike the Nationalist Party, which had been the largest Catholic party for the previous half-century, the SDLP was committed to taking its seats in Stormont and working for reform from within.²⁵⁷ This intention was largely overcome by escalating events, most notably Bloody Sunday, but the SDLP eventually returned to Stormont by 1973.

As one of the most detailed analyses of the early Troubles in (London)Derry notes, the formation of the SDLP was a threat to the Republicans because “with no organised political opposition at Stormont and no sense that anti-Unionist politicians were achieving anything, there had been a great opportunity for Republicans to promote their analysis and advance their position before the SDLP was established.”²⁵⁸ Thus, the SDLP offered a counter-narrative that was largely incompatible with that of the Republican movement. It is therefore unsurprising that the relationship occasionally

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Dutter, “Changing Elite Perceptions of the Northern Irish Conflict, 1973–1983,” *Political Psychology*, 148.

²⁵⁷ McLoughlin, “‘Dublin is Just a Sunningdale Away’? The SDLP, the Irish Government and the Sunningdale Agreement,” Working Paper 82, Institute for British-Irish Studies, University College Dublin, 1.

²⁵⁸ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 256.

became heated.²⁵⁹ However, in the very early days of its existence, the SDLP and the paramilitaries were able to work together through the self-defense committees.²⁶⁰

VI. Escalating Violence, Escalating Competition

Following the transformation of the British Army from ally to enemy in the eyes of many Catholics, the only source of protection lay in the hands of the Republican paramilitaries. The alliance between Westminster and Stormont gave additional weight to the traditional Republican argument that the partitionist structures were indeed part of Britain's plan to maintain its imperial control over Ireland. With this new reservoir of support, Republican violence ceased to be primarily defensive and both IRAs increasingly took part in offensive operations, especially against the Army. These violent engagements between the Army and the paramilitaries fed into a self-reinforcing cycle of escalating Catholic alienation from the state and support for violence. As Richard English, a prominent Troubles scholar notes, "Attrition with the British Army was vital in producing the atmosphere in which the new IRA grew and in which their violence gradually became acceptable to people who would otherwise not have condoned or supported it."²⁶¹ From this point on, the Republican paramilitaries, especially the PIRA, were no longer simply reacting to wildly changing market conditions, but were channeling Catholic support by providing strategic leadership

²⁵⁹ For example, Provisionals shot up the homes of and nearly kidnapped Fitt and Currie in the mid-1980s. Coogan, *The IRA*, 357–58.

²⁶⁰ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 257.

²⁶¹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 134.

through the production of violence. Thus, there was a transition from the dominance of riotous violence to that of terroristic violence.²⁶²

As part of this offensive turn, the PIRA began bombing strategic targets on August 2, 1970 with simultaneous explosions in three different counties.²⁶³ Through this campaign, they sought to force out both Stormont and the British by destroying the economic capacity of Northern Ireland. The initial targets were customs posts, telephone exchanges, and electricity stations, but in time they moved on to shops and other smaller economic institutions. The targeting commercial centers outside Catholic ghettos served a triple purpose. Tactically, because the security services could not protect against all threats, a deliberate increase in the level of randomness made an attack more likely to be successful. Strategically, the additional randomness increased the amount of fear and thus the coercive effect of these attacks. The additional checkpoints in Protestant areas inconvenienced the local population and reinforced the Republican threat. Practically, bombs were fairly cheap easy and to make using readily available supplies and were easier to deploy than conventional arms.²⁶⁴ This was a critical consideration because both wings were limited by a lack of conventional armament.

²⁶² Peroff and Hewitt, "Rioting in Northern Ireland: The Effects of Different Policies," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 596.

²⁶³ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 106. English puts the beginning of the campaign as October 1970. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 137.

²⁶⁴ Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) are often easier and cheaper to make than it would be to acquire comparable professionally manufactured munitions, but were not without risk. Indeed, there was a steep learning curve, wherein a number of Republican bombmakers and bombers accidentally killed themselves and others. The most prominent example of this was the elimination of several PIRA leaders and two children when a device exploded in a safehouse in Derry in June 1970. Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 62; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 360; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 105–06.

This lack of arms began to change in the fall of 1970. In April, Daithi O Connail went to the United States to set up a supplier network for the Provisionals.²⁶⁵ The two actors who featured most prominently in this effort were Martin Flannery and George Harrison. Flannery founded Northern Ireland Aid (Noraid) to raise funds for Catholic victims and families of Republican prisoners; Harrison established an underground channel for running guns.²⁶⁶ Given the need to arm the vast supply of new recruits, the most significant shipment of American guns was a large consignment of Armalites, a kind of very light, compactable automatic rifle, in late 1970.²⁶⁷

While hostile to the British Army, the Provisionals actively held back from attacking them until early 1971, because neither they nor the Catholic populace were prepared for a full-scale engagement with the Army. Although they were escalating the bombing campaign during this period, the PIRA was primarily focused on recruiting, training and organizing.²⁶⁸ On February 5, 1971, the first British casualty was Gunner Robert Curtis, killed in a shootout with Ardoyne PIRA men.²⁶⁹

This shooting signaled a major escalation of the PIRA violence, including the abandonment of its previous instructions to minimize civilian casualties. PIRA bombs began exploding at the rate of at least one a day and with experience, these bombs became more reliable. The bombing campaign was particularly effective at grinding the

²⁶⁵ Frampton, "Squaring the Circle: The Foreign Policy of Sinn Fein, 1983–1989," *Irish Political Studies*, 57.

²⁶⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 104; Mumford, "Intelligence Wars: Ireland and Afghanistan—The American Experience," *Civil Wars*, 385.

²⁶⁷ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 137, 155.

²⁶⁸ Peroff and Hewitt, "Rioting in Northern Ireland: The Effects of Different Policies," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 596.

²⁶⁹ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 136.

economy to a halt. Despite the collateral damage to civilians, the bombing campaign produced powerful propaganda and made the PIRA quite popular among young Catholics because they were actually doing something tangible to fight back against the British.

As a result of the PIRA's success, Goulding was forced to adopt a policy of "defense and retaliation."²⁷⁰ Thus, the OIRA also began deliberately targeting British soldiers. With the legitimizing effect of the OIRA joining in this policy, it did not take long for the Provisionals to further broaden their definition of "strategic targets." In March 1972, the offices of the Official Unionist Party were bombed, and hard-line Unionist politician William Craig found three sticks of gelignite in his garden.²⁷¹ These targets had previously been taboo because they invited charges of sectarianism, which was contrary to Republicanism—the belief that all Irishmen are Irish regardless of religion. Over the course of the summer, the violence continued to increase; the PIRA campaign spread to Derry. By now the British had stationed more than 10,000 troops in Northern Ireland, leading the Home Secretary, Reginald Maudling, to "declare that a state of 'open war' now existed between the IRA and British forces."²⁷²

The escalation of externally-directed violence also coincided with an escalation in the level of hostility between the two IRAs. After the PIRA initiated a policy of offensively attacking British soldiers and OIRA followed suit, the Provisionals warned that if any Provisionals were harmed as a result of their attacks, OIRA members would

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 139.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 100–01.

be shot. After an Official unit attacked a paratrooper patrol in Ballymurphy, the Provisionals captured the local OIRA commander and pistol-whipped him. This failed to have the intended deterrent effect and instead sparked a spiral of increasing violence. From beatings to shootings to planned assassinations, the situation declined to the point that McKee ordered the capture and execution of as many Officials as possible. In retaliation, the OIRA targeted eleven Provisional commanders for assassination. On March 8, 1971, the killing of Charlie Hughes, one of the Provisional commanders, who was young and respected by both sides, led to a negotiated ceasefire.²⁷³ This truce was reinforced by the perception that the Army had allowed, even encouraged, the factions to destroy each other.

This competition with the Officials also manifested itself in the adoption of a political ideology that would simultaneously differentiate the Provisionals from their more Marxist rivals and remove the criticism of the Provisionals as mindless militarists. After the initial split in 1969/70, the Provisionals were not wholly unified behind a political purpose other than the provision of Catholic protection in the North and an ostensible commitment to abstentionism. Therefore, the Provisionals appeared to need some political justification for the continued violence. In 1971, O Bradaigh and his top political advisor, Daithi O Connail, constructed a new political agenda to match the PIRA offensive in an effort to at least theoretically appease Protestant interests, entitled *Eire Nua*. It called for a decentralized federal union, which would resurrect the four

²⁷³ Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 126.

ancient provinces of Ireland: Munster, Leinster, Connaught, and Ulster.²⁷⁴ The Ulster province would revert back to the original nine counties, not just the six of Northern Ireland. Protestants would retain their majority, but it would be slim enough that they would have to rely on compromise with the Catholic community. Thus, through active participation of both communities, both could fully enjoy the state protection of their civil rights.²⁷⁵

This new political program was distrusted by MacStiofáin and the more militant members of the PIRA, especially the Northerners. They feared that pursuing a political agenda would decrease the resources available to wage the military campaign.²⁷⁶ Furthermore, many did not agree with the concessions inherent in the plan. With a devolved Ulster government, the Catholics would still be in a subordinate position compared to the Protestants. Thus, it was viewed not only as a petty bribe to assuage the Loyalists, but it essentially left the Catholics in no better position despite all the violence and bloodshed.²⁷⁷ Despite the opposition of Macstiofain and his supporters, the political program was passed and guided Provisional ideology for much of the next decade. However, given Sinn Fein's subordinate role until the 1980s, the diminution of resources toward the promotion of alternative political activity was fairly inconsequential.

²⁷⁴ This decentralization was also intended to appeal to the underdeveloped regions within the Republic of Ireland, in which many people resented the massive economic growth and prosperity of the east coast, especially around Dublin. Theoretically, strong provincial governments would be better able to funnel developmental resource into these regions. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 181.

²⁷⁵ Coogan, *The IRA*, 374; Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 103; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 181.

²⁷⁶ Coogan, *The IRA*, 374.

²⁷⁷ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 182.

VII. Internment

The increased activity of the Republican paramilitaries made governance increasingly difficult in Northern Ireland. Despite grave misgivings, the British condoned Stormont's imposition of internment, or imprisonment without trial, on August 9, 1971 in one last gamble to salvage the situation without having to assume direct responsibility for the crisis in Northern Ireland. The inherent problems with the suspension of basic civil rights were made even worse by the poor execution of the controversial policy.²⁷⁸ Catholic support for Republican violence had been growing steadily; internment made this growth exponential.

On March 26, 1971, Chichester-Clark resigned and was replaced by Brian Faulkner, whose resignation had triggered the O'Neill government's fall two years earlier. Despite his previous intransigence, the UK Representative described Faulkner as a "realist" who knew "that although his chances of remaining in office for long are not very bright, he can only do so by remaining in the good graces of Westminster."²⁷⁹ At the same time, Faulkner faced increasing unrest from his own constituency. In mid-April, Protestant mobs openly confronted the Army. In the Republic at least, this was interpreted as "severely denting the credibility of the Government's thesis that what it now faces is a security operation against the Irish Republican Army rather than deep

²⁷⁸ Wright and Bryett, "Propaganda and Justice Administration in Northern Ireland," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 30.

²⁷⁹ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, "Stability of Government in Northern Ireland," FCO 33/1471/21 Stability of Government in Northern Ireland, 21.3.1971.

inter-community hatred.”²⁸⁰ Furthermore, it highlighted the disconnect between elites and grassroots Unionists: “Ministers and Government officials spoke of ‘hooligans’ and ‘a momentary lapse,’ but local Loyalist leaders say that this week's rioting may be just a foretaste of what is to come this summer.”²⁸¹ The rioting of the summer was indeed extreme and out of control to the point that Faulkner demanded and was allowed to impose internment.

The decision to invoke the internment clauses of the Special Powers Act was not taken lightly. The option had never dropped out of consideration since the violence began, but was repeatedly rejected because it represented a public relations catastrophe. At the same time however, it was considered a viable and reasonable tool, should circumstances warrant such drastic action. The minutes from a Cabinet meeting shortly after the Falls Curfew in July 1970 explicitly reveal this situation:

The Minister of Home Affairs [Maudling] said that this possibility was kept under regular review, but hitherto the view had been taken that the adverse repercussions would outweigh any likely benefit. It also had to be acknowledged that, with the Army so deeply involved in the security situation, action of this sort could not be taken without consultation with Whitehall.²⁸²

Consequently, both governments drew up plans on how best to implement it, both technically and politically. With the deteriorating security situation at the end of 1970, preparations began in earnest, but political resistance to internment continued well into the turbulent summer.

²⁸⁰ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, “Stability of Government in Northern Ireland,” FCO 33/1471/21 Stability of Government in Northern Ireland, 21.3.1971.

²⁸¹ Chesshyre, Robert. “Ulster Loyalists Turn on Faulkner.” *Observer*, April 18, 1971.

²⁸² United Kingdom. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1535 20.7.70.

Instead, the Army imposed a version of indefinite detention that would provide many of the benefits of internment without the public outcry. Operation Linklater took advantage of the right of government to arrest, detain, and question individuals for up to 48 hours. It had been highly effective at disrupting the IRA command and control structure, to the point that generals boasted that “the IRA had been hard pushed even to place a few bombs in public lavatories.”²⁸³ However, as tension mounted prior to the Apprentice Boy March of August 12, Faulkner began to feel the squeeze from his supporters to begin interment. An extension of Operation Linklater was proposed to arrest known violent individuals on the 11th and release them on the 13th, after the march. However the GOC rejected this plan, primarily because of “the political implications of allowing the Protestant march to proceed while arresting numerous Catholics.”²⁸⁴ With the rejection of the Linklater plan, there seemed no further options available but to intern. In a prescient analysis, a senior Westminster civil servant warned: “The risk is that if it is conceded now, we shall find that in the next crisis we are left with nothing but Direct Rule.”²⁸⁵

As the Apprentice Boy March and its attendant violence loomed, the political pressure on Faulkner became too much to bear. Internment was the only crutch left to prop up his government and the window of opportunity for its employment was quickly

²⁸³ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, Stability of Government in Northern Ireland, FCO 33/1465/75a Stability of Government in Northern Ireland (WKK White to Sir Crawford, 3.8.71), “Internment,” para. 2.

²⁸⁴ United Kingdom. National Archives. “Northern Ireland—Internment, Report by officials,” Appendix A: Military aspects, para 6(d). CJ/4/56/17.

²⁸⁵ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, “Stability of Government in Northern Ireland,” FCO 33/1465/75c, (WKK White, 5.8.71), para. 3.

closing. He had been made fully aware that it was a political impossibility to impose internment without a gesture toward the minority, such as a ban on parades. To begin internment and ban the parades after the Marching Season was over would necessarily spark such a major backlash that Stormont would be suspended. If he did nothing, he would be ousted by his own party; if he acted too late, he would be ousted by Catholic protest. Westminster was aware of these pressures through its Representative at Stormont who reported:

For several weeks he has been under strong and probably unanimous pressure to intern from the unionist members of his cabinet. They are responding to widespread feeling at constituency level, and they no doubt fear that Craig or Paisley will benefit from Protestant feelings of fear and frustration if internment is not introduced. Craig and Paisley say that internment is no longer adequate to the situation and are pressing for the wholesale re-arming of the police and the resurrection of the B Specials. They know (as I do from a number of sources) that *there is a growing feeling among protestants formerly of moderate persuasion that in the end they will have to take matters into their own hands* and they hope to exploit this feeling. The government believe that internment would halt this trend.²⁸⁶

There were also concerns about the effect the IRA bombing campaign was having on local economy. Many businessmen openly expressed concern about major foreign investors withdrawing.

On August 9, 1971, Faulkner called upon the emergency powers vested in Articles 11 and 12 of the Special Powers Act to begin internment. He coupled the declaration with a six month ban on all marches and processions. Between just before dawn and noon, the security forces detained 347 of the 464 individuals they had

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

targeted. It is significant that despite claims to the contrary, this was a concerted blow to Catholics. In fact, the only Protestant arrested was the son of Maj. Bunting, who in defiance of his father was a member of NICRA and later became a leader within the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA).

It is particularly interesting that the execution of internment was so overwhelmingly partisan given Westminster's earlier insistence on a more balanced approach to minimize the negative political ramifications.²⁸⁷ The list had been compiled by the RUC and approved by Brian Faulkner, who claimed that there were no Protestants for whom there was information justifying detention. Furthermore, "the Attorney-General confirmed that the Police had been genuinely unable to furnish him with information suggesting that a subversive organization existed in the Protestant community."²⁸⁸ The publicly stated reasons and purposes of internment did little to mollify the Nationalist population, who viewed it as a direct affront.

Eventually, as the Protestant paramilitary groups became more organized and more active, the government began to target them as well. A bombing attack on McGurk's bar in Belfast on December 4, 1971 by "The Empire Loyalists,"²⁸⁹ which killed 15 Catholics, spurred this change in policy.²⁹⁰ Despite the Loyalist violence and

²⁸⁷ Westminster's original political plan, formulated in March 1971, was a limited form of internment. All forms of proscribed paramilitary organizations were to be targeted, particularly the IRA, Republican Clubs, and the UVF. Planners wanted to minimize the negative reaction against internment, therefore "the inclusion of the latter would be a sop for the minority community." The proposal sought to apply internment to a specific area, such as Greater Belfast. The greatest unrest was localized in Belfast and a limited response could possibly mollify the Catholic populace. United Kingdom, Public Record Office, CJ/4/56/1b,c (SF. 754-0143/F.4./JSE, 16.3.1971), paras. 3-4.

²⁸⁸ United Kingdom, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1609.

²⁸⁹ Thought to be a cover name for the UVF.

²⁹⁰ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 128.

its inherently destabilizing effects, the number of Protestants interned was an order of magnitude smaller than the Catholics: the peak number of Republicans held was 620, the peak number of Loyalists was 70.²⁹¹ The slow, gradual and ultimately incomplete adaptation to the realities of Protestant violence did little to appease the enraged Catholics.

This one-sided drastic step toward restoring law and order was further undercut by the fact that the Provisionals had gotten prior intelligence of the swoop and most of their key personnel were not captured. Additionally, a large portion of those sought were members of the less violent OIRA. The security forces' perception of them as major threats is in some ways excusable, because even some members of the IRA who were stationed in England were completely unaware of the split.²⁹² As a result of poor intelligence, most of those who were captured were either low-level, inactive, or innocent. Thus, the swoop proved relatively ineffective from a tactical point of view, although the government did make claims to significant and substantial intelligence gains. As will be discussed below, internment was a strategic disaster of epic proportions for the British.

The pinnacle of poor execution of the imposition of internment was the use of harsh interrogation techniques. Almost immediately after the imposition of internment, reports were being circulated of brutal treatment by the security forces. Nearly all the claims concerning what later came to be called “interrogation-in-depth” were connected

²⁹¹ Spjut, “Internment and Detention without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971-1975: Ministerial Policy and Practice,” *Modern Law Review*, 740.

²⁹² Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 125–26.

to the first massive security sweep, although there were also two cases in the months to follow. Because of the large public outcry at the apparent egregious violations of civil liberties and basic human rights, the government formed an investigatory committee under the chairmanship of Lord Edmund Compton, which found no evidence of brutality, just ill-treatment, in its November 1971 report.²⁹³ The Republic of Ireland took the United Kingdom to the European Commission on Human Rights in December 1971 and the appeal to the European Court on Human Rights ultimately found the British in violation of their treaty obligations not to engage in “cruel and inhumane treatment” in January 1978. Thus, the issue was kept alive and relevant for over six years.

Beyond even the most pessimistic internal governmental predictions, the imposition of internment and the accusations of cruel detainee treatment by the security forces spurred a major backlash against the British. Sectarian violence flared up across Belfast, forcing 7,000 Catholics and 2,000 Protestants out of their homes.²⁹⁴ During the rioting of the following two days, 17 people were killed, only one of whom was in the PIRA.²⁹⁵ As with the memory of brutality in response to the 1916 Easter Rising, the heavy-handed nature of internment produced significant grassroots support for Republican militancy. Recruitment into the IRA, especially the Provisionals, swelled almost beyond the organizational capacity to incorporate them. Many previously nonviolent Republicans now came to accept the validity of the IRA's position.

²⁹³ *Report of the Enquiry into Allegations Against the Security Forces of Physical Brutality in Northern Ireland Arising out of Events on the 9th August 1971* [Compton Report], Cmnd. 4823 (1971), 23.

²⁹⁴ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 101.

²⁹⁵ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 86.

Even those who remained dedicated to the nonviolent approach were outspoken in their protest. Those remaining public figures who continued to try to work within the Stormont system resigned their posts. The SDLP, which had already withdrawn from Stormont, went so far as to call a rival Parliament.²⁹⁶ The Stormont Cabinet was amazingly reserved in its reaction to this affront to its legitimacy. The only action it took was to advise the Londonderry Commission not to allow the SDLP to meet in the (London)Derry guildhall, but other than that it tried to downplay the SDLP's move as much as possible.²⁹⁷ The SDLP's Gerry Fitt went so far as to say:

The Unionist regime has been continually blackmailing Westminster to the effect that they must do everything possible to prevent a Protestant backlash. Westminster has now agreed that it is easier to coerce half-a-million than one million. The British Army now appears to be acting as agents of the Unionist Government. They will never again be accepted as a peacekeeping force.²⁹⁸

The entire Nationalist community was mobilized against internment in a way unseen since the first Anglo-Irish War. For example, a massive and more confrontational campaign of civil disobedience was organized by NICRA. It released the following statement the day after internment was imposed:

This association has struggled desperately in these last few months to force the British Government to undertake the task of reforming Northern Ireland. Instead it has moved to increasing repression, and now, the final scandalous policy of internment. We are holding the British Government responsible along with its Stormont puppets, for the present terror and violence in Northern Ireland. We believe Northern Ireland is now morally bankrupt and the only constructive course left for the people is total withdrawal from the state and its repressive apparatus. We

²⁹⁶ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 102.

²⁹⁷ United Kingdom, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, CAB/4/1616 20.9.71.

²⁹⁸ Hamilton, Andrew, "S.D.L.P. Alleges Armed Protestant Activity," *Irish Times*, August 13, 1971.

call on all people to resist internment through demonstrations and civil disobedience: including the withholding of rents and rates. We support and urge people in vulnerable areas to barricade themselves in for protection.²⁹⁹

Both the withholding of rents and rates, i.e. utility fees, and the public demonstrations were strictly illegal and are thus indicative of the radicalization NICRA had undergone in the previous two years. Yet far more important was the explicit transfer of legitimacy from the state to those manning the barricades in the Catholic enclaves by both NICRA and the SDLP.

The backlash to internment extended south of the border as well. The Lynch government was vocal in its criticism and accused Faulkner of making a “deliberate choice of the use of force rather than political means, to control the situation in Northern Ireland.”³⁰⁰ Irish public opinion was so heavily against the policy of internment that it was difficult for the Lynch government to take any action against the IRA, even if it wanted to. This public sympathy found additional expression in the Southern courts. Faulkner responded to the Irish criticism by complaining the handling of a case of “four men charged at Dundalk Court last month after firing shots across the Border at the Army. They were sentenced to 14 days from the date of arrest and released immediately.”³⁰¹ The South was now essentially a safe haven for the IRAs.

Riding this wave of support on both sides of the border, both IRAs increased their production of anti-security forces violence. They incited riots, burned buses, and

²⁹⁹ Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), *Press Release*, August 10, 1971.

³⁰⁰ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, “Home Secretary and Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office receiving Dr. Hillery on August 10,” PREM/15/478/44 FM FCO 111800Z.

³⁰¹ United Kingdom, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, “Speech by the PM (MR Brian Faulkner) during debate in NI House of Commons on Wilson Proposals—Thursday 9 December 1971,” 7, CAB/9J/62/23.

engaged in prolonged gun battles with the Army. The Provisionals took three specific steps to expand their violent campaign. First, all members of the security forces became legitimate targets, both on and off duty. Second, they began a bombing campaign against 'soft' targets, such as shops and pubs, instead of the just the strategic ones of the previous campaign. Third, they started to develop their nonviolent crafts such as propaganda distribution and intelligence gathering.³⁰² The violence of the reaction was evident in the 1971 statistics on conflict-related deaths: prior to August 9, 34 people had been killed; afterwards, 118 were killed, at an average of one per day.³⁰³

Nearly the entire Catholic community was united behind the campaign to end internment. There were a series of protests over the next few months. In mid-January 1972, a demonstration outside the internment camp at Magilligan near Derry got out of control and was put down by roughly 300 soldiers, including reinforcements from the hardened First Battalion Parachute Regiment (One Para).³⁰⁴ The following week, (London)Derry finally embraced the more aggressive tactics that had been developing in Belfast when two RUC men were killed in Derry and two bombs were detonated in One Para's barracks in Belfast.³⁰⁵ In light of this turbulence, the organizers of a major march planned for January 30 met with both IRAs to ensure they would not use the march as an opportunity for provocation:

It was very difficult to take people onto the streets because at that stage the Provisionals had taken over a very prominent role. We were, quite frankly, afraid because we wouldn't be responsible for what would

³⁰² Coogan, *The IRA*, 376.

³⁰³ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 102.

³⁰⁴ Mullan and Scally, *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday: The Truth*, xxvii.

³⁰⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 140.

happen. On this occasion we explained our difficulty and said that we would like to have a massive demonstration against internment. The message came back that if we wanted the demonstration, the IRA would leave that day to us and leave us alone. They weren't using us.³⁰⁶

This statement says much about the political climate of the time in Derry. If the PIRA was as in control as this statement suggests, any sort of public gathering on the street could be naturally be interpreted by Unionists as a display of Provisional power, irrespective of their declared intention to withdraw for the day. Thus, the government was threatened by any sort of demonstration, but the sheer size of the planned march was especially troubling.

The security forces began taking measures to contain the illegal march on January 25. General Ford, GOC (NI), drew up an Operation Order calling for the erection of 26 barriers to cordon off the Bogside. Each was to be manned by a platoon of infantrymen and a police presence. In case of a riot, they were authorized to respond with water cannon and baton rounds (rubber bullets) and CS gas as a last resort. One Para was to act as a snatch squad to arrest lawbreakers.³⁰⁷ The Order further warned that “almost certainly snipers, gasoline bombers and nail bombers will support the rioters” and that it was likely that there would be “IRA terrorist activity to take advantage of the event, to conduct shooting attacks against the security forces.”³⁰⁸ Thus, there was an elevated state of alert—despite the IRA commitment not to interfere, putting the troops on edge.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 140–41.

³⁰⁷ Mullan and Scally, *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday: The Truth*, xxvii.

³⁰⁸ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 141.

Despite the organizers precautions, the relatively peaceful march of roughly 10,000³⁰⁹ was fired upon by members of the British army after a small contingent broke away to throw stones at the security forces. Thirteen were killed on the spot and an additional 17 were wounded, one of whom died later. Most eyewitnesses discounted the claim by the troops that they had been fired upon and had acted in self-defense.³¹⁰ However, the most recent commission confirms that, before the assault, the Official IRA fired once at troops and missed.³¹¹ Apparently the OIRA sniper was forcibly disarmed and ejected from the area by members of the PIRA.³¹²

This apparent cold-blooded murder served to electrify public opinion even further against the British and the ranks of the paramilitaries swelled once again. As a result, the combined IRA activity increased to over 1,200 attacks a month by May.³¹³

VIII. Direct Rule

After Bloody Sunday and the resulting upsurge in Republican violence, Westminster could no longer ignore that things were spinning out of control in Northern Ireland. It was clear that Faulkner had lost control of the situation, leaving little option for the reluctant British but to end the region's devolution of government on March 24, 1972. The British authorities had been seriously preparing contingency plans for this eventuality since mid-1970, so the transition when it finally came was relatively

³⁰⁹ The exact number of demonstrators is a matter of debate. The Widgery Commission estimated between 3,000 and 5,000; Bernadette Devlin told Parliament that it was at least 15,000; organizers claimed 30,000.

³¹⁰ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 144.

³¹¹ Saville, Hoyt and Toohey, "Report of the Bloody Sunday Inquiry," *The Bloody Sunday Inquiry*.

³¹² Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 145.

³¹³ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 112.

smooth. The Heath government passed the Northern Ireland (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1972, which vested in the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland all the powers and responsibilities formerly held by Stormont.³¹⁴

The goal of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (SSNI) William Whitelaw was to transform an atmosphere dominated by violence back to one in which normal politics could function. To achieve this end, he had to restore a basic sense of law and order, or at least to get the IRA to discontinue its aggressive campaign of violence. This agenda of restoring a semblance of order naturally appealed to the Unionists, and the moderate Nationalists were willing to work with him to establish a more just framework of government. As a result, after some considerable hesitation, the more moderate Unionists decided to work within the new constraints on traditional Unionist power.

The Heath government tried to make the imposition of Direct Rule palatable to both sides. On the one hand, to win over the Catholics, Heath promised to scale down internment and promised to explore an increased role for the Republic of Ireland in Northern Ireland's affairs. This did much to appease the moderate Nationalists, who viewed his reform package as confirming the illegitimacy of the Stormont regime.³¹⁵ On the other hand, while the end of self-rule was anathema to the Unionists, the form of Direct Rule was designed to minimize their resistance to the imposition of centralized authority. Northern Ireland was not reintegrated as a normal constituent part of the United Kingdom. Many of its autonomous structures were maintained, including the

³¹⁴ United Kingdom, Northern Ireland Office, *The Future of Northern Ireland: A Paper for Discussion*, para. 24.

³¹⁵ Power, "Civil Protest in Northern Ireland," *Journal of Peace Research*.

Northern Irish civil service. The main difference is that they were under the direction of the SSNI instead of the Stormont Cabinet.

The decision to end Stormont had the immediate effect of hardening Loyalist attitudes further. Faulkner faced a bitter rival in the form of William Craig, who led the Ulster Vanguard movement. Where Faulkner was simply a staunch Unionist and called on Unionists to peacefully rely on their natural majority,³¹⁶ Craig offered political legitimacy to Loyalist paramilitary organizations through his fierce rhetoric. In a speech a week before Direct Rule began, he said, “We must build up a dossier of the men and women who are a menace to this country because if and when the politicians fail us, it may be our job to liquidate the enemy.”³¹⁷ Vanguard rallies were massive displays of Loyalist unity, and the obvious presence of the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) was not lost on anyone. The disillusionment with British rule was also apparent in the replacing of the Union Jack with Ulster flags, indicating a preference for independence than a dismantling of the Protestant dominated system.

With the fall of Stormont, the UDA, which had existed more in the shadows up to this point, began to take a more public role. They already had an effective organization with more than 30,000 by their own estimate, although others dispute that it was not quite so large.³¹⁸ The leadership was caught in a sting operation by MI5 on April 29.³¹⁹ While they were in prison, the temporary leadership took advantage of the

³¹⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 161.

³¹⁷ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 96.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

³¹⁹ They were subsequently acquitted of the charges of arms trafficking in December on the grounds of entrapment.

groundswell of popular support and new recruits to reorganize along the British Army model, just as the IRA had before them. They also became more aggressive, adopting the successful tactics the IRA had assiduously developed. The most blatant of these was the erection of Protestant ‘no-go areas’ in the late spring and early summer months. Their logic was that as long as Catholics had their own no-go areas and the government was unwilling to protect itself, then they would take matters into their own hands and control their neighborhoods’ law and order. These barricades were broken by the Army and the UDA responded by shooting at them.³²⁰ Thus, Direct Rule was not a welcome development for the UDA; rather, it was viewed as British capitulation to the IRA offensive.

On the other side, Direct Rule had the effect of splitting the Nationalist camp. The moderates wanted to wrest a political deal and reform from Westminster, while the more radical Republicans wanted to maintain the violence to attain the full 32-County Republic. At first, the elements with the biggest guns appeared to win the argument: the immediate response to Direct Rule was an increase in violent action. The collapse of the political institutions and the desperate splintering of the Unionists seemed to portend the ultimate collapse of Northern Ireland, and thus the creation of the 32-county Republic seemed to be within reach. However, this campaign quickly died down. As one commentator put it, with the fall of Stormont, “the feeling grew in the Catholic

³²⁰ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 103–05.

community—fostered by the SDLP, the clergy and the Dublin government—that the Provos ought now call a halt to their campaign.”³²¹

IX. Ceasefires

The need to end the violence before pursuing a political solution was to prove a continual problem throughout the Troubles. It bogged down Whitelaw for a year before he was able to pursue his political agenda. However, despite the temporary lulls and general decline in violence over the next few years, its importance and power to disrupt politics would remain crucial. The OIRA ended their violent campaign in May 1972, preferring a political solution to a violent one. The Provisionals were more sparing in their pauses, preferring to use them as leverage during the negotiations. Nevertheless, the uneasy and unfortunately brief truce was enough to kick-start a political dialogue. While these negotiations failed to bring about peace in the region at that time, they opened up communication and helped spur the end of the hated policy of internment.

Given the large number of raw recruits and the sense of the historical moment, it is somewhat understandable that the campaign of Republican violence after Bloody Sunday was poorly planned out and even more poorly executed. A number of the incidents were actually perpetrated by the Provisionals, but the elevated level of violence and the subsequent public condemnation were not enough to overwhelm their substantial support base, unlike the much smaller and weaker Officials.

The OIRA’s use of violence became increasingly ineffective, leading them to end their violent campaign in May 1972. On February 22, the OIRA planted a bomb in

³²¹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 112.

the Parachute Regiment's headquarters as revenge for their participation in the shooting during Bloody Sunday. Instead of killing any soldiers, the bomb killed a Catholic Army chaplain, a gardener, and five women working in the kitchen.³²² Their second major failure was the attempted assassination of a Unionist politician, John Taylor. He was shot ten times, mostly in the head. Amazingly, most of the bullets went through the jaw and he survived.³²³ The final blow for the OIRA was their kidnapping and killing of a soldier in the Royal Irish Rangers. Ranger William Best, 19, was a fairly popular Catholic from Derry, on leave from Germany. His murder provoked a groundswell of anti-IRA sentiment, leading to the OIRA permanent ceasefire on May 29.³²⁴ Goulding rejected the increasingly ideologically unsound and sectarian “war” to develop a useful political debate, although he reserved the right to defend Nationalist areas from attack by security forces or paramilitaries.³²⁵

The PIRA had their share of controversial attacks as well. On March 4, another bomb went off at the Abercorn restaurant in Belfast, killing two women and injuring over a hundred more. The PIRA was blamed for this attack, although they denied it. On March 20, a new phase in the bombing campaign began as a result of the PIRA's technical innovation of the car bomb. The telephoned warning had been obscure and misleading, causing the police to herd people toward the bomb on Donegal Street in

³²² Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 156.

³²³ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 94–95.

³²⁴ Although apparently not as large or coordinated as the later peace movements, apparently several Nationalist women's peace groups sprung up in the wake of these attacks. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 111.

³²⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 162.

Belfast, rather than away from it. As a result, two policemen and four civilians were killed, 19 seriously wounded, and over a hundred injured.³²⁶

With the Whitelaw initiative and the reversal of public opinion in response to the disastrous bombing campaigns of both wings of the IRA in 1972, the Irish government could begin to cooperate more extensively with their British counterparts. When Chichester-Clark's government failed, Dr. Hillery had raised the question of “some form of consultation, either institutionalised or informal, with the opposition leaders. He commented that some such political move offered the best hope of stopping the I.R.A. gunmen.”³²⁷ At the time, the suggestion was shelved, but given the new political climate it provided the basis for expanding the Republic's role in Northern affairs.

Although larger and with a stronger base of support, the Provisionals felt the pressure from the Nationalist community in light of the fall of Stormont and the disastrous wave of violence. Their first major politically-driven comprehensive ceasefire was begun at midnight, March 10, 1972.³²⁸ High level contacts had been established following the Abercorn bombing, leading to the ceasefire to provide a “violence-free window in which direct contact could be made.”³²⁹ The British government was constrained by the stated policy that it would not negotiate with terrorists.

³²⁶ Ibid., 160.

³²⁷ United Kingdom, Public Record Office, “Stability of Government in Northern Ireland,” FCO 33/1471 25 (FM DUBLIN 221315Z, PECK).

³²⁸ The IRA regularly called ceasefires during the Winter holidays as well as area-specific temporary cessations of violence.

³²⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 157.

In the face of public opinion and the IRA's apparent power, the British agreed to secret meetings. On March 13, Harold Wilson, now leader of the Opposition, accompanied by his Press Secretary and Labour's Shadow NI Secretary, Merlyn Rees, met with the Adjutant-General, the Belfast Brigade Commander, and a staff member from GHQ. Although the atmosphere was congenial, Wilson's Press Secretary noted that "a meeting of minds was clearly impossible. We were planets apart."³³⁰ However, while not producing any tangible results, the meetings established contact. These meetings provided opportunities to better understand the IRA, even if their demands could not be met. The British were truly interested in pursuing a workable solution, but they were only able to compromise so much in a given period of time because of the structures and pressures of the political system.

As the political situation developed seemingly in the Nationalists' favor, the IRA decided to retest the waters. On June 13, MacStiofáin, having crossed the border in disguise, delivered a brazen press conference in Derry offering a truce if the British were willing to negotiate. Whitelaw naturally declined, the government not being able to afford to be seen publicly negotiating with a terrorist organization.³³¹ However, secret contacts were followed up.

On June 20, 1972, NIO representatives met with Gerry Adams and Daithi O Conaill to discuss a ceasefire as a prelude to the more formal meeting. In exchange for a halt to IRA activity and the removal of all booby traps, the Army would discontinue its active presence in Nationalist areas and stop pursuing PIRA suspects still at large. To

³³⁰ Ibid., 156.

³³¹ Ibid., 162–63.

reinforce the ceasefire, a direct hotline was agreed upon between the two sides.³³² On June 26, the Provisionals called a ceasefire in preparation for another high level meeting. Before the PIRA agreed to the truce negotiations, they demanded that the British agree to two conditions: political status for IRA prisoners and the release from internment of Gerry Adams.³³³ Both these demands were met, although the government phrased the status as “Special Category” prisoners, which was awarded to paramilitary offenders of all persuasions. This policy would later in itself be a major source of contention.³³⁴

On July 7, the PIRA leadership was flown to London to meet with Whitelaw. The IRA contingent included MacStiofáin; O Conaill, the PIRA's lead political theoretician; the Officers Commanding (OCs) of both Derry and Belfast, Martin McGuinness and Seamus Twomey; Adams; and a Dublin lawyer, Myles Shevlin, who acted as their secretary. As before, there was a huge chasm between the political mindsets and intentions of the two parties. Whitelaw was very courteous, insisting the IRA delegation air its demands and interests. The Republican delegation made three specific demands: (1.) internment must end and there should be a general amnesty for all political offenders; (2.) the British government must make a public declaration recognizing that Ireland was a single, coherent unit; therefore, decisions about the

³³² Ibid., 164.

³³³ At this point, Gerry Adams was a key leader in the Belfast Brigade hierarchy. Although still a young man, he had been involved in the original split of the IRA, siding with the Provisional coup. He had already demonstrated keen political and strategic qualities, thus rising through the ranks very quickly. His importance to the PIRA administration and his degree of personal power is evident in his specific inclusion in these demands. Not surprisingly, he would go on to lead the Republican movement.

³³⁴ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 163.

political future should be made by the people of the whole of Ireland; (3.) the British should publicly plan a complete withdrawal of troops by January 1, 1975. They also stressed that they were not sectarian, correcting Whitelaw's use of the term "Protestant" with "Unionist." The Republicans said that they did not want a confrontation with the UDA, but they would not allow the UDA to intimidate either the British government or the Irish people from pursuing a unification policy.³³⁵

While the IRA believed they were in a position of strength, the British did not react well to MacStiofáin who "was like the representative of an army which had fought the British to a standstill...[telling them] what they should and shouldn't do if they wanted peace."³³⁶ For legal reasons, Whitelaw could not possibly promise to accept the IRA's demands, which called for a complete British withdrawal from Northern Ireland. However, he did promise to bring the demands before the Cabinet and return in a week to give their answer. Despite the obvious differences in objectives and understanding, the two sides did manage to agree to a basic, if temporary, truce. Both sides agreed to suspend offensive operations until July 14, when they would meet again to discuss the demands.

Even such an unimposing agreement proved too much, and just two days later, on July 9, the ceasefire was broken.³³⁷ A dispute over housing brought the truce to an end, yet again demonstrating how volatile the issue was in these early days of the

³³⁵ Ibid., 165–69; Coogan, *The IRA*, 392–96.

³³⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 169 (Frank Steele interview).

³³⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 396; Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 106.

Troubles.³³⁸ More cynical observers suggest that both sides were deliberately undermining the peace process to serve their own ends.

The British knew they could not realistically expect to meet the Republicans' demands. Not only were there legislative constraints, but the Loyalists flexed their muscles during the IRA ceasefire to remind Westminster of their power, killing four Catholics and an English visitor, who was shot by mistake.³³⁹ There is also some evidence to support the idea that the British wanted the truce to fail from the beginning of the process. They had been pressured into the negotiations, because Whitelaw worried that the PIRA might use a refusal to talk as propaganda, demonstrating British recalcitrance and unwillingness to work with the Nationalist community. On the other hand, from the British stance, the brief ceasefire was enough time to gather significant intelligence on the PIRA leadership.³⁴⁰ Moreover, by meeting with them and having the

³³⁸ The Lenadoon housing estate on the western fringe of Andersontown had been a mixed community until Loyalist leaders 'advised' Protestants to vacate, ostensibly because of the Catholic threat although the Catholics believed it was to clear the line of fire for the UDA. All the same, the houses were vacant and the need for replacement housing for dislocated Catholic families was intense by this time. The UDA still considered the estate to be Loyalist territory and threatened to attack any Catholic settlers. The army moved in to prevent a provocation by either side. Angry crowds gathered on both sides of the army barricade. Visibly armed UDA men gathered behind the army, which was using water cannon, CS gas, and rubber bullets to keep the Catholics at bay. The PIRA began negotiating with the troops, who disarmed one UDA man. However, he viewed the ramming of a moving truck by one of the army Saracens as a breach of the ceasefire. He was supported by a detachment armed with modern weapons, who fired over 300 rounds at the troops. The incident had been allowed to escalate despite a flurry of phone calls to Whitelaw, making his commitment to the ceasefire somewhat questionable. Coogan, *The IRA*, 396–97; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 172–73; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 113.

³³⁹ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 106.

³⁴⁰ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 112–13.

truce fail, he could thereby justify taking stronger security measures without the risk of alienating the more moderate Catholics.³⁴¹

Similarly, the Provisionals realized they would not achieve their goals through negotiation, but the pretense allowed them to claim to have attempted to negotiate as a way to mollify their detractors in the Nationalist community. More importantly, they wanted a short truce to reduce the threat to their structural integrity. The longer the peace lasted, the more lax the organization would become, and volunteers whose identity was not yet known might publicly associate with known IRA men, raising the risk that they would be identified by British or Loyalist adversaries. Instead, the PIRA returned to their previous strategy of negotiation through coercion.

On Friday, August 21, 1972, the Provisionals planted 22 car bombs in downtown Belfast in an attempt to overwhelm the security force response. It appears they were more successful than they intended, and blamed the authorities for failure to adequately respond to their warnings when nine people were killed and at least 130 others were injured.³⁴² ‘Bloody Friday,’ as it came to be called, was a political disaster for the Provisionals. The bomb blasts and the resulting carnage were televised, spreading the impact of the violence beyond the province. Ten days later, PIRA launched another series of three coordinated bomb attacks in Claudy, outside

³⁴¹ This turned out to be valid when, following the inflammation of public protest by all sides against the PIRA attacks on Black Friday (discussed below), the British Army successfully ended the no-go areas with minimal resistance with the invasion of these areas during Operation Motorman. Following this operation, the Provisionals' ability to pursue their campaign was drastically undercut. The relative peace that followed allowed the moderates of both communities to begin to negotiate a political compromise.

³⁴² Many claim the death count is 11, although this is an error resulting from the difficulty of counting the scattered and destroyed body parts. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 109–10; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 117.

(London)Derry, that killed nine more people.³⁴³ In response to the outcry against the IRA, the PIRA adopted a more cautious and careful approach, but continued their violence production nonetheless.

X. The End of Free Derry

With the collapse of the ceasefire and the backlash to the excessive violence of Bloody Friday, the British had the political coverage to initiate Operation Motorman on July 31. This was a massive invasion of the Bogside and the barricaded enclaves in Belfast in the largest British military operation since the Suez Crisis.³⁴⁴ There was no significant resistance; instead, the IRA fled into the countryside or across the border. It is difficult to overstate the significance of the end of the no-go areas for the Republican struggle; losing the no-go areas has been described as “shatter[ing] the IRA's military bargaining strategy.”³⁴⁵ The IRA could no longer draw upon the propaganda value of having effective mini-states, nor could they rely on the accompanying low-level violence, which served to keep “the cause” fresh and immediate. The role the IRA had embraced as the police and defenders of the community had deeply embedded them into the larger community. The loss of this direct connection left additional room for other actors to gain influence. More immediately, the no-go areas had provided convenient safe havens from which they could organize and launch their operations. The level of

³⁴³ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 159.

³⁴⁴ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 178.

³⁴⁵ Smith and Neumann, “Motorman’s Long Journey: Changing the Strategic Setting in Northern Ireland,” *Contemporary British History*, 413.

violence almost immediately dropped significantly and continued to decline for the next few years.³⁴⁶

The breathing room this reduction in violence provided allowed Whitelaw to pursue political means of deescalating the crisis, developing the strategy that was to dictate British policy for the next 25 years. For the first time, a British official publicly admitted that there was indeed an “Irish Dimension” and that “whatever arrangements are made for the future administration of the Province must take account of the Province's relationship with the Republic of Ireland.”³⁴⁷ At the same time, he reassured Unionists that their place in the United Kingdom would never be changed without their direct consent. Not only did Whitelaw lay the theoretical groundwork for the issue of consent,³⁴⁸ but he took immediate steps to pursue this policy, such as province-wide plebiscite on the border with the Republic, held on March 8, 1973. This poll was not particularly welcomed by the Nationalist community because it would merely confirm the majority's desire to remain in the United Kingdom.

On the same day as the 1973 Border Poll, PIRA extended its bombing campaign to mainland England.³⁴⁹ They had considered doing so in previous years, but had elected to save it for a crisis.³⁵⁰ Loyalist paramilitary responses, Operation Motorman, and the hardening of the Republic in clamping down on the IRA had decimated the

³⁴⁶ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 110; Lafree, Dugan and Korte, “The Impact of British Counterterrorist Strategies on Political Violence in Northern Ireland,” *Criminology*.

³⁴⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 178–79.

³⁴⁸ This concept would eventually be enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

³⁴⁹ There was a long Republican tradition of bombing the British mainland, including the 1867-85 Fenian dynamite campaign and the 1939 IRA campaign.

³⁵⁰ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 179.

Provisional's leadership and its capacity to wage war in Northern Ireland, creating the necessary crisis. Moreover, with the beginning of Direct Rule, the locus of power shifted from Belfast to London and bombs in mainland Britain became a regular feature of the Troubles.³⁵¹ By detonating an explosive in England whenever there was an attempt to solve the crisis without including them, the PIRA brought home the war to the British people and thereby the government.

The five bombs in Derry and six in Belfast, the soldier killed while guarding a polling station, and discovery of the body of a Catholic assassinated by Loyalists that morning were dwarfed by the news of the two major explosions in the heart of London.³⁵² Four car bombs had been deployed to blow up the Old Baily, the British Forces Broadcasting offices in Westminster, the Army Central Recruiting Depot in Whitehall, and New Scotland Yard in Victoria. The ones in Westminster and Victoria were both found and defused in time. However, the other two detonated before the police could clear the area, leaving 180 people injured, and one death as the result of a heart attack.³⁵³

Despite this escalation, or perhaps because of it, the security forces were better able to counter the IRA. International public opinion swayed to favor the British, allowing increased cooperation between various military and intelligence services, especially between the British and Irish. By the end of 1973, the IRA was beginning to

³⁵¹ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 124.

³⁵² Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 126.

³⁵³ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 182.

contemplate ending the campaign in view of the major structural damage they were suffering from both the Loyalist paramilitaries and the security forces.³⁵⁴

XI. Sunningdale and the Loyalists

The drastic reduction in violence raised hopes on all sides that the time was ripe for resolution of the crisis. SSNI Whitelaw took advantage of the window of opportunity to push forward a power-sharing agreement that would preserve the Northern Irish state but give the Catholic population a far more powerful voice in Northern politics. The government formed out of the resulting Sunningdale Agreement on December 9, 1973 failed because it relied solely upon a coalition of the moderate middle: it won strong support from moderates on both sides of the sectarian divide, but was undermined by the extremists through violence.

On March 20, 1973, Whitelaw issued a White Paper entitled “Northern Ireland Constitutional Proposals,” which would serve as a guideline for British policy thereafter. Whitelaw's proposal was a nuanced one that increased Catholic political clout in Northern Ireland without endangering the union with the British crown. To win over the Nationalists, he acknowledged a need for the Republic of Ireland to have some say in the conflict's resolution. To keep the support of the Unionists, he reaffirmed the British government's standing promise that any change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom would only be as a result of the will of the majority within that state.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 199.

Whitelaw moved quickly to implement his suggested reforms. On the face of it, the situation was dramatically improving. In January, Sinn Fein had declared a boycott of local council elections, which led to major SDLP victories, including the mayoralty of Derry. These victories established the SDLP as *the* representative party of the Nationalist community. The increased internment of Loyalists and reduction of internment in general both helped to win over the Nationalists. Furthermore, the increased success in tracking down and arresting IRA agitators on both sides of the partition seemed to be seriously undermining the power of the radical Republicans.³⁵⁵

Despite the reassurances about British commitment to the Union, the Unionist Party almost immediately split over the issue of giving the Republic a say in the North's internal affairs. Craig led the split and broke away to form the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party (VUPP). This was made more threatening to the peace by the UDA's announcement that it threw its support to the VUPP.³⁵⁶ However, a strike organized by Craig, the UDA, and the Loyalist Association of Workers (LAW) to protest the internment of the first Protestant paramilitaries in February had done much to alienate the Protestant community from the Loyalists. In the ensuing violence, three Loyalist paramilitary members were shot dead, two by the army, one by the IRA. The real public relations disaster was the Loyalist killing of a Protestant fireman while attempting to put

³⁵⁵ Acting on tips from a highly placed informer, on July 19, 1973, the security forces successfully arrested 16 IRA men from the Belfast Brigade's key staff, including the entire Third Battalion staff. *Ibid.*, 184.

³⁵⁶ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 120.

out a fire.³⁵⁷ The resulting disgust with the Loyalists helped to prop up Faulkner's position within Unionism as he decided to engage with the Whitelaw reform process.

Thus, although the fringe actively opposed it, a large plurality in Northern Ireland supported making limited but substantial political concessions for peace. The Provisionals vocally opposed the restoration of devolved government and called a boycott of the subsequent elections for a new devolved Assembly in Stormont.³⁵⁸ In addition, paramilitaries on both sides, but especially Loyalists, increased the level of violence to undermine political support for the agreement.³⁵⁹ Yet on June 28, the elections were held, wherein pro-reform Unionists won 26.5 percent, the SDLP 22.1, Alliance³⁶⁰ 9.2, and smaller parties adding 6.8. This resulted in a nearly 2:1 margin in the Assembly in favor of reform.³⁶¹ When the Executive was formed on November 21, it quickly began the preparations for a comprehensive agreement that could provide a stable solution to the Troubles. The new Constitution became law on July 18.

The movement toward political reconciliation was far from smooth. The creation of the power-sharing executive proved to be a far easier task than the formation of the Council of Ireland, which was hated by the Loyalists. On November 21, after ten hours of negotiation, representatives of the Unionist Party, the SDLP, and the Alliance Party worked out the logistics of the coalition. Faulkner would be Chief Executive, while Fitt would act as his deputy. This agreement was greeted with high praise by

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 128.

³⁵⁹ Rose, "From Sunningdale to Peace?," *Peace Review*, 142.

³⁶⁰ A smaller party of moderate Catholics and Protestants who attempted to break down the sectarian divide.

³⁶¹ Tonge, "From Sunningdale to the Good Friday Agreement," *Contemporary British History*, 45.

Heath's government, but the Unionists split yet again, leaving Faulkner increasingly isolated.³⁶²

Ignoring the crumbling of his power base beneath him, Faulkner proceeded to work out plans for the Council of Ireland. The new Irish Fine Gael-Labour coalition under the premiership of Liam Cosgrave held out the offer of greater coordination of security policy to help bolster Faulkner's position. On December 6, 1973, representatives of the Heath and Cosgrave governments met with representatives of the moderate Northern parties at the Civil Service Staff College at Sunningdale. Three days later, they announced what came to be known as the Sunningdale Agreement, which create a Council of Ministers from both Irelands and a consultative assembly made up of MPs from both.³⁶³

On January 4, 1974, the Unionists rejected Sunningdale by a margin of 427 to 374.³⁶⁴ Faulkner and his followers resigned to form their own party. The timing of this was very poor as Whitelaw was withdrawn to Britain at the same time to deal with a domestic strike that would prove the undoing of the Conservative government. Heath called for a national election on the platform of "Who runs Britain?" and the anti-Sunningdale Unionists ran on the platform "Who runs Ulster?" The February 28 elections not only swept Heath out of office, but also returned anti-Faulkner candidates to all of the Unionist seats.³⁶⁵

³⁶² Taylor, *Loyalists*, 121.

³⁶³ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 188.

³⁶⁴ Taylor, *Loyalists*, 121.

³⁶⁵ The Nationalists won one of the twelve Westminster seats: the SDLP's Gerry Fitt represented the heavily Nationalist West Belfast constituency.

The new British Labour government held only a weak majority, which severely limited its ability to act independently and decisively. That was to prove disastrous in an already turbulent Northern Ireland. When Merlyn Rees, the new SSNI, arrived in Belfast, he was greeted by Faulkner, who said, "I cannot carry the Unionist Party on Sunningdale whatever happens... I have lost my reason to be. I'm beaten, overwhelmed by the vote against my sort of unionism, or the unionism I'm trying to carry out."³⁶⁶

Faulkner's fears were confirmed when in the end of May he was forced to resign and with him fell Sunningdale. The immediate cause of the end of the Whitelaw initiative was a massive strike begun on May 15 by the Ulster Workers Council (UWC) in conjunction with the UVF and UDA. It began slowly, but quickly gathered momentum, with the help of armed paramilitaries who manned roadblocks. There was even considerable fear that this strike would turn into a coup.³⁶⁷ The strike was accentuated by a number of UDA bombs, which killed a total of 26 people in Dublin and 5 in Monaghan, marking a major expansion of Loyalist violence to include the Republic.³⁶⁸

This strike demonstrated the impotence of the new Labour government in Westminster, which was unable to put the strike down with force. On May 25, Wilson verbally attacked the Unionists for being "spongers" but this failed to reform them. The Army lacked the manpower to both man the empty posts and quell the strikers.

³⁶⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 193.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 194.

³⁶⁸ Coogan, *The IRA*, 447.

Moreover, any such physical attack would be a public relations nightmare.³⁶⁹ In the end, the Wilson government grudgingly acquiesced and dissolved the Northern Ireland assembly, reverting Northern Ireland back to Direct Rule. The Loyalists' affront would not be forgotten and reinforced Labour predilections to engage with the Nationalists.

Despite the failure of Sunningdale itself, the ideas it encapsulated had an enduring effect. First, it provided hope that it was at least possible to find a mutually agreeable arrangement that would satisfy most members of both sectarian communities. Second, the recognition of the South's natural interest in the North could not be withdrawn, even if it was deemphasized for the next decade. As a result of this change—and the disillusionment with violence resulting from bloodshed from the Loyalist bombs in the South—the Cosgrave government was still willing to cooperate with the British.

XII. The Rise of the Irps

After the declaration of the 1972 OIRA ceasefire in the wake of the Aldershot bombing, there was considerable pressure within the Official IRA to resume armed conflict. Many of the OIRA's more militant members subsequently coalesced behind Seamus Costello and split to form the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) in the end of 1974. When that split turned into a bloody feud, the Provisionals were happy to stand by and let their ideological enemies kill each other.

³⁶⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 194.

Costello was a dynamic, young leader who had risen to prominence during the Border Campaign, earning the nickname “The Boy General,”³⁷⁰ and he was afforded enormous respect within the Republican and larger Nationalist communities. He walked a fine line between the extremes that tore the IRA apart. On the one hand, he was fully committed to the tradition of physical force, in contrast to the Goulding leadership's embrace of nonviolent politics. On the other hand, he was a strong believer in the need for a coherent ideology to justify this violence and build a mass movement, in contrast to the reactionary forces that fueled the Provisional movement. Thus, he espoused a middle way that had broad potential appeal.³⁷¹

Since the 1972 ceasefire, the Officials had rapidly lost a sizeable portion of their membership. In the two years after its declaration, membership in Dublin had shrunk from 300 to around 90 and several local offices had closed entirely.³⁷² Given his popularity, Costello served as a lightning rod for opposition within the OIRA to the Goulding leadership. It does not appear that he was actively pursuing a split or coup at the time, but he was court-martialed and his followers were blocked from the Official Ard Fheis in 1974.³⁷³

On December 8, 1974, Costello organized a conference for his supporters in Spa, near Dublin, where he founded both the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) and the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) in separate, but overlapping

³⁷⁰ Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution*, 25; Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 256.

³⁷¹ The Provisionals' adoption of this model in 1983 underscores its potential for success.

³⁷² *Irish Times*, December 14, 1974 (LH INLA1).

³⁷³ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 413–14.

meetings.³⁷⁴ Unlike the Provisionals, the IRSP, or “Irps” as its members came to be known, was not simply a split from the old party. Instead, Costello merged some disaffected Officials with non-Republican Leftist Nationalists to produce a unique blend. Most prominent among these non-Republicans were Ronnie Bunting, the only Protestant interned in the initial Dawn Swoop, and Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, the former MP who had been jailed for her participation in the Battle of the Bogside and whose vocal support brought instant credibility to the new party.

The appeal of this politically sophisticated brand of Republicanism was quickly apparent. Within a few weeks, the IRSP had set up at least local six branches with several hundred members on both sides of the border.³⁷⁵ Roughly 30 internees in Long Kesh pledged their allegiance to the new party, giving the Irps a critical seal of approval.³⁷⁶ By February 1975, the party had grown to 700 people and 35 branches.³⁷⁷ By April, IRSP was claiming that its membership in Belfast was twice that of the Officials.³⁷⁸

The Officials responded to this challenge with extreme hostility toward and criticism of the IRSP. One of the Official branches in Antrim passed a motion essentially shunning their erstwhile colleagues, which resolved “that the Movement have nothing whatsoever to do with the IRSP, especially if their support is offered at

³⁷⁴ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 257.

³⁷⁵ Irish Republican Socialist Party, *Press Release*, n.d., Linen Hall Library Political Collection, INLA Ephemera File 1.

³⁷⁶ *Irish Times*, December 20, 1973.

³⁷⁷ *Irish Press*, February 19, 1975.

³⁷⁸ *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, April 1975.

any time.”³⁷⁹ More importantly, the OIRA turned its violence on the upstart organization. In the two weeks after its founding, the IRSP claimed that four members were kidnapped, questioned, and beaten by the OIRA, two supporters were shot and slightly wounded, and numerous other ex-Officials were warned that the IRSP would be “smashed.”³⁸⁰ The feud heated up in February, when the OIRA also accused the IRSP of “stealing I.R.A. property and exchanging gelignite for weapons with other groups for the purpose of extending their campaign of sectarian violence.”³⁸¹ This led to the killing of Hugh Ferguson, a prominent young member of the INLA, on February 20.

The existence of the INLA was strongly denied during this initial period as Costello tried to attract new followers and avoid excessive antagonism of the existing paramilitaries.³⁸² However, it appears that the Officials responded so strongly to Costello's new party at least in part because he had taken some of their weapon stocks.³⁸³ Although the INLA used various names, such as Irish Citizens' Army and People's Liberation Army, they nevertheless responded to OIRA violence in kind. The INLA killed the OIRA's Sean Fox on February 25. After this, the feud escalated further and there were several near-fatal attacks in both directions before a ceasefire was announced on March 16.³⁸⁴ This cessation did not last long and they were attacking

³⁷⁹ *Irish News*, December 23, 1974.

³⁸⁰ *Irish Times*, January 10, 1975.

³⁸¹ *Irish Times*, February 25, 1975.

³⁸² *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, October 1975.

³⁸³ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 421; Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 25.

³⁸⁴ *Sunday Independent*, March 16, 1975 (LH INLA1).

each other again before the end of the month.³⁸⁵ Three more people were killed in the feuding during April, after which it died down for a while. However, it reignited in June when two people linked to the INLA were killed by the OIRA.³⁸⁶

It is still unclear exactly what the relationship between the Irps and the Provisionals was during this formative period. Although there was speculation that the Provisionals were providing assistance to the Irps, this was strongly denied. As a Sinn Fein spokesperson said, “We have nothing to do with either side. They made their own bed and they can lie in it as far as we are concerned.”³⁸⁷ However, at the end of March, the IRSP announced that it “was now accepting ‘protection’ from another organisation and members on the run were advised to come out of hiding.”³⁸⁸ This could have been a reference to the INLA, but also could have been the PIRA. This possibility is especially intriguing because there were skirmishes between Provisional and Official supporters during the Easter parades a few days later,³⁸⁹ and the OIRA accused the PIRA of two shooting attacks the following week.³⁹⁰ Irrespective of the formality of their cooperative agreement, the Irps opted not to challenge the Provisionals' ceasefire.

The violent reaction of the Officials, and the resultant appearance of the INLA earlier than Costello had planned, effectively undercut the development of the new organization.³⁹¹ In December 1975, McAliskey and several of the Leftist leaders

³⁸⁵ Irish Republican Socialist Party, “Statement on behalf of the National Executive,” *Press Release*, April 3, 1975, available in Linen Hall Political Collection, INLA Ephemera 2.

³⁸⁶ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 421–22.

³⁸⁷ *Irish Press*, March 29, 1975.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.* See also “Statement on behalf of the Belfast Regional Executive,” March 27, 1975.

³⁸⁹ *Irish News*, April 1, 1975.

³⁹⁰ *Irish Times*, April 5, 1975.

³⁹¹ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 258.

resigned from the IRSP National Executive after failing to make the INLA subordinate to the IRSP rather than the reverse.³⁹² While this was a crippling blow, it is possible that the INLA/IRSP combination could have eventually recovered if Costello had not been killed in 1977.³⁹³

XIII. The Second Ceasefire

Even as this internecine strife was brewing within the Republican community, the British government was intent on finding a political solution to replace the failed Stormont experiment. The Labour government learned a valuable lesson from Sunningdale: any ultimately successful peace agreement had to win the support of the extremists. Rees and his Permanent Secretary Frank Cooper tried to pick up where Whitelaw had failed by drawing the paramilitaries into the process. They were quite successful in this endeavor: PIRA declared a second ceasefire that lasted roughly a year with only a few breaches. Unfortunately, the failure to convert this cessation of violence into political progress eventually led to its collapse and resulted in a distrust of nonviolent politics. Indeed, the ceasefire was so discredited as a policy option that it would be 16 years before it was used again—and even then it was highly controversial.³⁹⁴

³⁹² *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1975; Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 257–58; Coogan, *The IRA*, 457.

³⁹³ As the next chapter discusses, the INLA once more rose to prominence in 1979 and was active in the protests against the criminalization policy. Had Costello survived, his personal gravitas within the larger community might have propelled the IRSP to a position of greater leadership.

³⁹⁴ In other words, Rees' initial outreach led to a perception in the Nationalist community about the potential profitability of nonviolent politics. However, the collapse of the talks significantly shifted both the supply and demand curves for nonviolent politics to the left.

Rees realized the need for an end to violence as a prelude to true systemic overhaul, which required selling the idea to the paramilitaries. Despite Whitelaw's proscription of further negotiations with PIRA after the largely unproductive meetings in the summer of 1972, low-level contacts had been maintained through a variety of sources.³⁹⁵ He planned to call a Constitutional Convention, but he wanted all parties represented. Therefore, he not only removed Sinn Fein and the UVF from the proscribed list in spring 1974 but also began to actively pursue the formerly secret channels.

On July 4, 1974, Rees issued a White Paper, which outlined his vision for an acceptable peace deal, consisting primarily of a devolved power-sharing government in Northern Ireland. He held out the possibility of troop removal in exchange for a permanent disarming of the IRA. He also outlined his plans for a Constitutional Convention. As a token of good faith, he announced the intention to end internment.³⁹⁶

By December 1974, the IRA was once again willing to explore the possibility of peaceful negotiations because the bombing campaign in England was not going well. While it certainly brought the conflict home to the English people, the large number of civilian casualties created a global backlash against the Provisionals. Leaders of the PIRA met with a group of Protestant clergymen from the Irish Council of Churches in Feakle, County Clare in December.³⁹⁷ This meeting produced a blueprint for ceasefire, which called for the withdrawal of the Army from policing functions and a statement by

³⁹⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 195–200.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 201.

³⁹⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 397–98.

the British government that it had no “political or territorial interests in Ireland beyond its obligations to the citizens of Northern Ireland.”³⁹⁸ Within just weeks, PIRA had begun the process that would produce a truce that would last, mostly intact, until November 1975.

On December 20, 1974, the Provisionals announced an early beginning to the holiday ceasefire from December 22 until January 2, which gave hope that a more permanent ceasefire was in the offing.³⁹⁹ The subsequent two-week extension of the ceasefire raised hopes even further.⁴⁰⁰ Violence briefly broke out before a more permanent truce was arranged on February 10. Despite high levels of sectarian violence on the part of the Loyalists and a few breaches of the truce on both sides, the ceasefire remained largely intact until mid-August 1975.⁴⁰¹

Although ill-defined, the truce was characterized by a reduction of Army presence in Nationalist areas and a phasing out of internment in exchange for a halt to PIRA activity. Furthermore, Whitelaw moved several prisoners convicted of bombing attacks in England to prisons in Northern Ireland. Additionally, the now-legal offices of Sinn Fein were set up with direct lines to the NIO in order to maintain the truce.⁴⁰² The ceasefire provided the NIO with the opportunity to pursue its political agenda without the interference of violence. Rees's intention to get rid of internment was supported by

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 206.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 207.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 218.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 218–29.

⁴⁰² Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 129.

the publication of Lord Gardiner's Report on January 30, 1975.⁴⁰³ While the IRA was underwhelmed by the political progress, they still hoped for a positive outcome from the Constitutional Convention to be held in May. The election leading up to the convention was hardly reassuring to anyone other than the staunch Unionists: of the 78 seats, 47 went to the United Ulster Unionist Council, a coalition of hardline Unionist parties, and 17 to the SDLP.⁴⁰⁴ The PSF had continued its boycott despite now being legal on the grounds that

Anyone who stands in this convention election, who works in polling stations or votes, is giving assent to intimidation and accepting that the orange fascists have a right to lay down the terms under which the six counties can be governed—any vote is a vote for a return to the loyalist sectarian domination.⁴⁰⁵

In addition to the ideological barrier to ending abstentionism, the Provisionals were so intent on dictating their Manichean terms of British withdrawal that they were unable to lock in the potential benefits of the ceasefire.

After the election, the Provisionals pushed the British to make a formal announcement of their intent to withdraw, so the new Constitution would be a framework for the post-British form of government.⁴⁰⁶ Naturally, the government declined to do so. The summer was marked by increasing sectarian killing, albeit the majority being by Loyalist assassins.

⁴⁰³ The other half of his report recommended the abolition of the “Special Category” status and creation of H-shaped cell blocks. All three of his recommendations were enacted, the latter two helping to cause the next series of negative communal reactions to British security policy. As the next chapter will detail, the protest movement over this criminalization policy transformed Republican politics.

⁴⁰⁴ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 225.

⁴⁰⁵ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 130.

⁴⁰⁶ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 225.

By late September, the negotiations were beginning to unravel. The Provisionals were disenchanted with the potential for progress through negotiation and withdrew. Rees then announced on November 4th the discontinuation of the “Special Category” status effective March 1, 1976. The truce officially ended with the closing of the incident centers following the decision of the Derry Brigade to blow up their own offices on November 10. Despite the breakdown, the commitment to end internment remained and the last 46 detainees were released on December 5.⁴⁰⁷ One final meeting occurred on February 10, 1976. It would be roughly two decades before both sides could come to the bargaining table again.

XIV. Ulsterization and Criminalization

As the PIRA ceasefire wound down, the British began to put into place new policies for Northern Ireland that were less reactive and more strategic. These policies were guided by the idea that if the image of normality could be projected on the situation in Northern Ireland and the sense of crisis be removed, reality would soon come to reflect this image.⁴⁰⁸ Thus, changes in the perception of the need for violence would eventually lead to a change in the amount of violence produced. The two main features of this strategy, Ulsterization and Criminalization, were designed to separate the producers of the violence from their support bases. While the overall policy was fairly effective, it set the stage for a major political disaster that would breathe new life into the Republican movement.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 233.

⁴⁰⁸ Weitzer, “Policing a Divided Society,” *Social Problems*, 43; White and White, “Revolution in the City: On the Resources of Urban Guerrillas,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 119.

Reflecting both the general disinterest in running Northern Ireland from Westminster and the cutting edge of counter-insurgency doctrine, Ulsterization emphasized the gradual return of responsibility to the locals.⁴⁰⁹ On a very fundamental level, Westminster wanted to remove the moral hazard of British responsibility for security that stood in the way of an internally-negotiated settlement.⁴¹⁰ The RUC and UDR began to take the counter-terrorism lead instead of the Army. This helped to remove the propaganda of fighting against the imperialist British, at least directly, and made the people with the greatest understanding of local political sensitivities the front-line troops in the struggle to restore normality.

The intent was not simply to perform a one-to-one swap of different uniforms performing the same task, but rather a transformation from militarized policing to community policing.⁴¹¹ As part of this reform, the RUC took over the primary role in collecting information against the paramilitaries. The police interrogation centers, most famously the one at Castlereagh, were enormously successful at turning informants and inflicting serious damage to the organizations.⁴¹² Unfortunately, this lead role was also accompanied by a reversal of the previous demilitarization reforms of the RUC that had been intended to make them more palatable to the minority community and it returned to being a paramilitary police service.⁴¹³ As a result of this Ulsterization policy, British

⁴⁰⁹ Neumann, "The Myth of Ulsterization in British Security Policy in Northern Ireland," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*.

⁴¹⁰ Wright and Bryett, "Propaganda and Justice Administration in Northern Ireland," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 35.

⁴¹¹ Weitzer, "Policing a Divided Society," *Social Problems*, 47.

⁴¹² Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 298–99.

⁴¹³ Weitzer, "Policing a Divided Society," *Social Problems*, 48.

Army forces decreased from 22,000 in 1972 to 9,500 in 1984 while the RUC strength nearly doubled from 4,257 to 8,127.⁴¹⁴

Criminalization denied paramilitaries on both sides from recognition of any special status for political crimes. From a practical standpoint, the authorities needed an alternative to the hated system of internment that removed the appearance of arbitrary power but relaxed the standard rules of evidence to accommodate the emergency situation. However, there were deeper implications to the criminalization: it was a deliberate attempt to deprive them of the legitimacy afforded by having “prisoners of war” status and instead focus the public's attention on the antisocial aspects of the violence these groups produced.⁴¹⁵ Moreover, such a policy essentially closed the option of negotiation, because a government can talk to insurgents but has a social duty to prosecute criminals.⁴¹⁶ This fit well with the get-tough approach adopted by Rees's successor, Roy Mason, who took over on September 10, 1976.⁴¹⁷ A further element of this tougher approach was the return to the spirit of Operation Linklater in 1971, when internment was replaced by the repeated use of temporary detention orders, which allowed the authorities to hold an individual for three days (extendable up to seven days).

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 44.

⁴¹⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 236–37.

⁴¹⁶ For more on the strategic implications of criminalization as a general policy, see Toros, “‘We Don't Negotiate with Terrorists!': Legitimacy and Complexity in Terrorist Conflicts,” *Security Dialogue*; Gilbert, *Terrorism, Security, and Nationality: An Introductory Study in Applied Political Philosophy*.

⁴¹⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 237; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 149. Mason was appointed by the new Labour Prime Minister, James Callaghan, after Wilson abruptly resigned on March 16, 1976. Callaghan had been an integral part of Wilson's government for years, so the change in the occupancy of the top post had little impact on Northern Irish policy.

Despite its elimination of internment, ironically one of the most important consequences of the Criminalization policy is that it made the prisons the focus of Republican protest in the early 1980s (see chapter 6). When the first PIRA prisoner under the new policy arrived in jail on September 15, 1976, he refused to don the prison uniform, instead wrapping himself in a blanket.⁴¹⁸ Subsequent prisoners followed his example and the protest became known as “going on the blanket.” In time, this protest escalated to include smearing feces on the cell walls (“dirty protest”) and fatal hunger strikes. However, during the first several years of the blanket protest, there was little public support for the strikers.⁴¹⁹

Despite the focus on the Provisionals, it is important to note that these tougher policies also targeted the Loyalists.⁴²⁰ The UVF was virtually decimated and the notorious “Shankill Butchers” were successfully prosecuted. Moreover, Mason faced down a major Loyalist strike led by Paisley in May 1977. Thus, Mason was tough but fair, and his distancing from Loyalist influenced helped to undercut the Nationalist demand for violence.

Between these more sophisticated security policies and the effects of the ceasefire on organizational discipline and community mobilization, the remainder of the decade was a fairly bleak time for the Republicans. Improved intelligence gathering led to a near doubling of the arrest rate from 1 in 4.73 incidents to 1 in 2.53, and the

⁴¹⁸ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 238.

⁴¹⁹ Wright and Bryett, “Propaganda and Justice Administration in Northern Ireland,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 31.

⁴²⁰ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 245.

perpetrators could expect much longer terms in prison.⁴²¹ The regular large-scale protests and riots were a thing of the past and the sense of urgency had greatly diminished.⁴²² Moreover, the internal opposition to the violence was beginning to be vocally expressed. The most notable expression of this opposition was the formation of the Peace People in 1976, which earned its founders the Nobel Peace Prize.⁴²³

This produced a fundamental reassessment of the paramilitaries' relationship with the Nationalist community: “Long-term support for the IRA, both passive and active, was not guaranteed, but was dependent upon future IRA activities. Thus, greater care had to be exercised to ensure civilian safety.”⁴²⁴ As a result, the Provisionals turned their focus from economic targets to the security forces.⁴²⁵ Thus, the profitability of violence was drastically shrinking from changes in the underlying supply and demand, as well as improved security policies.

XV. The Long War

By 1978, it appeared the Provisionals were in a serious decline, if not on the edge of being beaten. Mason himself declared, “My view is that [the IRA's] strength has waned to the point where they cannot sustain a campaign.”⁴²⁶ He arranged for Queen

⁴²¹ White and White, “Revolution in the City: On the Resources of Urban Guerrillas,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 118–20.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 119.

⁴²³ Evason, “Northern Ireland’s Peace Movement: Some Early Reactions,” *Community Development Journal*.

⁴²⁴ White and White, “Revolution in the City: On the Resources of Urban Guerrillas,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 120.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁴²⁶ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 149.

Elizabeth II to visit the region to celebrate her jubilee, virtually taunting the Republicans with their inability to stop the visit.⁴²⁷

In the face of these changing realities, the Provisionals engaged in a fundamental reevaluation of its strategy and restructuring of its organization. It had become readily apparent that the hopes for a relatively quick victory were simply unrealistic. Instead, the PIRA had to brace itself for a long, hard slog in which it would win by persistence rather than overwhelming force. To accomplish this long-term goal, the emphasis had to be on survival rather than short-term coercive power. The new cellular structure adopted in 1977 further removed the PIRA from its embedded role within the Catholic community. While this protected them from the growing threat of intelligence infiltration, it made them slightly less dependent on, and thus less sensitive to, the desires of the Nationalist community.⁴²⁸

Beginning in 1975, a clique surrounding Gerry Adams, including Danny Morrison and Martin McGuinness, began to embrace the “long war” doctrine. One PIRA member recalls his initial resistance to the message:

Morrison was saying we have sold the people a false bill of goods with slogans like ‘Victory in 74!’ and so on. People were getting cynical, and we would have to say instead that it is a long war. It grated with a lot of us. None of us believed it would be a long war. We were of the opinion that we could win it, we could force the Brits to pull out. We were young and in our twenties, we had seen the fall of Stormont, burned down the British embassy in Dublin, ran the Brits ragged in the countryside. We

⁴²⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 245. The Provisionals did attempt to disrupt the visit with a bomb in Coleraine, but it went off after she had already left. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 218–19.

⁴²⁸ White and White, “Revolution in the City: On the Resources of Urban Guerrillas,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 122.

were of the generation that had seen Saigon fall and the U.S. defeated in Southeast Asia.⁴²⁹

Despite this initial resistance, by June 1977, the Army Council was giving tell-tale signs of the acceptance of such a long-term policy.⁴³⁰

A captured internal report revealed that the new government policies were having a massively deleterious effect on the PIRA's operational security.⁴³¹ Yet despite this desire for improved security, the Provisional leadership remained wedded to a mostly hierarchical organization. Each of the new cells, or Active Service Units (ASUs), consisted of four people, but the cell leaders still reported to the brigade staff. Despite being tethered to the central organization, these cells had considerable autonomy to plan and execute local attacks.⁴³² In addition to this basic restructuring, the Northern and Southern commands were largely firewalled, protecting the basic logistics network and support structures from the more operational elements in Northern Ireland and the surrounding border counties.⁴³³ A third important change was the creation of the Administrative IRA, through which the Provisionals could provide alternative social control, i.e. internal policing or punishment attacks, over the populations under their influence.⁴³⁴ This quasi-cellular restructuring made it more difficult for low-level volunteers to provide too much intelligence, but the organization remained vulnerable to

⁴²⁹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 150.

⁴³⁰ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 217.

⁴³¹ Horgan and Taylor, "The Provisional Irish Republican Army: Command and Functional Structure," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 21.

⁴³² English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 213.

⁴³³ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 249.

⁴³⁴ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 152–53; Silke, "Rebel's Dilemma," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 65–66.

higher-placed informants.⁴³⁵ This threat was countered by the creation of a security department (also called the “nutting squad”) to identify and eliminate potential leaks.⁴³⁶

In conjunction with these structural changes, PIRA adopted a significant policy change to improve operational security. Before 1979, volunteers who broke under interrogation were punished by ostracization, at worst. However, as the police interrogations yielded increasingly damaging intelligence, PIRA produced the “Green Book” and began training volunteers on counter-interrogation techniques.⁴³⁷ The importance of mastering these techniques was underscored by the increased penalty for breaking: death. On July 12, 1979, Volunteer Michael Kearney was executed for informing, which was widely viewed within the organization as a grim warning to keep one's mouth shut.⁴³⁸

XVI. Conclusion

The market for Republican violence gradually changed from one fueled by fear, to hope, to grim determination. In the early stages of the crisis, the Catholic community demanded protection from an organization ill-prepared to deliver it. The greatest political costs the IRA endured during the late 1960s were the accusations that “I Ran Away.” Thus, there was virtually no opposition to the production of violence, just material constraints and the lack of will by the IRA leadership. The failure of the IRA to satisfy the demand produced wide-

⁴³⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 246–47.

⁴³⁶ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 155–56; Monaghan, “‘An Imperfect Peace’: Paramilitary ‘Punishments’ in Northern Ireland,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 441.

⁴³⁷ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 213.

⁴³⁸ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 154–55.

scale entrepreneurialism in the form of riots, self-defense organizations and the eventual Provisional split.⁴³⁹

By 1972, the market had changed considerably to one of unbound possibilities. The Republicans had managed to bring down the Unionist regime in Stormont and turn the Catholic population against the British Army. The end of partition seemed within reach. However, there was significant competition to determine how it would actually be attained. The Officials and the Provisionals faced off with each other, often violently feuding, to establish their dominance. Meanwhile, the SDLP formed to provide an alternative, nonviolent means of consolidating the political advances for Catholics in the North rather than reach for the ultimate prize of reunification.

By the mid-1970s, this optimism had faded and war weariness had begun to set in. Both IRAs revealed the upper-bound of violence they could afford to produce after the Aldershot bombing and Bloody Friday. Peace groups began forming, demanding an end to the violence. The SDLP was actively pursuing political solutions that would exclude the Republicans from influence. There was a late-coming rival—the IRSP/INLA—that appeared to have perfected the product design, but was unable to surmount the barriers to entry. The British

⁴³⁹ Peroff and Hewitt (1980) argue that rioting and terrorist violence should be viewed as distinct forms of violence because they have an inverse relationship to each other. However, this simply highlights that they are highly substitutable and, given the bundling of political violence into a single basket discussed earlier, should be treated as comparable products in this analysis. Peroff and Hewitt, “Rioting in Northern Ireland: The Effects of Different Policies,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

finally had a set of policies in place that were tailored to increase the costs of production without also increasing demand for it.

CHAPTER 6: The Stalemate Years

Despite the market shrinkage of the late 1970s, the producers of Republican violence had proved resilient. The paramilitaries adjusted to the new conditions and even thrived. While the structural changes enacted as part of the “Long War” strategy reduced the PIRA's direct cost sensitivity to Nationalist opposition, the diversification of their product range to include violence substitutes increased their opportunities to attract support. The paramilitaries became increasingly involved in the provision of alternative social control, especially targeting the drug trade in Nationalist areas. Far more significantly, the Provisionals and Irps took advantage of the rebirth of popular support surrounding the 1981 Hunger Strikes to launch a strategy of greater political engagement. This politicization greatly expanded the base of support, but also put additional limitations on the profitability of violence itself. These limitations were only partially offset by the massive influx of advanced weapons from Libya. These limitations produced incentives for new entrants to specialize in violence production unencumbered by the need to balance a complex production portfolio. However, the barriers to entry remained quite high.

I. A New Regime

The rise of the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher, the “Iron Lady,” on May 4, 1979 was a critical juncture in the development of the Republican market.⁴⁴⁰

⁴⁴⁰ Thatcher rose to power after the Labour government under James Callaghan lost control of the labor unions during the “Winter of Discontent.” The British economy had been suffering for several years and Callaghan imposed austerity measures to control the growth of inflation. The resulting unions strike dragged on until February 1979. On March 28, Callaghan lost a no-confidence vote by a margin of just one vote. *BBC News*, “1979: Early Election as Callaghan Defeated,” March 28, 1979. Although the vote

Labour's Roy Mason had been a tough adversary, but his campaign to separate Republicans from Nationalists was both kept in check and complemented by the fact that the Labour Party had historically been sympathetic to the Nationalist cause. Mason demonstrated the will to stand up to Loyalist pressure, making the intense targeting of the paramilitaries more palatable. In contrast, the Conservatives were the traditional allies of the Unionists, making the prospects of further voluntary—as opposed to coerced—substantial concessions over the heads of the intransigent Loyalists far less likely. This, combined with the expansion of the state's use of force—at times of a legally-questionable nature—reversed the key feature of the previous highly successful security policy: the resulting increased costs of violence production were now at least partially offset by significant increases in demand.

II. Not Yet Beaten

Even before the formal transition in government from Labour to Conservative, the Republican paramilitaries began showing that they still had some fight left in them.⁴⁴¹ As Labour's grip on government slipped, the PIRA began a bombing campaign targeting banks in the North and threatened to expand it to mainland Britain.⁴⁴² On March 30, 1979, the INLA killed Airey Neave, Thatcher's close friend, confidant and

was almost completely unrelated to the Troubles, SDLP MP Gerry Fitt abstained from the election as punishment for Callaghan's previous offer to introduce proportional representation in exchange for Unionist support in parliament. Coogan, *The IRA*, 355–56.

⁴⁴¹ A British intelligence assessment by General Glover warned in November 1978 that the Provisionals were a growing menace capable of maintaining its level of violence indefinitely. Glover further noted that “[t]he Provisionals cannot attract the large number of active terrorists they had in 1972–73. But they no longer need them. PIRA's organization is now such that a small number of activists can maintain a disproportionate level of violence...[B]y reorganizing on cellular lines PIRA has become less dependent on public support than in the past and is less vulnerable to penetration by informers.” Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 173–74.

⁴⁴² Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 116.

apparent choice to be the next Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (SSNI), in a bold and technically innovative attack.⁴⁴³ On August 27, the PIRA killed 18 British soldiers at Warrenpoint and assassinated one of the queen's cousins, Earl Mountbatten, and three others while he was sailing in Ireland.⁴⁴⁴ Although Thatcher was no friend to the Republicans before coming to office, these attacks doubtless helped to shape her response to future challenges.

The audacious killing of Airey Neave, brought the INLA back to the forefront of Republican politics. With Costello's death in 1977, leadership of the INLA had passed to Ronnie Bunting. Fearing Provisional retribution for interfering in their transatlantic arms shipping and recognizing Irish-American hostility to the IRSP's radical agenda, Bunting instead developed a number of relationships with European radical groups and the PLO.⁴⁴⁵ These groups helped to arrange the transfer of arms and critical skills. In January 1979, the INLA introduced the use of a mercury-tilt switch, a simple but deadly piece of technology.⁴⁴⁶ The switch only completed an electrical circuit when held at the correct angle, making it ideal for incorporation into booby-trap bombs—it did not have to be remotely activated and would be stable until moved. This new device was first tested out on March 6 with the killing of a UDR soldier in Portadown.⁴⁴⁷ Having proven the potential for the technology, the INLA attached a bomb to the underside of Neave's

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 220–21; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 271; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 175; Coogan, *The IRA*, 456–58; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 219.

⁴⁴⁴ Coogan, *The IRA*, 469; Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 116–18; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 174–76.

⁴⁴⁵ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 259–60.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., 262.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., 262.

car in the parking garage at the House of Commons, where it went off on March 30. Having lost both of his legs, it took Neave a half hour to die.⁴⁴⁸ The INLA had killed an implacable foe and a close friend of the heir apparent to the premiership and had managed to do it in the heart of parliament.

Not to be outdone by the upstart INLA, the Provisionals began preparing for their own “spectacular” attack. It is unclear if the two attacks on August 27 were intentionally coordinated, but their joint effect was even more powerful than they would have been alone. In the early morning, the PIRA detonated a remote control bomb planted on Mountbatten's sailboat in Mullaghmore.⁴⁴⁹ This operation was not overly sophisticated from a technical standpoint since Mountbatten regularly vacationed there without guards. But the killing of three members of the royal family: Mountbatten, his daughter and his grandson, as well as a member of the crew, certainly grabbed headlines.⁴⁵⁰ The bombing at Warrenpoint was considerably more complicated: using remote control bombs, the PIRA bombed a British Army convoy, then detonated a second bomb where the reinforcements had rallied.⁴⁵¹ These bombs produced the largest one-day loss of life for the British Army of the entire Troubles.

The British responded to these affronts by increasing the role and coordination of the intelligence agencies.⁴⁵² When combined with the transfer of increasing authority

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 262–63.

⁴⁴⁹ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 115.

⁴⁵⁰ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 220.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 220–21.

⁴⁵² This included better cooperation with American intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Mumford, “Intelligence Wars: Ireland and Afghanistan—The American Experience,” *Civil Wars*; Moran, “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland,” *Intelligence and*

to the RUC and UDR, this decision resulted in a number of highly controversial policies that would plague the Thatcher administration throughout the decade. The most notorious of these were the alleged shoot-to-kill operations and collusion between the security forces and the Loyalist paramilitaries. Although there is no conclusive evidence of these being official policies, the reduced public oversight and relative morality necessary to effectively carry out intelligence operations likely facilitated the growth of these activities.

Whether directed by British intelligence or just a coincidence, the leaders of the INLA/IRSP at the time of Neave's assassination were soon killed by Loyalist hit squads. On June 26, 1980, Miriam Daly, the IRSP's front-person during the prison protests, was executed in her home in the middle of a Catholic enclave. The professionalism of the hit caused considerable speculation that it had been the work of the British Army's Special Air Service (SAS), but it appears to have been carried out by highly trained Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a cover name for the UDA, hit squads with access to up-to-date intelligence. On October 15, Bunting and the Irps' chief political strategist, Noel Lyttle, were gunned down during a home invasion in the middle of the night. On January 16, 1981, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey and her husband were also shot in their home. In a bizarre twist, an SAS team was dug in around the house and allowed the gunmen to enter, but then one of the soldiers provided first aid, likely saving her life.⁴⁵³

National Security; Neumann, "The Myth of Ulsterization in British Security Policy in Northern Ireland," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*.

⁴⁵³ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 281; Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 490–91.

In what was now beginning to look like a recurring pattern, the Irps were cut down by violence before they could realize their full potential as a significant rival to the Provisional IRA. In 1975, it was the Officials. In 1977 and the early 1980s, it was the Loyalists. In 1986–87, it would be themselves.

III. Prison Protests

The Prison Protests began as early as 1976, but failed to garner significant public support until a number of Republican prisoners from the INLA and PIRA went on hunger strikes over the decision to retroactively end the Special Category status for prisoners on March 26, 1980. The leader of this effort, Bobby Sands, was elected to Westminster before dying of starvation. He was followed to the grave by nine other prisoners for a total of seven PIRA and three INLA “martyrs.” Thatcher's refusal to negotiate earned her the undying enmity of a generation of Republicans and gave rise to a mass mobilization of the Nationalist community that rivaled that at the beginning of the previous decade.

As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, on September 14, 1976, the first prisoner to be convicted under the new Criminalization policy refused to accept the label of criminality by donning the prison uniform. Instead, he went without clothes and simply wrapped himself in a blanket. There were a number of personal consequences for the prisoners who followed this example. The prisoners were confined to their cells and often punished with reduced rations and loss of furniture in their cells.⁴⁵⁴ Worse yet,

⁴⁵⁴ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 191.

the refusal to obey the prison rules meant forfeiture of the standard 50 percent sentence remission.⁴⁵⁵

In 1978, the blanket protest escalated when the prisoners began refusing to use the facilities, beginning the “no wash” protest.⁴⁵⁶ Given the confined space, one can only imagine the resulting stench of body odor. It therefore fairly easy to understand why the warders became increasingly aggressive in trying to get the prisoners to wash. This led to a further escalation wherein the prisoners began covering the cell walls with their own excrement. The “battle of the bowels” turned the cells into “filthy, maggot-infested caves.”⁴⁵⁷

By late 1980, there were 800 Republican prisoners, 300 of whom were on the dirty protest.⁴⁵⁸ Yet even these pervasive, stomach-turning conditions failed to elicit a strong response from the broader community, despite the IRSP’s and the Relative’s Action Committee’s, and to a lesser extent Sinn Fein’s, efforts to draw their attention.⁴⁵⁹ One of the more interesting attempts to raise awareness was when a group of women picketed the Catholic bishop’s residence in Derry dressed only in blankets.⁴⁶⁰ However,

⁴⁵⁵ Gormally, McEvoy and Wall, “Criminal Justice in a Divided Society: Northern Ireland Prisons,” *Crime and Justice*, 80–81.

⁴⁵⁶ There are alternative accounts of what led to it: either a prisoner was badly beaten during a shower and placed in solitary or there was simply growing frustration with the policy of only providing one towel to cover oneself without a second to dry. Bishop and Mallie, *The Provisional IRA*, 351, Gormally, McEvoy and Wall, “Criminal Justice in a Divided Society: Northern Ireland Prisons,” *Crime and Justice*, English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 191.

⁴⁵⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 488.

⁴⁵⁸ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 191.

⁴⁵⁹ Wright and Bryett, “Propaganda and Justice Administration in Northern Ireland,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 31.

⁴⁶⁰ McWilliams, “Struggling for Peace and Justice: Reflections on Women’s Activism in Northern Ireland,” *Journal of Women’s History*, 23–24.

by mid-1980, the failure to mobilize support or convince the authorities to compromise had left the morale quite low for the prisoners and their supporters outside.⁴⁶¹

In response, the prisoners took it upon themselves to escalate their protests inside the jails even further by beginning a hunger strike on October 27, 1980. The six-man hunger strike was led by the Provisional OC, Brendan Hughes, and included one man from the INLA.⁴⁶² The external PIRA and INLA commands were against the hunger strikes at first,⁴⁶³ but it quickly became apparent that they needed to support the prisoners or risk losing the support of the prisoners' families.⁴⁶⁴ With the leadership's somewhat grudging blessing, the hunger strike gained momentum as more prisoners joined in: on December 1, three women in the Armagh Jail; on December 15, 23 prisoners in the Maze; and on December 16, another seven from the Maze.⁴⁶⁵ On the December 18, Hughes unilaterally called off the strike believing an offer was on the table.⁴⁶⁶

There remain considerable differences of opinion as to whether there was a deal struck and the prison authorities reneged or if Hughes had simply misunderstood. Either way, the British did not concede to the strikers' five demands, although they did provide them with officially assigned civilian-type clothing instead of the normal uniforms.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶¹ Dingley and Mollica, "The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 464.

⁴⁶² English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 193.

⁴⁶³ Dingley and Mollica, "The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 464.

⁴⁶⁴ Beresford, *Ten Men Dead: The Story of the 1981 Irish Hunger Strike*, 21.

⁴⁶⁵ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 194.

⁴⁶⁶ Dingley and Mollica, "The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 464.

⁴⁶⁷ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 195–96.

Therefore, on the fifth anniversary of the end of Special Category status, the new Provisional OC in the Maze, Bobby Sands, led a second hunger strike. The strikers included three PIRA and one INLA member and new people were added weekly to increase the level of pressure on the authorities.⁴⁶⁸

In a fortuitous turn of events for the Republicans, Frank Maguire, the Nationalist MP for Fermanagh/South Tyrone died, sparking a by-election. Running under the banner of Anti H-Block/Armagh Political Prisoner, Sands won by a healthy margin on April 9.⁴⁶⁹ The SDLP and the Workers Party, the political wing of what remained of the Officials, opted not to contest the election. This political victory did little to sway the British and Sands died on May 5. There were around 100,000 people in attendance at his funeral. Sands' election agent ran in the subsequent by-election and also won.⁴⁷⁰ The Workers' Party contested this second election to highlight what they perceived as the sectarianism of the Provisionals, but only managed to win 1.8 percent of the vote.⁴⁷¹

By October, the campaign's failure to budge Thatcher was readily apparent and the hunger strike had become self-defeating. The relatives of the strikers were increasingly authorizing medical interventions to save their lives, putting the Republican organizations at odds with the families. Worse, the death of the strikers,

⁴⁶⁸ Dingley and Mollica, "The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 465.

⁴⁶⁹ Wright and Bryett, "Propaganda and Justice Administration in Northern Ireland," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 31.

⁴⁷⁰ Dingley and Mollica, "The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 475.

⁴⁷¹ Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Worker's Party*, 426–27.

however gruesome, began to lose its novelty and the media coverage became less significant.⁴⁷² Therefore, on October 3, an end to the strike was called.

Thatcher had stared down the Republicans and won, but it was a Pyrrhic victory. As one observer succinctly summarized the impact of the Hunger Strikes: “The government may not have been moved, but a proportion of Northern Ireland’s Catholic/Nationalist population were.”⁴⁷³ Martin McGuinness commented that “not since the declaration in arms of the Irish republic on the steps of Dublin’s GP in 1916 has any event in modern Irish history stirred the minds and hearts of the Irish people to such an extent as the hunger strike in 1981.”⁴⁷⁴ Moreover, almost all of the conditions demanded by the strikers were surreptitiously granted by December, albeit without the label of “political status.”⁴⁷⁵ The British government eventually granted almost all of the prisoners’ demands, but not before it had mobilized a new generation of opposition by proving so publicly intransigent.

Thatcher’s unflinching response to the Hunger Strikes earned her a place in the pantheon of Irish Republican enemies, right next to the genocidal Oliver Cromwell. Danny Morrison rather colorfully called her an “unctuous, self-righteous fucker...[and] the biggest bastard we have ever known.”⁴⁷⁶ The depth of this loathing is apparent in the extreme measures the Provisionals went to in order to try to kill her. The Brighton Hotel bombing aimed at the Conservative convention in October 1984 was an ingenious use

⁴⁷² Dingley and Mollica, “The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 465.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 204.

⁴⁷⁵ Coogan, *The IRA*, 501.

⁴⁷⁶ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 207.

of new technology: the PIRA used a VCR timing mechanism to plant a bomb a month in advance.⁴⁷⁷ Such intense feelings, which appear to have been reciprocated by Thatcher, made any possibility of a negotiated settlement to the conflict remote, if not impossible, so long as she remained in office—which she managed to do until November 1990.⁴⁷⁸

IV. The Rise of Sinn Fein

After the enormous outpouring of support for the Hunger Strike, it was no longer possible for their rivals to dismiss the Republicans as just a fringe group with no real support among the Catholics of Northern Ireland. Not only had they managed to win elections, but the campaign had swelled membership in both the INLA and PIRA beyond their ability to fully integrate the new recruits into the military organization. There were many more within the community who had been mobilized just short of direct participation in the violence. This political windfall appeared to support the analysis of Gerry Adams and his fellow-travelers; they became increasingly powerful within the Provisional movement as a result.

The ascendancy of the Adams clique was apparent in the abandonment of O Bradaigh's *Eire Nua* policy in 1982 and his resignation and replacement by Adams in 1983. At the 1981 Sinn Fein Ard Fheis, just a few weeks after the end of the second hunger strike, Danny Morrison delivered a speech that would shape the development of the movement over the next decade. In it, he asked: “Who here really believes we can

⁴⁷⁷ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 119–20.

⁴⁷⁸ O’Kane, “Anglo-Irish Relations and the Northern Ireland Peace Process: From Exclusion to Inclusion,” *Contemporary British History*, 81.

win the war through the ballot box? But will anyone here object if, with a ballot paper in one hand and the Armalite in the other, we take power in Ireland?”⁴⁷⁹ This quickly became shortened to the pithier strategy of the Armalite and the Ballot Box. As English points out, in the light of subsequent events, this new strategy has been mistakenly interpreted by many subsequent scholars as an intended swing from the belief in pure force to pure politics.⁴⁸⁰ Instead, it was adopted because of a belief that the two could serve as complements: force overcame their numerical inferiority while political action denied the enemy the ability to simply dismiss them. Sinn Fein's surprisingly strong showing in the 1982 regional assembly elections, including winning seats for both Adams and McGuinness, appeared to vindicate the strategy in the face of resistance from O Bradaigh and O Conaill. The similar performance in the local and general elections of 1983 swayed the internal balance of power and Adams was elected president of Sinn Fein on November 13, 1983.⁴⁸¹

V. Twin Evils: Sectarianism and Supergrasses

The rapid growth of the two Republican paramilitaries proved to be a double-edged sword. The new recruits brought a new sense of vitality to the Republican movement, but the sheer number largely overwhelmed the ability of the organizations to train and adequately indoctrinate them.⁴⁸² This increased the need for more experienced operatives, resulting in laxer standards for re-entry into the paramilitaries to include individuals who had exhibited a questionable character. The combination of large

⁴⁷⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 328.

⁴⁸⁰ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 206.

⁴⁸¹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 329.

⁴⁸² Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 485–86.

numbers of raw recruits and operatives of inferior quality resulted in two damaging developments: sectarianism, i.e. attacking Protestants rather than the state, and supergrasses, i.e. massively destructive informants.⁴⁸³ Perhaps as a result of its smaller size but more likely because of the loss of its key leaders to violence, the INLA was struck more heavily by both of these problems, but the PIRA was also deeply affected by the latter. Both sectarianism and informants seriously undermined the overall production of the market and damaged the Provisionals' attempts to enter the nonviolent substitute market.

After the UFF's killed Bunting, the INLA was in a state of flux.⁴⁸⁴ Bunting had overridden the concerns of the senior staff to allow the reentry of Gerard Steenson—the man who had killed the OIRA's Billy McMillen during the 1975 feud—and his cortege to the organization. Steenson's faction militated for an increase in INLA attacks, including the targeting of Loyalist paramilitaries and politicians. Bunting had been able to keep a lid on the simmering tension between Steenson and the staff, but his death brought it to a boil. Steenson led a bloodless coup within the Belfast INLA on May 9, 1981. The Dublin command grudgingly acquiesced but tried to keep Steenson in check by limiting the flow of weapons to the North.⁴⁸⁵ On December 5, Steenson attempted to eliminate the Dublin leadership with a hit designed to look like it had been carried out by the Loyalists.⁴⁸⁶ Despite having only wounded the chief-of-staff, Steenson first

⁴⁸³ There are a number of slang terms for an informant, including tout and grass. A supergrass, therefore, is a super-informant.

⁴⁸⁴ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 187–99.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 196–97.

attempted to intimidate his remaining rivals in Belfast, then had their leaders shot.⁴⁸⁷

Yet again, his men failed to kill their targets and Steenson's bid to take control of the INLA were thwarted.

Steenson's attempted second coup, and the anemic response from the leadership, severely demoralized the organization and many of the older members left.⁴⁸⁸ The degree to which the INLA had been cut low is apparent by its choice of the next chief of staff. Dominick "Mad Dog" McGlinchey had been an operations officer for the PIRA until a falling out with the leadership while in prison on gun charges. Released in 1982, he made a lateral move into the INLA. Within just six months, he had assumed command by unifying the various factions that had emerged, at times somewhat brutally.⁴⁸⁹ Given the apparent state of flux in the leadership, it is therefore unsurprising that less reputable elements could get through whatever screening process remained.

On November 20, 1983, elements within the INLA carried out one of the worst anti-Protestant sectarian attack of the Troubles. Under the assumed name "Catholic Reaction Force," members of the INLA entered a Pentecostal church in Darkley and sprayed the room with machinegun fire. Three of the church elders were killed and several other people injured. After the police reported that the Ruger semi-automatic rifle used in the shooting had been linked to other INLA actions through ballistics, the INLA admitted that it had been their weapons but announced an investigation into its

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid., 197–98.

⁴⁸⁸ Many of those who remained were imprisoned on the word of a supergrass, Harry Kirkpatrick, who began informing in early 1983.

⁴⁸⁹ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 212.

misuse.⁴⁹⁰ The INLA Chief-of-Staff, Dominic “Mad Dog” McGlinchey strongly condemned the killings: “They were in no way a legitimate target. These killings are contrary to republican socialism. They cannot be defended.”⁴⁹¹ However, the damage was done and Darkley became one of the main reference points for the INLA.⁴⁹²

When McGlinchey was himself arrested as part of the supergrass system in 1984, the INLA fractured yet again and nearly ceased to exist. The INLA prisoners in the Portlaoise jail disbanded and joined the PIRA prisoners, while others in the Limerick jails simply gave up their status as INLA prisoners.⁴⁹³ Despite this, the INLA managed to stagger on, barely clinging to relevance with the occasional attack, such as a series of bomb hoaxes in Dublin during Thatcher's visit there in 1984.⁴⁹⁴

A far more pervasive problem was the turning of informants by the security forces. These informants were “attracted by easy money, the prospect of pardon for past misdeed[s], recruited by intimidation or the fear of false betrayal” by their paramilitary comrades.⁴⁹⁵ Between 1981 and 1983, the use of controversial “supergrass” informants led to the arrest of roughly 1,000 people.⁴⁹⁶ The supergrass system was highly controversial because the largely uncorroborated testimony of just seven Loyalist and 18 Republican informants alone led to almost 600 arrests, 217 trials, and 120

⁴⁹⁰ *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1983.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹² Indeed, this attack inside a church seems to have had a more enduring impact on brand image than the arguably worse sectarian killing of ten Protestant workmen in Kingsmills on January 5, 1976 by the PIRA under the name “South Armagh Republican Action Force.” Coogan, *The IRA*, 443. See Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 120–21.

⁴⁹³ *Irish Press*, November 6, 1984.

⁴⁹⁴ *Belfast Telegraph*, December 3, 1984.

⁴⁹⁵ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 485.

⁴⁹⁶ Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 109.

convictions within the two-year period between November 1981 and November 1983.⁴⁹⁷ Two more supergrasses came forward in 1983, but those cases did not proceed to trial.⁴⁹⁸ The mass convictions and the dubious character of the informants, who were granted immunity despite admitting their own personal participation in many of the more egregious acts for which the defendants were on trial, were effective in removing large numbers of militants from the streets, but they also undermined the legitimacy of the courts.

Before addressing the political ramifications of the supergrass system, it is useful to first consider its impact on the paramilitaries' ability to produce violence. In this sense, it was an enormous success in raising the production costs for both of the active Republican groups. The PIRA Derry Brigade was almost completely rolled up in the summer of 1982 on the word of a supergrass.⁴⁹⁹ Similarly, according to one knowledgeable source, the INLA had largely resisted infiltration by the various intelligence services active in Northern Ireland since its inception. All this changed in September 1981 and, by January 1982, the infiltration had snowballed to the point that the organization nearly collapsed.⁵⁰⁰ As a testament to the policy's success, the number of attacks fell by roughly half after 1981 and the arrest rate nearly doubled.⁵⁰¹ The annual number of attacks fell from 1,671 in 1981 to 879, 791 and 582 in 1982, 1983 and

⁴⁹⁷ Greer, "The Supergrass System," in Anthony Jennings, ed., *Justice Under Fire: The Abuse of Civil Liberties in Northern Ireland*, cited in Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 109; Jackson and Doran, *Judge Without Jury: Diplock Trials in the Adversary System*, 44.

⁴⁹⁸ Jackson and Doran, *Judge Without Jury: Diplock Trials in the Adversary System*, 44.

⁴⁹⁹ Mulholland, "Irish Republican Politics and Violence Before the Peace Process, 1968–1994," *European Review of History—Revue européenne d' Histoire*, 411.

⁵⁰⁰ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 201.

⁵⁰¹ White and White, "Revolution in the City: On the Resources of Urban Guerrillas," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 124–25.

1984, respectively. Although the total number of arrestees only increased slightly, the arrest-to-incident ratio rose considerably from 1:3.54 in 1981 to between 1:1.54 and 1:1.79 from 1982 to 1984.

In addition to these legal actions, it appears that the information gathered through this system helped with the planning of more offensive disruptive actions. In November and December 1982, the security forces were involved in three shooting incidents that left six unarmed Catholics dead—almost all were members of the INLA or PIRA. This led to a furor in the Nationalist community over the possibility of a “shoot-to-kill” policy, i.e. denial of due process in favor of violent elimination of the alleged perpetrators. The British authorities strongly denied the existence of any such policy, but the subsequent handling of the investigation confirmed for many Nationalists that the British had circumvented legal restrictions on the use of lethal force.⁵⁰²

As a result of the problems with the supergrass system and the apparent shoot-to-kill policy, public confidence in the legal system, especially the Diplock Court system in which Offenses Against the State were decided by a judge instead of a jury, fell to its lowest recorded levels on both sides of the sectarian divide.⁵⁰³ The supergrass system was largely discredited by the mid-1980s after the higher courts overturned 67

⁵⁰² John Stalker of the Manchester Police was named to lead an independent investigation into these shootings in 1984, but was removed just prior to releasing his findings amid allegations of criminal misconduct. Even after being cleared of the charges, he was not restored to the inquiry and the report was never made public. Stalker went on to publish a book that indicated there was an informal policy in place. Stalker, *The Stalker Affair: The Shocking True Story of Six Deaths and a Notorious Cover-Up*.

⁵⁰³ Jackson and Doran, *Judge Without Jury: Diplock Trials in the Adversary System*, 44.

of the 74 convictions that were appealed.⁵⁰⁴ This subversion of justice likely increased demand for radical change and sympathy for the paramilitaries within the Nationalist community.

VI. Another Northern Ireland Assembly

To complement the harsher stance against the paramilitaries, the Thatcher government sought to co-opt the moderate Nationalists through greater political engagement. In the wake of Sinn Fein's rapid growth in Nationalist electoral support, the British and Irish governments made a concerted effort to bolster the position of the more moderate SDLP.⁵⁰⁵ This was largely accomplished through a return to the principles of Sunningdale, which remained as divisive in the 1980s as it had been in the 1970s. The new institutions were opposed equally by Republicans and Loyalists.

Starting in 1982, the newly appointed SSNI, James Prior, attempted to revive the Sunningdale power-sharing executive without the more controversial Irish dimension through a policy of “rolling devolution.”⁵⁰⁶ Prior's vision of the new Northern Ireland Assembly was a venue for incremental trust-building that might eventually lead to fully devolved government again. However, after both Sinn Fein and the Southern government came out in opposition, the SDLP demurred and announced it would boycott the new assembly.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁴ Greer, “The Supergrass System,” in Anthony Jennings, ed., *Justice Under Fire: The Abuse of Civil Liberties in Northern Ireland*, cited in both Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law*, 109, and Jackson and Doran, *Judge Without Jury: Diplock Trials in the Adversary System*, 44.

⁵⁰⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 331.

⁵⁰⁶ Coogan, *The IRA*, 504; O'Duffy, “British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast. Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 403.

⁵⁰⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 505–06.

Hume arranged a Forum to discuss the possibilities for unification of Ireland in 1983–84. Unionists naturally boycotted the Forum, but the meeting of all the constitutional Nationalist parties on both sides of the border produced high hopes that a political breakthrough might be imminent.⁵⁰⁸ The immediate British response was definitively negative. Margaret Thatcher said of the three proposals the Forum elucidated: “The unified Ireland was one solution—that is out. A second solution was a confederation of the two states—that is out. A third solution was joint authority [over the North]—that is out.”⁵⁰⁹ However the subtext of this rejection was a call for the South to take a greater role in joint security operations, which could lead to a form of joint sovereignty over the North.⁵¹⁰

Building off of the apparent warming of relations between the British and Irish governments on the Northern Ireland issue, the two heads of state, Margaret Thatcher and Garret FitzGerald, held a series of summits in 1984 and 1985. Thatcher continued to push for Irish cooperation on security matters, and eventually conceded a consultative role for the South on policies in the North in exchange.⁵¹¹ An alternative view of British motivations for these negotiations was that it would provide leverage with the Unionists: if they were to agree to power-sharing, the Irish government's role would be diminished.⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 507.

⁵⁰⁹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 240.

⁵¹⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 508.

⁵¹¹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 240–41.

⁵¹² McGarry, “Political Settlements in Northern Ireland and South Africa,” *Political Studies*, 866–67.

The resulting Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA), or Hillsborough Agreement, on November 15, 1985 represented a major blow to the Provisionals' new position in the market for nonviolent politics. Because it enshrined the Irish dimension in British policy, it was generally perceived as a major victory for the SDLP.⁵¹³ Worse yet, the locking in of the principle of consent, i.e. the constitutional status of the North could only be changed by a majority within the North, which had been strongly lobbied for by John Hume, was anathema to Republican ideology. The acceptance of the principle of consent removed the permanence of the British commitment to Northern Ireland's place within the Union, and represented the adoption of a more neutral stance on the constitutional status of the North.⁵¹⁴ This directly challenged the Republican narrative of British imperialism being the root of the conflict.⁵¹⁵

In the Manichean politics of Northern Ireland, the severity of the Unionists' hostile reaction made the AIA that much more of a success for the SDLP among the Nationalists.⁵¹⁶ The AIA effectively quashed the Provisionals' political rise in the early 1980s and shored up the SDLP's dominant position within the Nationalist nonviolent political market, even if only by a fairly narrow majority. As a result, Sinn Fein and the SDLP were stuck in a stalemated competition.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹³ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 241.

⁵¹⁴ O'Duffy, "British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast. Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999," *Nations and Nationalism*, 404.

⁵¹⁵ Neumann, "From Revolution to Devolution: Is the IRA Still a Threat to Peace in Northern Ireland?," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 83.

⁵¹⁶ The Loyalist backlash to the AIA was significant: strikes, protests, boycotts and a resurgence of Loyalist paramilitary violence. Dixon, "Paths to Peace in Northern Ireland (II): The Peace Processes 1973–74 and 1994–96," *Democratization*, 12–13; Neumann, "The Myth of Ulsterization in British Security Policy in Northern Ireland," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 374.

⁵¹⁷ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 241.

VII. War Averted

Recognizing the box into which the Provisionals were being maneuvered by their rivals and adversaries as they entered the nonviolent market, they began planning an explosive burst of violence that would destabilize the moderates and finally coerce the British out of Northern Ireland. A critical part of this plan was the renewed ties with Gaddafi, whose provision of massive arms shipments made such a putsch possible. Although the record is still somewhat muddled about the timing, number, size and composition of these arms shipments, it is very clear that they would have been sufficient for producing violence on a scale unprecedented in Irish history. The arms included surface-to-air missiles (SAM-7s) that could have reduced government control of the border areas to virtually zero by denying the British their one major strength: air power. Although the PIRA were unable to turn the threat of these advanced weapons into reality, the subsequent revelation of their presence in Northern Ireland was a major publicity coup in and of itself.

Beyond the acquisition of heavy and advanced weapon systems, the Libyan connection was especially significant because it dramatically increased the use of high-explosives, specifically Semtex, in the Republican campaign.⁵¹⁸ The more compact and malleable explosives could be used to make more effective and easily concealed anti-personnel and booby trap bombs, “barrack buster” mortars, and truck bombs of mini-nuke proportions. As the PIRA became more adept at the construction and use of these

⁵¹⁸ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*.

explosives, there was a significant increase in the level of economic damage produced.⁵¹⁹

Despite the best efforts of the Provisionals to maintain the element of surprise, the security forces became aware of the plans for this large-scale escalation when a particularly large shipment aboard the *Eksund* was captured on October 28, 1987.⁵²⁰ This discovery prompted a wave of intense security sweeps to find and dismantle weapons caches on both sides of the Irish border. The British quickly implemented technological and procedural countermeasures for their helicopters and troops to mitigate much of the threat from whatever weapons remained in the Provisionals' arsenal. Having lost the critical element of surprise, the PIRA abandoned its plan. Some of the weapons were occasionally used, especially in the border areas, but these incidents were not part of a coherent campaign.

VIII. The Splits

As these failures in both the violent and nonviolent political markets were developing, internal dissention within the Republican community was on the rise. In 1986, the Provisionals split, although the splinter group did not immediately form an armed wing. In 1987, INLA split into the even more sectarian and violent IPLO. The former represented a new entrant threat that would loom over the subsequent events

⁵¹⁹ The increased power of these bombs at least partially offset the decrease in the success rate for such operations. In other words, the authorities were more able to interdict and disrupt plots, but those that got through were increasingly devastating. Neumann, "From Revolution to Devolution: Is the IRA Still a Threat to Peace in Northern Ireland?," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 83. By the late 1980s, 70 per cent of all planned IRA operations in the province were aborted for fear of detection, whilst of the remaining 30 per cent, another 80 per cent were prevented or interdicted by the security forces (ibid.).

⁵²⁰ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*.

until it was finally realized in 1994 with the emergence of the Continuity IRA. The latter was an immediate threat to the Provisionals because the more sectarian violence won the support of a dangerous niche within the market but also undermined the overall support for violence.

In a move to bolster the electoral appeal of Sinn Fein, the Provisional leadership pushed to end the policy of abstentionism. The decision to recognize the legitimacy of the Southern government had led to repeated splits—often bloody ones—in the Republican movement over the preceding six decades, and 1986 was no exception. At the Ard Fheis that November, O Bradaigh led a failed attempt to stop Adams' proposal to change in the Sinn Fein constitution. Afterwards, he led a small contingent out of the meeting to form Republican Sinn Fein (RSF). The general Provisional response to this challenge was one of dismissive sadness rather than major concern.⁵²¹

RSF maintained its vocal support for the PIRA's prisoners and ongoing violence, but apparently had no immediate intention of producing their own. Although primarily of an older generation, most of those who left were experienced and therefore represented a core around which a rival Republican paramilitary could form. Indeed, it appears that they set up their own army council during the 1986 split, but it lay dormant until the Provisionals stopped producing an adequate level of violence production.⁵²²

The removal of the most vocal critics of Adams' plan to expand Provisional production of nonviolent politics freed him to begin exploring a potentially controversial new relationship with the SDLP: the creation of a pan-Nationalist front.

⁵²¹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 6, 1986.

⁵²² Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 289.

This began at a lower level in late 1987 and culminated in secret direct talks between John Hume and Gerry Adams in January 1988.⁵²³ Hume acted as a conduit to Fianna Fail's Charles Haughey, who was still a strong constitutional Republican but had gradually come into alignment with Hume's own interpretation of Northern Irish politics and the need for consent.⁵²⁴ The meetings apparently officially ended on September 5, 1988,⁵²⁵ but the two men met four more times in 1989 before abandoning the talks.⁵²⁶ The talks proved inconclusive, but marked a turning point in the competitive relationship between the two parties.

In contrast to the relatively civil Provisional split, the Irps splintered in a burst of violence. After its descent into criminality and sectarianism, the INLA had split into four factions by the end of 1984: two seeking to disband the organization, one led by Steenson and Jimmy Brown and the other by Harry Flynn and Gerry Roche, one seeking to reform it, led by John O'Reilly, Ta Powers, and Hugh Torney, and one that vacillated between the two, led by Tom McAllister.⁵²⁷ These factions wrangled for power for two years before the McAllister-Steenson alliance emerged as the Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLO)⁵²⁸ with the express intent to disband the INLA.

⁵²³ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 264. Hume had reached out to the PIRA Army Council in February 1985, but the meeting had only lasted seven minutes and revealed an intense lack of trust between the two sides. Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 354.

⁵²⁴ O'Donnell, "Fianna Fáil and Sinn Féin: The 1988 Talks Reappraised," *Irish Political Studies*, 69–72.

⁵²⁵ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 356.

⁵²⁶ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 264.

⁵²⁷ "Interview with 'Seamus Clancy,'" *Sunday News*, January 3, 1987; Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 262–63.

⁵²⁸ During the feud, the IPLO used the name INLA-Army Council (INLA-AC) and strongly denied any link between the IPLO and INLA-AC. *Sunday News*, January 3, 1987.

Like the INLA in 1975, this new entrant entered the market with a great deal of promise, but was effectively sidelined by a vicious feud.

Although the IPLO's first targets were members of the RUC, it soon turned on its erstwhile comrades in the INLA.⁵²⁹ On November 12, 1986, the IPLO shot and killed an RUC constable and followed this a few weeks later with a grenade attack on a group of policemen. Having established their bone fides as a potentially effective Republican paramilitary, they next eliminated an INLA man who was widely despised in the larger Republican community for racketeering for personal gain in West Belfast on December 22.⁵³⁰ On January 20, 1987, the IPLO arranged a fake summit at the Rosnaree Hotel to discuss the division of weapons and resources between the two groups as a trap. Two of the leaders, including the highly regarded Ta Powers, were killed and the remaining two were injured.⁵³¹ At the same time as this decapitation strike, nearly a dozen INLA and IRSP members were targeted for kidnap and death to prevent any retaliation.⁵³² Two weeks later, the INLA⁵³³ regrouped and responded by torturing and killing a member of the IPLO.⁵³⁴ The feud turned into a deadly tit-for-tat, including the murder of Steenson during a fake ceasefire meeting on March 14.⁵³⁵ The feud ended in a truce one week later as both organizations recognized that the death of six INLA and three IPLO members had severely weakened both of them.

⁵²⁹ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 279–80.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 280.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, 284–85.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, 286.

⁵³³ This faction called itself the INLA-GHQ to differentiate itself from the INLA-AC during the feud.

⁵³⁴ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 288–91; Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Worker's Party*, 511.

⁵³⁵ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, March 19, 1987; Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 296–98.

If the IPLO's goal had been to destroy the INLA, the feud was largely a success. The INLA allegedly disbanded, but actually just went dormant for a few years while it rebuilt its heavily damaged organization. However, if the IPLO's goal was to eliminate its rival and take its place with a new and improved paramilitary organization, it was largely a failure. The IPLO continued to exist, but the feud badly damaged its reputation. Worse yet, without Steenson's leadership, it became the most sectarian Republican group of the entire Troubles.

The feud between the INLA and IPLO served to strengthen the PIRA by weakening its rivals. In February 1987, the Provisionals began to call for the INLA to disband, but apparently took no substantive action to end the in-fighting.⁵³⁶ After the feud ended, most of the Southern members of the IPLO either joined the Provisionals or withdrew from Republican politics.⁵³⁷ Those who joined the PIRA “were seasoned political and military operatives, some of whom had access to weapons, intelligence, and arms routes abroad.”⁵³⁸ As a result, combined with the lack of an immediate threat of entry from RSF's armed wing, the Provisionals' level of monopoly power over the Republican market for violence was at its highest point to date.

IX. Blood on their Hands

There was a remarkable shift in the perception of the utility of violence during the late 1980s. There were a series of atrocities in fairly close succession that helped to remove much of the romanticism of violence that still remained despite nearly twenty

⁵³⁶ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 5, 1987; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 26, 1987; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, March 5, 1987.

⁵³⁷ *Irish Times*, February 6, 1992; Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 302.

⁵³⁸ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 301.

years of persistent conflict.⁵³⁹ The PIRA killed a number of Protestant civilians in Enniskillen on November 8, 1987. SAS commandos shot and killed three unarmed PIRA volunteers in Gibraltar on March 6, 1988. During the funeral for these Provisionals, a lone Loyalist attacker killed three and wounded many more within the crowd of mourners. At the resulting funeral three days later, two lost British soldiers were dragged out of their car by an incensed Republican mob and were later executed by the Provisionals. As a result of these attacks, many people in both communities were shocked out of a sense of complacency and began to organize to protest for an end to the violence.

The first event helped to discredit the Republican paramilitaries. The bombing of a Remembrance Day parade on November 8, 1987, which killed 11 people and injured 63 others, was a public relations nightmare for the Provisionals in itself.⁵⁴⁰ This was compounded by the reaction of the father of one of the young victims. Gordon Wilson gave an interview afterwards in which he forgave his daughter's killers and called for peace: "I have lost my daughter, but I bear no ill-will, I bear no grudge...dirty sort of talk is not going to bring her back to life...I don't have an answer...but I know there has to be a plan. If I didn't think that, I would commit suicide...it's part of a greater plan, and God is good...and we shall meet again."⁵⁴¹ The bombing and subsequent call for peace dominated the news, and made a deep impression in the

⁵³⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 349–50; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 257–58; Coogan, *The IRA*, 578–81.

⁵⁴⁰ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 255–56.

⁵⁴¹ Cooney, John, *The Herald*, April 9, 1993.

United States and around the globe. In the wake of this backlash, the SDLP and Catholic Church both called on Nationalists to start informing on the Republicans.⁵⁴²

In response, the PIRA admitted responsibility and said that it “deeply regret[ted] what occurred” before blaming the timing of the attack on British countermeasures.⁵⁴³ However, Adams recognized the devastating impact the bomb had had on the level of support for the Provisionals. In a significant departure from the standard Provisional response to such tragedies, he called Enniskillen a “mistake” and warned the PIRA not to repeat it. He went on to encourage the individual producers of violence to take additional caution to avoid civilian casualties:

Every IRA Volunteer must realise that he or she has the capacity to advance or retard the national struggle. The British crown forces will exploit IRA operational mistakes in a ruthless manner. They have no concern for the civilian population. Concern for the civilian population must be a key factor in the IRA's deliberations.⁵⁴⁴

Despite these efforts to minimize future large-scale civilian deaths, Enniskillen and Wilson's noble response disillusioned many of Nationalists at home and abroad.

The second event helped to discredit the British government. The killing of three unarmed PIRA volunteers in Gibraltar on March 6, 1988 sullied the reputation of the British and appeared to confirm the previous allegations of the existence of a shoot-to-kill policy.⁵⁴⁵ A controversial but widely acclaimed documentary, *A Death on the Rock*,

⁵⁴² *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 12, 1987.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.* Subsequent forensic analysis disputes the PIRA's claims about the accidental nature of these deaths. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 255; Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 209-10.

⁵⁴⁴ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 19, 1987.

⁵⁴⁵ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 256; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 346; Coogan, *The IRA*, 577-79; Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 370-71; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 330-32. The Gibraltar incident

explores the precise details of this counter-terrorism operation.⁵⁴⁶ The Provisionals were undeniably involved in an operation to bomb the British garrison at the mouth of the Mediterranean, but were not an immediate danger at the time of their deaths. The three volunteers were elevated to hero status within the Republican community and there was a very large outpouring of support at their funerals. The apparently extra-legal killings by the SAS—and the documentary itself—raised many questions about the legitimacy of the British efforts to counter the Republican threat.

The third event helped to discredit the Loyalists. At the first of these funerals, a lone Loyalist gunman named Michael Stone attacked the mourners. He killed three and wounded fifty others with a gun and grenades.⁵⁴⁷ Despite the almost suicidal nature of such an attack, he was able to escape the incensed crowd long enough to be arrested by the police.

The final event helped to discredit a belief that the conflict was the responsibility of the above three actors—individual members of the community were themselves liable. After the jarring attack at the first funeral, the mourners at the second one three days later naturally were on edge. Two British soldiers accidentally approached the funeral and attempted to quickly reverse their car. Fearing a second Loyalist attack, the mob dragged them from the car, after which the PIRA took them

followed nearly a year after another SAS ambush in Loughall, County Armagh, in which eight PIRA volunteers and a civilian were killed during an attempted attack on an RUC barracks. Coogan, *The IRA*, 575–78.

⁵⁴⁶ Thames Television, *Death On The Rock, SAS Executions in Gibraltar*, ITV Network, Audiovisio file, April 28, 1988.

⁵⁴⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 579.

from the scene and shot them. Several of those involved in the mob violence were jailed for their roles.⁵⁴⁸

Any one of these incidents alone would have been shocking and politically significant, but their temporal proximity and the fact that much of the violence was captured on film gave them an even more potent combined effect.⁵⁴⁹ The power of the broadcast media was officially recognized after these attacks when the British imposed a ban on airing the voices of proscribed organizations, including Sinn Fein, on October 19, 1988. A peace movement began to form across sectarian lines and on both sides of the Irish border that was to challenge the Republicans' power. The most prominent of these was the Peace Train organization, which was joined by New Consensus, Families Against Intimidation and Terrorism (FAIT), and later Peace '93. Not only did these opposing voices emphasize that the paramilitaries could not claim to represent the full community, but they also served as a catalyst, emboldening others to also express their opposition through protest or cooperation with the security forces.

X. Conclusion

The development of the Republican market in the 1980s essentially paralleled the changes of the previous decade. Like internment in 1971, the Hunger Strike in 1981 radicalized and mobilized a new generation of Republicans. Like Sunningdale and the constitutional forum in 1973–75, the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 proved to be a

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., 589; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 348–49; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 257.

⁵⁴⁹ Footage of the Enniskillen bombing aftermath, the entire Milltown Cemetery attack, and the mob's attack of the soldiers is available on *YouTube*. "The Enniskillen Remembrance Day Massacre," *YouTube*; "Milltown Massacre (1988) (1–8)," *YouTube*; "Corporal Killings," *YouTube*.

major political threat that undermined support for further radical change, especially through violence. Similarly, like the emergence of the INLA in 1974–75, the IPLO's promising attempted entry into the market in 1986–87 was thwarted by feud violence.

The one critical difference was that the Provisionals embraced the production of nonviolent politics after discovering its potential as a source of political power during the Hunger Strikes. This alternative political product was initially viewed as a complementary good, which would synergistically expand the base of support and thus capacity to coerce the British out of Ireland. By the end of the decade, it was clear that it was in fact a substitute good whose production had taken on a life of its own—electoral performance was inversely related to the severity of the armed campaign. As the reaction to the Remembrance Day bombing at Enniskillen demonstrated, excessive violence made the Provisionals' overall political position vulnerable.

Consequently, the late 1980s represented a major turning point in the Troubles as the market forces began to align in favor of Republican disarmament—a process that would take over a decade to reach fruition. Opposition to Republican violence began to become more organized and vocal. The SDLP and the Irish government began to explore a more cooperative arrangement with the Republicans. The new entrant threat was significant, but no existing paramilitary group could even come close to challenging Provisionals' dominance over Republican violence. The massive stockpile amassed from the Libyan arms shipments left them largely impervious to pressures from external suppliers. Finally, continuing the trend begun in 1976, the ability of the

intelligence services to monitor and track individuals and weapons steadily improved, forcing the paramilitaries to engage in the costly process of constant innovation.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁵⁰ See Moran, "Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland," *Intelligence and National Security*.

CHAPTER 7: A Decade of Change

The nineties is the decade in which peace can be agreed and we can start building a future. — Gerry Adams (*Irish News*, February 1, 1991)

The 1990s witnessed a remarkable transformation of the political market in Northern Ireland, which eventually led to the closure of the market for Republican violence. The radical shift in the payoff structures for Republican violence was partially the result of significant developments in international and domestic politics, but was largely a product of strategic choices within the Nationalist community itself. At the global structural level, the end of the Cold War altered traditional priorities, perspectives and possibilities. External actors, like the United States and the European Community/Union, were freer to take a more active mediation role in settling the conflict and had the resources to offer real incentives for peace. Similarly, the disappearance of the external Soviet threat allowed the British security apparatus to refocus its energy and resources on the Northern Irish conflict. Concurrent with these macro-political changes, a new generation of leadership came to power in both Dublin and London which was less ideologically beholden to its forbears' dogmatic policies and more open to new approaches reflective of the changing times.⁵⁵¹

⁵⁵¹ See Guelke, "Civil Society and the Northern Irish Peace Process," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 65. Dixon argues that it was not the actual international structural change itself that enabled the peace, but rather the ability of the Republican leadership to exaggerate the effects of this change to persuade a reluctant base to support their compromises. Dixon, "Performing the Northern Ireland Peace Process on the World Stage," *Political Science Quarterly*, 61; Carmichael and Knox, "Devolution, Governance and the Peace Process," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 600. Moxon-Browne (1999) allows that both the end of the Cold War and the rise of European integration may have helped end the conflict, they are merely facets of a deeper globalization process, a view further supported by Stevenson. Moxon-Browne, "Northern Ireland: Coming Out of Conflict?" *Civil Wars*, 23–34; Stevenson, "Peace in Northern Ireland: Why Now?" *Foreign Policy*, 41–54.

Although they had already begun to shift toward the production of nonviolent politics, this opening opportunity structure allowed the new Republican leaders to steer the movement—skillfully, albeit gradually—toward exclusive nonviolence through a two-pronged manipulation of the competitive forces. First, the SDLP moved from a mostly antagonistic relationship with the Provisionals to a cooperative one in the context of a broad Nationalist front, reducing the substitute threat. Second, the Provisionals asserted their monopoly power over violence production, reducing the threats from both new entrants and established rivals. Neither of these processes was overly smooth as opportunists on both sides of the sectarian divide challenged the Provisionals' increasing dominance of both violence and nonviolence. Nevertheless, in the face of squeezing margins in the market for violence and increasingly attractive profits in the market for nonviolence, the monopolistic Provisionals very effectively managed a gradual transition of their product mix towards peace.

I. Thatcher Resigns

This transformative decade in Northern Ireland became possible with the precipitous resignation of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in November 1990. Thatcher was a politician who was bitterly opposed to making any concessions to terrorists. Indeed, the “Iron Lady's” staunch refusal to relent during the Hunger Strikes of 1981 and apparent repeated authorization of shoot-to-kill operations in the North and elsewhere in Europe provoked a deep and abiding antipathy within the Republican

Community, both in Ireland and America.⁵⁵² It is unlikely that even if Thatcher had chosen her successors' policy of greater political engagement with the Republicans herself, the Republicans would have been predisposed to cooperate.⁵⁵³ The killing of MP Ian Gow on July 30, 1990, probably had a very similar effect in terms of hardening her will against the Republicans as the killing of her close confidante Airey Naeve in 1979.⁵⁵⁴ Thus, removing Thatcher from government was a prerequisite condition for a negotiated solution.⁵⁵⁵

Given Thatcher's staunch anti-Republicanism, it is somewhat ironic that her chosen head of Northern Irish policy was such an effective catalyst for drawing the Republicans into nonviolent politics. Peter Brooke was appointed as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (SSNI) in August 1989, 15 months before Thatcher's precipitous

⁵⁵² Coogan, *The IRA*, 608; Thompson, *American Policy and Northern Ireland*, 86; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 207. See also Young's biography in which he called her "the most Orange leader" ever, giving more ammunition for Nationalist hate. Young, *One of Us: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher*, 466. For an IRA apologist view, see Kelley, *The Longest War: Northern Ireland and the IRA*, 302.

⁵⁵³ In contrast, Dixon argues that the British government's position regarding Northern Ireland was remarkably consistent over the duration of the Troubles. Specifically, he points to Thatcher's pivotal role in negotiating the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985) and her authorization of back-channel contacts with the Provisionals in 1986 and 1990. Dixon, "Performing the Northern Ireland Peace Process on the World Stage," *Political Science Quarterly*, 66–67; Ireland and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, "Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1985," *United Nations Treaty Series* 1413, no. 23668 (1985). However, this view distorts the pivotal policy change that was the pursuit of serious, direct, legitimacy-granting negotiations with the Republicans with some flexibility regarding the timing of their disarmament. Moreover, it is far from clear that the subsequent dialogue would have been nearly as productive had Thatcher remained in office. Indeed one of the reasons Major's (and even more so, Blair's) government proved as successful as it did was his lack of baggage regarding the Northern Ireland issue, whereas any compromise to Thatcher would be viewed as a surrender by the Republican base. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 283; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 368.

⁵⁵⁴ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 266.

⁵⁵⁵ For more about the effect of leadership change on ending violent conflicts, see Stanley, *Paths to Peace: Domestic Coalition Shifts, War Termination and the Korean Wa.* and Stanley and Sawyer, "Equifinality of War Termination: Multiple Paths to Ending War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

fall from power.⁵⁵⁶ Brooke's pursuit of a less dogmatic policy opened the door for increased dialogue with and between all segments of the Northern Irish political space. Within just months of assuming the post, Brooke publicly made a startling admission that the Provisional IRA could not easily be defeated.⁵⁵⁷ Almost exactly one year later—and just two weeks before Thatcher resigned her office—he gave a further enticement to Republicans by stating, “the British government has no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland.”⁵⁵⁸ These statements appeared to signal a British willingness to disengage from Northern Ireland, whether in the face of Republican pressure or of changing international security imperatives after the Cold War.

Concurrent with this softening of the British negotiating stance, the Provisionals were actively positioning themselves to improve the payoff from their participation in nonviolent politics. As discussed in Chapter 6, Gerry Adams was pivotal in leading the Provisional movement towards greater engagement with nonviolent politics. Although the initial secret conversations between Adams and John Hume of the SDLP petered out fairly quickly in 1988, the groundwork was laid for a much fuller and protracted

⁵⁵⁶ O’Leary and McGarry, *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland*, 312; Wood, *Crimes of Loyalty: A History of the UDA*, 368 (stating that the appointment was on July 7, 1989); Melaugh, “A Chronology of the Conflict: 1989,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society* (stating that the appointment was on July 24, 1989). The situation in Northern Ireland had nothing to do with Thatcher’s rapid decline within the Conservative Party. Rather, she faced an internal revolt as opposition mounted to her policies on local taxation, European integration, the national economy, the National Health Service, among others. This vulnerability provoked a sea change in the internal political structure of the party. Where she had handily defeated her sole challenger for leadership the previous December (84.0 compared to 8.8 percent), over the course of November 1990 it quickly became apparent that she had lost the support of the party base. Philip Webster and Robin Oakley, “Clear-cut win as 314 vote for Thatcher,” *The Times*, December 6, 1989; Phillip Johnston, “When Margaret Thatcher had nowhere left to turn,” *The Telegraph*, February 22, 2009.

⁵⁵⁷ Brooke, Speech as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, November 3, 1989; Hennessey, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process: Ending the Troubles?*, 67 (“difficult to envisage a military defeat of the [Provisional] IRA.”); English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 307.

⁵⁵⁸ *Irish News*, November 10, 1990; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 269.

dialogue between the two men in the 1990s.⁵⁵⁹ Despite the initial lack of progress, Adams continued the course of building up a more legitimate, nonviolent identity for Sinn Fein. This is evident by his announcement in March 1989 that Sinn Fein was seeking to be a “non-armed political movement to work for self-determination.”⁵⁶⁰

The British government had to tread cautiously while encouraging this very welcome evolution toward nonviolent Republicanism. On the one hand, there was a clear and well-publicized policy of not negotiating with terrorists, and any revelation of talks with Republicans would likely be incredibly politically damaging. On the other hand, the conflict in Northern Ireland had become a hurting stalemate, wherein both sides recognized neither was capable of defeating the other. Moreover, the failure of Sunningdale in 1974 had ably demonstrated that any lasting peace settlement would require the support of the paramilitaries. Beginning in October 1990, the British reinitiated through intelligence contacts and intermediaries the secret (and deniable) talks that SSNI Tom King had ended after the PIRA' attempt on his life in August 1987.⁵⁶¹

The Provisionals responded with an equally intricate dance so the leadership would not get too far ahead of the base. In an attempt to back up their private talks with observable action that would not be lost on the British government, the PIRA declared

⁵⁵⁹ Jackson, *Home Rule: An Irish History, 1800–2000*, 304; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 264.

⁵⁶⁰ *BBC News*, “Timeline: Northern Ireland's Road to Peace,” January 27, 2006.

⁵⁶¹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 255–56.

its first official ceasefire in 15 years over the Christmas holidays in 1990.⁵⁶² This official ceasefire was momentous because—although the IRA had regularly suspended operations for the holiday—to date, they had carefully avoided the use of the word “ceasefire” after their disastrous experience in 1975. It is unsurprising that the ceasefire declaration caused considerable media speculation about secret preparations for a more permanent ceasefire, which the leadership publicly and loudly denied but privately confirmed to the British contacts.⁵⁶³

II. Brooke-Mayhew Talks

Despite these moves toward peace, Sinn Fein was not included in March 1991 when Brooke announced Four-Party talks between the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland to discuss three elements or “strands” of a comprehensive peace agreement: relations between the two sectarian communities in Northern Ireland (“Strand One”), North-South relations on the island of Ireland (“Strand Two”), and East-West relations between Ireland and Great Britain (“Strand Three”). These were the first formal talks between the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland since the breakdown of the Constitutional Convention in February 1976.⁵⁶⁴ Brooke's new framework for peace was an important and lasting change given that the “Three Strand” approach formed the

⁵⁶² This was also just a few months after the disastrous “human bomb” campaign, in which “collaborators” were forced to carry out involuntary suicide-bomb attacks on the security forces. Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 366–67.

⁵⁶³ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 397–98; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 269.

⁵⁶⁴ Guelke, “Civil Society and the Northern Irish Peace Process,” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 63. There had been informal talks between the SDLP, UUP, DUP, and Alliance in Duisburg, West Germany in October 1988, but these failed to produce an agreement. *Ibid.*

basis for the peace talks that eventually produced the Belfast Agreement in 1998.⁵⁶⁵ The talks proved difficult to sustain, despite Brooke's best efforts to focus them on topics for which consensus was reasonably possible and to postpone discussion of the more serious impediments to agreement. At first, the Combined Loyalist Military Command, the umbrella organization for the Loyalist paramilitaries, was willing to provide political space for the talks to progress through a ceasefire, but quickly reversed course and ended its two-month-long ceasefire in July 1991.⁵⁶⁶ In April 1992, after two more abortive starts to this political dialogue, Brooke was replaced by Patrick Mayhew, who vigorously promoted his predecessor's initiative.⁵⁶⁷

Although Sinn Fein was not invited to participate in what became known as the Brooke-Mayhew Talks, it was nevertheless actively trying to position itself to respond to the changing zeitgeist. It had become increasingly apparent that both the British government and the population of Northern Ireland were ready for the violence to end and were serious about finding a workable solution to the conflict. At the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (annual meeting) two months before the April 1992 Westminster election, Sinn Fein produced a new document outlining its vision of the path that would produce an end to the violence, *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland* (TLPI).⁵⁶⁸ Although couched in traditional Republican language and logic, this document was the first time the Provisionals publicly accepted the principle of Unionist consent, even to a limited

⁵⁶⁵ Thompson, *American Policy and Northern Ireland: A Saga of Peacebuilding*, 148.

⁵⁶⁶ Melaugh, "A Chronology of the Conflict: 1991," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁵⁶⁷ Melaugh and Lynn, "Brooke/Mayhew Talks (April 1991 to November 1992)—A Chronology of Main Events," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁵⁶⁸ Sinn Fein. *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland: A Summary Guide to the Sinn Fein Peace Proposal*.

degree.⁵⁶⁹ TLPI maintained the Republican opposition to a Unionist veto over the withdrawal of the British, but conceded that the Unionists had a right to consent to the institutions by which they were governed within a united Ireland. Yet despite this limited concession, in the April elections, Gerry Adams lost his seat in Parliament representing West Belfast to the SDLP's Joe Hendron—a crippling blow that shook the Provisional movement.⁵⁷⁰

By June 1992, talks about Strand One (inter-communal relations) had largely stalled, but Mayhew pressed ahead with the remaining two strands. In a major step forward, Unionist parties accepted a political dialogue with the Republic of Ireland in July 1992. However, during the talks' summer recess, the British government banned the UDA, which led Ian Paisley to briefly withdraw from the talks when they resumed in September. The Brooke-Mayhew talks were finally derailed completely in November by the collapse of the Irish Coalition government and Unionist disquiet over the resumption of institutional proceedings under the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which had been suspended in order to entice the Unionists into the talks.⁵⁷¹ Despite the failure to

⁵⁶⁹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 399; Pruitt, "Readiness Theory and the Northern Ireland Conflict," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 1523; Hennessey, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process: Ending the Troubles?*; Guelke, "Civil Society and the Northern Irish Peace Process," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 67.

⁵⁷⁰ Adams lost by just 1.5 percent of the vote—apparently partially as a result of strategic voting by the Unionists. Whyte, "Who Won What When and Where?," *Northern Ireland Elections*, ARK, Economic & Social Research Council.

⁵⁷¹ Melaugh and Lynn, "Brooke/Mayhew Talks (April 1991 to November 1992)—A Chronology of Main Events," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

produce an agreement, these talks created a framework and procedural model that was a crucial foundation for negotiations.⁵⁷²

III. Night of the Long Knives

With their continued public exclusion from the Brooke-Mayhew Talks and Gerry Adam's Westminster loss, the Provisionals shifted their focus back toward their position in the Republican market for violence. Although the Provisionals were the dominant Republican paramilitary organization, they lacked a total monopoly on violence, and experienced market competition from two other paramilitary groups.

The INLA mounted infrequent and rarely successful attacks that communicated the group's continued existence, but little else. It had become a marginal group since the catastrophic 1987 feud with the IPLO (see Chapter 6 for more details) and did not pose a serious threat to domination of the Republican market for violence.

The Provisionals' most formidable rival for market domination was the IPLO, which had been able to regroup much more quickly after the 1987 feud. The IPLO was fairly active and developed a brand identity for extreme, primarily sectarian violence. In comparison with the Provisionals, the IPLO had always been a smaller and more extremist group, lacking the ability to recruit the same numbers or quality as the much larger PIRA. Although supported by a political base that was equally or perhaps even more fervently devoted but was significantly smaller, the IPLO had to rely on criminal activities to a greater extent to provide the materiel necessary for continuing its armed

⁵⁷² Jackson, *Home Rule: An Irish History, 1800–2000*, 303; Spencer, “Containing Dialogue: The British Government and Early Talks in the Northern Ireland Peace Process,” *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 455; Bloomfield, *Political Dialogue in Northern Ireland: The Brooke Initiative, 1989–92*, 197.

campaign. Accordingly, by the beginning of 1989, it had branched fairly heavily into the drug trade as a way of supplementing its income and maintaining its ability to produce violence;⁵⁷³ however, it lacked the discipline and internal mechanisms necessary to staunch the corrosive effect on the organization, and drug profits rather than political fervor became an increasingly important motivation for the IPLO⁵⁷⁴.

As the main active alternative Republican paramilitary, the IPLO was the primary sanctuary for PIRA volunteers who became dissatisfied with their leadership or were expelled. These disaffected Volunteers brought to the IPLO their expertise, experience, information, skills, and, occasionally, weapons. In exchange, the IPLO offered protection from PIRA that provided the ex-Provisionals with an alternative platform from which to promote preferred policies or, for the less ideologically-motivated, with cover to engage in criminal activities of which PIRA disapproved. Naturally, this poaching of manpower and other resources created tensions between the two groups.

Far more problematic for the Provisionals was the IPLO's preferred strategy of violence. Although nominally more Socialist than the Provisionals, the IPLO had less

⁵⁷³ The nexus between paramilitaries, drugs, and other illegal activities is hardly a unique IPLO phenomenon in Northern Ireland. Drug-running, racketeering, robberies, etc. have been profitable side-activities for both Republican and Loyalist groups throughout the Troubles. The Loyalists have been especially heavily tainted by the criminality of paramilitary behavior. OIRA pioneered the use of the black market as a way of filling its war coffers with its drinking clubs. In later years, OIRA primarily existed as muscle to support its racketeering and other fraudulent activities. PIRA and INLA have often been accused of similar criminal activities, albeit to a lesser extent. PIRA generally relied on a broader, mostly voluntary levy system and took efforts to curb and punish any use of the IRA name or resources for personal aggrandizement. Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 311–15. *See also*, Coogan, *The IRA*, 541.

⁵⁷⁴ By 1991, British newspapers were describing the IPLO as an umbrella organization for a number of smaller criminal gangs rather than a monolithic entity. McKittrick, "Extremists switch from politics to trafficking," *The Independent*, February 7, 1991.

faith in the reformability of the Unionist population.⁵⁷⁵ As a result, they were far more prone to engage in purely sectarian attacks, i.e. attack random Protestant civilians as representatives of the Loyalist population, rather than pinpointing attacks to more “legitimate” political targets. Such sectarian attacks often sparked a cycle of tit-for-tat killings as Loyalist groups killed Catholic civilians in reprisal and vice versa. From the Provisionals' viewpoint, this sectarian killing of civilians both opened the door for propagandists to discredit Republican claims about the political nature of the violence⁵⁷⁶ and tended to produce considerable outrage from the moderate segments of the Nationalist population. Thus, the IPLO violence could alienate potential supporters of Sinn Fein by discrediting all violence as purely sectarian rather than strictly limited to legitimate targets.

After years of escalating tensions between the IPLO and PIRA, the Provisionals forcibly disbanded an internally divided IPLO in November 1992. Relations between the Provisionals and the IPLO, which had never been overly warm, began to deteriorate rapidly after the gang rape of a Nationalist girl in the Divis Flats in June 1990 by IPLO members. The IPLO became increasingly torn apart by internal strife which mushroomed into a full-blown feud that resulted in the death of the head of the IPLO, Jimmy Brown, on August 18. Two more men were killed in the following month, one from each side of the IPLO internal feud, before the two factions finally reached an

⁵⁷⁵ The more Socialist strand of Republicanism emphasizes the class issue over the sectarian one. According to the Socialist interpretation, British Imperialists created the Unionist-Nationalist division as a way of splitting the revolutionary potential of the Irish working class. Thus, Loyalists must be convinced of the error of their nationalistic ways so that Protestants and Catholics can join forces to deliver a Socialist Republic.

⁵⁷⁶ John Hood, “Letter to the Editor,” *An Phoblacht*, November 7, 1991.

uneasy truce in the end of September;⁵⁷⁷ however this internal division left them weak for hostile takeover. On Halloween 1992, in the “Night of the Long Knives”, PIRA executed the leader of one of the factions, wounded 20 members from both factions, and issued an ultimatum to the survivors of both factions to disband their organizations or face death. Both quickly complied, leaving PIRA alone in the Republican market for violence—except for the insipid INLA—in possession of a virtual monopoly of the market.⁵⁷⁸

Although largely overlooked by most observers of the Troubles, including terrorism experts, the violent elimination of the IPLO was a pivotal precursor to the subsequent peace. It demonstrated both the ability of the Provisionals to engage in coordinated large-scale operations across geographical distance and the political will to do so against their Republican rivals. Although it did not fully prevent the INLA or other Republicans dissatisfied with the peace process from producing their own violence, it did have a significant chilling effect on these groups' subsequent behavior. This leverage over the smaller violence producers allowed the Provisionals to maintain low-levels of Republican violence that were useful, but deniable, in the strategic negotiations with the state and Unionists and to end it once the negotiations were over.

IV. The Unionist Impasse

With the effective end of the Brooke-Mayhew Talks, the talks were replaced by two parallel, sometime complementary, sometimes competing, processes: one between

⁵⁷⁷ Boyne, “INLA: The Deadly Hand of Irish Republicanism,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*.

⁵⁷⁸ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 5, 1992.

the national governments in Dublin and London and one within the Nationalist community itself.

Within Westminster, the peace process was hampered by domestic political constraints. Although Major was eager to resolve the Northern Ireland crisis as a way of winning popular support for his administration, his options for peace were fairly restricted. Major's political room to maneuver was limited by his reliance on Unionist MPs to bolster the Conservatives' slim 21 seat majority in Parliament.⁵⁷⁹ Despite his reliance on the Unionists, Major's commitment to resolving the Northern Ireland crisis was evident in his limited public actions, and his more extensive secret maneuverings.

Although Major was largely reliant on the Unionists, as Irish Deputy Prime Minister Dick Spring noted in July 1993, their intransigence would no longer be allowed to prevent the peace. If the Unionists were unwilling to take a productive role in the efforts for peace, London would simply negotiate with Dublin over their heads, following in the vein of the AIA.⁵⁸⁰ Fortunately, Major and Albert Reynolds—who had replaced Charles Haughey as the leader of Fianna Fail and Taoiseach in early 1992—had formed a very warm working relationship characterized by an extreme degree of frankness and the ability to overcome significant log-jams in intergovernmental negotiations.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁹ Fitzduff, *Beyond Violence: Conflict Resolution Process in Northern Ireland*, 129; Dorey, *British Politics since 1945*, 226.

⁵⁸⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 616.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 610, 613; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 268–69; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 375–76.

Despite the close Reynolds-Major relationship, both governments were distracted by other domestic political concerns, ceding the initiative to other actors for over a year. Just two weeks after the end of the Brooke-Mayhew Talks in November 1992, the Republic's Fianna Fail-Progressive Democrat Coalition was replaced by a new Fianna Fail-Labour Coalition after two months of negotiation.⁵⁸² While this new coalition was still headed by Reynolds, the shifting political landscape required his considerable attention. Meanwhile, in London, the Major government needed to court the Unionists in Westminster to support the Maastricht Treaty, and could not risk alienating them with too progressive a policy toward Northern Ireland. This necessitated a disingenuous public stance against cutting the Unionists out of negotiations, as was apparent with Major's heated rebuke of Shadow SSNI Kevin McNamara's proposal to negotiate a shared sovereignty with the Republic over the heads of the Unionists, which he denounced as "shameful."⁵⁸³ Major went on to call for McNamara to be fired as the Shadow SSNI.⁵⁸⁴

In contrast with such public actions, the secret contacts with the Provisionals initiated under Brooke continued under Major's government. One example of the sustained effort by the British to encourage the Republicans toward constitutional

⁵⁸² Labour was the traditional partner to Fine Gael and had been very critical of the Fianna Fail-Progressive Democrat Coalition. Mair and Weeks, "The Party System," in Coakley and Gallagher, ed., *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, 3rd ed., 150.

⁵⁸³ Coogan, *The IRA*, 614. Cannot substantiate Coogan's account in the Parliamentary record, although Mayhew referred to it as "infamous" during Parliamentary debate. United Kingdom. *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 6th ser., vol. 227 (1992-93) cols. 1092; Cunningham, *British Government Policy in Northern Ireland, 1969-2000*, 89.

⁵⁸⁴ Brown, "Leadership Disowns McNamara Plan for Ulster," *The Independent*, June 30, 1993. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/leadership-disowns-mcnamara-plan-for-ulster-1494775.html> (accessed October 29, 2010).

politics was the December 1992 Coleraine speech by SSNI Patrick Mayhew, in which he reiterated British commitment to the Union so long as the majority in Northern Ireland desired, but admitted that “there is also the aspiration to a united Ireland, an aspiration that is no less legitimate.”⁵⁸⁵ In early January 1993, a British intelligence officer told the Provisionals that “an easing-off [of violence] would start the ball rolling in a significant way” toward direct negotiations.⁵⁸⁶ After several months of back-and-forth, the Provisionals finally acknowledged that they would be willing to produce a two-week ceasefire in exchange for direct talks.⁵⁸⁷ However, these secret negotiations came to an abrupt end when the press caught wind of them in late November, causing considerable embarrassment for the Major government.⁵⁸⁸

V. A Broad Nationalist Front

The second of the parallel processes revolved around laying the foundation for a united Nationalist voice in future talks, i.e. transitioning from competition to cooperation in the nonviolent politics marketplace. In the face of the Unionist veto to any public attempts to move the peace process forward, Sinn Fein and the SDLP sought to maximize their bargaining leverage for when serious negotiations would eventually resume by forming a unified Nationalist bloc. Thus, at the same time as the secret

⁵⁸⁵ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 270. The Provisional response to this remarkable admission of Republican legitimacy was fairly hostile, perhaps because it simply echoed a speech Peter Brooke gave in November 1990 without significant further development. *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, December 17, 1992; Hennessey, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process: Ending the Troubles?*, 67–68.

⁵⁸⁶ Coogan, *The IRA*, 641.

⁵⁸⁷ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 405–08.

⁵⁸⁸ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 206; Sparre, “Megaphone Diplomacy in the Northern Irish Peace Process: Squaring the Circle by Talking to Terrorists through Journalists,” *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 92.

discussions between the British and the Provisionals, Adams and Hume were reigniting their working relationship.⁵⁸⁹ The results of their discussions were transmitted by Hume to London via Dublin.

In April 1993, Hume and Adams released a joint statement calling for national self-determination, i.e. including the full Irish dimension.⁵⁹⁰ Specifically, they rejected a devolved, internal solution, arguing that “internal settlement is not a solution because it obviously does not deal with all the relationships at the heart of the problem.”⁵⁹¹ In a second joint statement on September 25, they announced that they had forwarded a report of their mutually-agreed upon positions to Dublin for consideration.⁵⁹² Despite considerable speculation as to its content, the Hume-Adams Initiative (HAI) has never been published.⁵⁹³

On the one hand, Sinn Fein's increasingly close relationship with the SDLP was a positive development towards peace because it brought the Republicans into the nonviolent political discourse. On the other, it forced both governments to grapple with the potential ramifications of talking to terrorists. As a result, the official responses,

⁵⁸⁹ Although it is unclear if the Reid-Hume pipeline ever went completely dormant during this period, the direct meetings between Adams and Hume suggest a significant change in the qualitative nature of the relationship. Moreover, Jackson argues that SDLP membership had lost interest in making a deal with Unionists after the AIA and promise of a “New Departure.” Jackson, *Home Rule: An Irish History, 1800–2000*, 304–05. Instead, with a united Nationalist front, the British would be forced to become “persuaders for unity.”

⁵⁹⁰ McKenna, “First Joint Statement issued by John Hume and Gerry Adams, 24 April 1993,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*; *Irish Times*, April 26, 1993.

⁵⁹² McKenna, “Second Joint Statement issued by John Hume and Gerry Adams, 25 September 1993,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁵⁹³ Sinn Féin, “John Hume/Gerry Adams Statement,” <http://sinnfein.ie/peace/document/40> (accessed February 1, 2008; page now discontinued). According to Moloney, the HAI did not actually exist; the statement was simply a ploy to put additional pressure on Reynolds. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 413.

especially by the British, to the Hume-Adams talks were often muted or somewhat critical, but pains were taken to avoid totally undermining Hume's outreach efforts.⁵⁹⁴

VI. Downing Street Declaration

To at least some degree, the public détente between Sinn Fein and the SDLP was an unwelcome development in London. The announcement of the HAI was very poorly received by the Unionists on whom Major's government depended. Although the AIA was considered an abomination in Unionist circles, in their minds, continued dialogue between the two states was a far more preferable response to the political pressure from Reynolds than any actions that would even hint at legitimizing the Provisionals.⁵⁹⁵ In the wake of a particularly deadly PIRA bombing of a fish market in the Shankill on October 23 that killed nine Protestant civilians, including two schoolgirls, and wounded dozens more, Major and Reynolds issued a joint statement from Brussels rejecting the HAI. Although they gave credit to Hume for his courage and imagination in engaging with Sinn Fein, “negotiations on a political settlement could only take place between democratic governments and parties committed exclusively to constitutional methods.”⁵⁹⁶ Major went even further, publicly stating that “the thought [of talking to Sinn Fein] would turn my stomach . . . I will not talk to people who murder indiscriminately.”⁵⁹⁷

Six weeks later, Major and Reynolds began their own initiative for peace with the Downing Street Declaration (DSD). Critically, the DSD embraced the concept of

⁵⁹⁴ Coogan, *The IRA*, 650.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 649.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 650.

⁵⁹⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 393.

national self-determination, albeit with the caveat that majorities in both North and South had to be convinced of unification. The DSD continued Brooke's Three Strand approach, highlighting the need for cooperative institutions within Northern Ireland, the island of Ireland, and the British Isles. It specifically mentioned the importance of the evolving nature of and relationships with the European Union, indicating an even broader framework for resolving the conflict. Perhaps most importantly, the DSD also reflected significant Republican influence with the British Prime Minister by renouncing all "selfish strategic or economic interests" in the North and committing "to encourage, facilitate and enable the achievement of such agreement over a period through a process of dialogue and co-operation based on full respect for the rights and identities of both traditions in Ireland."⁵⁹⁸ With Reynold's commitment to reevaluate and to dialogue constructively with the Unionists over threatening aspects of the Republic's institutions, both states appeared willing to take on the role of persuader of the Unionists. Finally, the DSD opened the door for direct negotiations with Republicans, if they were to renounce violence:

the achievement of peace must involve a permanent end to the use of, or support for, paramilitary violence. . . . democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process, are free to participate fully in democratic politics and to join in dialogue in due course between the Governments and the political parties on the way ahead.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁸ Ireland, Department of Foreign Affairs, "Joint Declaration of 15 December 1993 (Downing St. Declaration)."

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid.

The Republican response to the DSD was lukewarm, at best. The DSD fell short of Republican demands in two critical ways.⁶⁰⁰ First, there was no British commitment to withdraw before negotiations began. Although this demand had softened over the years from total withdrawal first to a commitment to withdraw within four years,⁶⁰¹ it was still a major sticking point because of the asymmetry of power between the Irish and British. The Republican memory of Michael Collins' acceptance of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty (which led to the Irish Civil War), after a long truce had severely weakened and exposed his guerrilla army, was resurrected; many extremist Republicans mockingly referred to Sinn Fein party headquarters as “Michael Collins House.”⁶⁰² Second, Republicans still chafed that the Unionists had an effective veto over ending partition because of what they perceived to be a historical injustice. In other words, while the Unionists deserved a voice as residents of Ireland, they should not be rewarded with a veto for the illegitimate partition of the island. A statement from Republican prisoners highlighted this flaw in the DSD, but also recognized “that there could be no durable peace without unionist consent to new political structures.”⁶⁰³

The Provisionals faced a difficult decision: either risk splitting the movement to take advantage of new political opportunities or, by being intransigent, sacrifice the support of moderates they had won from moving in the direction of nonviolence. They chose a middle path of non-rejection, promoting dialogue within the movement while

⁶⁰⁰ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 413, 417.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 413.

⁶⁰² Coogan, *The IRA*, 653.

⁶⁰³ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 273. See also Bell, “Ireland: The Long End Game,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 13–14, for more on the skeptical Republican response to the DSD.

Sinn Fein called for clarification of the document. Publicly, they signaled a cautious willingness to see where talks might lead. In private, the Provisional leadership took pains to stress to the base that the discussions with the British would not lead to a ceasefire or acceptance of a return to devolved government, but was rather a ploy to discredit the British.⁶⁰⁴

The Provisionals' clarification strategy had the effect of fracturing the united front approach of the two national governments.⁶⁰⁵ The ROI was much more receptive to political engagement, as demonstrated by Reynold's lifting the broadcast ban on Sinn Fein in January 1994. After PIRA declared a three-day ceasefire for Easter, a Sinn Fein delegation went to London to ask for clarification on three (undisclosed) issues.⁶⁰⁶ The initial governmental response was to hold fast and stick to the carefully negotiated language of the DSD. However, bowing to pressure from Hume and Reynolds, Major finally issued a response.⁶⁰⁷ On May 13, Sinn Fein again submitted a list of questions about which it wanted clarification to Dublin, which then passed it to London. On May 19, the British issued a “commentary” on the declaration in response to the calls for clarification.⁶⁰⁸ This commentary dismissed most of the Provisionals' specific questions

⁶⁰⁴ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 417–19. As a sidenote, an opinion poll found that 38% of Sinn Fein supporters strongly approved of the DSD, while only 4% disapproved. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, O'Doherty, “Ourselves, Plus,” *Fortnight* (Ulster Marketing Survey for ITN).

⁶⁰⁵ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 208.

⁶⁰⁶ MacKinnon, “Sinn Fein takes plea for clarification of joint declaration to Downing Street,” *The Independent*, April 7, 1994. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/sinn-fein-takes-plea-for-clarification-of-joint-declaration-to-downing-street-1368320.html> (accessed October 28, 2010).

⁶⁰⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 653.

⁶⁰⁸ Brown and McKittrick, “Cabinet plans response to Sinn Fein,” *The Independent*, May 18, 1994. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/cabinet-plans-response-to-sinn-fein-clarification-to-downing->

as items that were up for discussion during post-violence negotiations, but did affirm that no issues were off the table.⁶⁰⁹

This British concession did not immediately produce a positive response from the Provisionals. On July 24, a Sinn Fein Conference in Letterkenny rejected key elements of the DSD, although it acknowledged that it was a step in the right direction. Although this was not necessarily an outright rejection of the entire DSD framework, it was interpreted as such and the Provisionals were deluged by the negative reactions, domestic and international; just a month later, to much fanfare, PIRA declared an indefinite ceasefire on August 28, 1994.

VII. The First Ceasefire

Following the PIRA ceasefire and the Loyalists' matching ceasefire declaration on October 13, it is hard to overstate the level of euphoria in Northern Ireland and abroad;⁶¹⁰ yet, despite all of the public support for peace, it eventually proved unsustainable, resulting in a return to violence in 1996, which lasted until 1997. Between the first ceasefire and the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, the peace talks took two distinct forms.⁶¹¹

First, the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation (1994–1996) was an ROI-backed initiative to promote dialogue between all the parties to the conflict. Unsurprisingly, the Unionists were not eager to participate in the Forum, given its strong Nationalist

street-declaration-ruled-out-in-favour-of-deadpan-reply-colin-brown-and-david-mckittrick-report-1436788.html (accessed October 28, 2010).

⁶⁰⁹ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 209.

⁶¹⁰ Bell, "Ireland: The Long End Game," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 17.

⁶¹¹ Coakley, "Ethnic Conflict and its Resolution: The Northern Ireland Model," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 41.

overtone. The forum was largely unproductive in producing arrangements for peace, but it was effective in solidifying links between Sinn Fein and the various Nationalist parties in both the South and North (including Alliance).⁶¹²

Second, the British-backed Northern Ireland Forum and All Party Talks (1996–1998) sought to bring the Northern Irish parties together for dialogue. The Forum had no real powers, especially because the Nationalist parties announced they would boycott it beforehand.⁶¹³ However, the elections for the Forum (and a commitment to nonviolence) dictated which ten parties would be granted entry into the All-Party Talks.⁶¹⁴ Sinn Fein was excluded from these talks until John Major's Conservative government was ousted by Tony Blair's Labour Party in 1997. With the inclusion of Sinn Fein, Ian Paisley withdrew from the talks. Nevertheless, the remaining participants reached a formal agreement on Good Friday, April 10, 1998 (see Section X) below for more details).

A. International Mediation

Of particular importance to the forward momentum of the talks was external mediation. American and other foreign governments were key to keeping the talks moving onward despite a series of obstacles and setbacks. The talks process was led by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, who was appointed as U.S. President Bill

⁶¹² O'Donnell, "Pan-nationalism: Explaining the Irish Government's Role in the Northern Ireland Peace Process, 1992–98," *Contemporary British History*, 231.

⁶¹³ Ruane and Todd, *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict, and Emancipation*, 318.

⁶¹⁴ Guelke, "Violence and Electoral Polarization in Divided Societies: Three Cases in Comparative Perspective," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 87–88.

Clinton's Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland on December 2, 1994.⁶¹⁵ Mitchell enjoyed the full backing of Clinton and the bipartisan Irish lobby in Washington, allowing him to exert considerable pressure on, and to offer very attractive carrots to, both national governments and both communities in Northern Ireland.⁶¹⁶ Mitchell was later joined by former Prime Minister Harri Holkeri of Finland and General John de Chastelain of Canada to head an independent decommissioning body, making the Troubles an even more cogent international issue.⁶¹⁷ Despite the failure of the early peace process, these external mediators' tireless work was critical to the ongoing dialogue and to the rapid convergence on an agreement once Sinn Fein was included in formal talks by the Blair government.

On the upside, Sinn Fein initially enjoyed massive peace dividends from the first ceasefire and reaped the rewards of Nationalist support. Gerry Adams was a media darling at home and abroad.⁶¹⁸ In January 1994, President Clinton personally approved a temporary visa for Adams, much to the consternation of the British Government.⁶¹⁹ One highlight of this visit was a faceoff between Adams and the Unionist MP Ken Maginnis on Larry King Live on October 4.⁶²⁰ In September 1994, the UK lifted its broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein, a powerful symbol of the Provisionals' new-found

⁶¹⁵ Martin Walker, *The Guardian*, December 2, 1994.

⁶¹⁶ O'Grady, "An Irish Policy Born in the U.S.A.: Clinton's Break with the Past," *Foreign Affairs*, 5.

⁶¹⁷ Coakley, "Ethnic Conflict and its Resolution: The Northern Ireland Model," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 42; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 420–22; Curran and Sebenius, "The Mediator as Coalition Builder: George Mitchell in Northern Ireland," *International Negotiation*; Cochrane, "Irish-America, the End of the IRA's Armed Struggle and the Utility of 'Soft Power,'" *Journal of Peace Research*.

⁶¹⁸ Bell, "Ireland: The Long End Game," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 16; Coogan, *The IRA*, 657.

⁶¹⁹ Cox, Guelke and Stephen, *A Farewell to Arms?: beyond the Good Friday Agreement*, 2nd ed., 435.

⁶²⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 665.

domestic and international legitimacy. In another symbolic coup, Reynolds invited Hume and Adams to Dublin, where he very publicly shook their hands after issuing a highly optimistic joint statement in support of the Forum:

We are at the beginning of a new era in which we are all totally and absolutely committed to democratic and peaceful methods of resolving our political problems. We reiterate that our objective is an equitable and lasting agreement that can command the allegiance of all. We see the Forum as a major instrument in that process. We reiterate that we cannot resolve this problem without the participation and agreement of the Unionist people. We call on everyone to use all their influence to bring this agreement about.⁶²¹

Furthermore, Adams was rewarded for delivering the ceasefire with two more visits to the United States, including an invitation to the Clinton White House on December 6.⁶²²

Three days later, talks began at Stormont.

B. Costs of Peace

At the same time, there was a considerable downside to the ceasefire: PIRA risked atrophying and losing its production capacity for violence. The longer the ceasefire lasted, the less prepared the organization was to resume the production of violence in order to advance the Republican agenda. As J. Boyer Bell, one of the most eminent IRA scholars notes,

the enormous, amorphous structure of support began to dissolve: the network of links and telephone numbers, mail drops, safehouses, ready money, dinners on demand, and cars on loan. People died or moved or forgot and were not replaced—for there was no urgency. Professional services no longer required were no longer available: who would risk an

⁶²¹ Sinn Féin, “John Hume/Gerry Adams/Albert Reynolds Statement,” <http://sinnfein.ie/peace/document/42> (accessed February 10, 2008; page now discontinued).

⁶²² Coogan, *The IRA*, 666; Lynch, “The Gerry Adams Visa in Anglo-American Relations,” *Irish Studies in International Affairs*.

accountancy firm or a medical practice if there was no campaign, no war, no real need?⁶²³

The ceasefire was indefinite, not permanent as the British had hoped; thus, the political returns for peace had to outweigh the considerable costs to PIRA from maintaining its ceasefire. Without significant progress toward a British withdrawal and reunification of Ireland, the Provisionals would be forced to either admit failure and give up on the cause, or return to violence regardless of the loss of goodwill from the moderate Nationalists.

Unfortunately for the prospects of peace, the political process was extremely slow, leaving the Republicans very disappointed with their foray into purely nonviolent politics. The Reynolds government in Dublin collapsed from an unrelated scandal on November 16 and was replaced in mid-December by the Rainbow Coalition (Fine Gael-Labour-DL) government under John Bruton, who was not nearly as sympathetic to Sinn Fein.⁶²⁴ Despite the decreased emphasis on maintaining a Nationalist broad coalition, the Bruton government did work to keep the momentum going in the peace process. Bruton was simply much less effective at countering the Unionist pressure on Major than Reynolds had been, which strengthened the voice of Unionists in subsequent developments.

⁶²³ Bell, "Ireland: The Long End Game," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 18.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, 19; Coogan, *The IRA*, 667.

C. Framework for Peace

In February 1995, the ROI and UK jointly issued the “Frameworks for the Future” (Frameworks Document).⁶²⁵ The Frameworks Document proposed a reciprocal trade in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland within both the ROI and UK. The British agreed to accept the principle of consent in exchange for the Irish commitment to remove its claims on the North in Articles 2 and 3 of its constitution. It also called for a joint referendum on both sides of the border to approve whatever agreement the inter-party talks produced. The Unionists viewed the Frameworks Document as further selling out to encroachment by Dublin and were strongly critical.⁶²⁶ Importantly, Major sought to mollify the Unionist opposition to the Frameworks Document by having Mayhew issue the Washington III pronouncements, which made Sinn Fein participation in the talks conditional on verifiable disarmament.⁶²⁷ Decommissioning was to become such a contentious issue that it would eventually derail the entire peace process,

⁶²⁵ The Frameworks Document “stressed principles of self-determination, consent, democratic methods and respect for all communities through parity of esteem and equal opportunity.” Spencer, “Containing Dialogue: The British Government and Early Talks in the Northern Ireland Peace Process,” *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 463, citing Bew and Gillespie, *Northern Ireland: a Chronology of the Troubles 1968–1999*, 303–04. The Frameworks Document locked in the areas of agreement between the two governments achieved in the Brooke-Mayhew talks,” with the addition of the constitutional swap between the ROI and UK. O’Duffy, “British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast, Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 416. See also Knox and Quirk, *Peace Building in Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa: Transition, Transformation and Reconciliation*, 36–37; Ivory, “Revisions in Nationalist Discourse Among Irish Political Parties,” *Irish Political Studies*.

⁶²⁶ Spencer, “Containing Dialogue: The British Government and Early Talks in the Northern Ireland Peace Process,” *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 463; Walker, *A History of the Ulster Unionist Party: Protest, Pragmatism and Pessimism*, 247; Hennessey, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process: Ending the Troubles?*, 95–96; Patterson, *Ireland Since 1939: The Persistence of Conflict*, 328.

⁶²⁷ O’Duffy, “British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast, Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 415–16.

confirming in Republican minds that the British were simply moving the goal-posts and had no intention of negotiating in good faith.⁶²⁸

Despite the controversy about decommissioning, the peace process did initially appear to be progressing. In May 1995, the second-highest officials in Sinn Fein and the Northern Ireland Office, Martin McGuinness and Michael Ancram, respectively, met at Stormont while their superiors, Adams and Mayhew, met informally in Washington DC.⁶²⁹ In July, there seemed to Republican observers to be even more progress when the RUC blocked a controversial traditional march by the Protestant Orange Order in Drumcree, followed a week later by the first official meeting between Mayhew and Adams.

D. Peace Process Stalls

Shortly thereafter, the peace negotiations began to stall. In early September 1995, James Molyeaux was replaced as leader of the UUP by the hardliner David Trimble, who had led a sizable demonstration against the blocking of the Drumcree March. Given Major's tenuous hold on a majority in Parliament even with UUP support, there was little he could do to propel talks forward.⁶³⁰

Despite this hardening of Unionist opinion, in November, some new life appeared to be breathed back in the process. Dublin and London issued yet another joint

⁶²⁸ Spencer, "Containing Dialogue: The British Government and Early Talks in the Northern Ireland Peace Process," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 467–68.

⁶²⁹ Spencer puts the date of the McGuinness-Ancram meeting in July, while the Loyalists met with him in March and the date of the first official meeting with Mayhew in September. *Ibid.*, 464–66.

⁶³⁰ O'Duffy, "British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast, Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999," *Nations and Nationalism*, 416; Spencer, "Containing Dialogue: The British Government and Early Talks in the Northern Ireland Peace Process," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 466.

communiqué in an attempt to restart the talks by introducing twin-track diplomacy and establishing an international body to disentangle the issue of decommissioning from finding a viable political solution.⁶³¹ A major political coup was the visit to Northern Ireland by President Bill Clinton in the final days of November, which gave hope for resurrecting the optimism of the previous year. In the end of January, Sinn Fein met at Stormont with representatives from both the Irish and British governments.

The Mitchell Report was published in January 1996, breaking the decommissioning impasse. While Sinn Fein insisted that negotiations had to precede giving up arms, the Unionists—and thus the British—refused to enter into talks until PIRA had ‘removed the gun from politics.’ As a compromise, Mitchell proposed simultaneously doing both, albeit with a prior commitment to a set of six principles:⁶³²

1. Democratic and exclusively peaceful means of resolving political issues;
2. The total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations;
3. Agree that such disarmament must be verifiable to the satisfaction of an independent commission;
4. Renounce for themselves, and to oppose by others, the use of force, or threat to use force, to influence the course or the outcome of all-party negotiations;
5. Agree to abide by the terms of any agreement reached in all-party negotiations, and to resort to democratic and exclusively peaceful methods in trying to alter any aspect of that outcome with which they may disagree; and
6. Urge that ‘punishment’ killings and beatings stop and to take effective steps to prevent such actions.

The “Mitchell Principles” were essentially a total commitment to exclusively peaceful politics without the use or threat of force, committing to verifiable decommissioning and opposing the use of force by others, and abiding by the terms of the eventual

⁶³¹ McKenna, “British and Irish Governments. Joint Communiqué, 28 November 1995,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁶³² Knox and Quirk, *Peace Building in Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa: Transition, Transformation and Reconciliation*, 39.

agreement. The British only partially heeded the Mitchell Report and proceeded to implement just one small part of its recommendations: establishing an elected assembly.⁶³³ Major's unwillingness or inability to buck the Unionist opposition to such an approach was not lost on the Nationalists, especially the Provisionals.

VIII. Return to Violence

After 17 months of frustrating peace, the cost of continued inactivity outweighed the benefits from engaging in nonviolent politics. The Republican base, which had only narrowly supported the experiment in peace began agitating for a return to violence. The ceasefire had not resulted in the Provisionals politically eclipsing the SDLP as many had hoped, reducing the actual profitability of nonviolence. Faced with the possibility of a splinter group entering the market and destroying the intricate balance of violent and nonviolent production—about which there was considerable media speculation, the Provisionals had little choice but to end their ceasefire.

PIRA returned to violence by setting off an enormous truck bomb in the heart of London's financial district at Canary Wharf on February 9, 1996, killing two and wounding at least 100. This set off a new campaign of large-scale bombings against the British mainland, including the bombing of the Hammersmith Bridge in London on April 25, 1996, the destruction of Manchester's city center on June 15, 1996, the bombing of Theipval Barracks on October 7, 1996, and two major hoax bomb scares that caused considerable economic damage in the spring of 1997. The PIRA violence

⁶³³ Ibid., 38–39.

was primarily focused on the British mainland, but they also struck in Europe and within Northern Ireland itself.

The Provisionals were joined in their return to violence production in the North by rival suppliers of violent politics in the form of several smaller Republican groups. Continuity IRA (CIRA), which had first publicly announced its emergence as a military force in January 1994 by firing a salute at the grave of Wolfe Tone,⁶³⁴ entered the market with the bombing of the Killyhevlin Hotel on July 14, 1996; however, most of their subsequent bomb attempts against a variety of targets failed to produce damage or casualties. CIRA was closely affiliated with Republican Sinn Fein, which had split over issue of abstentionism in 1986 (see Chapter 6). After several internal feuds during the first ceasefire, INLA reemerged in May 1997, primarily targeting security forces and Loyalist paramilitaries. Later, in the wake of the second ceasefire in 1997, a faction within the PIRA that was dissatisfied with the Provisionals' continued involvement in the peace process split to form the 32 County Sovereignty Movement (32CSM), the armed wing of which was called the Real IRA (RIRA).

The primary British response to the Canary Wharf bombing was to proceed with inter-party talks without Sinn Fein. On February 28, 1996, Major and Bruton announced preparations for another round of talks to begin the following June. Shortly before the Northern Ireland Forum elections in the end of May, Ancram reiterated the need for PIRA to resume its ceasefire in order for Sinn Fein to be allowed into the talks. Remarkably, Sinn Fein won 15.5 percent of the vote, its best showing to date, while the

⁶³⁴ *Saoirse/Irish Freedom*, February 1994.

SDLP was disappointed with a return to its electoral margins of the late 1980s.⁶³⁵

Despite this electoral victory, Sinn Fein was excluded when the talks began on June 10.

A month later, the SDLP withdrew from the talks after the RUC backed down in the face of Unionist pressure and allowed the Orange Order to march at Drumcree.⁶³⁶

IX. Labour's New Opportunity

Without participation by either representative of the Nationalist community, very little progress was made until a dramatic turn of events in the late Spring. First, the UK general election on May 1 swept the Conservatives out of power, ushering in Tony Blair's New Labour. A clear Labour majority removed the structural veto the Unionists had enjoyed and freed the British government to pursue a much more progressive agenda vis-à-vis Northern Ireland.⁶³⁷ In a further sign of the change to come, the same election saw Gerry Adams restored to his seat in Westminster, where he was joined by Martin McGuinness. Sinn Fein had broken its electoral record again, receiving 16.1 percent of the vote.⁶³⁸ In a clear sign of support for the peace process, within only two weeks of becoming Prime Minister, Blair visited Northern Ireland and approved resumption of exploratory talks with Sinn Fein. Early June proved equally portentous as local elections produced the first ever Nationalist mayor of Belfast, SDLP's Alban Maginness, and Fianna Fail returned to power when Fine Gael's John Bruton was

⁶³⁵ Whyte, "Who Won What When and Where?," *Northern Ireland Elections*. ARK, Economic & Social Research Council.

⁶³⁶ Dick Grogan, "SDLP testing the Mitchell principles," *The Irish Times*, July 15, 1996.

⁶³⁷ Knox and Quirk, *Peace Building in Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa: Transition, Transformation and Reconciliation*, 41.

⁶³⁸ Whyte, "Who Won What When and Where?," *Northern Ireland Elections*. ARK, Economic & Social Research Council.

replaced in the ROI's general election by Fianna Fail's Bertie Ahern.⁶³⁹ There was a slight hiccup in this drive towards engagement when Blair banned further talks with Sinn Fein after PIRA killed two RUC officers on June 16.⁶⁴⁰ Despite this temporary setback, PIRA renewed its ceasefire on July 19, 1997.

With a renewed ceasefire and more cooperative negotiating partners, a workable agreement coalesced remarkably quickly. In a direct departure from prior British policy, the Blair government embraced the simultaneous decommissioning approach recommended by the Mitchell Commission. On August 26, the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) was established to monitor decommissioning efforts concurrent with the negotiations.⁶⁴¹ As a result, Sinn Fein agreed to the Mitchell Principles and SSNI Mo Mowlam approved their return to the talks on August 29. The return of Sinn Fein prompted the more radical Loyalists, notably Paisley, to boycott.⁶⁴² Nevertheless, the return to talks produced a major public relations coup for the Republicans in the form of direct talks with the British prime minister, including the reception of a Sinn Fein delegation to the Prime Minister's residence at 10 Downing Street in mid-December.

Although rapid, this process was not free of complications, but rather faced challenges from radicals in both camps. The Loyalist ceasefire, which had mostly stuck

⁶³⁹ Suzanne Breen, "Belfast Elects Nationalist Lord Mayor," *The Irish Times*, June 3, 1997; Coakley, "The Foundations of Statehood," in Coakley and Gallagher, eds., *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, 28.

⁶⁴⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 710.

⁶⁴¹ Melaugh, "Agreement on Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, 26 August 1997," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁶⁴² Curran and Sebenius, "The Mediator as Coalition Builder: George Mitchell in Northern Ireland." *International Negotiation*, 131.

despite the Provisionals return to violence, appeared to fall apart in December after the INLA killed a notorious Loyalist, Billy Wright, in a brazen prison attack.⁶⁴³ The Loyalist prisoners voted against the peace process, but quickly reversed themselves in the face of pressure from their leadership and a personal visit from Mowlam.⁶⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the party representing the Loyalist paramilitaries was expelled from the talks after the RUC found the UFF responsible for three recent sectarian killings.⁶⁴⁵

On the other side of the sectarian aisle, the Provisionals were faced by internal fractures. In early October, PIRA held a special convention that featured a highly acrimonious debate between the hawks and doves, which resulted in a number of the minority hawks leaving to form the Real IRA (RIRA).⁶⁴⁶ This defection was led by Michael McKevitt, the former PIRA Quartermaster General and brother-in-law of the Republican martyr, Bobby Sands. Following these militants' lead, 20 prominent Sinn Fein councilors, led by Francie Mackey and Rory Dougan, switched their affiliation to the 32 County Sovereignty Movement (32CSM), which emerged publicly in mid-December.⁶⁴⁷ On top of this, continued community policing actions by PIRA under the pseudonym "Direct Action Against Drugs" (DAAD) led to the temporary expulsion of

⁶⁴³ Guelke, "Violence and Electoral Polarization in Divided Societies: Three Cases in Comparative Perspective," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 92; United Kingdom, House of Commons, MacLean, "The Billy Wright Inquiry: Report," *House Paper 0431, Session 2010–11*, September 14, 2010.

⁶⁴⁴ Gerry Moriarty, "Mowlam clears the first loyalist hurdle as the prisoners tell her to keep going," *The Irish Times*, January 10, 1998.

⁶⁴⁵ Guelke, "Violence and Electoral Polarization in Divided Societies: Three Cases in Comparative Perspective," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 92.

⁶⁴⁶ *BBC News*, "Who are the Real IRA?," March 8, 2009; *BBC News*, "Who are the Dissident Republicans?," August 23, 2010; Dingley, "The Bombing of Omagh," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 456; Tonge, "They Haven't Gone Away, You Know: Irish Republican 'Dissidents' and 'Armed Struggle,'" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 682.

⁶⁴⁷ Coogan, *The IRA*, 727.

Sinn Fein from the talks; subsequently, Sinn Fein was allowed to return to negotiations.⁶⁴⁸

X. Good Friday Agreement

Within two weeks of Sinn Fein rejoining the talks, the parties managed to produce the Belfast Agreement, more commonly known as the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), on April 10, 1998. Much of the credit for this belongs to George Mitchell, who tirelessly chaired meetings that often lasted through the night in order to meet the preordained deadline.⁶⁴⁹

Unsurprisingly, the response to the GFA was mixed in both communities. Almost immediately, Republican Sinn Fein called for a “no” vote in the upcoming referendum. 32CSM quickly followed suit, rejecting the GFA as “fundamentally undemocratic, anti-Republican and unacceptable.”⁶⁵⁰ The PIRA itself was slow to fully endorse the GFA, but later removed its ban on members sitting in the Assembly at Stormont. Despite this opposition, Sinn Fein's public endorsement of the GFA—and the end to its historical abstentionist policy in Northern Ireland—by 94.6 percent indicates widespread grassroots support.⁶⁵¹

The Unionists were even more divided over support for the Agreement. While the more extremist DUP immediately launched a “no” vote campaign, the Orange Order

⁶⁴⁸ These deaths were the latest in a major increase in alternative social control violence provided by the Provisionals since the beginning of the first ceasefire in 1994. Guelke, “Violence and Electoral Polarization in Divided Societies: Three Cases in Comparative Perspective,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 92; Monaghan, “‘An Imperfect Peace’: Paramilitary ‘Punishments’ in Northern Ireland,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*.

⁶⁴⁹ Trimble, “Making Peace in Northern Ireland: Reflections” (speech at The Mitchell Conference, Queen's University, Belfast, UK, May 22, 2008); Mitchell, *Making Peace*.

⁶⁵⁰ “Agreement Rejected,” *Belfast Telegraph*, April 22, 1998.

⁶⁵¹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 481.

took some time before it ultimately decided to reject the GFA. In contrast, the UDA and the more mainstream UUP both came out in support of the GFA, the UUP endorsing it by a vote of 72 percent. The UUP's David Trimble even went so far as to campaign jointly with the SDLP's John Hume in support of the agreement, an entirely unprecedented political act in Northern Ireland.⁶⁵²

Those external actors not directly involved in the negotiations did everything they could to promote a public ratification of the Good Friday Agreement. The Irish Dail passed legislation giving up its constitutional claims to the North. Blair and Major joined forces to mount a bipartisan campaign in support of the GFA.⁶⁵³ The British Parliament passed a massive £315 million economic package for Northern Ireland to sweeten the deal.⁶⁵⁴ President Clinton even offered to return to Northern Ireland.

The result of these united campaigns and incentives was a massive ratification of the GFA on both sides of the border on May 22. With a remarkable 81.1 percent turnout in the North, the vote was 71.1 percent in favor.⁶⁵⁵ Although with a somewhat less impressive turnout of 56.3 percent in the Republic, the vote was an even more overwhelming endorsement of the GFA with 94.4 percent in favor. The elections for the Northern Ireland Assembly the following month reinforced Sinn Fein's upward trajectory, although its 17.6 percent still fell shy of the SDLP's 22.0 percent. Ominously,

⁶⁵² *BBC News*, "Trimble and Hume Centre Stage for Referendum," May 19, 1998.

⁶⁵³ Martin Fletcher, "'Yes' men Blair and Major take to Ulster streets," *The Times*, May 6, 1998.

⁶⁵⁴ United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Treasury, "Northern Ireland: Towards a Prosperous Future Chancellor Announces 315m Pounds Economic Strategy," *HM Treasury News Release 76/98*, May 12, 1998.

⁶⁵⁵ This is in sharp contrast to the last referendum on the topic in 1973 that was nearly universally boycotted by Catholics. With only 58.1 percent turnout, support for continuing to be part of the United Kingdom rather than join with the Republic of Ireland was a massive 98.9 percent. Whyte, Nicholas. "Who Won What When and Where?" *Northern Ireland Elections*. ARK, Economic & Social Research Council.

Unionist support began to shift from the relatively moderate UUP to the more extreme DUP, PUP, and UKUP—a move that would at times destabilize the subsequent peace.

XI. Omagh Bombing

The overwhelming public opinion in favor of peace was not sufficient to remove the gun and bomb from Northern Irish politics. As the shadow Northern Ireland Assembly finally started to meet in July 1998, it faced its first serious challenge. In a moment of *déjà vu* after the conflicts of the past two years, the Parades Commission announced that it would not allow the Drumcree March and in response the Loyalists rioted. As part of this violent outburst, three Catholic children were killed. Despite the loud public outcry over these killings, the Republican paramilitaries restrained themselves from retaliatory violence. Less than a month later, the Troubles were declared to be over by two very different sources: SSNI Mowlam and the ultra-extremist Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF).

Unfortunately, these declarations of peace were slightly premature. RIRA detonated a large bomb in Banbridge on August 1 to relatively muted reaction; however, their next bomb in Omagh, exactly two weeks later, produced a vastly different reaction.⁶⁵⁶ The Omagh bombing was the bloodiest single event of the entire Troubles, killing 29 and injuring 2,500 people, 370 of whom were hospitalized; 20 of these suffered amputation or severe loss of mobility.⁶⁵⁷ The victims included women and children, members of both sectarian communities, and tourists from other countries.

⁶⁵⁶ Tonge, “They Haven’t Gone Away, You Know: Irish Republican ‘Dissidents’ and ‘Armed Struggle,’” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 682, 685.

⁶⁵⁷ *Irish Times*, December 29, 1998.

The public outpouring of condemnation from abroad, from the two national governments, and even from within Republican circles was overwhelming. Despite the 32CSM's denial of involvement in the atrocity, RIRA announced a military suspension. Although not implicated by Omagh, the IRSP, sensing a major shift within Republican politics, called on INLA to call a ceasefire, which it did on August 22. The following week, the INLA prisoners in Maze Prison went even further by declaring their war to be over.

Ironically, despite Gerry Adams' public statement that violence must be “a thing of the past, over, done with and gone,”⁶⁵⁸ PIRA continued to refuse to disarm; instead, it turned its guns inward. In a massive sweep reminiscent of the 1992 Night of the Long Knives against the IPLO, members of PIRA visited the houses of known RIRA and 32CSM members and issued an ultimatum that RIRA should disband “sooner rather than later.”⁶⁵⁹ Within days, RIRA announced a complete cessation of violence. CIRA remained defiant and did not publicly declare a ceasefire, but it essentially went dormant following Omagh.

The reaction to the Omagh bombing revealed fundamentally altered demand and supply curves within the market for Republican violence after the GFA. The demand curve shifted dramatically to the left: only an extremely small niche of hardcore Republicans remained committed to the armed campaign. At the same time, the supply curve shifted to the right: many more Nationalists were willing to cooperate with the

⁶⁵⁸ Warren Hoge, “Sinn Fein Calls Violence in Northern Ireland ‘a Thing of the Past,’” *New York Times*, September 2, 1998; O'Brien, *The Long War: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 391.

⁶⁵⁹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 4, 1999.

police and the Provisionals were willing to take matters into their own hands to oppose the dissident groups. These changes did not completely eliminate the market for violence, but they shrank it to negligible, manageable levels. The smaller paramilitaries were essentially moribund after 1998.

XII. Epilogue

Although the subsequent decade was riddled with political impasses and the occasional minor act of violence by both Republicans and Loyalists, Omagh marked the effective end of major violence in Northern Ireland. According to the Sutton Index of Deaths, in the eight subsequent years, an additional 95 people are estimated to have died because of the Troubles, some from suicides, some from “own goals” (accidentally killing themselves), some from internal feuds between paramilitary factions, some from punishment beatings/shootings, and some from purposive paramilitary attacks. Of these, only 26 were Republican killings (an average of 3.25 per year), most of which went unclaimed (only six have been attributed to a specific paramilitary group). This level of Republican violence is more than an order of magnitude less than the 324 fatalities Republicans produced in the decade immediately prior (total fatalities were 645).

More significantly, the Provisionals took a number of symbolic steps to prevent a return to violence. For the first few years of the peace, PIRA was very cautious about giving up anything but its more obsolete weapons and was frequently criticized for its lack of credible commitment to decommissioning. Indeed, it appears that PIRA was still actively acquiring new weapons while turning in older and less effective ones. In the anti-terrorist wake of Al Qaeda's 9/11 attacks in the United States and a highly

embarrassing revelation of arms and training connections with Colombia's terrorist FARC, PIRA announced it was beginning to decommission its arms.⁶⁶⁰ In 2002, PIRA issued an apology for its role in the violence of the past three decades in an attempt to further the healing process:

We offer our sincere apologies and condolences to their families. There have been fatalities amongst combatants on all sides. We also acknowledge the grief and pain of their relatives. The future will not be found in denying collective failures and mistakes or closing minds and hearts to the plight of those who have been hurt. . . . The process of conflict resolution requires the equal acknowledgement of the grief and loss of others. On this anniversary, we are endeavouring to fulfil [*sic*] this responsibility to those we have hurt.⁶⁶¹

Three years later, on July 28, 2005, PIRA publicly issued orders to all of its units to dump arms, officially ending its role as a producer of political violence.⁶⁶²

Far more recent events highlight the inability of the PIRA to close the market for political violence completely. Within a matter of days of each other, both CIRA and RIRA reemerged on the world stage in early March 2009. First, RIRA killed two British soldiers and wounded four other people as they were receiving a pizza delivery outside Massereene Army base in Antrim.⁶⁶³ Not to be outdone, CIRA shot and killed an officer

⁶⁶⁰ Fitzduff, *Beyond Violence: Conflict Resolution Process in Northern Ireland*, 132. Although he highlights the importance of 9/11 in shifting public opinion on anti-state violence, English cautions against overstating its causal significance given PIRA's prior steps toward decommissioning. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 333. Thus, 9/11 primarily affected the timing and character of the decommissioning process rather than the end result.

⁶⁶¹ *BBC News*, "IRA Statement in full," July 16, 2002.

⁶⁶² *BBC News*, "IRA says armed campaign is over," July 28, 2005.

⁶⁶³ Roya Nikkhah, "Two soldiers dead in attack on British Army base in Northern Ireland," *The Telegraph*, March 7, 2009; "Shootings were attempt at mass murder, says PSNI," *The Irish Times*, March 8, 2009; David Sharrock, "Massereene Barracks attack started with pizza order," *The Times*, March 9, 2009; *RTE*, "Real IRA claims responsibility for attack," March 8, 2009.

in the new and reformed Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) in Armagh.⁶⁶⁴

Moreover, CIRA had been implicated in two serious, but non-fatal attacks and a number of more minor attacks the previous year that were given minimal coverage at the time, but may be indicative of a new campaign to reopen the market. The Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) warned that

All these incidents indicate that CIRA has not only been very active but that it has acted in a way which could have led to a number of deaths. The murder of PC Carroll on 9 March 2009, which has been attributed to CIRA, is tragic further evidence of this. The nature and extent of its other covert activities over the period show the same ruthless determination. Taken with the efforts to enhance its capability we conclude that CIRA is active and highly dangerous.⁶⁶⁵

Although the IMC noted that there are currently two separate factions of RIRA that operate independently of one another, the assessment of the growing threat RIRA poses is nearly identical to that of CIRA.⁶⁶⁶

Yet despite these ominous signs that the market for political violence may be reopening in Northern Ireland, the public reaction to the two lethal attacks in March demonstrated a wide and deeply-felt antipathy to a return to violence, even within the Republican community. There may remain a sufficiently large base of hard-core, extremist Republicans that these groups may be able to survive, but the political costs of violence remain so high that their campaigns will likely remain muted—nothing like the former violence of the Troubles.

⁶⁶⁴ McAleese, Deborah, "Continuity IRA claiming responsibility for killing PSNI officer," *Belfast Telegraph*, March 10, 2009. <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/continuity-ira-claiming-responsibility-for-killing-psni-officer-14220267.html> (accessed October 24, 2010).

⁶⁶⁵ United Kingdom, House of Commons, *Twenty-First Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission*, 9.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 11–12.

PART III: The Market for Republican Violence

As the preceding chapters highlight, the market for Republican violence during the Troubles was extremely volatile. There were major shifts in the demand and supply curves and dramatic changes in the level of competition over the course of the conflict. Demand for violence peaked in the early 1970s, then again in the early 1980s. Supply started to become steadily more expensive in the mid-1970s, with significant spikes in 1976, 1988–89, 1993–96, and 1998. Despite the eventual domination of the market by the Provisionals, the market was subject to a number of competitive forces throughout the conflict. The threat and eventual emergence of new entrants undermined both the 1975 and 1994 ceasefires. Rivalry between the Republican groups ranged from intense and bloody feuds to cooperative arrangements. The threat of nonviolent political substitutes began to emerge in the mid-1970s, and—despite the Provisionals' entrance into this market in 1981—remained a major threat until the creation of the pan-Nationalist coalition in 1993. Similarly, the substitute of alternative social control helped to ease the pressure to engage in violence during the transition to ceasefires. The power of both buyers and suppliers over Republican violence production was fairly minimal.

The complexity of the Republic market is evident from the impact of feedback loops between agent and structure. The Provisionals both reacted to and helped cause many of the changes in the market conditions that led to the eventual virtual closure of the market for violence. The Provisionals essentially stumbled into the nonviolent market during the Hunger Strikes and embraced this diversification. Once a beachhead

was established in this market, the Provisionals then very carefully used its monopoly power over violence to gradually switch the balance of its production portfolio. As a result of this strategic maneuvering, demand eventually declined to the point of essentially closing the market in 1998. Indeed, the low-level resurgence of the dissident Republican groups after the PIRA 2005 decommissioning highlights how important the Provisionals' monopoly power had been for securing the peace.

This section consists of four chapters. Chapter 8 examines the demand for Republican violence over the 30 year span. Chapter 9 explores the costs of violence production. Chapter 10 analyzes the changing competitive forces within the market. Chapter 11 compares the expected results the market forces with empirical data to test the hypotheses developed in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 8: Demand for Violence

The changes in demand alone do not explain all of the variance in the production of violence over the course of the Troubles, but as one would expect, there is a very strong correlation. Facing an existential threat in the late 1960s and early 1970s, demand for Republican violence hit an all-time high. When the market first opened, the high degree of entrepreneurialism evident in the mass rioting and creation of community defense associations highlight how far demand outstripped the production capacity of the moribund IRA. This high level of demand gradually declined as the state became more selective in its counterterrorist measures and restrained the worst Loyalist elements and the Republicans failed to deliver the expected quick victory. Later, demand for radical change peaked again in 1981 with Thatcher's callous response to the Hunger Strikes; however, some of this demand was diverted to nonviolent politics instead (see Chapter 6). The demand for Republican political violence in the 1990s was significantly lower than that of the previous two decades, but was nonetheless substantial and self-sustaining.

By 1990, many of the social injustices that had prompted the 1960s Civil Rights Movement and fueled the early Troubles had for the most part already been addressed. Moreover, the 1991 Census revealed that Northern Ireland was rapidly losing its status as a Protestant bastion as the Catholic population drew closer to parity. Even as Nationalists neared population equality, there was still considerable frustration over their remaining barriers to economic and political opportunities, which continued to fuel the demand for violence. Further, the direct and indirect experience of political violence

helped to make the conflict self-sustaining by heightening the communal sense of insecurity and producing spirals of vengeance.⁶⁶⁷

Even as this shift away from support of violence occurred, Republican paramilitaries remained relevant because the Northern Irish state continued to retain its Protestant identity and exercised that identity most notably through its coercive arm, the security forces (and the extra-legal activities of the Loyalist paramilitaries). Thus, the demand for Republican violence that resulted from social inequalities was reduced significantly, but overall demand was not negated entirely due to externally initiated and self-perpetuating violence.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five sections. The first section examines the changes in basic demography underlying the conflict. The second section addresses changes in measures of social equality, particularly economic and employment opportunities and housing conditions. The third section examines survey data about attitudes toward violence over the course of the Troubles. The fourth section analyzes the Catholic experience of violence from state and Loyalist. In the final section, these three measures are combined to create a single measure of demand.

I. Demography

The Unionist dominance of economic and political life in Northern Ireland was principally reliant on the majority status of the Protestant population in the province. This built-in democratic protection of the Union slowly eroded over the course of the Troubles as Catholic birthrates regularly exceeded those of Protestants. The shift

⁶⁶⁷ Hayes and McAllister, "Sowing Dragon's Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland," *Political Studies*.

towards parity probably decreased the demand for achieving reunification of Ireland through violence for two reasons. First, it allowed a greater voice for Catholics in Northern Irish politics, making the existing system more amenable. Second, it increased the prospects for reunification through nonviolent politics.⁶⁶⁸

Protestants had historically dominated the North by a factor of nearly 2:1 between 1921 and 1961, but this demographic advantage subsequently began to slip. The overall population increased 18.3 percent between 1961 and 2001, but the Protestant population shrank 14.8 percent during this same period. Interestingly, before 1991, this slippage was not the result of growth in the size of the Catholic population, but rather the increase in non-Christian identities,⁶⁶⁹ which reduced the numbers of Catholics and Protestants alike. By 2001, this non-sectarian identity had grown by over 900 percent, after peaking in 1981. Between 1961 and 1981, the Catholic population dropped 16.7 percent, but this was likely a result of the Republican boycott of the census in 1971 and 1981—by 2001, the Catholic population had grown to 36.4 percent over 1961 figures.

⁶⁶⁸ At the same time, fear of this demographic change could have indirectly increased demand by inspiring Unionist intransigence and Loyalist paramilitary violence. However, this secondary effect should largely be captured by the analysis of violence below.

⁶⁶⁹ Includes both those who stated their religious affiliation as “none” and those who did not submit an answer. United Kingdom, Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, 1991 Census [hereafter NISRA, *1991 Census*], table 1.

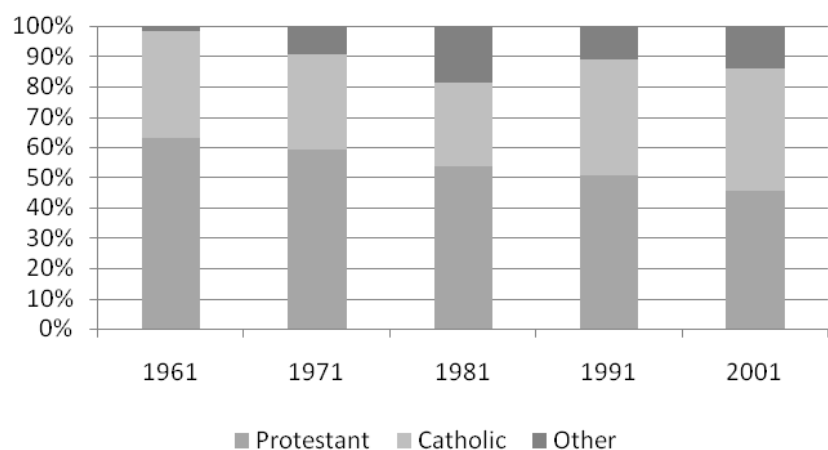


Figure 8.1 Change in Sectarian Demographics 1961–2001⁶⁷⁰

As a result of these changes in population sizes, Protestants were only narrowly holding onto a majority with 50.6 percent of the population by 1991; Catholics had increased to 38.4 percent; and the non-affiliated was 11.0 percent.⁶⁷¹ In 2001, these proportions fell even further—Protestants were no longer a majority with just 45.6 percent of the population.⁶⁷² Although the Catholic birth rate had historically been higher, these changes signified that the emigration resulting from the poor economic and security conditions in Northern Ireland would no longer hold in check the growth of the Catholic population.⁶⁷³ As Catholics approached parity with Protestants in the

⁶⁷⁰ NISRA, *1991 Census*, table 1; United Kingdom, Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, “Theme Table on Religion,” *Northern Ireland Census 2001 Theme Tables* [hereafter NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*], table T30.

⁶⁷¹ Includes both those who stated their religious affiliation as “none” and those who did not submit an answer. NISRA, *1991 Census*, table 1.

⁶⁷² If one examines the immediately politically relevant population, i.e. aged 16 and older, the gap between Catholics and Protestant almost doubles from 5.3 percentage points to 9.3 in 2001. However, the trends since 1971 for this sub-population are nearly identical. United Kingdom, Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, 1971 Census [hereafter NISRA, *1971 Census*], table 3; United Kingdom, Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, 1981 Census [hereafter NISRA, *1981 Census*], table 8; NISRA, *1991 Census*, table 12; NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*, table T30.

⁶⁷³ Reynolds, “A Constitutional Pied Piper: The Northern Irish Good Friday Agreement,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 629.

North, the justification for using violence as necessary to overcome the resistance of the Unionist majority became a much less compelling argument.⁶⁷⁴

II. Social Equality

Although discrepancies remained between Catholic and Protestant socioeconomic status in Northern Ireland, the differences within many of the key areas of concern had largely been resolved by the early 1990s. Three decades of social justice legislation had considerably helped to ameliorate the outrage that had fueled the production of violence. As Moxon-Browne notes, “the effect of British anti-discrimination legislation has been to redress the very grievances that sparked the Troubles 30 years ago.”⁶⁷⁵ Both communities experienced notable growth in their levels of economic prosperity, with Catholics outpacing Protestants in some measures. The combined forces of increased population growth and increased prosperity resulted in a growth of the Catholic middle class, which likely helped shift support away from violent politics.

A. Improved Housing Conditions

Since even before the Troubles erupted into full-scale violence, there were significant efforts to improve the housing situation in Northern Ireland. These initiatives were continued throughout the conflict and produced a remarkable improvement in the housing sector overall, and especially for Catholics. In the early 1970s, there was a massive push to build new housing. This effort continued through the 1980s, leading to

⁶⁷⁴ In contrast, the demographic shift jeopardized the natural Unionist majority, which may have encouraged greater Loyalist violence. As a result of the Catholic community’s experience of this violence, demand for Republican violence could have increased, but this is a smaller, second-order effect.

⁶⁷⁵ Moxon-Brown, “Northern Ireland: Coming out of conflict?,” *Civil Wars*, 31.

a remarkable upward shift in the quality of housing by the early 1990s. The result was higher rates of ownership and larger living spaces for both Catholics and Protestants. By the 1990s, the two groups had reached near parity; the Protestants' continued marginal advantage appears to be primarily a result of their historically superior economic position rather than any discernible ongoing, overt bias.⁶⁷⁶

Increased access to housing was a key part of the vast improvement in the housing situation between 1971 and 1996. The Housing Executive Act (Northern Ireland) 1971 established the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as the central housing authority to reduce allegations of sectarian influence in housing decisions. Part of NIHE's mandate was to build new housing estates to meet the pent up demand. As a result of this push, the amount of available housing dramatically increased over the decades: 202,398 new houses were built over this time-span—with the single most productive year being 1971 (see Figure 8.1).⁶⁷⁷ The total population only grew by 165,627 between 1971 and 2001; thus, nearly 40,000 surplus units were built.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶ Whyte, "How Much Discrimination Was There Under the Unionist Regime, 1921–1968?," in Gallagher and O'Connell, ed., *Contemporary Irish Studies*, 1–36.

⁶⁷⁷ Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion in Northern Ireland*, fig. 4.1; McKenna, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Housing," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, table 7. There are slight discrepancies in the total number of new houses built because the two sources report different figures for those produced by the housing associations, but the overall margin of difference in any of the overlapping years is less than 0.5 percent.

⁶⁷⁸ NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*, table T30; NISRA, *1991 Census*, table 1.

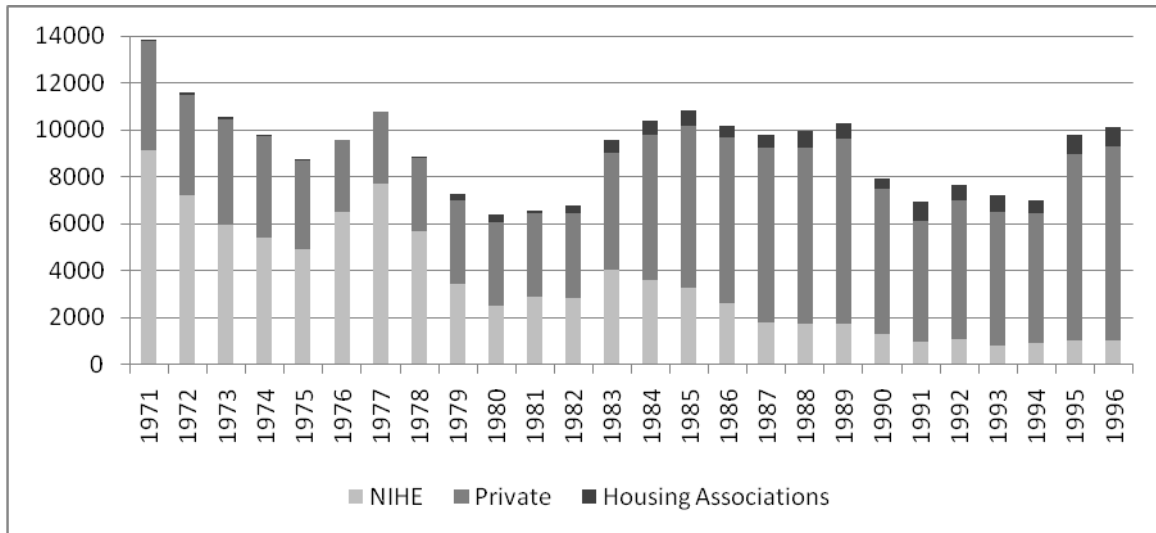


Figure 8.2 New House Building, by sector 1971–1996⁶⁷⁹

Of significant interest within the overall trend upward in housing was the change in distribution of dwelling size by religion (Figure 8.3). Between 1971 and 1991, there was a 41.6 percent decrease in the number of people living in small dwellings (four rooms or less) and a 76.4 percent increase in those living in the largest dwellings (seven or more rooms). This pattern is even more striking for Catholics: a 54.3 percent decrease in small dwellings and a 125.5 percent increase in largest dwellings. Interestingly, a greater proportion of Protestants remained in these smaller homes (21.8 percent, compared to Catholics 20.8 percent). Although this is important as a historical first, Catholics nevertheless remained more likely to live in the smallest of these dwellings: Catholics were 20.2 percent more likely than a Protestant to live in a home

⁶⁷⁹ Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion in Northern Ireland*, fig. 4.1; McKenna, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Housing," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, table 7.

with one to two rooms and 6.4 percent more likely to live in a three room residence.⁶⁸⁰

In a closely related measure, there were significant gaps between the Catholic and Protestant performance on the official bedroom standard for owner-occupied, public rental and private rental properties: between 1983 and 1991, Catholic representation in the worst dwellings fell from 16 to 10 percent, while Protestant representation fell from 6 to 4 percent.⁶⁸¹

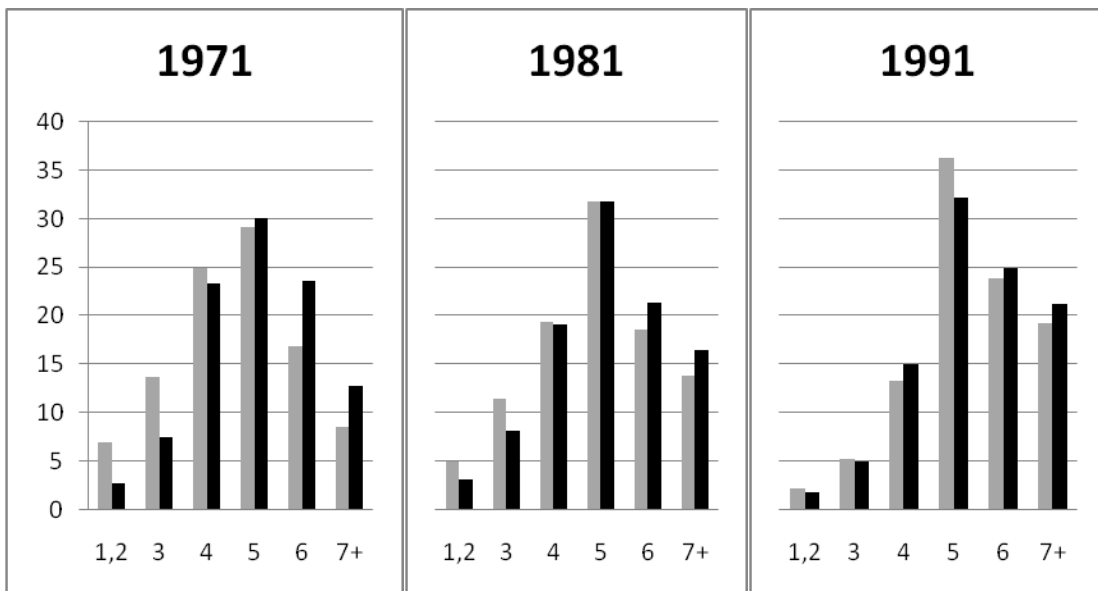


Figure 8.3 Distribution of number of rooms in dwellings, by religion, over time (Grey = Catholic; Black = Protestant)⁶⁸²

In addition, home ownership, rather than dependence on the state or the private rental market, was on the rise. As Figure 8.4 demonstrates, while fewer than half of either community owned their own homes in 1971, by 1991 a full 63 percent of

⁶⁸⁰ Admittedly, this is a massive improvement from 1971 and 1981, when Catholics were 146.4 and 58.7 percent more likely to live in a one to two room residence and 82.7 and 41.8 percent more likely to live in a three room home.

⁶⁸¹ Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion in Northern Ireland*, table 7.2. Although based on a different sample, the 2001 Census reported a return to 16 percent of Catholics below the bedroom standard. NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*, table T30.

⁶⁸² NISRA, *1971 Census*, table 4; NISRA, *1981 Census*, table 4; NISRA, *1991 Census*, table 5; Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion in Northern Ireland*, figs. 3.2, 5.2, 9.1.

Protestants and 55 percent of Catholics owned their own homes.⁶⁸³ However, this is not entirely a positive story: the communal differential increased from 4.5 to 8 percent over this period. Thus, both communities experience dramatically increased prosperity in the form of homeownership, but Catholics remained at a distinct disadvantage.

Nevertheless, over the course of the decade, the homeownership trend continued and the sectarian gap continued to narrow to just 4 percentage points in 2001: 72 percent of Catholics versus 76 percent of Protestants.⁶⁸⁴

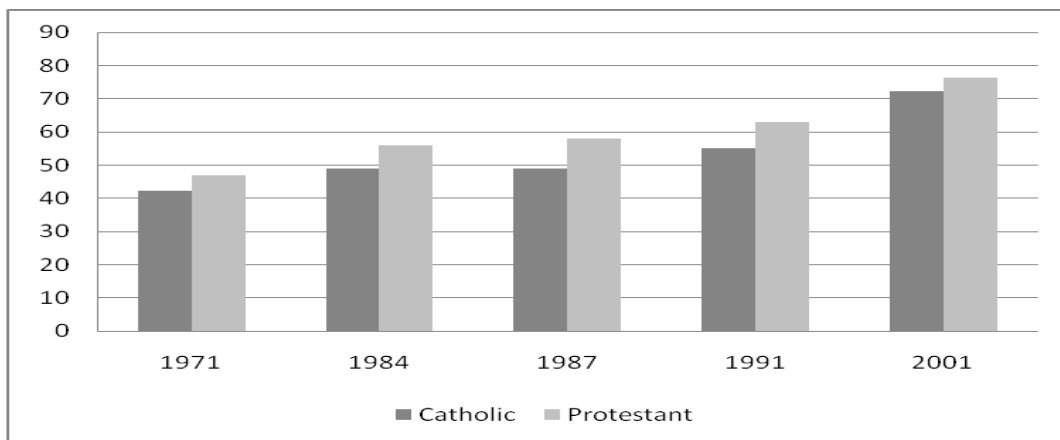


Figure 8.4 Home Ownership Rates, by Religion⁶⁸⁵

Overall, the improvement in the housing situation for Catholics was notable during the 1980s, and even more impressive compared to 1971. By 1990, 85 percent of Catholics were satisfied with their housing conditions and only 11 percent were dissatisfied⁶⁸⁶—a remarkable change from the 1960s. A sizable majority now owned their homes, and only a very small fraction of the community remained in substandard housing. While

⁶⁸³ Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion in Northern Ireland*, figs. 2.3 and 7.1.

⁶⁸⁴ NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*, table T30.

⁶⁸⁵ NISRA, *1971 Census*; Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion in Northern Ireland*, figs. 2.3 and 7.1; NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*, table T30.

⁶⁸⁶ Melaugh, *Majority Minority Review 3: Housing and Religion*, fig. 7.6 The Protestant figures were very similar, albeit slightly better: 88 percent satisfied and only 7 percent were dissatisfied.

there was still notable inequality between Catholics and Protestants, the overall improvement in housing was a significant trend for Catholics. Thus, housing inadequacy, which had been the major mobilizing force behind the civil rights movement, was no longer as serious an issue. As a result, the demand for major political action and for violent action declined substantially as growing numbers of Catholics became increasingly satisfied with at least this aspect of their social and political lives.

B. Economic Opportunities

Before measuring Catholics' relative economic position vis-à-vis Protestants, one must also look at the overall economy to identify the available opportunity structures. A critical assumption of this study is that more economic development increases the opportunity costs of violence, thus reducing demand for violence (and vice versa). Unfortunately, Northern Ireland consistently underperformed economically compared to the other regions of the United Kingdom. Unemployment was higher and lasted longer⁶⁸⁷ and regional GDP and income per capita was almost always considerably lower.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁷ Gallagher, *Majority Minority Review 2: Employment, Unemployment and Religion in Northern Ireland*, figs. 8.1, 8.10.

⁶⁸⁸ McKenna and Melaugh, Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Economy, Finance, Industry and Trade," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*; United Kingdom, Office for National Statistics. *Household Income and Gross Disposable Household Income: Regional Trends 38*. Spreadsheet, February 25, 2004.

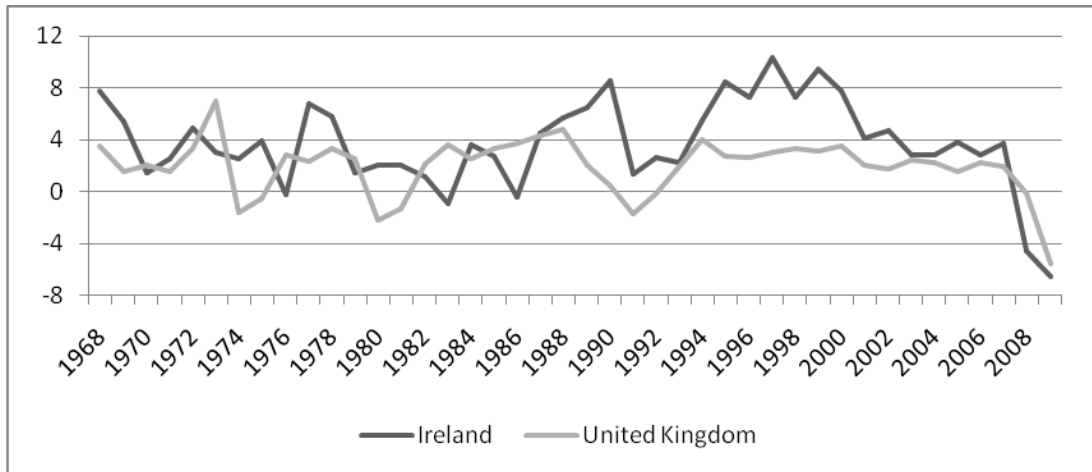


Figure 8.5 Percent growth of GDP per capita⁶⁸⁹

Data on Northern Ireland's economic performance are not readily available for the full length of the Troubles, but the regional economy is closely tied to both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Over the course of the Troubles, Ireland's GDP per capita rose 3.7 percent while the UK's rose only 2.0.⁶⁹⁰ For both economies, the early 1970s was a period of low, but reasonably steady growth until the UK went into recession in 1974 followed by Ireland in 1976. In 1980–81, the British economy shrank considerably and just as it was recovering the Irish economy started shrinking in 1983, rallied, then shrank again in 1986. At the turn of the decade, both economies were in a slump, but this appears to have turned around in 1992–93. After this—both economies, but especially the Irish—enjoyed steady growth. Indeed, Ireland's growth from the mid-1980s on earned it the nickname the “Celtic Tiger.” As a result of this growth, Irish GDP per capita surpassed the United Kingdom's in 1999, where it has

⁶⁸⁹ The World Bank, “World Development Indicators(WDI) & Global Development Finance(GDF),” *World dataBank*.

⁶⁹⁰ If one censors the steep decline in 2008 caused by the global recession, the rates of growth are 4.2 and 2.2, respectively.

remained until the global economic crisis of 2008 and near bankruptcy of the Irish government in 2010.⁶⁹¹

Beginning in 1989, economic data for the Northern Irish regional economy are available and it appears to be closely in line with both national economies. The Northern Irish economy during this period was experiencing considerable and steady growth across a number of key indicators. Thus, in conjunction with the following section, not only was the Catholic share of the economic pie increasing, but the pie itself was growing larger. Between 1989 and 1993, GDP for Northern Ireland grew a whopping 34.7 percent, and even with the slight growth in population, GDP per capita grew 30.7 percent.⁶⁹² In the next three years, GDP and GDP per capita grew 16.4 and 14.2 percent, respectively.⁶⁹³ By 2002, GDP and GDP per capita grew from the higher 1990 baseline by over 40 and 30 percent, respectively. This increased productivity translated into higher wages. Between 1991 and 1996, there was a 33.2 percent growth in absolute personal income and a 28.1 percent and 28.2 percent growth in per capita personal income and personal disposable income, respectively.⁶⁹⁴ The increase in these three income indicators is even more impressive when one looks at a full decade and compares the changes between 1986 and 1996: 110.4, 98.7, and 103.1 percent growth. In other words, income approximately doubled during the decade. Similarly, as Figure

⁶⁹¹ The World Bank, "World Development Indicators(WDI) & Global Development Finance(GDF)," *World dataBank*.

⁶⁹² *McKenna and Melaugh*, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Economy, Finance, Industry and Trade," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

8.6 demonstrates, there was substantial growth from the 1990 baseline, even when the numbers are adjusted for changes in the cost of living.

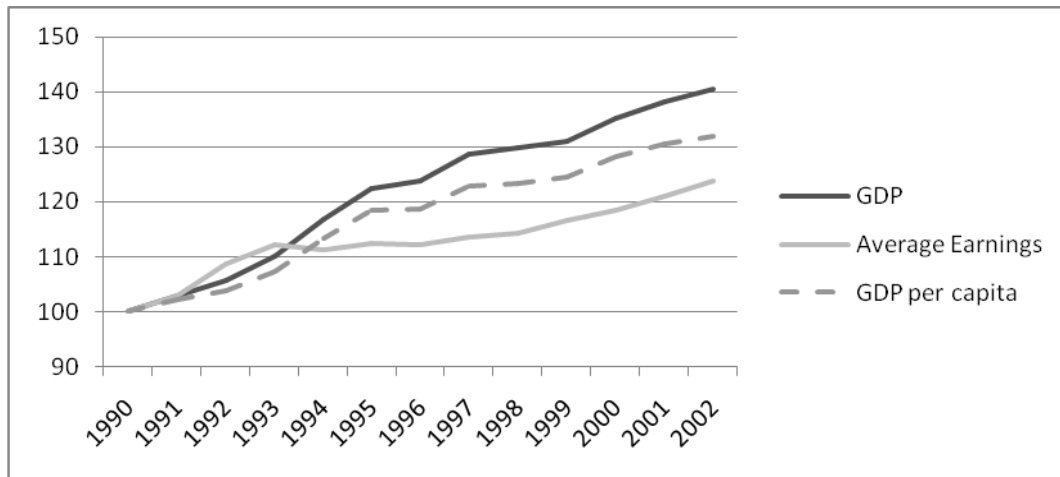


Figure 8.6 GDP and GDP per capita in real terms and average gross weekly earnings for full-time workers, deflated using the Retail Price Index (1990=100%).⁶⁹⁵

Unemployment is a commonly used economic indicator for the deprivation or relative deprivation driving political violence.⁶⁹⁶ Earlier scholars who examined the relationship between unemployment and political violence in Northern Ireland found no or negative correlation between the two; however, their studies suffered from severe limitations.⁶⁹⁷ Because there are only very limited measures of unemployment disaggregated by religion, it is exceptionally difficult to actually measure the variable of interest. This is especially true if the rate itself is less important than the ratio of unemployment between Catholics and Protestants, i.e. relative deprivation is more

⁶⁹⁵ Dignan, "Low Income Households in Northern Ireland, 1990–2002," *Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency*, table A1.1: "NI economic indicators 1990–2002."

⁶⁹⁶ White, "On Measuring Political Violence: Northern Ireland, 1969 to 1980," *American Sociological Review*, 578; Honaker, "Unemployment and Violence in Northern Ireland: A Missing Data Model for Ecological Inference," Working Paper, University of California, Los Angeles.

⁶⁹⁷ Thompson, "Deprivation and Political Violence in Northern Ireland, 1922–1985: A Time-Series Analysis," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*; White, "On Measuring Political Violence: Northern Ireland, 1969 to 1980," *American Sociological Review*.

important that deprivation itself. More recent scholarship using advanced data imputation techniques to estimate the monthly sectarian unemployment rates has found that they are very strongly linked to increases in the production of violence against civilians.⁶⁹⁸ For the current purposes, a qualitative estimation should suffice.

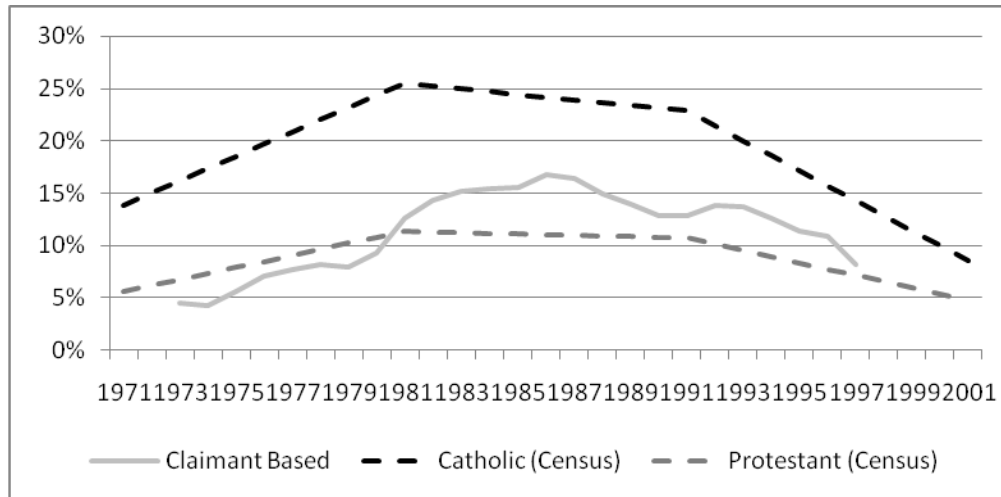


Figure 8.7 Unemployment rate (claimant-based and census) in Northern Ireland⁶⁹⁹

As Figure 8.7 demonstrates, throughout the conflict, the Catholic population suffered a much higher rate of unemployment. Given the economic downturns in the early 1980s and early 1990s, it is unsurprising the 1981 and 1991 censuses captured high rates of unemployment for both communities. The claimant-based annual measure indicates that Catholic unemployment probably increased even beyond the rate of one-in-four until it began declining in 1987. This supposition is bolstered by the degree of volatility in the two national economies during the early-to-mid-1980s. Despite the brief

⁶⁹⁸ Honaker, “Unemployment and Violence in Northern Ireland: A Missing Data Model for Ecological Inference,” Working Paper, University of California, Los Angeles.

⁶⁹⁹ McKenna, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Employment, *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*; NISRA, *1971 Census*; NISRA, *1981 Census*; NISRA, *1991 Census*; United Kingdom, Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, *2001 Census*.

dip at the turn of the decade, the regional economy and consequently employment figures appear to have steadily improved from around 1987. As a result, by 2001, the Catholic unemployment rate was lower than at the start of the Troubles by nearly half.

In addition to the raw unemployment figures, it is important to analyze the relative position of the two sectarian communities in the labor market. In 1971, the Catholic unemployment rate was 2.5 higher than the Protestant rate. This ratio steadily declined to 1.8 by 2001. This represented a significant improvement, but also demonstrated that disparities continued to exist.

Throughout this entire period, Catholics were disproportionately represented in several sectors, most notably the ranks of the unemployed and managerial positions (see Figure 8.8). There was a general trend of convergence over forty years. Catholics were also slightly underrepresented in the active labor force – although this could simply reflect the larger youth population within the Catholic community. The Catholic overrepresentation among the unemployed fell from 147.2 percent in 1971 to 139.7 in 1981, to 132.6 in 1991, to 121.3 in 2001. Equally importantly, the Catholic proportion of managers more than tripled to a point of near parity by 2001.

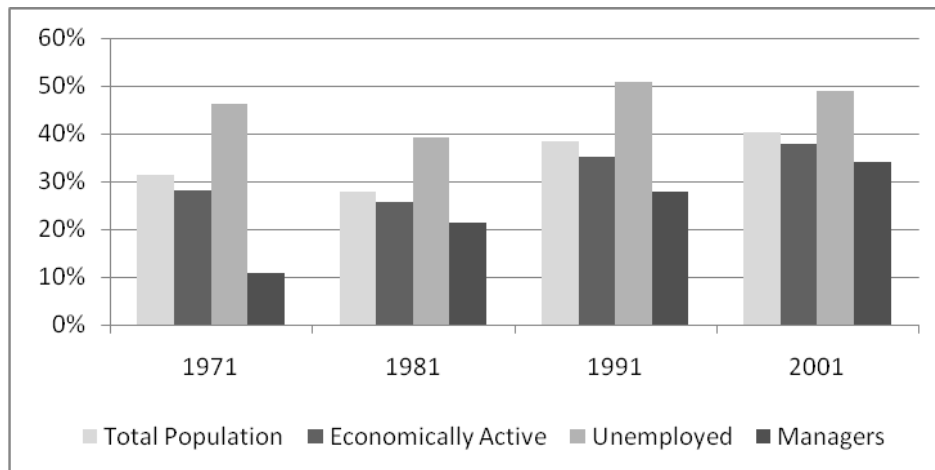


Figure 8.8 Catholic representation in significant Northern Irish sub-populations⁷⁰⁰

While the census data are extremely useful for comparing snapshots of the relative economic position for each community across the decades, improved data collection in the 1990s allows us to examine yearly changes during this decade. Of particular interest for the demand for violence, there was a notable increase in the hiring of Catholics by both private industry and the public sector, after which Catholics were fairly proportionally represented in the economy by 2001.

Both the private and public sectors started the decade by appointing Catholics to around 40 percent of the available positions in 1991, and ended it at least five points higher in 2001. The much higher Catholic, i.e. a larger pool of candidates looking for work, unemployment and increased demographic share of the population may be driving these numbers rather than any attempt at affirmative action since both the applications and the appointments are well above the Catholic representation in the labor force. As a result of these hiring patterns, Catholic employment in the private and

⁷⁰⁰ NISRA, *1971 Census*; NISRA, *1981 Census*; NISRA, *1991 Census*; NISRA, *Census 2001 Theme Tables*, table T30.

public sectors grew from 34.6 and 35.3 percent, respectively, in 1990 to 39.3 and 39.9 percent in 2001, a steady upward trend for Catholic employment in both private and public sectors.⁷⁰¹ In contrast, the security services remained almost entirely of a Protestant character, i.e. less than 10 percent Catholic, which likely did little to reduce Republican demand for violence .

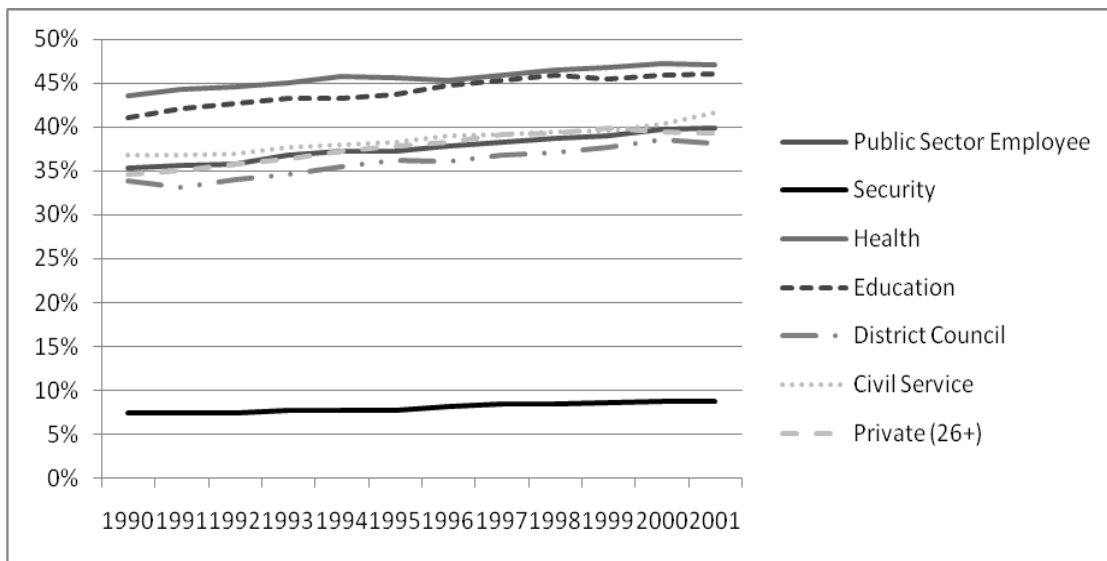


Figure 8.9 Percentage of Catholics in Workforce by Sector by Year⁷⁰²

As one might expect of a community with large reservations about the legitimacy of the state, Catholic interest and participation in the private sector increased before the public sector (see Figure 8.9). There was substantial growth in the proportion of Catholic applications and appointments in the private sector over the decade: 9.0 and 12.7 percent, respectively. Catholic participation in the private sector employment process peaked in 1996 at 47.9 and 46.8 percent, respectively. This represented a roughly 16 percent increase for both in just five years, or a 3.1 percent annualized

⁷⁰¹ Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, “Profile of the Monitored Workforce in Northern Ireland: Summary of the 2001 Monitoring Returns,” *Monitoring Report 12* (2001) [hereafter ECNI 2001].

⁷⁰² Ibid.; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, *Monitoring Report 11* (2000) [hereafter ECNI 2000].

growth. However, applications and appointments fell somewhat in 1997, after which growth was essentially flat.

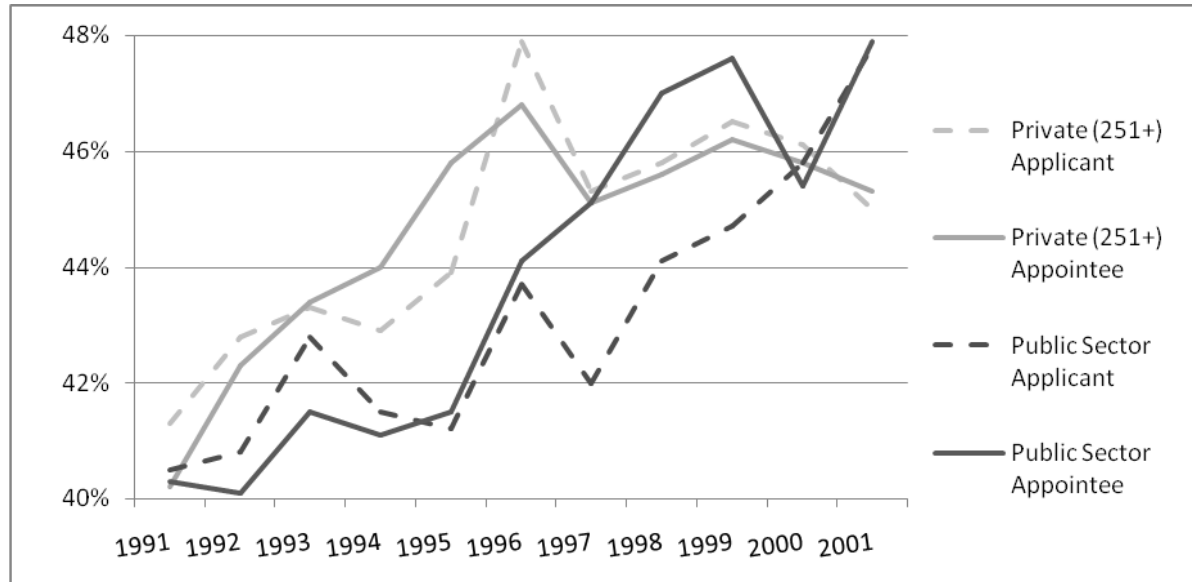


Figure 8.10 Catholic Participation in Employment Process⁷⁰³

While the relationship between applications and appointments was extremely close in the private sector, there appears to have been an important change in the public sector relationship around 1995–96. Before 1995, the Catholic appointment rate was 0.6 percentage points lower than the application rate on average; after 1996, it was an average of 1.72 percentage points higher. While Catholic applications for public sector jobs appear to have started increasing in 1995, this may well have been a matter of momentum: the higher rate of Catholic appointments likely helped fuel further interest in these jobs. By 2001, public sector applications and appointments had converged at their highest levels for the decade: 47.8 and 47.9 percent, respectively.

⁷⁰³ ECNI 2000; ECNI 2001.

By the end of the decade, a Catholic had a nearly even chance of being hired in either the private or public sector. Moreover, the increased interest in and acceptance of public sector jobs by Catholics is doubly significant for measuring demand for radical political change. Not only were these individuals able to find employment, thus lowering their perception of grievance, but their government employment signified an acceptance of the legitimacy of the state, implying a decreased demand for violence. The one key exception to this was the continuing lack of willingness or ability to serve in the security forces, which would signal a more robust political acceptance of the state's legitimacy by the Catholic minority.

The level of grievance from economic frustration and unemployment experienced by Catholics, and by extension, Nationalists, appears to have significantly decreased during the 1990s both in relation to previous decades and within the decade itself. These figures indicate that the support for violence rooted in economic factors was probably higher during the 1980s than it was in either the previous or subsequent decade; 1980–87 should have been a period of extreme volatility in the market for violence.⁷⁰⁴ In contrast, the two Republican ceasefires during the 1990s doubtless helped to lock in and even accelerate the concurrent improvement in the underlying economic conditions.⁷⁰⁵ Although unemployment remained slightly higher than would

⁷⁰⁴ One need only remember the epic political battle between the Thatcher government and the National Union of Miners to understand the dire circumstances of the British national economy in the mid-1980s.

⁷⁰⁵ Contrary to prevailing perceptions, the data seem to imply that Northern Ireland's considerable overall economic growth over the course of the decade was not just a direct result of a "peace dividend;" if anything, the rate of growth appears to have slowed slightly with the second ceasefire. In other words, it appears that economic conditions likely affected political attitudes more than vice versa. For further discussion of the potential endogeneity between peace and economic development in Northern Ireland,

be proportional, the gap had closed to nearly negligible levels. Perhaps even more significantly, Catholics were now slightly overrepresented in the public sector. All of these employment indicators, except the security services, imply a decrease in public demand for violence.

III. Experience of Violence

One significant factor in the general demand for violence in Northern Ireland was personal experience of violence, which was correlated with an increased demand for retaliatory violence.⁷⁰⁶ Between 1969 and 2004, the Catholic community suffered 1,036 fatalities at the hands of British security forces (303) and Loyalist paramilitaries (733).⁷⁰⁷ The majority of these killings (580) occurred between August 1971 and April 1977. The two-year period after the imposition of internment in August 1971 was especially violent, accounting for 26.8 percent of all Catholic fatalities. Throughout the 1980s, there was a fairly regular, but much lower level of Catholic casualties with the exception of a concentration in 1981.⁷⁰⁸ By late 1987, there was a discernible increase in violence: between April 1987 and September 1994, 208 Catholics were killed. By the end of the 1990s, the rate of personal exposure to violence among the Catholic

see Honaker, "Unemployment and Violence in Northern Ireland: A Missing Data Model for Ecological Inference," Working Paper, University of California, Los Angeles.

⁷⁰⁶ Hayes and McAllister, "Sowing Dragon's Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland," *Political Studies*, 908–09.

⁷⁰⁷ Sutton, "An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*. There were 41 casualties by unknown perpetrators that were excluded from this analysis given the uncertainty of how these deaths were perceived by Catholics. Data limitations also exclude the deaths of Catholics in the Republic of Ireland. Given the tacit rapprochement between the Republicans and the Irish state despite rhetorical hostility, Catholic casualties by Irish security forces are not included as a driver of demand.

⁷⁰⁸ These deaths include the Loyalist attacks on Miriam Daly, Ronnie Bunting, and other members of the H-Block campaign.

community had declined significantly, which had a greatly dampening effect on demand for violence.

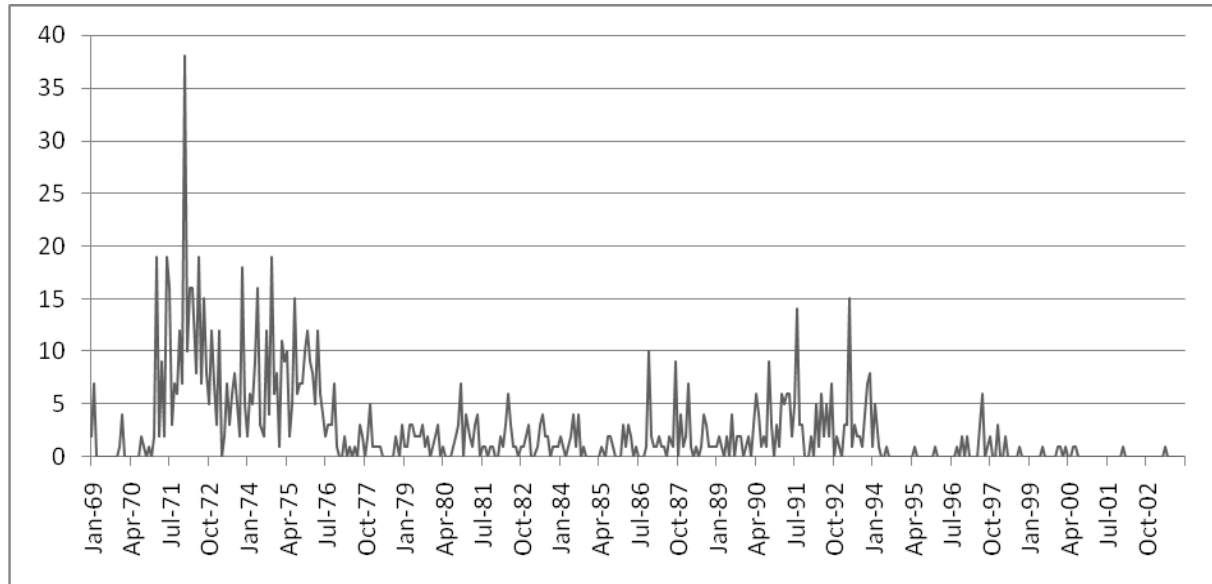


Figure 8.11 Catholic conflict-related fatalities (monthly)⁷⁰⁹

Although the Troubles were precipitated by Loyalist violence, most of it was nonfatal in the first two years of conflict. It was only after the imposition of internment in August 1971 that the Catholic community became subject to large-scale fatal violence—initially primarily from the security forces, then transitioning to the Loyalist paramilitaries. In just two years, the security forces accounted for 42.2 percent of the Catholics they would kill over the 34-year period under review. In the 5.5 years between December 1971 and April 1977, Loyalists killed 56.8 percent of their total for the period. This widespread violence includes a number of particularly bloody attacks. For example, the UVF killed 15 Catholics in the bombing of McGurk's Bar in Belfast on December 4, 1971; the British Army killed 14 Catholics during the anti-internment

⁷⁰⁹ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

march in (London)Derry on January 30, 1972, aka “Blood Sunday;” the UVF killed 23 people in Dublin on May 17, 1974.⁷¹⁰

After April 1977, the Loyalists violence petered out and reappeared in only intermittent bursts until the early 1990s. The only sustained campaign of note was between April 1979 and October 1980, in which Loyalists killed 24 Catholics, including a member of the OIRA and three members of the IRSP/INLA.

During the 1980s, fatalities produced by the security-forces were the primary concern for Northern Irish Catholics. Although most of the victims were members of a paramilitary organization, and some were actively carrying out an attack, the allegations of a shoot-to-kill policy reinforced for many Catholics their perception of being second-class citizens in an unjust regime. The first series of these questionable shootings was carried out by the RUC in November and December 1982. The second series was carried out by the SAS in Loughhall and Gibraltar in May 1987 and March 1988.

In September 1990, the Loyalists began their second major, sustained campaign of fatal violence against the Catholics. In a two-year period, they produced 20.6 percent of their total violence—even more than during the most intense period of violence in 1971–73. October 1993 was an especially intense month of violence against the Catholic community, with the highest casualties in this entire period, all of which were perpetrated by Loyalist paramilitaries.⁷¹¹ In the face of the ratcheting up of the Loyalist

⁷¹⁰ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁷¹¹ This ratcheting up of Loyalist violence was largely a response to PIRA’s Shankill Bombing discussed below. On October 30, members of the UDA walked into the Rising Sun bar and restaurant in Greysteel, County Derry, yelled “Trick or Treat,” and opened fire into a crowd of Catholics. There is some debate

campaign in 1993, Republicans came under internal pressure to react to the killings. As described by one scholar, “PIRA found themselves under growing pressure to respond to the loyalist threat. Pressure to do something grew within the movement as well and IRA commanders in Belfast experienced increasing grassroots unrest, as men on the ground became more and more anxious to take some action against the loyalists.”⁷¹²

The brazenness of the Loyalist killings and their public disregard for Catholic lives only increased this pressure within the Nationalist community for a violent response. For example, one of the most famous Loyalist gunmen, Johnny Adair, openly boasted in an interview in 1993 that he had personally killed twelve Catholics and planned the deaths of eight others.⁷¹³ His arrest in May 1994 and subsequent conviction likely helped to ease the Catholic demand for more sectarian responses to Loyalist attacks.⁷¹⁴

Nevertheless, the Loyalist onslaught continued for several more months.

The Loyalist October 1994 ceasefire in response to PIRA's August ceasefire effectively reduced the Catholic community's experience of violence, thus reducing the demand for Republican violence in response. The killing of a Catholic civilian by Loyalists in November 1995 may have had an disproportionate impact in spiking demand compared to earlier killings given the nearly 11 months since the last Loyalist killing; however, the Loyalists were remarkably restrained in response to PIRA's ending

about the number of casualties: seven killed and 11 wounded (according to English), seven killed and 13 wounded (according to Taylor), or eight killed and 19 wounded (according to Moloney). English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 283; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 391; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 415.

⁷¹² Silke, “Beyond Horror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 43.

⁷¹³ Ibid.; Maggie O’Kane, “For Queen and Country,” *The Guardian*, October 19, 1993.

⁷¹⁴ Silke, “Beyond Horror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 55.

its ceasefire in February 1996. By and large, the Loyalists maintained their own ceasefire, although some elements did kill five civilians in the run-up to PIRA's second ceasefire in July 1997.

As one would expect given such high levels of violence, Catholics reported a high degree of exposure to violence.⁷¹⁵ The number of Catholics reporting they had been a victim of a violent incident quadrupled from 4 percent in 1973 to 16 percent in 1998.⁷¹⁶ The number who knew someone injured or killed by political violence doubled from 34 percent in 1973 to 69 percent in 1995, before dropping slightly to 59 percent.⁷¹⁷ Although this may be an artifact of the different size and density of the two sectarian communities, Catholics reported notably greater personal exposure to violence than Protestants. Significantly, the Catholic response to violence exposure is strongly correlated with increased sympathy or support for Republican paramilitaries.⁷¹⁸

IV. Opinion Polls

Although there is no formal metric by which to evaluate the standard market forces for the production of political violence, the intermittent usage of surveys, which increased notably during the 1990s, allows us to better quantify the demand for Republican violence. Without regular longitudinal data derived from a consistent methodology, it is somewhat difficult to compare directly different periods and we risk comparing apples to oranges. There was some improvement in the creation of such

⁷¹⁵ In 1978, 37.2% of Catholics reported witnessing an act of terrorism or rioting. Moxon-Browne, Northern Ireland Attitude Survey, 1978 [computer file].

⁷¹⁶ Hayes and McAllister, "Sowing Dragon's Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland," *Political Studies*, 910.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 917.

regularized data, but even these new surveys had several defects discussed below; yet despite these weaknesses in the data, it would be even more inappropriate to ignore these surveys given the high degree of relevance to the topic. Therefore, this study will attempt to draw very cautious conclusions from the survey data in this section.

Before examining the survey data, a few additional notes of caution are necessary. While the availability of survey data vastly increased during the 1990s, most of them are incomplete, inconsistent or tangential for the measurement of the market forces under consideration here. Moreover, such data are potentially biased in two ways: First, there may be a significant response bias, especially for surveys undertaken directly by or on behalf of government entities, because more radical Republicans may be disinclined to participate. Cooperation with government officials is generally frowned upon to avoid legitimizing the Northern Irish state, even in some small way. Second, those who do respond may have an incentive to understate their degree of support for Republicans and violence and/or overstate their opposition to avoid becoming a target for scrutiny by the security forces. Despite these caveats, there is no better source for information about popular support and opposition to the Republican paramilitaries—with the possible exception of voting data, which have their own set of issues previously discussed. In addition, the elections and 1998 referendum provide some insight into the intra-communal dynamics.

Because the government only began conducting systematic survey collection in the late 1980s, most of the analysis for the earlier time period is based on a patchwork of similar studies. As Figure 8.12 demonstrates, during the first decade of the conflict

there was exponential growth in support for Republican violence, i.e. support nearly doubled every five years.⁷¹⁹ Some of this change may be a reflection of the different questions being asked in each of the surveys, but even a very cautious interpretation of these results indicates significant growth.⁷²⁰

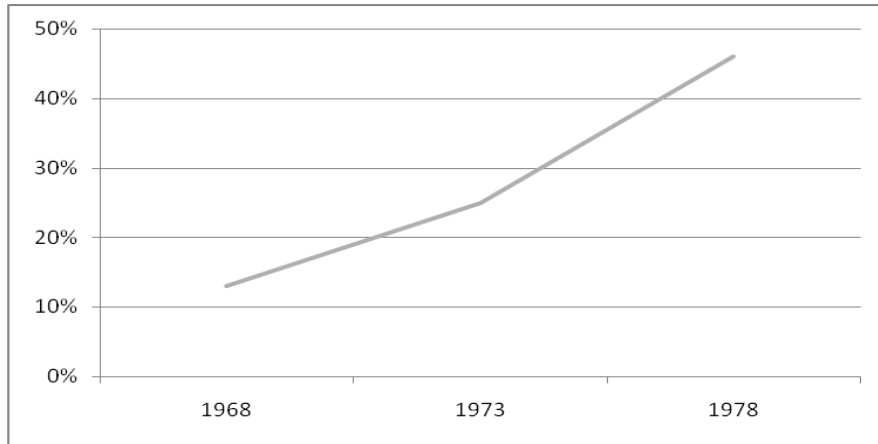


Figure 8.12 Catholic support for Republican violence⁷²¹

In 1992, the Central Survey Unit (CSU) of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) began a semi-annual Community Attitudes Survey (CAS) that included a number of useful questions.⁷²² However, the composition and timing of these surveys fluctuated between years during this period. Thus, it is impossible to directly

⁷¹⁹ Although not a direct measure of support, by 1978, there was a 60-40 split of Catholic opinion on whether or not discrimination against them was the same (or worse) or less than 10 years before. Moxon-Browne, Northern Ireland Attitude Survey, 1978 [computer file], Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], 1980, SN: 1347.

⁷²⁰ Specifically, the 1968 question asked about the right to take up arms to reunify Ireland; the 1973 question asked if violence was a legitimate means for political goals; and the 1978 question asked if “the IRA are basically patriots and idealists.” Hayes and McAllister, “Sowing Dragon’s Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland,” *Political Studies*, 913.

⁷²¹ Ibid.; Rose, “Northern Ireland Loyalty Survey,” *Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) 7237*; Jackson, Determinants of Occupational Status and Mobility in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, 1971–1972; Pilot 1 Data [computer file]; Moxon-Brown, Northern Ireland Attitude Survey, 1978 [computer file].

⁷²² NISRA, Central Survey Unit, Community Attitudes Survey [computer file] Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], UKDA numbers 4790–99.

compare these results to prior periods and some important questions were only asked in some years.

Unfortunately, there are no polls on Catholic support for violence available for the early and mid-1980s. A slightly less direct measure of support for violence is the Catholic community's attitude towards the security services and courts, as the most coercive face of British rule. Table 8.1 shows that approximately one-third of Catholics had negative opinions about significant portions of the security apparatus in Northern Ireland in the late 1980s. Likely as a result of the Ulsterization policy described in Chapter 5, the Catholic negative opinion of the British Army was surprisingly low compared to the other components of the security system in a fairly small survey about perceptions of fairness of the security forces to in 1988.⁷²³ The greatest amount of hostility was directed at the UDR, with two-thirds disapproval.

Table 8.1 Catholic perceptions of the security forces⁷²⁴

	1988	1992–93	1993–94
Decrease role of BA in fighting terrorism	N/A	31%	34%
BA should withdraw patrols	N/A	35%	39%
BA unfair in combating terrorism	20.3%	30%	32%
UDR/RIR unfair in combating terrorism	66.0%	46%	41%
Police unfair in combating terrorism	48.5%	26%	25%
Courts unfair in treatment of terrorism cases	29.5%	29%	28%

⁷²³ Hamilton, McCartney, Anderson and Finn, *Violence and Communities*, table 6.5: Catholic attitudes towards security forces and courts.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*

There appears to have been a slight overall reduction in dissatisfaction with the security forces between 1988 and 1993 according to the Community Attitudes Survey (CAS), a series of large sample government surveys begun in 1992. The evaluation of the courts is nearly identical to those found in 1988, but attitudes toward the other three branches are distinctly different. In addition to Thatcher being replaced by Major, there were several specific events or reforms that likely account for these changes. The Ulster Defense Regiment was strongly criticized by Nationalists throughout the Troubles, which eventually led to its restructuring and merger with the Royal Irish Rangers to form the Royal Irish Regiment in 1992. Thus, the 20 point drop in Catholic dissatisfaction between 1988 and 1992 could reflect true changes in Catholic perceptions of the force as a result of this restructuring. Similarly, because the first survey was carried out in January 1988, the 10 point increase in dissatisfaction with the British Army could be a result, in part, of the increased publicity of the alleged shoot-to-kill policies publicized after the killing of three PIRA operatives in Gibraltar on March 6, 1988, and after the 1992 allegations by Brian Nelson that the Army colluded with Loyalist paramilitaries in the 1989 killing of Pat Finucane, a solicitor frequently used by Republicans.⁷²⁵ However, this author is unaware of any specific reforms to RUC policing during this period that could have caused such a dramatic drop in Catholic alienation from the police. This could therefore be an accurate reflection of change or simply an artifact of different survey methodologies. Nevertheless, although the two surveys are not directly comparable, these findings appear to indicate a

⁷²⁵ Although the Stalker and Stevens Inquiries led to numerous prosecutions, they found no evidence of an official shoot-to-kill policy.

significant lessening of hostility towards the security apparatus: the average of the four categories dropped from 41.1 percent in 1988 to 33 and 32 in 1992/3 and 1993/4, respectively.⁷²⁶

The CAS included questions directly related to the legitimacy of violence in two surveys between 1992 and 1994. Specifically, it asked about the use of violence to advance a political goal (force) and the use of violence in response to previous attacks (retaliation). The CAS results in Table 8.2 indicate that the number of Catholic respondents willing to admit support for violence by paramilitaries—already fairly low—appears to have shrunk considerably from the 1970s and was on a downward trend. For both types of violence, the combined Agree and Agree Strongly categories fell 25 percent from four percentage points in 1992–93 to three in 1993–94. Only one percent was strongly supportive of paramilitary violence, and even this support dwindled to naught for retaliatory violence in 1994. If one adopts a highly expansive view that all those who do not have a fixed oppositional opinion at least provide a permissive environment, the level of this kind of support fell from eleven percent to eight for the use of force and from nine percent to eight for the use of retaliatory force. Despite these low support figures, as will be discussed below in Figure 9.2, over one-fifth of the respondents in these two surveys said they would not report information about terrorist activities.

⁷²⁶ If one excludes the RUC measure, the averages change to 38.6 percent in 1988, 35 in 1992/3, and 34 in 1993/4, which is still a notable, if much more modest reduction of 9.3 percent. *Ibid.*, NISRA, Central Survey Unit, Community Attitudes Survey [computer file] Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], UKDA numbers 4790–99.

Table 8.2 Catholic belief that paramilitary violence is justified to attain political goals and in retaliation for other paramilitaries' violence⁷²⁷

	1992–93		1993–94	
	Force	Retaliation	Force	Retaliation
Agree strongly	1%	1%	1%	0%
Agree	3%	3%	2%	3%
Depends	2%	1%	1%	1%
Neutral	2%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	19%	18%	19%	18%
Disagree strongly	71%	73%	73%	74%
DK/Refusal	3%	3%	3%	3%

The improved data collection in the 1990s allows us to examine more frequent attitude changes, albeit most of the data provide only tangential proxies. CAS includes two questions on how the courts treat terrorism suspects and non-terrorism suspects by religion and a similar question on the contribution of the police to the fairness of the legal system. Only the first directly deals with political violence, whereas the latter two potentially reflect much larger issues about satisfaction with the legal system.

⁷²⁷ NISRA, Central Survey Unit, Community Attitudes Survey [computer file] Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], UKDA numbers 4790–91.

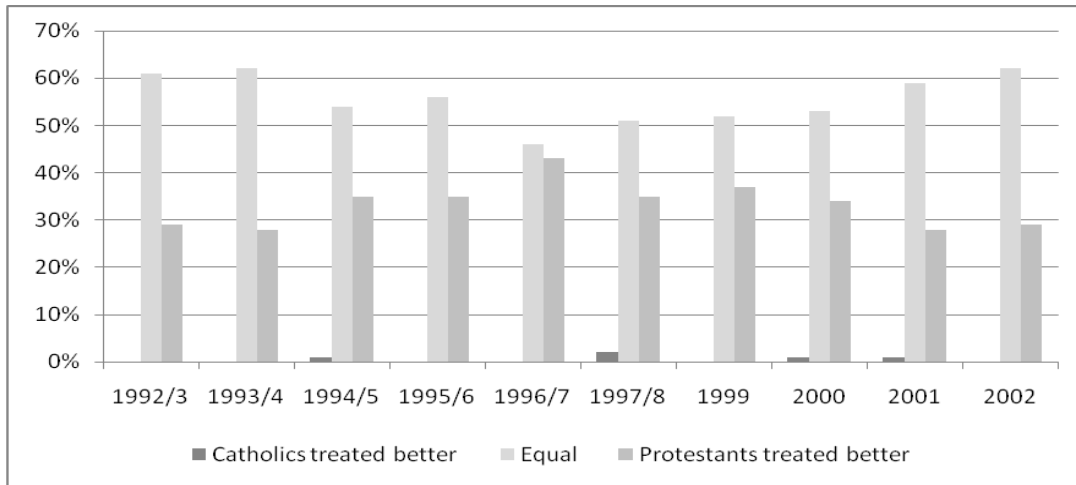


Figure 8.13 Catholic opinion of how courts treat Catholic and Protestant terrorism suspects⁷²⁸

Despite the minimal change in this measure between 1988 and 1992/3 discussed above, Figure 8.13 demonstrates that there was considerable change within the period. After a slight decline of one percentage point, there was contradictory movement in 1994/5. A very small number of Catholics started to believe that the system had tilted in their community's favor, but there was also a 25 percent increase in those who believed it had become more biased in favor of Protestants. Belief in a Protestant bias remained at this level the following year, then increased another 22.9 percent in 1996/7. In 1997/8, belief in a Protestant bias fell 18.6 percent and belief in a Catholic bias reemerged, twice as strongly as in 1994/5. The Protestant bias rose 5.7 percent in 1999, then fell slightly, non-monotonically back to its original level in 1992/3 by 2002.

⁷²⁸ Ibid.



Figure 8.14 Catholic opinion of how courts treat Catholic and Protestant non-terrorism suspects⁷²⁹

Belief in a bias within the courts for non-terrorism offenses was consistently much lower than for terrorism offenses, but formed a significant minority that grew in a rather volatile manner during this period. Starting out at a mere 7 percent in 1992/3, after steady annual increases, it had nearly tripled by 1995/6 to 19 percent. Belief in a Protestant bias fell 15.8 percent in 1997/8, but rebounded two-fold the following year. There were dramatic reductions over the next two years, before another rebound in 2002, ending 2.3 times higher than the level in 1992/3. For the most part, beliefs about court bias tracked very closely between the two types of legal proceedings. However, given that the 1992/3 and 1993/4 surveys are the bridge to attitudes about the other branches of the security apparatus for which we do not have longitudinal data, the discrepancy between perceptions of terrorism and non-terrorism court bias in these two years is basis for some concern. While perception of court bias shrank slightly for terrorist cases, it grew enormously for non-terrorist proceedings. Nevertheless, the overall similarity in the pattern of opinions on the role of bias of the system dealing

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

with terrorist and non-terrorist offenses over the course of the decade seems to give weight to the comparability of the two variables. First, the standard criminal justice system was consistently a much smaller source of grievance for the Catholic community during this period. Second, there is a close correlation between opinions about responses to terrorist and non-terrorist criminal activities.

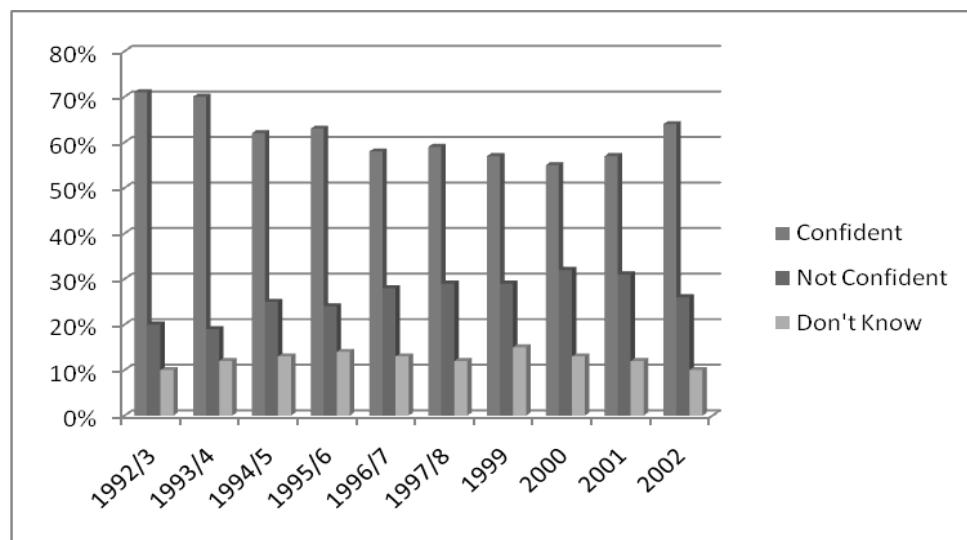


Figure 8.15 Catholic confidence in the police contribution to the fairness of the system⁷³⁰

Building off of this correlation between opinions on the anti-terrorism and standard criminal systems, it is useful to examine Catholic confidence in the RUC's fairness in general. Once again there appears to be less concern about bias than for terrorism-related offenses. Specifically, where belief that the RUC was unfair in its handling of terrorist offenses was 26 and 25 percent in 1992/3 and 1993/4, respectively, it was just 20 and 19 percent for this more generic question. Moreover, the joint slight downward movement of the two measures gives further evidence that the two may be closely correlated.

⁷³⁰ Ibid.

The fairly steady increase in the reporting of no confidence between 1993/4 and 2000 was likely even stronger in relation to police responses to terrorism. The 31.6 percent jump in 1993/4, which formed the new baseline for the period, may have been caused by the increased interaction with the police resulting from the RUC's response to the first ceasefire.⁷³¹ The RUC launched a major public relations campaign and attempted to foster a greater sense of openness—a marked departure from the secrecy that had characterized the RUC's struggle against the paramilitaries.⁷³² Yet clearly, after so many years of focusing primarily on the security situation and despite laudable efforts, the RUC had difficulty quickly transitioning from a paramilitary police force to a normal or community police force in the wake of the two ceasefires. The jumps of 16.7 and 10.3 percent in 1996/7 and 2000 indicate that this frustration with the RUC continued to grow at significant rates as the first ceasefire broke down and in the aftermath of the GFA. The latter bump is likely a result of the release and slow implementation of the Patton Report on police reform in 1999, described as “the most ‘significant and complex blueprint’ for police reform in the world.”⁷³³ The 16.1 drop in 2002 is most likely the result of the restructuring of the RUC into the PSNI in November 2001.

⁷³¹ This could also be a result of the more mundane focus on traffic policing that resulted in a significant increase in tickets and court appearances. See Mulcahy, *Policing Northern Ireland: Conflict, Legitimacy and Reform*, 16–17.

⁷³² This greater openness included ad campaigns and invitations for community representatives to attend briefings on the various departments in the RUC, including Special Branch. *Ibid.*, ch. 6.

⁷³³ Topping, “Diversifying From Within,” *British Journal of Criminology*, 778; O’Rawe, “Transitional Policing Arrangements in Northern Ireland: The Can’t and Won’t of Change Dialect,” *Fordham International Law Journal*; United Kingdom, Office of the Oversight Commissioner, Hutchinson, *Oversight Report 16*.

These polling data reveal that the level of Catholic support for violence grew significantly during the 1970s, but had shrunk considerably by the early 1990s. The only direct measurement of support for violence during this later period is limited to the 1992–94 period, but it indicates that roughly five percent of Catholics believed the violence to be justified. The other measures tended to register an increase in dissatisfaction until 1996–97, after which they diverge somewhat. Although much smaller than the nearly one-half who supported violence in 1978, a sizable proportion of the Catholic community—at least one-tenth—remained hostile to at least certain aspects of continued British rule in Northern Ireland even after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. Thus, demand for violence continued to exist.

V. Combined Measure

Overall, demand for Republican violence appeared to grow exponentially between 1969 and 1973 and then declined sharply after 1976, from which it would never fully recover. The Hunger Strike and Thatcher's aggressive stance helped to breathe new life into the market in the early 1980s.⁷³⁴ However, a combination of reforms and Thatcher's ouster from office appear to have further reduced demand. Indeed, demand for violence was significantly lower during the 1990s than in the previous two decades, but fluctuated somewhat over the period.

Many of the economic discrepancies between the two sectarian communities had already begun to converge. The housing situation was nearly equal, although Protestants

⁷³⁴ The Conservatives' general social policies probably also provided a source of frustration with the British government given the high unemployment and mostly working class character of the Catholic population in the North during her tenure in office.

continued to have a slight advantage resulting from their historically superior economic position rather than any discernible overt bias.⁷³⁵ Both Catholic and Protestant representation in the labor force had significantly improved and continued to improve over the course of the decade. After a notable increase in the hiring of Catholics by both private industry and the public sector, which accelerated even further in 1996, Catholics considerably closed the gap and were fairly proportionally represented in the economy by 2001.

The communal experience of violence was intense in the early 1970s but fell sharply after 1977. This decline in violence represented a diminution of the existential threat to the besieged minority community. While tensions continued, the threat of Loyalist pogroms driving Catholics out of their homes had all but disappeared, with the exception of the occasional mob violence surrounding the summer Marching Season. Nevertheless, there were significant spikes in the experience of violence that likely temporarily increased demand: 1981, 1987, 1988, and 1990–94. During this last period, Loyalist and state violence grew steadily between the beginning of 1990 and spring 1992, and again between summer 1992 and summer 1994, after which it plunged to very low levels as the Loyalist paramilitaries generally honored their ceasefires.

Finally, the polling data of Catholic opinions suggest that the wide support Republicans enjoyed during the 1970s had dramatically shrunk by the 1990s. Negative impressions about the security apparatus in Northern Ireland appeared to start slightly lower than in 1988, but increased over the course of the decade. High points of this

⁷³⁵ Whyte, "How Much Discrimination Was There Under the Unionist Regime, 1921–1968?," in Gallagher and O'Connell, ed., *Contemporary Irish Studies*, 1–36.

negativity were in 1995, 1996, 1999, and 2000. However, most of these opinion polls are only tangentially related to demand for violence.

CHAPTER 9: Supply of Violence

Production costs for political violence at the beginning of the Troubles were virtually zero given the feeling of existential threat, but opposition to violence grew steadily as the conflict wore on. The greatest limitation to production in the early days was the ability to organize and arm, i.e. material rather than political costs. The changing nature of the conflict from one of imminent civil war to one of terroristic coercion altered the perception of the legitimacy of violence. Furthermore, the increased distance between the Republican paramilitaries and the Nationalist community as a result of the end of the “no-go areas” in 1972 and the paramilitaries’ organizational restructuring in the late 1970s made it harder for them to accurately gauge the political costs of production. As a result, they made a number of strategic mistakes that emboldened individual opponents of violence within the community to speak out and begin organizing, which shifted the supply curve to the left.

During the first three years of the Troubles, Catholics were almost universally supportive of the need to provide communal self-defense. One of the largest blows to the IRA's power came not from its production of violence, but rather its failure to produce: in 1969, graffiti appeared saying, “IRA—I Ran Away.” Future members of the SDLP and both wings of the IRA worked together during this period to secure their community from the perceived Loyalist onslaught. Once the panic began to subside, Nationalists began demanding more selective violence—while most were willing to at least tolerate the use of violence against the security forces, civilian casualties served to alienate many others. This leftward shift in the supply curve was amply demonstrated

by the Officials essentially going out of business in 1972 after the Aldershot bombing. Similarly, the emergence of the Peace People in 1976 revealed a significant amount of opposition to the violence within the Nationalist community.

As the violence declined to meet the market expectations and the proponents of peace were unable to resolve their political differences, vocal opposition to the Republican violence diminished somewhat. However, the peace activist networks that formed in 1976 helped to crystallize the opposition once again in 1988–89.

Although the British and international community's efforts to foster anti-violence civil society organizations certainly helped to eat into Republican political profits, the most significant spikes resulted from Republicans' own botched operations. Just as the Aldershot Barracks bombing in 1972 helped to permanently destroy the OIRA brand, PIRA's image was badly tarnished by two bombings (Warrington and Shankill) in late 1993, and the costs for all Republican groups exploded with the Omagh Bombing in 1998. Moreover, the collapse of the first ceasefire drew considerable open criticism from within the Nationalist community, the British Isles, and the world. Finally, the security forces were able to impose considerable operational costs through improved intelligence and law enforcement policies.

I. Public Reaction

There was only intermittent overt opposition to violence in the form of public demonstrations, usually in response to specific attacks by the Republican paramilitaries. The first such display was in response to the OIRA's killing of an off-duty soldier following the Aldershot bombing in 1972. The second was the creation of the Peace

People movement in 1976 following the PIRA's cessation of the first ceasefire. The third—and most enduring—was the creation of a new peace movement in the late 1980s after a series of interrelated atrocities. This new peace movement helped to focus the opposition when the PIRA ended its second major ceasefire in 1996. While the first display of public opposition to violence is a case of a paramilitary producing too much of the wrong kind of violence for its constituency, the latter two displays highlight the leftward shift in the supply curve as a result of extended ceasefires.

A. The First Ceasefires

In the Spring of 1972, the Officials became more active, but in so doing revealed the limitations of their brand appeal.⁷³⁶ Three specific attacks tarred them as incompetent, or, even worse, sectarian. On February 22, 1972, the OIRA attacked the home barracks of the 1 Para in Aldershot, England in retaliation for their role in Bloody Sunday three weeks earlier. The bomb destroyed the officers' mess and killed a Catholic chaplain, a gardener and five cleaning ladies—not the 12 officers the OIRA claimed.⁷³⁷ Three days later, the OIRA attempted to kill John Taylor, the Minister of State for Home Affairs in the Stormont government, whom they described as an “arch-bigot.”⁷³⁸ On May 21, the Officials kidnapped and executed Ranger William Best while he was home on leave from Germany, where he was stationed with the British Army. Best was a popular local Catholic and his killing produced a number of small women-led peace

⁷³⁶ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 89; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 156, 162; Coogan, *The IRA*, 459; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 111; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 175.

⁷³⁷ Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Worker's Party*, 175–76.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, 176.

groups within the Nationalist community.⁷³⁹ There were protest marches around the Officials' headquarters in Derry, and a gathering of 2,000 protesters loudly expressed their displeasure.⁷⁴⁰ Just over a week later, on May 29, the OIRA declared a ceasefire.⁷⁴¹

It is important to note that this campaign of lackluster OIRA violence overlapped with a similar campaign by the Provisionals. On March 4, 1972, the Provisionals killed two women and injured 136 others when it bombed the Abercorn restaurant in Belfast—although they strongly denied it.⁷⁴² On March 20, the PIRA killed six people and injured more than 100 others in a bomb on Lower Donegall Street in Belfast.⁷⁴³

As a result, the market was overly saturated with low-quality violence—in the political rather than technical sense. In response, both paramilitaries reduced their production to recapture the market equilibrium. The PIRA declared a three-day ceasefire after the abolition of the autonomous Stormont government on May 21 and the OIRA declared a more permanent ceasefire on May 29.

Despite the appearance of some sensitivity to Nationalists' negative reactions, the Provisionals failed to properly gauge the amount of opposition these civilian casualties engendered and suffered very serious consequences as a result. The PIRA launched a series of 22 bombs in Belfast on July 21, killing nine and injuring many

⁷³⁹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 111.

⁷⁴⁰ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 17; Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Worker's Party*, 179.

⁷⁴¹ The Officials maintained the right to defensive use of force, so they continued to produce violence at a much lower level through 1973. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 89.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, 104; Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 385; Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 156–57; Coogan, *The IRA*, 381; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 111.

⁷⁴³ Melaugh, “A Chronology of the Conflict: 1972,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

more, earning the name “Bloody Friday.”⁷⁴⁴ Ten days later, on July 31, the British Army swept through the no-go areas and ended the period of overt Republican domination of the local communities. In the wake of the recent atrocities and overwhelming force, there was relatively little resistance to Operation Motorman from either the paramilitaries or the residents of these neighborhoods.⁷⁴⁵

The loss of these no-go areas fundamentally altered the context for Republican violence and made the paramilitaries far more vulnerable to the security forces thereafter. In fact, it is difficult to overstate the significance of this change.⁷⁴⁶ Beyond their loss of legitimacy and agenda-setting power from their role as a quasi-government, the paramilitaries had a harder time recruiting, training and managing logistics for violence production. Now, with more regular interactions between the grassroots population and the security forces, there were more opportunities for individuals to express their opposition through informing, and the reduced stature of the paramilitaries within the local community structure made informing a slightly more socially acceptable option.

⁷⁴⁴ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 177–78; Coogan, *The IRA*, 384; English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 158–59. As further evidence of their obliviousness to the negative reaction within the Nationalist community, the PIRA followed this up with a series of three bombs in Claudy ten days later (during Operation Motorman), which also killed nine. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 159.

⁷⁴⁵ Thornton, “Getting it Wrong: The Crucial Mistakes Made in the Early Stages of the British Army's Deployment to Northern Ireland (August 1969 to March 1972),” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 103.

⁷⁴⁶ Smith and Neumann, “Motorman's Long Journey: Changing the Strategic Setting in Northern Ireland,” *Contemporary British History*, 413–35; Lafree, Dugan and Korte, “The Impact of British Counterterrorist Strategies on Political Violence in Northern Ireland,” *Criminology*, 17-45; Thornton, “Getting it Wrong: The Crucial Mistakes Made in the Early Stages of the British Army's Deployment to Northern Ireland (August 1969 to March 1972),” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 103. For a contrary opinion, see Beggan, “Understanding Insurgency Violence: A Quantitative Analysis of the Political Violence in Northern Ireland 1969–1999,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 711–13.

B. Peace People

The second wave of overt opposition occurred with the launch of the Peace People.⁷⁴⁷ On August 8, 1976, a car driven by a PIRA member careened into a family of Catholics during a high-speed chase, killing three young children. A passing Protestant woman named Betty Williams rushed to their aid and later joined forces with the children's aunt, Mairead Maguire Corrigan, to take a stand against the violence. The Peace People rapidly evolved from a simple petition-signing campaign into a full-scale social movement capable of mobilizing 35,000 people to take part in protests. Although it collapsed within two years over ideological and personal differences, in its early days, the Peace People represented a serious threat to the Republican paramilitaries.⁷⁴⁸ Their opposition called attention to the fact that the Republicans could not claim to speak for everyone within their community, undercutting their strategic position in the coercive negotiation process with the British. Their opposition also bolstered the British policy of criminalization.⁷⁴⁹ As a result, the Provisionals unsuccessfully attempted to intimidate the marchers into silence.⁷⁵⁰ As one Republican commentator notes, “for a brief period, however, the Peace People, unwittingly or by design, provided assistance to the ‘normalization’ effort of the British imperialists.”⁷⁵¹

⁷⁴⁷ Williams, Speaker, Nobel Peace Laureates Conference, November 5, 1998; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 363.

⁷⁴⁸ Coogan, *The IRA*, 486.

⁷⁴⁹ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 144.

⁷⁵⁰ Nobel Peace Laureates Conference, November 5, 1998.

⁷⁵¹ Clarke and Urban, “War in the Streets, Struggle in the Prisons,” *Beyond the Pale*.

The rise of such a vocal opposition signaled the end of any optimism about the potential for a quick resolution of the conflict in the Republicans favor.⁷⁵²

C. A New Peace Movement

After the events surrounding the Gibraltar SAS shooting in 1988, new life was breathed into the peace movement (see Chapter 6). The worst aspects of violence produced by all three sides to the conflict were neatly juxtaposed, inspiring individuals to reach across sectarian lines to promote a peaceful solution. In contrast to the creation of a monolithic organization in 1976, the late 1980s saw the rise of several smaller groups that pursued their own strategies but would often cooperate to produce larger events. The groups included the Peace Train, which emphasized both the Irish and British dimensions of the conflict by organizing train rides from Belfast to Dublin and London; Families against Intimidation and Terror (FAIT), which publicized the grisly details of paramilitaries' terrorist and punishment attacks; and New Consensus, which used opposition to violence to advance a more specific political agenda. This plurality of voices made the later peace movement much more dynamic and adaptable, but it also underscored the ongoing lack of an acceptable political alternative to the violence around which such opposition could coalesce.

Building from these nascent peace movements that had begun to coalesce after the Gibraltar killings and subsequent funeral violence, popular opposition to Republican violence became increasingly organized and vocal. In addition to the brief foray into the use of proxy bombs (forced suicide bombings by unaffiliated civilians), four events in

⁷⁵² Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 144.

particular elucidated a strong negative response from the Nationalist community and closely preceded major reductions in violence production: a series of proxy bombs in 1990, Warrington and Shankill in 1993, and Omagh in 1998.

1. Proxy Bombs

On October 24, 1990, PIRA revisited its earlier use of proxy bombs, but with a gruesome twist. Instead of just forcing people to deliver bombs by holding their families hostage, as had been done previously, starting in 1990 the victim was forced to become an unwitting suicide bomber. The “human bombs” selected for simultaneous attacks in three different parts of Northern Ireland on this day were all Catholics whom PIRA had labeled as “collaborators”: Patrick Gillespie, who worked in a British Army canteen; John McEvoy, an ex-member of the UDR who sold petrol to members of the security forces; and Gerry Kelly, a mechanic on a British Army base.⁷⁵³ In 1985, the Provisionals had declared that contractors and suppliers for the security forces were considered “legitimate targets” and had subsequently killed 15 contractors and shot at countless others in the intervening years.⁷⁵⁴ Thus, these “collaborators” were doubly attractive targets: they themselves had been labeled legitimate targets, and they had access to secure facilities. Gillespie's bomb killed him and five soldiers; McEvoy's killed one soldier, but he managed to escape; Kelly's failed to explode. Thus, the three bombs were a mixed success from a tactical point of view.

⁷⁵³ Phillips, “Human Bombs,” *Maclean's*, November 5, 1990; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 366; Bloom and Horgan, “Missing Their Mark: The IRA's Proxy Bomb Campaign,” *Social Research*, 595.

⁷⁵⁴ Bloom and Horgan, “Missing Their Mark: The IRA's Proxy Bomb Campaign,” *Social Research*, 595; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, “War News” 1985–1990.

There is wide consensus that the proxy bomb campaign was a public relations disaster for the Provisionals. Noting the technical value inherent in the tactical innovation of proxy bombing, Bloom and Horgan explain its quick abandonment:⁷⁵⁵ “the reasons for its discontinuation appear clear, . . . extensive public pressure eventually forced the IRA to adjust its tactics accordingly.”⁷⁵⁶ However, this public opinion had a much larger strategic impact, not just a tactical one. Taylor notes:

The vast majority of Catholics in Derry were sickened by the attack and no doubt let the IRA know what they thought. The revulsion caused by this use of a ‘human bomb’ increased a groundswell for peace that the IRA could not ignore . . . a considerable section of the community on which the Provisionals relied for their support, and whom they had originally come into existence to defend, had had enough.⁷⁵⁷

Similarly, Moloney concluded that “only one thing can be said with certainty. The human bomb tactic fortified the peace camp within the Provisionals and weakened the militarists.”⁷⁵⁸ The public relations failure of the proxy bombings resulted in a marked downturn in demand for political violence.

2. Warrington Bombing

On March 20, 1993, PIRA planted two bombs in the town center of Warrington, England, killing two young boys—one of whom was badly injured but lived for six days, keeping the story and the impact of the attack at the forefront of media coverage—and injuring 51 others. One of the more striking features of this bombing is

⁷⁵⁵ PIRA did not fully abandon the use of proxies, but used them somewhat more sparingly and returned to the previous policy of allowing the drivers to escape before the bombs went off. However, PIRA used hoax proxy bombs to remind the security forces of the potential for violence escalation. Bloom and Horgan, “Missing Their Mark: The IRA’s Proxy Bomb Campaign,” *Social Research*, 603.

⁷⁵⁶ Bloom and Horgan, “Missing Their Mark: The IRA’s Proxy Bomb Campaign,” *Social Research*, 594.

⁷⁵⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 366–67.

⁷⁵⁸ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 349.

that the father of the older boy made a “dignified and passionate plea for peace.”⁷⁵⁹ The intense media coverage produced a massive outpouring of condemnation for the bombers. In addition to the condemnations from the usual sources, international public opinion and even Republican voices expressed horror at the violence.

Of particular importance was the strong negative reaction to the bombing in the Republic of Ireland. Coogan describes the Irish public's reaction as “one of guilt mingled with outrage.”⁷⁶⁰ Silke notes that “there was enormous public sympathy for the victims accompanied by a palpable sense of shame . . . and the hostile environment created in the aftermath of Warrington made the Republic for a time an unreliable place for the organization.”⁷⁶¹ As a result of the bombing, there was a significant increase in public support for, or at least willingness to consider, internment and reaching an extradition treaty with the British.⁷⁶²

In the wake of the bombing, a housewife named Susan McHugh organized a rally in Dublin, which coalesced into the “enormous, but short-lived peace movement, Peace '93,” which won the backing of Irish President Mary Robinson.⁷⁶³ A peace rally in Dublin 10 days after the bombing attracted 20,000 supporters—the largest protest against paramilitary violence since the Peace People rallies of the mid-1970s—and smaller silent vigils and demonstrations in Cork and County Clare.⁷⁶⁴ The following

⁷⁵⁹ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, 384.

⁷⁶⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 586.

⁷⁶¹ Silke, “Beyond Horror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 40–41.

⁷⁶² Cooney, *Glasgow Herald*, April 1, 1993.

⁷⁶³ Coogan, *The IRA*, 587; Jim Dunne, “President will visit Warrington,” *The Irish Times*, April 3, 1993.

⁷⁶⁴ Cusack, “Rally opens peace campaign,” *The Irish Times*, March 29, 1993; Murdoch, *The Independent*, March 30, 1993.

week, there were rallies of between 1,000 and 3,000 people in London, Cork, Wexford, Waterford, Limerick, and Belfast. Smaller events were held in almost all of the counties of Ireland on both sides of the border, including a 150 person march in the Republican stronghold of Crossmaglen, County Armagh.⁷⁶⁵

The initially indifferent Republican coverage of the bombing broke down into a fierce internal debate on such a use of violence. A PIRA spokesperson acknowledged phlegmatically that the Warrington bombs “did not serve the interests of the IRA.”⁷⁶⁶ The Provisionals' flagship newspaper, *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, demonstrated the seriousness of the opposition to such bloody attacks within not only the larger Nationalist community but also the Republican base. The initial reaction to the bombing within the main part of the newspaper was a brief blurb accompanying a photo that was intended to discredit the peace movement: “Sticky participation in the current ‘peace’ movement automatically discredits that movement.”⁷⁶⁷ Subsequently, this façade of indifference to public opinion was broken down by a heated exchange in the letters to the editor section. Owen Bennett wrote two letters in April questioning the justification of the ongoing violence because the IRA was simply not winning the war. Eamon O Dubhain of Dublin followed up on these letters by providing a condemnation of the violence, a condemnation that was carefully crafted using Republican rhetoric in criticism of Republican actions:

republicans must have the freedom and the courage to critically examine our struggle, and (if necessary and possible) continue the fight in a new

⁷⁶⁵ *Irish Times*, April 5, 1993.

⁷⁶⁶ *Irish News*, March 25, 1993.

⁷⁶⁷ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, April 8, 1993.

way. . . . Armed struggle is a weapon, not a principle. It is a weapon that has—properly—been picked up by republicans as a last resort, and should now be put away at the first opportunity. Now is the time for republicans to help create the conditions for such an opportunity.⁷⁶⁸

Over the next month, O Dubhain's letter was met with at least nine letters refuting this call for moving away from violence over the course of the following week, but at least two additional letters provided support.⁷⁶⁹ Although a majority appeared to continue their support for the use of violence, the sheer amount of space dedicated to the topic indicates a deeper dialogue within the community.

3. Shankill Bombing

In the midst of this public condemnation and internal debate, the Provisionals were caught up in another public relations disaster. On October 23, 1993, PIRA attempted to bomb a regularly-held UDA meeting above Frizzell's fish shop in the Protestant Shankill. In a tragedy of errors, both the meeting and the bomb's fuse ended early,⁷⁷⁰ killing one of the bombers, Thomas Begley, and nine Protestant civilians, including four women and two schoolgirls, and injuring over 60 others.⁷⁷¹ Not only did the Provisionals kill Protestant civilians instead of Loyalists—opening themselves up to claims of sectarianism—but the death of Begley was PIRA's first “own goal” from premature explosion in Northern Ireland since February 1989.⁷⁷²

As Silke notes, the Republican reaction was mixed:

⁷⁶⁸ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 6, 1993.

⁷⁶⁹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 6, May 13, May 20,, 1993.

⁷⁷⁰ According to English, the UDA had actually abandoned the meeting spot a few weeks earlier. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 282.

⁷⁷¹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 281; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 414–15.

⁷⁷² There had been two other “own goals” in England in 1991, when two inexperienced Volunteers, Patricia Black and Frank Ryan, died during an attempt to bomb a military band in St. Albans, Hertfordshire. *The Independent*, February 20, 1996.

dismay and disbelief among senior IRA figures that local commanders could have sanctioned such a mission,⁷⁷³ and shame and deep regret among many supporters that the bombing had been carried out in their name. In Belfast though, the reaction in nationalist quarters was not as bad as after Enniskillen. Catholics in the city had been suffering loyalist attacks for too many months, and although there was some regret, there was still a wide consensus that the bombing—or something like it—had been coming for a long time.⁷⁷⁴

Once again, Peace '93 and the other peace groups launched a wave of large protests around Ireland.⁷⁷⁵ Gerry Adams responded to the outpouring of condemnation by issuing the closest thing to a condemnation without crossing a line in the sand: “I don't think that what happened, no matter what the intentions, can be excused.”⁷⁷⁶ Similarly, an editorial in *An Phoblacht/Republican News* stated, “The IRA has borne the responsibility and paid the price in political terms.”⁷⁷⁷ Despite this *almost*-condemnation, Adams served as a pall-bearer in Begley's funeral.

Although the Shankill bombing boosted support for Peace '93, outrage is hard to maintain and the number of activists steadily declined. Moreover, with the apparent progress of the Hume-Adams talks, vocal condemnation simply became less salient. By May 1994, active participation in Peace '93 had drastically dwindled to just a few dozen.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷³ There was an attempt to insulate the leadership from the backlash this attack generated by blaming a local commander, however it appears the Army Council had approved the attack, or at the very least was aware of it and opted not to veto the operation. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 414.

⁷⁷⁴ Silke, “Beyond Horror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 49.

⁷⁷⁵ O'Halloran and Quinlan, *Irish Times*, October 28, 1993.

⁷⁷⁶ Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish*, 199.

⁷⁷⁷ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, October 28, 1996.

⁷⁷⁸ Sharrock, *Guardian*, May 22, 1994.

4. PIRA Ceasefire

Just a few months later, the Provisionals declared their first ceasefire. It is important to note that the decline in overt opposition is closely linked to the decline in violence production, i.e. movement along the supply curve, not a shift in it. Indeed, there were several occasions during the first ceasefire that demonstrated the continued strength of the opposition to a return to violence production. One example was the huge peace rally in Belfast to see U.S. President Clinton speak in 1995.⁷⁷⁹

The true cost of a return to violence would not be revealed until PIRA ended the ceasefire with the February 9, 1996 bombing of London's Canary Wharf. Widespread peace protests broke out almost immediately across the region, many of them drawing in excess of one thousand people.⁷⁸⁰ A week later, a phone-in poll sponsored by the *Belfast Telegraph*, *Sunday Life*, the *Irish News*, the *News Letter* and *Sunday World* resulted in an overwhelming 153,848 people calling in to express support for an end to the violence, equating to approximately 10 percent of the entire population of Northern Ireland.⁷⁸¹ On March 23, 1996, 150,000 people took to the streets and 80,000 of them signed a petition to the politicians to get the peace talks back on track.⁷⁸²

Over time, this publicly expressed fervor for peace declined. Other than a small service to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Enniskillen bombing, there no other major peace rallies until 1998. The pressure to return to ceasefire continued albeit

⁷⁷⁹ Clinton, *My Life, Volume 2: The Presidential Years*, 292.

⁷⁸⁰ Grattan, Gary, *Belfast Telegraph*, February 13, 1996; *Belfast Telegraph*, February 15, 1996.

⁷⁸¹ On one hand, the number who attempted to vote might be higher because there were limited phone lines. On the other hand, there was no mention of any attempt to restrict individuals from voting more than once. Walmsley, *Belfast Telegraph*, February 19, 1996.

⁷⁸² Barbash, *Washington Post*, March 24, 1996.

at a declining rate over time: the next major protest was a 1,500 person rally on the lunch hour in Belfast on October 11, 1996.⁷⁸³ As with the last ceasefire, these protests petered out as the political process became dominant, but did not necessarily reflect a diminished opposition to violence.

As important as these overt demonstrations of displeasure over the return to violence were, the increased Nationalist cooperation with the authorities was far more problematic for the ongoing production of violence.⁷⁸⁴ As Silke notes, Republicans

faced massive discontent from the nationalist population who were frustrated and disappointed with the collapse of the cease-fire. The fact that the loyalists maintained their ceasefires added to this sense of frustration, and the end result was an unprecedented drop in passive support for the Provisionals. Many locals refused to turn a blind eye to PIRA activities and the RUC reported that they were receiving exceptional levels of co-operation in many areas. The Provisionals' campaign stumbled and faltered. In an attempt to reassert their authority they made a number of public statements in local areas warning dissenters that they would use physical power if need be.⁷⁸⁵

This resistance declined as a result of Provisional intimidation, but remained at higher levels than before the ceasefire.

In the wake of the ceasefire's collapse, Republicans increasingly had to rely on the active maintenance of fear rather than a natural wellspring of support within their community in order to safeguard their operations. In effect, after getting a taste of

⁷⁸³ Breen and Brennock, *Irish Times*, October 12, 1996.

⁷⁸⁴ J. Boyer Bell also notes the practical costs of the ceasefire on the functioning of the organization: the enormous, the “amorphous structure of support began to dissolve: the network of links and telephone numbers, mail drops, safehouses, ready money, dinners on demand, and cars on loan. People died or moved or forgot and were not replaced—for there was no urgency. Professional services no longer required were no longer available: who would risk an accountancy firm or a medical practice if there was no campaign, no war, no real need?” Bell, “Ireland: The Long End Game,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 18.

⁷⁸⁵ Silke, “Beyond Horror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 83.

peace, the Nationalist public underwent a sea-change in opinion that reduced the availability of a relatively safe haven from which to plan and launch their attacks and draw their recruits.⁷⁸⁶

5. *Omagh Bombing*

The third and most important bombing of the decade in terms of engendering Nationalist opposition to violence was the bombing in Omagh, County Tyrone, on August 15, 1998. Omagh was the single bloodiest bombing of the Troubles: 29 were killed—including a pregnant mother of twins, 370 were hospitalized (60 of whom had multiple major injuries and 20 of whom suffered amputations or severe loss of mobility), and an additional 2,500 sought medical attention for less severe injuries.⁷⁸⁷ This carnage produced an unprecedented level of public condemnation. At least fifty-thousand people attended remembrance services in Omagh, and tens if not hundreds of thousands turned out on both sides of the Irish border.

With the second PIRA ceasefire and signing of the Good Friday Agreement, there had clearly been a second sea change of opinion within the Nationalist community regarding violence, which affected a significant portion of the Republicans. This is most clearly reflected in Sinn Fein's vociferous public condemnation of the bombing, not to mention threats against those who continued to produce violence (see Chapter 10 for more details).⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁶ South Armagh may be an exception to this statement, but opinion appears to have shifted somewhat even there.

⁷⁸⁷ *Irish Times*, December 29, 1998.

⁷⁸⁸ According to Bernadette Hayes and Ian McAllister, “[t]he Omagh bombing was also an important catalyst in changing opinion within the Republican movement as, for the first time, Sinn Fein issued an

In Dundalk, a major Republican safe haven just across the Irish border and home to many leaders of RIRA, including the McKeivitts, the negative popular response was immense: half of the town's population of 30,000 took part in a protest rally at the courthouse square.⁷⁸⁹ Local talk radio callers advocated stronger measures to distance themselves from the RIRA leaders: "We should burn the McKeivitts out of their house, ostracize their children, make a point of getting up and leaving any restaurant they walk into."⁷⁹⁰ Indeed, the level of hostility towards the McKeivitts forced them to seek the help of a local priest and flee the area.⁷⁹¹

In the wake of this public outrage, both the British and Irish governments passed new anti-terrorism legislation, including forfeiture of land or property in the Republic where weapons or bomb-making equipment were found.⁷⁹² Indeed, in an ironic twist, the British felt compelled to pass stricter laws to keep in line with the new Irish sentiment against terrorism and to cement their newly improved relationship of cooperation.⁷⁹³ Although Sinn Fein expressed some concerns about the new draconian measures, these were fairly muted.

outright condemnation of the Real IRA, whose members carried out the Omagh bombing. As Gerry Adams put it: "Sinn Féin believe the violence we have seen must be for all of us now a thing of the past, over, done with and gone." Hayes and McAllister, "Who voted for peace? Public support for the 1998 Northern Ireland agreement," *Irish Political Studies*, 91.

⁷⁸⁹ Hoge, *New York Times*, September 14, 1996.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹¹ Boffey, *Sunday Telegraph*, August 23, 1996.

⁷⁹² Coogan, *The IRA*, 705.

⁷⁹³ O'Duffy, "British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast. Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999," *Nations and Nationalism*, 424. This appears at odds with an opinion piece in the *Irish Times* at the time, in which several Irish legislators expressed strong concerns about both the extreme powers being granted the gardai and the close relationship with the RUC. *Irish Times*, September 5, 1998.

Thus, the political costs of violence increased substantially over the course of the 1990s. The opposition to the proxy bombs was sufficient to prevent its repeated use after 1990, but appears to have had little effect on the cost of violence in general. Similarly, the Warrington and Shankill bombings produced the first serious mass peace movement since 1976, even if it rapidly declined as the peace process advanced. Despite the relatively short time of its prominence, Peace '93 provided a structure around which future opposition could coalesce. The 1994 ceasefire substantially changed the Nationalist tolerance for violent politics and Republicans suffered for dashing the expectations of peace. Finally, with the commitment of paramilitaries and nonviolent political actors on both sides of the sectarian divide to the Good Friday Agreement, Nationalist perceptions about the utility of violence drastically shifted from positive to negative. As a result, the Provisionals found themselves in the awkward position of reflecting and even enforcing this new-found Republican pacifism, which would make a future return to violence that much more politically damaging.

II. Opinion Polls

Opinion poll data gauging opposition to Republican violence within the constituent community are largely unavailable between 1968 and 1988. The data that are available after this later date are potentially biased and tangential (see discussion in Chapter 8). Despite these caveats, there is no better publicly available source for information about political opposition to the Republican paramilitaries. The Community Attitudes Surveys, which began in 1992 are especially useful for gauging the scope and intensity of opposition to Republican violence.

In the year before the Troubles began in earnest, a strong majority of Catholics did not support the use of Republican violence and the plurality appear to have actively opposed it. The Northern Ireland Loyalty Survey was a series of 1,291 interviews conducted between March and August 1968, “just before the civil rights demonstrations began.”⁷⁹⁴ Of the 537 Catholics in the study, 86.8 percent disagreed with the idea that any means, including violence, were acceptable for the reunification of Ireland. Of these respondents, just over half (50.2 percent) said that they “do not like the use of force,” another 1.6 percent said that such violence is “morally wrong” and 11.7 percent appeared to oppose reunification in general.⁷⁹⁵ Using a very inclusive definition of opposition, roughly 57.5 percent of all Catholic respondents appeared to oppose the production of political violence. These figures likely would have been radically lower just a few months later, after the Loyalist pogroms, but they provide an indication of the probable distribution of opposition in the absence of existential threat.

Given the turbulence and violence of the early 1970s, it is not overly surprising that data are generally lacking for this time period. The author was unable to acquire the raw data for the 1975 Irish Social Mobility Survey, but summary statistics are available elsewhere. It appears that 75 percent of Catholics did not agree that violence was a legitimate means for pursuing a political goal—but it is not clear how many actually

⁷⁹⁴ Rose, “Northern Ireland Loyalty Survey,” *Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)* 7237.

⁷⁹⁵ The anti-reunification figure is derived from a combination of respondents who were against any measure to reunify and who ‘want to stay as they are.’ The remainder of those opposing force either sought unity without violence or emphasized the instrumental failings of violence.

disagreed as opposed to no opinion or no answer.⁷⁹⁶ The 1978 Northern Ireland Attitude Survey, which captures the period after the 1975 ceasefire and the rise and fall of the Peace People, demonstrates considerable negative feelings towards the IRA within the Catholic community. Figure 9.1 demonstrates the depth of this negativity: fully 65.7 percent agreed to some degree that the IRA were “basically criminals and murderers,” 67.3 denied that the IRA had brought the Northern Irish problem closer to a solution and 53.6 questioned their patriotism and idealism.⁷⁹⁷ The fact that 23.4 percent strongly agreed that the IRA was a murderous organization and 18.8 percent strongly disagreed that it was a patriotic organization captures the depth of this feeling within the community.⁷⁹⁸ Similarly, 55.2 and 64.8 percent thought the British and Irish governments, respectively, should adopt a tougher line with the IRA. However, the poll did not include any questions directly related to active opposition.

⁷⁹⁶ Hayes and McAllister, “Sowing Dragon's Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland,” *Political Studies*, 913.

⁷⁹⁷ The figures for those who self-identified their primary nationality as Irish were nearly identical: 63.7 agreed that the IRA were criminals; 67.8 disagreed that the IRA had helped to resolve the Northern Irish problem; and 50.5 questioned their patriotism. Approximately 69.1 percent of Catholics identified themselves as Irish, as did 7.8 percent of Protestants.

⁷⁹⁸ A similar percentage also believed to some degree that the stories of the RUC beating Catholics were just propaganda: 10.5 slightly agreed; 7.2 moderately agreed; and 4.7 strongly agreed.

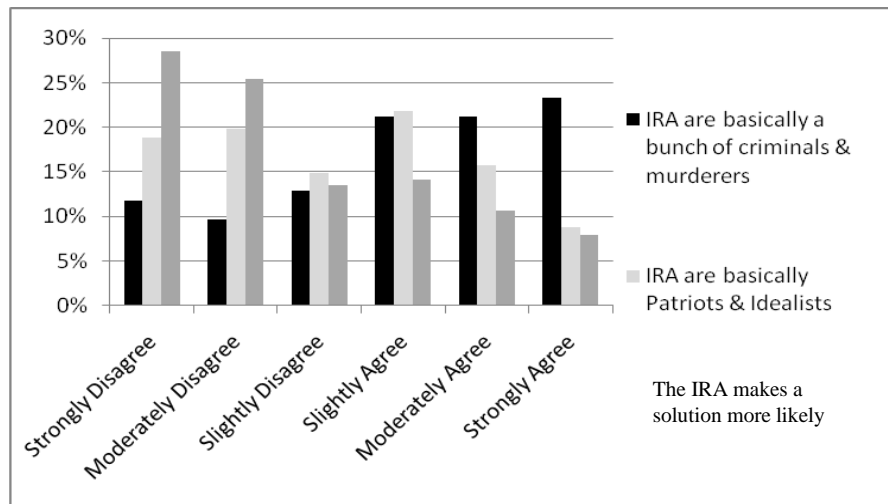


Figure 9.1 Catholic attitudes toward the IRA⁷⁹⁹

The author is unaware of any polling data related to support of and/or opposition to Republican violence available for the 1980s. This is especially unfortunate, because this was the period in which the Republican paramilitaries became saturated with informants. It would have been very useful to examine if there was a correlation between the increase in informants and changes in the measures of communal opposition.

By 1992, despite a significant minority of support, the Catholic community overwhelmingly expressed disapproval of paramilitary violence, both for the attainment of political goals and in retaliation to Loyalist paramilitaries' violent attacks.⁸⁰⁰ While it is impossible to say how much of this disapproval was translated into opposition, this measure provides at least some means of estimating the likely change over time. The total figures for Catholics who believed that violence was not justified ranged from 90

⁷⁹⁹ Moxon-Browne, Northern Ireland Attitude Survey, 1978 [computer file].

⁸⁰⁰ See table 8.2 "Catholic belief that paramilitary violence is justified to attain political goals and in retaliation for other paramilitaries' violence."

to 92 percent—the majority of whom strongly believed this.⁸⁰¹ Interestingly, respondents expressed even less support for retaliatory violence than for normal political violence. In 1993, the Depends and Neutral categories were both smaller for retaliatory violence; in both years, the Disagree Strongly category was larger. Nevertheless, it is impossible to tell from these surveys how many were just rhetorically opposed versus actively opposed to the violence.

Unlike the previous surveys that only captured general attitudes, the first two CAS surveys included two questions that directly relate to the level of opposition within the Catholic community. First, if the respondent had information about a terrorist incident, would he or she report it?⁸⁰² Second, to what extent does the respondent believe the identity of those who do report information about terrorist offenses should be protected? It is important to note that the questions make no distinction between terrorist activities by Republican and Loyalist groups, so respondents' willingness to report such activity could include those who would report on only one type or both.

⁸⁰¹ Strongly Disagree for regular and retaliatory violence was 71 and 73 percent in 1992/3, and 73 and 74 in 1993/4. Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, Central Survey Unit, “Community Attitudes Survey.”

⁸⁰² Respondents were given multiple options to whom they could report: army, police, a confidential tip-line, someone else, or it depends on the circumstances.

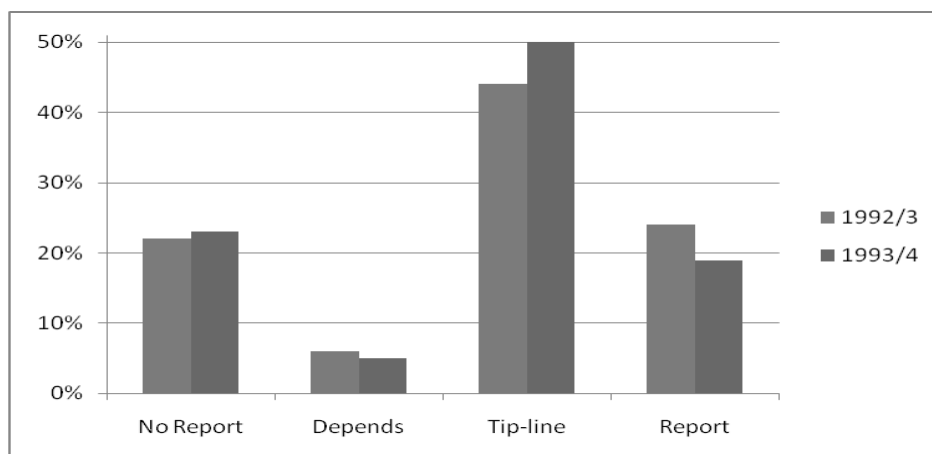


Figure 9.2 Catholic Terrorism Reporting Behavior⁸⁰³

As Figure 9.2 demonstrates, a significant minority, roughly one-quarter, would not report any activity or would only do so under certain conditions; yet over two-thirds claimed that they would report such activities to someone.⁸⁰⁴ The overwhelming plurality response in both years was the use of the confidential tip-line, which increased by six points between the two years. The number who would definitely not report incidents increased by one percentage point, but so too did the overall number who would definitely report them via any of the available media. In addition, the likelihood of reporting directly to the police dropped by one point, reporting to someone else dropped four points, and the Depends category shrunk by one point. These data indicate that confidential tip-lines were seen by Catholics as the best way to report terrorism.

Unsurprisingly given the strong support for the confidential tip-line, 92 percent of Catholics agreed that tipster identities should be protected in 1992/3, including 51

⁸⁰³ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁴ The report category may be somewhat inflated by the inclusion of those who would report it to someone other than the police or army (eight and four percent, respectively), which could theoretically include a local paramilitary organization. However, this changes the overall findings only marginally.

percent who strongly agreed.⁸⁰⁵ Only five percent disagreed, including two percent who disagreed strongly. In 1993/4, the overall number of those who agreed fell to 90 percent, but those who strongly agreed rose to 52 percent. Only four percent disagreed, of which only one percent disagreed strongly. Thus, while Catholic desire for tip-line confidentiality could have been driven by fear of Loyalist reprisals, the strong willingness to report generic terrorist activities most likely includes a fairly substantial portion of Catholics willing to report on the Republican paramilitaries. Moreover, without access to the number of tips that law enforcement received through various channels, there is no better measure of Catholic willingness to cooperate with the security services against the paramilitaries. It is therefore extremely unfortunate that these questions were removed from subsequent Community Attitude Surveys (CAS).

A second method of exploring opposition to Republican violence—less direct but for which has more data are available—is to look at Catholic attitudes towards sentencing for terrorist and non-terrorist crimes. Although they are the best longitudinal data available, the CAS measures are imperfect for our purposes because they likely capture Catholic feelings about both their coreligionist and Protestant terrorist offenders. Moreover, individual attitudes towards sentencing may be strategically derived. For example, staunch opponents of violence may adopt more lenient positions as a reward for those individuals or organizations that abandon armed struggle. Thus,

⁸⁰⁵ It is important to note that agreement or disagreement with the confidentiality of informants is not necessarily linked to support for terrorism. There are certainly civil liberty concerns about the use and abuse of anonymous tips by the law enforcement system. Nevertheless, the numbers for disagreement appear to track with other proxies for Republican support.

Table 9.1 Catholic support for length of life sentences for terrorist crimes and proportion of support compared to non-terrorist crimes⁸⁰⁶

	<u>1992/3</u> ⁸⁰⁷	1993/4	<u>1994/5</u> ⁸⁰⁸	1995/6	1996/7	1997/8	1999	2000	2001	2002
10–20 Years	19% N/A	20% (83%)	23% N/A	24% (86%)	20% (71%)	24% (100%)	22% (88%)	23% (85%)	21% (91%)	18% (95%)
21 Years- Life	59% N/A	57% (121%)	53% N/A	51% (106%)	55% (120%)	55% (110%)	57% (106%)	55% (115%)	54% (104%)	58% (109%)
Duration of Risk	3% N/A	3% (100%)	2% N/A	1% (100%)	3% (100%)	2% (67%)	2% (100%)	2% (100%)	2% (100%)	3% (75%)
Depends on Crime	17% N/A	14% (67%)	17% N/A	18% (86%)	15% (75%)	16% (80%)	15% (94%)	13% (76%)	19% (95%)	17% (77%)
Do Not Know	4% N/A	7% (140%)	5% N/A	4% (133%)	6% (150%)	4% (133%)	5% (167%)	6% (150%)	3% (100%)	4% (133%)

⁸⁰⁶ Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, Central Survey Unit, “Community Attitudes Survey.”

⁸⁰⁷ The comparative question of attitudes toward non-terrorist life sentence duration was not asked in the 1992/3 CAS. Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, Central Survey Unit, “Community Attitudes Survey.”

⁸⁰⁸ The 1994/5 CAS data on attitudes toward non-terrorist life sentence duration is unavailable on the CSU website.

while there is most likely a strong link, there is not necessarily a direct correlation between attitudes toward sentencing and violence in general. Table 9. captures statistics on Catholic support for criminals receiving a life sentence in jail, for both terrorist and non-terrorist crimes.

Although the number of respondents who either answered that they did not know or simply refused to answer was always fairly low (ranging between three and five percent for non-terrorist crimes),⁸⁰⁹ Table 9. shows Catholics were consistently more likely to fall into this unsure/refusal category for terrorist crimes—often by large margins. Moreover, Catholics were between two and five times more likely than Protestants to be in this category in any given year. This finding could result from individuals having conflicting attitudes towards Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries, greater unwillingness to express an opinion for fear of personal consequences, or simply less confidence about the most appropriate response to such crimes.

A sizable minority of Catholics supported very light sentences for terrorism-related crimes throughout this period, ranging from 18 to 24 percent. At the earliest time for which data are available, this support started at the low end of the scale (19), increased monotonically by 25 percent over three years (24), temporarily dropped 16.7 percent in 1996/7 (20) before spiking back up 20 percent in 1997/8 (24), then despite a slight 4.5 percent bounce in 2000, support dropped 25 percent over the next four years (18). So while support for light terrorist sentences varied, it stayed relatively stable over time.

⁸⁰⁹ Catholic responses in this category also tracked nearly perfectly with the overall statistics, with the sole exception of 1997/8, when Catholics were three percent and the overall was four percent.

Similarly, a slightly smaller minority, ranging between 13 and 19 percent, adopted a more relativistic stance on sentencing: their views changed depending on the nature of the crime. Other than a brief but sizeable dip in 1993/4, this group was consistently in the 18 to 19 percent range until 1996/7. Between 1996 and 1999, support for this type of sentencing hovered around 15 percent, then dropped two more percentage points. However, in 2001 support jumped 46.2 percent to return to the pre-1996 levels.

In addition, a very small minority favored incarceration until the individual was no longer at risk of re-offense. Given the potentially high degree of subjectivity in assessing risk of recidivism, it is difficult to interpret the level of support for this category. It could include ultra-Nationalists who believe individuals would not reoffend in a united Ireland, fiscal conservatives who want to release ailing and elderly prisoners to ease budget strains, and individuals who simply believe violent crime is a product of youth and individuals are no longer a threat past a certain age. With its consistently small size of one to three percent, it is probably safe to assume that category is fairly neutral.

Despite the significant relativist and lenient minorities, support for stiffer penalties was always a majority within the Catholic community during this period. This support started on the high end in 1992/3 (59), fell 13.6 percent by 1995/6 (51), then rose 7.8 percent in 1996/7, after which it largely stayed consistent other than two spikes in 1999 and 2002. The change in attitudes between 1993/4 and 1994/5 is especially striking and likely reflects the optimism of the times surrounding the first PIRA

ceasefire. The 1996/7 dip in support for short sentences and matching spike for long ones is likely a consequence of the ending of the ceasefire.

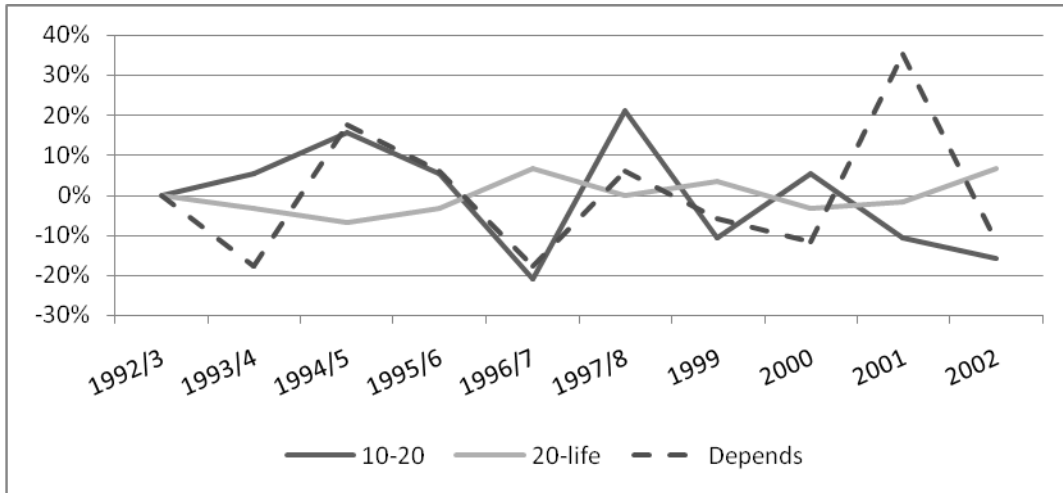


Figure 9.3 Change in Catholic support for length of life sentences for terrorist crimes [base=1992/3]⁸¹⁰

As Figure 9.3 demonstrates, the two more lenient minority Catholic positions on life sentencing changed largely in tandem with each other and, as one would expect, inversely to the majority harsher position. The two minority positions diverged in 1993/4 (pre-ceasefire) and the Depends position appears to have lagged a year behind the 10–20 year position starting in 1999 (post-Omagh). Despite this slight lag, by 2002 both minority positions had shrunk over 10 percent from 1992/3 levels. Given the much larger base size for the 21 years to life position, it shows considerably less variation over time. Nevertheless, both 1996/7 (post-ceasefire) and 1999 (post-Omagh) showed significant peaks. Thus, it appears that sentencing attitudes were directly tied to the prospects for peace: they softened with the first ceasefire, hardened with its collapse, softened again with the GFA, hardened again after the Omagh bombing, then softened

⁸¹⁰ Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, Central Survey Unit, “Community Attitudes Survey.”

again as PIRA and INLA became increasingly committed to the peace and finally started to harden again once the existing terrorist prisoners had already largely been dealt with. Thus, this final shift towards harsher attitudes for terrorist crimes demonstrated widespread anger at unpopular attempts by dissident Republican groups to derail the peace.

Despite the appearance of significant minority support for short sentences for terrorists, Catholics were generally less lenient towards terrorism-related crimes than non-terrorism-related ones. Interestingly, Catholics were generally much more lenient than Protestants for both terrorism and non-terrorism crimes, but this difference was even more pronounced for the terrorism crimes. Catholics were on average 2.1 times more likely to support a sentence of twenty years or less than Protestants and only 70.5 percent as likely to support a sentence of twenty years to life. However, this relationship between attitudes toward the two categories of crime fluctuated over the course of the decade. With the exception of 1997/8, the respondents were consistently much less likely to support shorter sentences. Prior to 1998, Catholics were 20 percent less likely to support shorter sentences, 24 percent less likely to suggest that the sentence should depend on the nature of the crime and 16 percent more likely to support long ones. After 1998, the attitudes towards the two categories of crimes started to converge as support shifted toward more stringent penalties for both. Nevertheless, Catholics remained five percent less supportive of short sentences, nine percent more supportive of long ones, and an impressive 23 percent less likely to be relativistic for terrorism-related crimes in 2002. Given these suggestive data, it appears that opposition to

terrorist violence within the Catholic community was considerable during this time period, especially in reaction to the resumption of the armed campaign in 1996. At the beginning of the period, nearly 60 percent of Catholic respondents supported longer prison terms, of which almost two-thirds supported sentences lasting the remainder of the individuals' lives (which was 32 percent higher than for non-terrorist offenses) and less than 20 percent supported short sentences. Over the next two years, the community adopted a much softer attitude—a 26.3 increase in support for light sentences and 13.6 decrease for harsh ones. The end of the first ceasefire caused a return to more limited support for light sentences, but only a half-way return to support for long sentences—it would take six more years to return to rough parity with the 1992/3 levels.

III. Informants

Informing on VPOs is one of the most damaging and costly forms of opposition with which these groups must contend, and it the number of informants generally trended upward over the course of the conflict. Prior to the end of the no-go areas, there was virtually no penetration by informants within the Catholic community. The increased penetration resulting from the Ulsterization policy was made exponentially more damaging by the use of supergrass in the early 1980s. By the early 1990s, between eight and nine out of every ten PIRA operations were being neutralized as a result of the heavy penetration of the organization by informants.⁸¹¹ The number of informants within a constituent community is not a perfect measure of dissatisfaction

⁸¹¹ Moran, "Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland," *Intelligence and National Security*, 17; Geraghty, *The Irish War: The Hidden Conflict Between the IRA and British Intelligence*; Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*.

because state forces may use coercion to “turn” otherwise fervent supporters of an organization. Nevertheless, the number of alleged informants that groups punish or kill can offer insight into their perceived level of penetration and can help to capture the more material costs of violence production. As such, the early 1990s witnessed a notable increase of informant retribution, indicating a cost that rivaled the devastation from the supergrasses of the early and mid-1980s.

Expert estimations of the number of informants seem to indicate that progressively more members of paramilitaries were becoming informants between 1976 and the 1990s, whether through disillusion or coercion. Urban estimates that between 1976 and 1987, roughly three percent of the frontline PIRA members were informants.⁸¹² The extent of the problem even early on is evident from the fact that the PIRA restructured in 1977 to staunch the devastating loss of operational security. Later—and somewhat controversial—estimates put the number greatly higher, at close to one in six in some areas.⁸¹³ In the decade following the GFA, several prominent Provisionals have been revealed to have been informants. For example, Freddie Scappaticci was one of the top PIRA internal security officers who is credited with protecting Adams's shift toward peace by eliminating several hard-line opponents (Scappaticci continues to deny these allegations).⁸¹⁴ Denis Donaldson, Sinn Fein's chief

⁸¹² Urban, *Big Boys' Rules: The Secret Struggle Against the IRA*, 244; Moran, “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 8.

⁸¹³ Ingram and Harkin, *Stakeknife: Britain's Secret Agents in Ireland*, 16; Moran, “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 8.

⁸¹⁴ Moran, “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 18.

administrator in Stormont publicly admitted his role and was killed in 2006 by the RIRA.

Despite these revelations, there are no public data on the number of informants at any given time; therefore, it is useful to look at the paramilitaries' own assessment of their infiltration through the number of executions. This is potentially a very poor indicator, because after a sufficient level of informant saturation has been established, intelligence services may be better able to protect informants' identity and to extract them before the paramilitaries can kill them.⁸¹⁵ Between 1969 and 2000, Republican groups killed at least 68 informants.⁸¹⁶ After a concentrated campaign between 1992 and 1977—with the exception of the 1975 ceasefire year—the number killed peaked in 1981, 1985 and 1992; the monthly number peaked at three in October 1972, September 1985 and July 1992. In the year between June 1973 and May 1974, seven people were killed at a rate of one approximately every other month. There were two spikes in which two people were killed in a month in January and July 1976. Between November 1980 and April 1982, there was a second extended, low-level campaign against informants in which nine people were killed. Three more alleged informants were killed in the six months between February and July 1984. Four more were executed in September and October 1985, followed by a second wave of four between

⁸¹⁵ Although there is no publicly available evidence that other informants revealed information to save him, a potential example of this was the security forces ability to recover an informant named Sandy Lynch while he was being interrogated in January 1990. During the raid, Danny Morrison, the PIRA press officer, was captured and subsequently convicted. His conviction was overturned in 2008. Morrison, "Dirty Fighting," *Danny Morrison: Writer*.

⁸¹⁶ Sutton, "An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

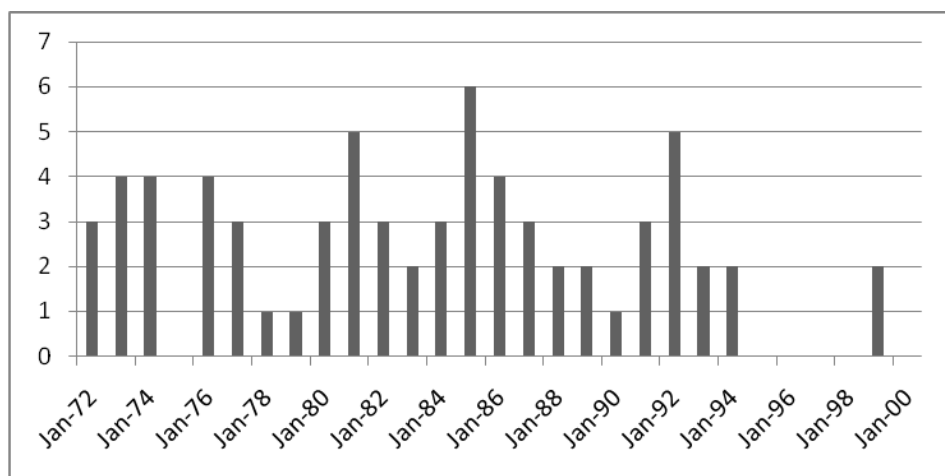


Figure 9.4 Informants killed by Republican paramilitaries, 1969–2000⁸¹⁷

May and September 1986. Four more were killed in the ten months between April 1987 and January 1988. After this, informant killing became intermittent—other than two people killed in June 1991—until July 1993. After an initial spike of three people killed in a month, four more were executed in the following year. Subsequently, only four more informant killings were claimed before the new millennium: one in April 1994, one in July 1994, one in January 1999, and the last one in July 1999. The post-1994 drop-off probably has less to do with penetration than with the reduced ability to detect it as a result of lower operational tempo.

Overall, the paramilitaries killed 33 civilians, 34 members or ex-members of a paramilitary organization, and one Workers' Party activist. The pattern of whom the Republicans executed for informing changed dramatically over the decades from primarily civilians to primarily paramilitaries. During the 1970s, 15 out of the 20 informants were civilians—75 percent. During the 1980, 14 (15 including the Workers'

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

Party activist) of the 33 informants were civilians—42.4 or 45.5 percent. In the 1990s, 4 of the 11 were civilians—36.4 percent.

The declining ratio of civilian to paramilitary informants being killed could indicate greater disillusionment with violence production within the core support group, greater sophistication of security force penetration, or greater restraint from the paramilitaries towards targeting civilians for fear of a backlash. The subsequent revelation of several high-profile Republican informants tends to lend greater credence towards the first two explanations, but it is extremely difficult to make any sweeping generalizations about why informants were willing to play such a dangerous game. Nevertheless, there appears to be at least some post facto justification of their role as a result of some degree of disillusionment with the morality and/or efficacy of violence.⁸¹⁸

IV. Own Goals

Producing political violence is an inherently dangerous activity, and accidental deaths (“own goals”) were not uncommon. Even in state or private arms manufacturing factories, accidents occasionally happen. Add to this mix the need to use improvised explosives and parts, to circumvent heavy security, and to maintain an element of surprise, and the risk of own goals becomes exponential.

⁸¹⁸ For example, one of the more famous informants, Martin McGartland, claims that his informing was motivated by being turned off by PIRA violence—especially punishment attacks—from a young age: “when the IRA punishment squads began their evil work I found myself in open conflict with such cruel treatment.” McGartland, *Dead Man Running: The True Story of a Secret Agent's Escape from the IRA and MI5*, 187.

Over the course of the Troubles, the Republican paramilitaries accidentally killed 115 people in premature explosions: 17 civilians, 1 INLA member, 2 OIRA members and 95 PIRA members. As Figure 9.5 demonstrates, there was a very steep learning curve in the early stage of the conflict: 83.3 percent of all own goals occurred between June 1970 and October 1976; 40 people died in 1972 alone. Figures remained relatively high through 1976, then fell precipitously until 1987. Five paramilitaries were killed between January 1979 and May 1981, as were two more in 1984–85. There was a significant uptick in own-goals between May 1987 and February 1989, which included the death of two civilians. During the 1990s, PIRA lost four of its members to premature explosions, including one during the ceasefire interregnum in 1996.

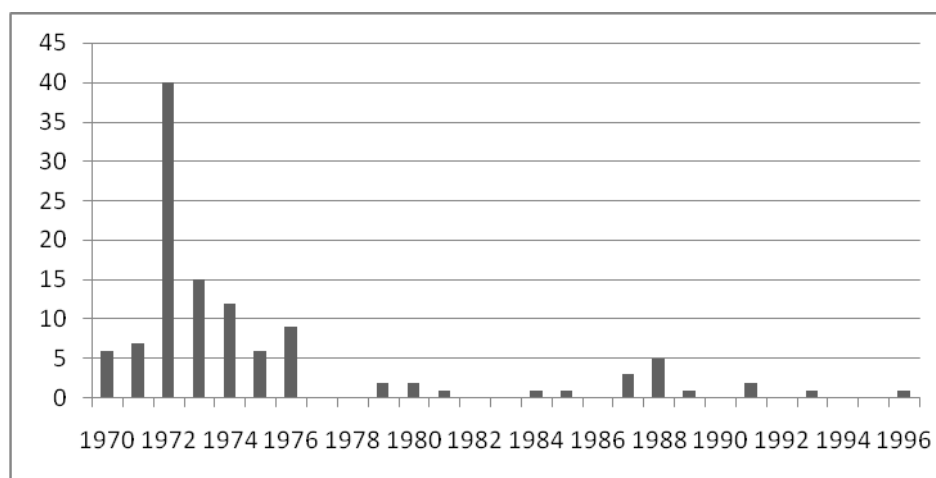


Figure 9.5 Catholics killed by premature explosions, 1969–2000⁸¹⁹

Clearly the Republican paramilitaries became more skilled in preventing accidental deaths and became more efficient in their production of bombing violence. The uptick

⁸¹⁹ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

in 1987–89 could have been a result of increased “jarking” of the weapons caches.⁸²⁰

Whatever the source, these deaths—especially of the two civilians—hurt the professional image the Republicans, especially the Provisionals had developed. In addition, the relative rarity of these later deaths may have increased their individual impact within the community.

V. Security Measures

Although this study is only tangentially interested in the direct material costs of violence production, it is important to consider them in terms of the amount of ongoing support the producers require to replace lost capital.

Despite the Provisionals' comfortable position in terms of weapons after the Libyan shipments in the mid-1980s, the security forces were clearly imposing considerable costs, i.e. “taxes,” on the actual production of violence. First, the alleged shoot-to-kill policy discussed in Chapter 6, regardless of how formal the policy was, resulted in costly losses of personnel. Second, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the British brought enormous technical resources to bear in Northern Ireland, resulting in higher levels of interdiction and more solid convictions.⁸²¹ These higher costs meant that the paramilitaries had to plan and commit additional resources for more attacks to attain the same level of violence. Moreover, incarcerated members had to be replaced by new recruits and trained—an additional cost.

⁸²⁰ Jarking is the disabling and/or bugging of weapons, which are then left in the caches to disrupt operations and improve the collection of intelligence and legal evidence.

⁸²¹ RUC inspector, personal communication, August 2007.

The intelligence services had long used computers to aid their information collection and analysis, but the 1990s saw dramatic improvements in these systems. The disparate systems had previously been unable to share information directly, which posed a significant problem considering the range of different producers and consumers of such intelligence. Starting in October 1994, these systems became increasingly integrated. To augment these capabilities, British intelligence invested heavily in computer upgrades during the two ceasefires to produce such a total level of surveillance that the subjects essentially lived in an “open, invisible, electronic prison.”⁸²² The existence of this computer-aided surveillance program came to light when secret documents were accidentally thrown away instead of shredded and subsequently published in *An Phoblacht*.⁸²³ In conjunction with the additional manpower and concentrated attention resulting from the collapse of the Soviet enemy, these technical improvements increased the general effectiveness of the security forces.

A. Financing

An interesting question is whether new British financial restrictions may have had a significant role in the Republican move away from political violence. Unfortunately, there is very little publicly available information on the effectiveness of the security forces' attempts to disrupt Republican paramilitaries' financial networks, but the data available seem to discredit this theory. According to one of the most authoritative sources on Republican financing, the Provisionals had an annual operating budget of roughly \$3.3 million by the 1990s, but the average of various estimates of

⁸²² Geraghty, *The Irish War: The Hidden Conflict Between the IRA and British Intelligence*, 158–59.

⁸²³ *Ibid.*, 161; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, January 29, 1998.

their annual income for the decade is roughly triple this amount.⁸²⁴ Nevertheless, from 1989 onward, the British had the legal authority to target these networks more actively, especially in Northern Ireland itself, with the passage of the UK Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act (PTA) in 1989.⁸²⁵ International cooperation through the UN started to solidify in late 1996, accelerated in 1998, and really took off after September 11, 2001, as Islamic terrorism became increasingly threatening to the United States and other Western nations.⁸²⁶

Following the 1989 PTA, the PIRA's finances shrunk somewhat, but not significantly. Since only two of the available estimates are from the same source, they should have employed a comparable estimation methodology: the Garda estimated that PIRA took in roughly \$4.6 million in 1988 and \$4.4 million in 1996.⁸²⁷ Although this represents a slight decline, it is a fairly negligible difference. It is still well above the estimated operating costs for the organization. All of the estimates from other sources for the intervening years are significantly higher than the Garda's. Thus, despite the increased British capabilities, pressure on terrorist financing was not a major factor in the push towards peace. However, greater international cooperation, especially from the Americans after the rise of Al Qaeda, may act as a significant damper on dissident Republican groups' capability to reopen the market.

⁸²⁴ Horgan and Taylor, "Playing the 'Green Card'—Financing the Provisional IRA: Part 1," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 10 (converted to USD using <http://currencies.apps.grandtrunk.net/>).

⁸²⁵ Levi, "Combating the Financing of Terrorism," *British Journal of Criminology*, 652.

⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁷ Horgan and Taylor, "Playing the 'Green Card'—Financing the Provisional IRA: Part 1," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 10 (converted to USD using <http://currencies.apps.grandtrunk.net/>).

B. Weapons Seizures

An important consideration for determining the costs of violence production is the effect that weapons seizures had upon the Republican organizations. If one simply looks at the raw figures for weapons seizures, it is clear that the security forces were able to impose high costs on the paramilitaries on both sides of the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland. These higher seizure numbers could indicate better informant penetration, but they also represent resources that must be replaced over time. Although the paramilitaries, especially the Provisionals, had ample means to import arms from a variety of sources after 1971, they remained very conservative about minimizing the risk of loss until the massive Libyan arms shipment of the mid-1980s (see Supplier section in Chapter 10). Therefore, the effective unit cost of each weapon seized dropped significantly after 1971 and again after 1985.

Seizures of firearms and explosives were fairly strongly correlated with each other over the course of the Troubles. However, the ratio of kilograms of explosives to number of firearms seized dramatically increased in 1983. The average ratio doubled from 7.0 kg/firearm in 1969–1982 to 13.9 in 1983–1998. Indeed, it only fell below the previous period's average ratio twice: in 1989 and 1995. This change in the ratio is widely attributed to the increased policy of “jarking” cached weapons, i.e. disabling and bugging the weapons to provide actionable intelligence or evidence for a criminal prosecution.⁸²⁸ This jarking policy was likely a contributing factor in the increased

⁸²⁸ Urban, *Big Boys' Rules: The Secret Struggle Against the IRA*, ch. 12; Moran, “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 7.

number of individuals detained on terrorism charges during the same period as discussed below.

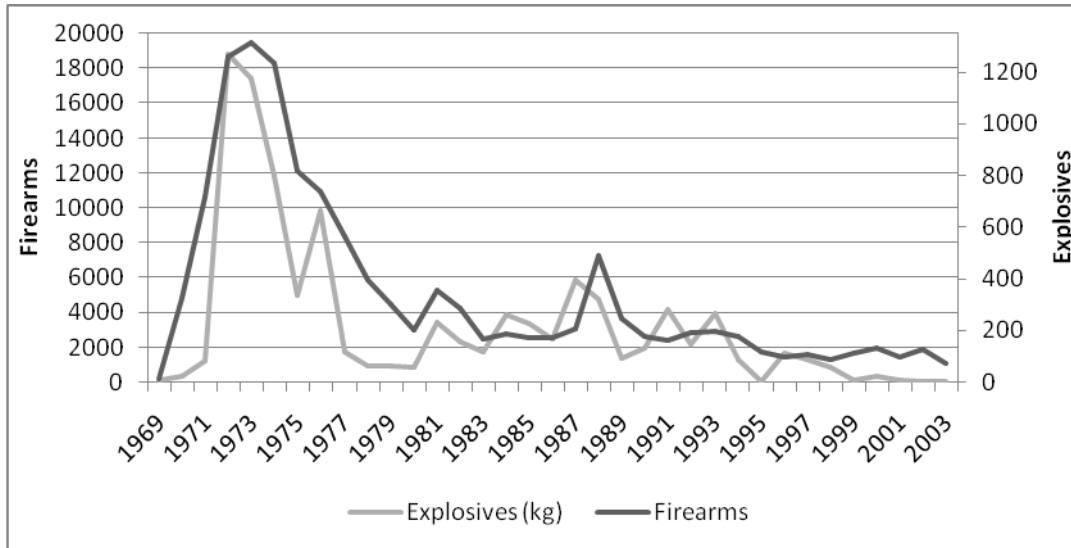


Figure 9.6 Number of firearms and kilograms of explosives seized⁸²⁹

Figure 9.6 demonstrates the sheer number of firearms and explosives seized over three decades. The number of kilograms of explosives seized may be a somewhat deceptive metric of the amount of violence these seizures prevented. Earlier bombs primarily used homemade explosives, which tended to be much bulkier and less powerful than professionally manufactured high explosives.⁸³⁰ Clearly, the security forces were able to impose considerable, but exponentially decreasing costs on the paramilitaries during the 1970s. By the early 1980s, weapons seizures were much reduced and stayed at a fairly stable, but slightly declining, rate for the remainder of the conflict. The noticeable increase in the late 1980s is primarily the result of the arms

⁸²⁹ McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, Table NI-SEC-07: “Firearms, and explosive finds in Northern Ireland (only), 1969–2003.”

⁸³⁰ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 177–98.

raids following the capture of the Eksund in 1987.⁸³¹ Specifically, in 1987–78, British authorities in Northern Ireland seized a combined 695 firearms and 10,613 kg of explosives, much of which was Semtex high explosive. Although the number of firearms seized fell from this peak, the amount of explosives seized remained well above 1,250 kg per year until 1995—and was more than triple that amount in both 1991 and 1993.

During the ceasefires, the security forces appear to have curtailed their weapons seizure activities considerably. There are two likely, non-exclusive explanations for this pattern. First, this may have been partly the result of a political decision to avoid undermining the peace negotiations. Second, a more direct explanation is that decreased violence production by the paramilitaries provided less opportunities to acquire actionable intelligence. Indeed, the drop-off was likely a combination of the two: fewer small-scale interdictions resulting from incident investigations and less aggressive pursuit of the more strategic weapons caches.

In addition to the pre-production costs that authorities could impose through the seizure of materiel, the authorities became increasingly adept at thwarting and mitigating the bombs that these groups did manage to deploy after 1985. Not only did the total number of bombs fall from 248 in 1984 to 215 in 1985 (a 13.3 percent reduction), but the success rate for bombs fell from 78 percent to 69 percent. Although

⁸³¹ Even more important than the material loss of the Libyan arms shipment on the Eksund was the loss of the element of surprise resulting from its discovery. While British intelligence was aware of the connection with the Gaddafi government, both it and the Irish government appear to have been caught by surprise at the volume and sophistication of the weapons. The British forces subsequently employed a variety of countermeasures that largely negated the effects these weapons would have had if they had been used in the planned massive assault. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*.

the number of bombs would not return to the low 1985 levels again until 1995, the success rate for these bombs would continue to slip, albeit never below one in three. For the next four years, bombs were increasingly neutralized before explosion, reaching a low point of 53 percent in 1989. In the early 1990s, the success rate steadily increased to a high of 71 percent in 1993, after which it fell precipitously to less than one-half for the remainder of the period.⁸³²

C. Human Costs

In parallel with the seizure and neutralization of weapons, the British authorities imposed significant costs on the human resources of the paramilitary organizations. While many Republicans were killed during the conflict, a far greater number spent a significant amount of time behind bars. Either way, the paramilitaries were deprived of their expertise and were forced to recruit and train replacements.

Between 1969 and 2000, a total of 239 Republicans were killed by external actors, including Loyalists, security forces and unknown perpetrators. In addition to these permanent labor costs, the authorities sequestered many of the more experienced operatives in a variety of detention facilities. Between August 1971 and February 1975, 2,060 Republicans were interned, i.e. imprisoned without trial.⁸³³ Most of the other publicly available security statistics for emergency power detentions and legal incarcerations generally do not differentiate between Loyalists and Republicans, but it is probable that a significant majority were Republicans. Between 1972 and 2003, 19,605

⁸³² Data on the number of explosions versus neutralizations is only available through 1997.

⁸³³ Spjut, "Internment and Detention without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971–1975: Ministerial Policy and Practice," *Modern Law Review*, 740.

people were charged with terrorist or other serious offenses.⁸³⁴ Between 1974 and 1999, 21,971 were detained, 8,363 of whom were detained for extended periods.⁸³⁵ While many individuals may appear in each of these statistics more than once—other than death, of course—and most likely appear in several of these statistical counts, such high figures imply that there was a severe burden placed on individuals suspected of involvement with the production of violence.

1. Republican Fatalities

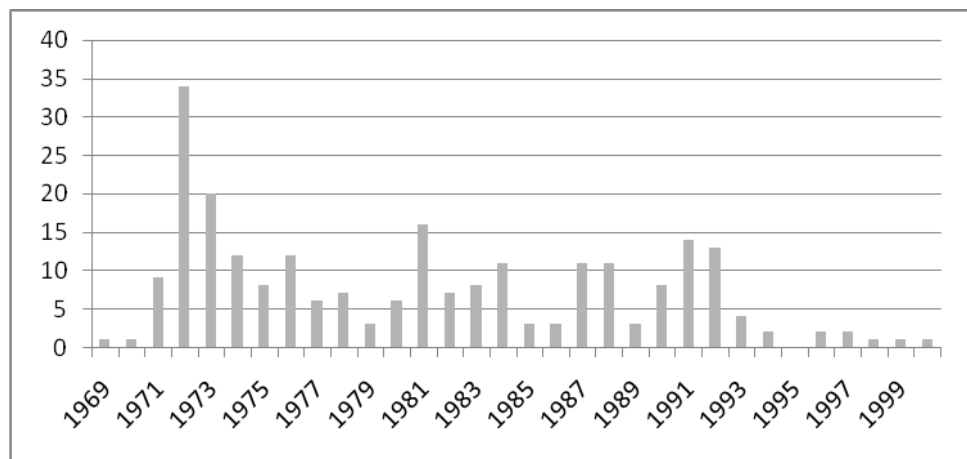


Figure 9.7 Republican paramilitaries killed by other actors⁸³⁶

Nearly half of the 239 Republicans killed by non-Republicans were killed during the 1970s, and fully 26.4 percent were killed 1971–73 alone. There were additional spikes in 1976, 1981, 1987–88 and 1992–93. With the process of Ulsterization, the number of fatalities went down, but they rebounded to pre-1976 levels

⁸³⁴ Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI): Number of people charged with terrorist and serious public order offences, 1972-2003 (By Calendar Year). McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁸³⁵ Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, *Northern Ireland Statistics on the Operation of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Acts 1974, 1976, 1984, and 1989*.

⁸³⁶ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

during Thatcher's tenure, when 37.7 percent of Republican fatalities occurred.

However, after the Anglo-Irish Agreement—with the exception of the two alleged shoot-to-kill operations involving the SAS in 1987 and 1988—Republican fatalities fell to 1979 levels between 1985 and 1989. In 1991–92, they reached the highest level since 1981 and surpassed the levels of the late 1970s. The only killings of active Republican paramilitaries after the 1994 ceasefire began occurred outside Northern Ireland: a PIRA member was shot during a police raid on his home in Hammersmith, London in 1996; an INLA member was shot during a botched armed robbery in Dublin in 1997; and a RIRA member was shot during a botched armed robbery near Ashford, County Wicklow in 1998.⁸³⁷

The later fatalities were effectively more costly to the paramilitary organizations because they were more difficult to replace. As the conflict endured, paramilitaries developed crucial skills for the more effective and efficient production of violence—both in terms of gaining technical proficiency and avoiding politically costly mistakes. The death of these veterans cost their organizations more than the death of raw recruits. Moreover, as demand for violence shrank over the years, it became more difficult to fill the resulting vacancies. For example, operatives lost in 1970–72 generally only had a few years of experience (most were teenagers as young as 13, although some were veterans of previous campaigns) and there were large numbers of recruits willing to fill their spots. In 1981, although recruitment was around the 1970–72 levels, killed operatives had over a decade of institutional and/or individual experience with violence

⁸³⁷ Ibid. Two other Republicans died during this time: an ex-member of the PIRA was shot by Loyalists in December 1997, and an INLA member was beaten and stabbed in a gang fight in Dublin.

production (only one was a teenager, the rest were in their 20s and 30s). The SAS operations in 1987–88 were especially damaging. They eliminated two cadres of highly capable veterans, whose replacements would require extensive training and on-the-job experience to reach the same ability to produce violence. In addition, the wellspring of recruitment was greatly reduced compared to 1970–72 and 1981, making their loss even more costly.

2. Internment and Detentions

Over the years, the British authorities relied on a variety of extraordinary, emergency power detention policies to disrupt and eliminate the Republicans' ability to produce violence. Before 1971, the security forces primarily focused on disruption by detaining suspects for a couple of days (and re-detaining them shortly after release).⁸³⁸ The imposition of internment in August 1971 which helped to fuel demand for violence also imposed significant costs on the paramilitaries by semi-permanently sidelining suspected Republicans, especially the leadership. Given the unpopularity of internment, the British shifted to a criminalization policy coupled with the use of detention orders for disruption purposes. Where Wilson and Callaghan had attempted to minimize the use of detention orders in order to bring about a sense of normality, Thatcher's government adopted a much more aggressive and interventionist policy, such as by increasing the use of disruption. This policy remained in place until the first ceasefire in 1994.

⁸³⁸ One example of this policy is Operation Linklater in the summer of 1971. Unfortunately, there are no data for this early time period.

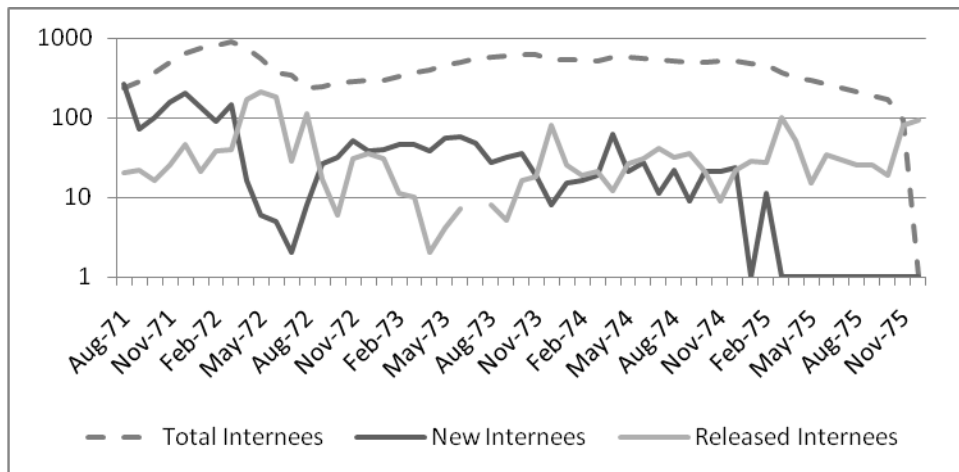


Figure 9.8 Logged number of Republican internees, August 1971–November 1975⁸³⁹

After the initial raids in August 1971 netted 260 individuals, there was a sustained 8-month period during which monthly averages of 144 people were added, but only 28.5 were released. Starting in April 1972, this pattern almost exactly reversed for the next five months: 7.4 internees were added and 142.2 were released per month. As a result, the number of internees fell from a high of 913 in March 1972 to a low of 248 in September 1972. New internments picked up again, especially between November 1972 and June 1973, bringing the total to more than 500 from June 1973 through December 1974. In 1975, the British essentially stopped interning new people, and finished processing the remaining internees by 1976.

With the passage of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act of 1974, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (SSNI) was empowered to detain terror suspects for up to three days beyond the 48 hours normally allowed. During the first several years in effect, these detentions were used fairly sparingly, but the SSNI

⁸³⁹ Spjut, “Internment and Detention without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971-1975: Ministerial Policy and Practice,” *Modern Law Review*, 740.

granted extensions in roughly 79.8 percent of the cases between 1976 and 1981.

Between when the Conservatives formed a government in 1979 and when the supergrass trials began in 1983, the number of detentions increased more than fivefold.

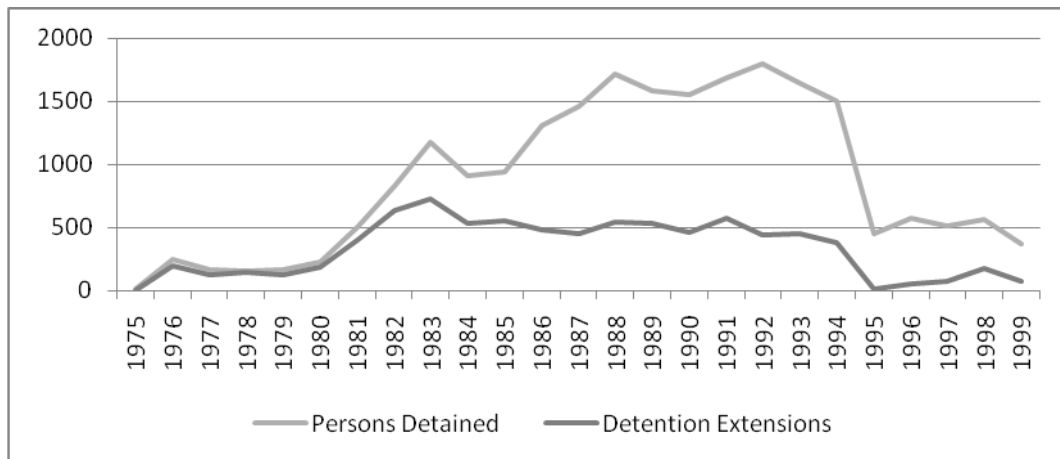


Figure 9.9 Persons Detained for Terrorism-Related Offenses⁸⁴⁰

There appears to have been a dramatic change in British policy in 1985—likely from a combination of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the collapse of the supergrass system. The trend toward increasing numbers of Republican fatalities reversed and the number of detentions dramatically increased. Between 1985 and 1992, the number of individuals detained on suspicion of terrorist offenses nearly doubled from 938 to 1,795. The early 1990s marked some of the highest levels of detention: more than 1,500 people were detained each year between 1990 and 1994. The number of detention extensions during this same period was somewhat lower than during the 1980s, but remained fairly high: between 383 and 571. After the first ceasefire, these number of detentions and detention extensions fell precipitously in 1995 to 443 and 12, respectively. Even if these

⁸⁴⁰ Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, *Northern Ireland Statistics on the Operation of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Acts 1974, 1976, 1984, and 1989*.

figures were evenly split between Loyalist and Republican suspects, the high rates of detention likely significantly increased the organizational and personal costs of carrying out violent attacks given the estimates of PIRA's active manpower of approximately 400 in 1996,⁸⁴¹ just 50 to 70 for the INLA in 1997,⁸⁴² roughly 100 for RIRA in 1998,⁸⁴³ and even smaller numbers for CIRA.

3. Prosecutions

Prosecutions and detentions are not necessarily related because an individual may be detained without being charged, or charged without first being formally detained.⁸⁴⁴ Nevertheless, it is useful to compare the two figures to roughly assess how well the policy of detention was targeted at the actual producers of violence. Between 1974 and 1981, considerably more people were charged than detained each year.⁸⁴⁵ This finding accords with the attempt to normalize the situation in Northern Ireland through the policy of criminalization. However, from 1982 to 1994, the average ratio of the number charged to the number detained dropped to 39 percent, and was consistently right around 25 percent between 1987 and 1994. The ratio jumped to almost exactly 1:1 in 1995 and 1996 before falling back down to an average of 81 percent for the

⁸⁴¹ Boyne, "Uncovering the Irish Republican Army," pts. 1 and 2, *Jane's Intelligence Review*.

⁸⁴² *Ibid.*

⁸⁴³ Boyne, "The Real IRA: After Omagh, Now What?" *Jane's Intelligence Review*.

⁸⁴⁴ Although the figures he quotes do not appear to match any officially available statistics—possibly because of aggregation to the individual rather than the total number of detentions and charges—of the 7,052 people detained between 1974 and 1991, 6,097 were released without charge and many of these individuals were repeatedly let go and re-detained. Raimond, "The Role of Indefinite Detention in Antiterrorism Legislation," *Kansas Law Review*, 533.

⁸⁴⁵ Prior to 1974, individuals were generally interned rather than detained. Although not directly comparable given the different counting techniques, the pattern of considerably more people being charged than detained appears consistent with the internment data. Spjut, "Internment and Detention without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971-1975: Ministerial Policy and Practice," *Modern Law Review*, 740.

remainder of the decade. Thus, it appears that the security policy was primarily focused on disruption of ongoing plots until the first ceasefire, after which it was focused on bringing individuals to justice for past crimes.

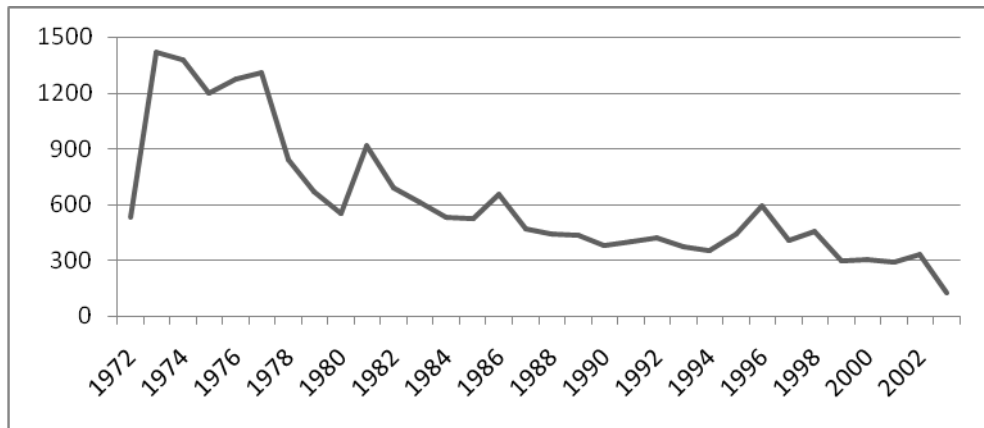


Figure 9.10 Persons charged with terrorist and other serious offences, 1972–2002⁸⁴⁶

The number of individuals charged with terrorist-related and other scheduled crimes gradually declined over the course of the conflict. The number hit an early plateau at an average of 1,315 people a year in 1971–77. Counter-intuitively, charges fell during the period of criminalization. Other than hiccups in 1981, 1986, and 1996, the downward trend was fairly smooth.

Around the time of the first ceasefire in 1994, prosecutions picked up considerably, rising to a peak of 595 in 1996. Prosecutions only fell back to pre-1995 levels in 1999. This peak in charges is likely directly related to the end of the first ceasefire. On the one hand, prosecutors may have opted to be less aggressive in filing charges during the first ceasefire for political considerations and had a backlog of cases

⁸⁴⁶ Police Service of Northern Ireland’s official Web site, “Police Service of Northern Ireland: Making Northern Ireland Safer,” <http://www.psni.police.uk>; McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

ready to go once conditions changed. On the other hand, they may have pursued cases hyper-aggressively as a punishment for ending the ceasefire.

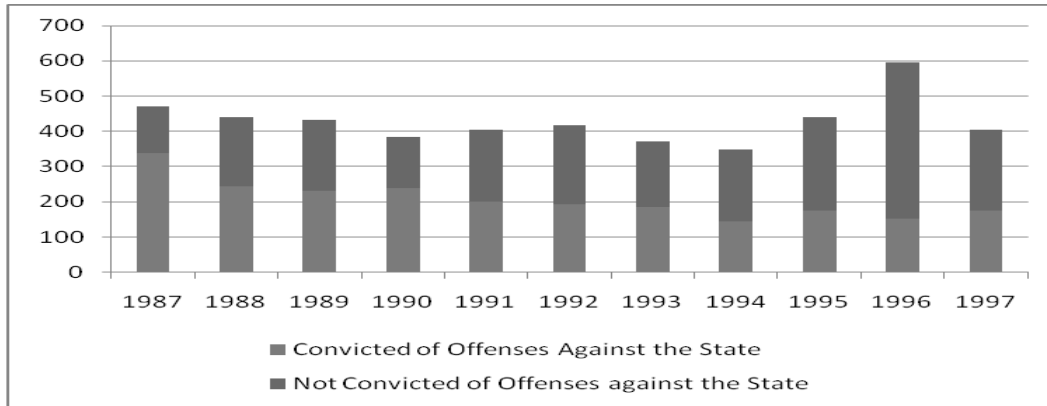


Figure 9.11 Persons Charged with and Convicted of Scheduled Crimes⁸⁴⁷

Of particular interest is how often charges resulted in convictions.

Unfortunately, the data currently available for the number of convictions achieved against those charged with terrorist offenses during this period are somewhat contradictory. For example, one of the most prominent analyses for these figures in 1992 states that 418 individuals had been charged with scheduled offenses, resulting in 223 guilty pleas and 57 verdicts of guilty.⁸⁴⁸ This is an overall conviction rate of almost exactly two-thirds, but for contested cases it was just 29.2 percent.⁸⁴⁹ In contrast, the official statistics for convictions of Offenses Against the State appears to be much lower: only 193 people were found guilty, producing a conviction rate of 46.2

⁸⁴⁷ McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁸⁴⁸ Rasnic, "Northern Ireland's Criminal Trials Without Jury: The Diplock Experiment," *Annual Survey of International and Comparative Law*, 246-47, citing Dickson, *The Legal System of Northern Ireland*, 3rd ed.

⁸⁴⁹ The conviction rate for these scheduled offenses was regularly reported in the 90-95 percent range during the 1970s, 1980s, and 2000s.

percent.⁸⁵⁰ This disparity likely results from some of the 418 people being convicted of other crimes, especially those who took plea bargains.

Nevertheless, it is useful to examine the conviction rate over this time period.⁸⁵¹ The total number of convictions of offenses against the state gradually declined by nearly half, as did the conviction rate. The number of convictions dropped from 337 in 1987, hit lows of 145 and 153 in 1994 and 1996, respectively. The rate dropped from an impressive 71.5 percent in 1987 to the mid-50s in 1988–89, briefly spiked up to 62.4 in 1990, before settling to an average of 45.3 percent in 1991–95. It briefly dipped to 25.7 percent in 1996, but returned to 43.2 percent the next year. Thus, these figures appear to indicate that the British legal system had become less effective at prosecuting terrorist crimes. However, since we do not have information on the other types of convictions that resulted from these charges, nor the severity of the penalties imposed, this must be a very tentative conclusion at best.⁸⁵²

To overcome the data discrepancies in the existing literature, the author filed a freedom of information request with the British Department of Justice. The statistics provided include the number of individuals who were actually prosecuted for scheduled offenses, convicted, and placed in immediate custody from 1978 to 1999 and the average length of the sentences from 1993 to 1999. For comparison purposes, in 1992,

⁸⁵⁰ United Kingdom, Office of National Statistics, Insalaco, ed., *Annual Abstract of Statistics*, 2002, table 11.21, 11.22.

⁸⁵¹ This conviction rate is derived from the number of convictions of Offenses Against the State divided by the number charged with terrorist or other serious offenses. Ibid., table 11.21; McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

⁸⁵² Indeed the anecdotal evidence tends to point in the opposite direction that the legal system became much more effective at imposing stiffer penalties during this period (private correspondence with former RUC inspector).

these data indicate that 5 of the 418 people charged were not prosecuted, and at 354, the number of convictions was far higher than previously reported. Figure 9.12 shows that the conviction rate for individuals prosecuted for scheduled offenses was consistently very high, on average it was 92.0 percent and ranged from a low of 85.7 in 1992 to 95.4 in 1987.

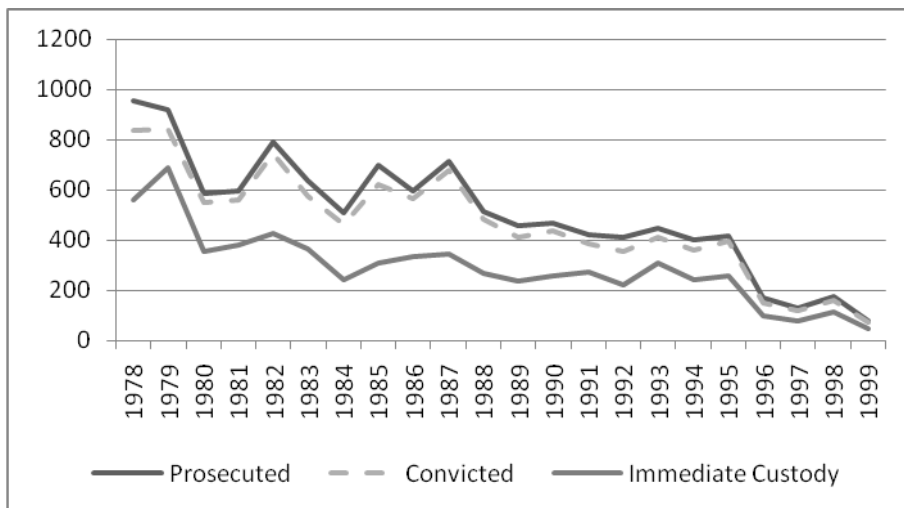


Figure 9.12 Number of individuals prosecuted, convicted and placed in immediate custody for scheduled offenses at the Crown Court 1978–1999⁸⁵³

4. Sentencing

In addition to how many people are processed through the legal system, it is important to analyze how long the individuals are removed from society and thus unable to produce violence. Unfortunately, the data on sentencing for terrorist-related offenses are extremely limited. While the number of early releases for prisoners sentenced to life is available from 1985, the average length of sentences for scheduled and terrorist offenses is only available from 1993 to 1999.

⁸⁵³ United Kingdom, Department of Justice, Freedom of Information Team, e-mail message and letter to author, October 18, 2010.

During the 1990s, there is no obvious pattern for the sentences handed down to those convicted of scheduled and terrorism-related crimes. Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) offense sentences appear to be inversely related to the ceasefires: increasing in 1995, decreasing in 1997 and rebounding after 1998. In contrast, sentence lengths for scheduled offenses appear to have declined fairly consistently across the time period, albeit with slight fluctuations along the way. However, the average of just over six years in prison for scheduled offenses and three-and-a-half years for PTA offenses indicates a sizeable personal burden on those convicted.

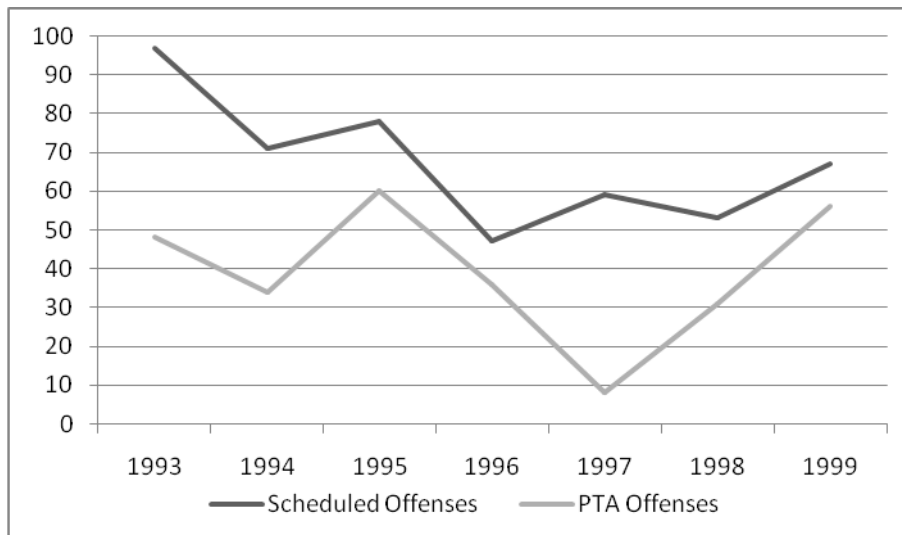


Figure 9.13 Average sentence length in months for scheduled offenses and offenses under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 1993–1999⁸⁵⁴

In addition to simply removing Republicans from the streets, the British attempted to entice individual prisoners away from the paramilitary organizations while they were in the prisons. In 1995, SSNI Mayhew successfully lobbied for a reversal of the harsher sentence remission scheme adopted in the Prevention of Terror (Temporary

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

Provision) Act 1989. The 1989 PTA had reduced remission from one-half to one-third, but the Northern Ireland (Remission of Sentences) Act 1995 restored the one-half remission and gave the SSNI discretion to revoke a prisoner's "license" at any point between 50 and 66 percent of the original sentence.⁸⁵⁵ Doubtless, these additional tools, in conjunction with the incentive schemes introduced in the late 1980s,⁸⁵⁶ made it even more difficult for the paramilitaries to maintain order within the prisons. These opportunities for personal benefit at the expense of the organization appear to have brought considerable pressure to bear on the individuals comprising the Republican violence labor force, and thus raised the costs of violence production for the paramilitary organizations.

As Figure 9.14 demonstrates, the British policy towards granting leniency to Republicans sentenced to life in prison changed dramatically by the early 1990s. The number of licenses granted to these most violent prisoners more than tripled between 1989 and 1990. Releases continued at a higher level until the first ceasefire at which point it dropped off precipitously. On the one hand, this decline during the ceasefire might be a result of the most amenable prisoners already having been released. On the other hand, linking further releases to political developments turned the prisoners into a

⁸⁵⁵ United Kingdom, House of Commons Library, Home Affairs Section, Baber, *Northern Ireland: The Release of Prisoners under the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Bill*, Research Paper 98/65, June 15, 1998.

⁸⁵⁶ As will be discussed in more detail below, because Northern Ireland had a surplus of prisoner accommodations, it allowed prisoners to choose where they would be housed—with early release being much more likely if individuals did not associate with other paramilitaries. McKittrick and Reeves, "Lifers' freed in attempt to turn tide of terror," *The Independent*, August 28, 1990.

potent bargaining chip for the British.⁸⁵⁷ This latter explanation seems more probable given the prisoner releases after the GFA.

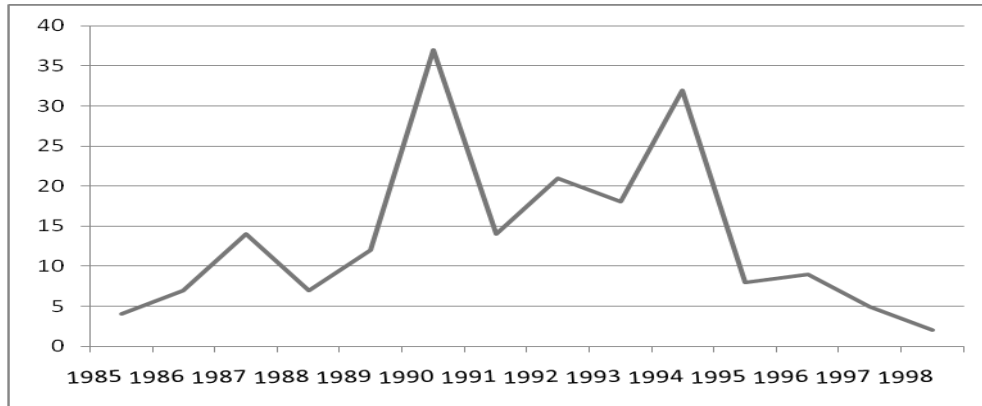


Figure 9.14 Licenses granted to Republican ‘Lifer’ prisoners⁸⁵⁸

Finally, as part of the Good Friday Agreement, paramilitary prisoners were released early after serving a mandatory two-year minimum sentence. In the first year (between September 1998 and August 1999), 287 prisoners were released. In the subsequent year, 143 were released, including 94 in July 2000. In the following two years, only 19 more were released—the last two releases occurred in April 2002.⁸⁵⁹ In sum, 453 prisoners were released under this program, of which 242 were Republicans.

Thus, the security forces imposed significant personnel costs for the continued production of violence. The detention and extended detention rates were at the highest levels of the Troubles just before the ceasefires. The rate of terrorist charges shot up during the period between the two ceasefires. Finally, prisoners were given strong

⁸⁵⁷ This entire policy was criticized by the Republicans: “All republican PoWs prisoners of war [*sic*] are hostages and their release is dependent upon the political advantage which can be wrung from them.” McKittrick & Reeves, “‘Lifers’ freed in attempt to turn tide of terror,” *The Independent*, August 28, 1990.

⁸⁵⁸ United Kingdom, House of Commons Library, Home Affairs Section, Baber, *Northern Ireland: The Release of Prisoners under the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Bill*, Research Paper 98/65.

⁸⁵⁹ *Northern Ireland Prison Service*, “Early Release Figures: Early Releases Under the NI (Sentences) Act by Month.”

incentives to publicly turn away from violence, simultaneously depriving the paramilitary organizations of some of their most experienced operatives and the legitimacy derived from the support of those who sacrificed the most in the name of the cause. As a result, according to a 1996 analysis of bombing operations on the British mainland, “the IRA is not as effective as in previous campaigns . . . [because] the elimination of more experienced bombers has left comparatively inexperienced people to carry out operations on the ground.”⁸⁶⁰

D. Marginal Costs

Thus far, we have only considered the absolute costs of production, rather than the marginal unit costs for each act of violence. The various quantitative metrics of the costs discussed above make it possible to create just such a measure by dividing them by the number of Republican attacks in the GTD,⁸⁶¹ which is an important requirement for any market analysis. Unfortunately, these are simply a first step, capturing only one small element of the production costs because opposition is not easily quantifiable. As discussed above, the actual costs of violence production from eliminating some of the violence production components, e.g. weapons or manpower, largely depend on the supply of those goods; they do not have a fixed value. For example, the impact of sidelining individual Republicans—either permanently through killing or just temporarily through incarceration or detention—is largely dependent on the depth and

⁸⁶⁰ Boyne, “Uncovering the Irish Republican Army,” pt. 1, *Jane's Intelligence Review*.

⁸⁶¹ Given the different methodologies used to code GTD1 (ending in 1997) and GTD2 (beginning in 1998), the latter is not included in the following analysis.

size of the recruitment pool to replace them. Similarly, the capture of weapons costs less when there is a glut than when there is a dearth.

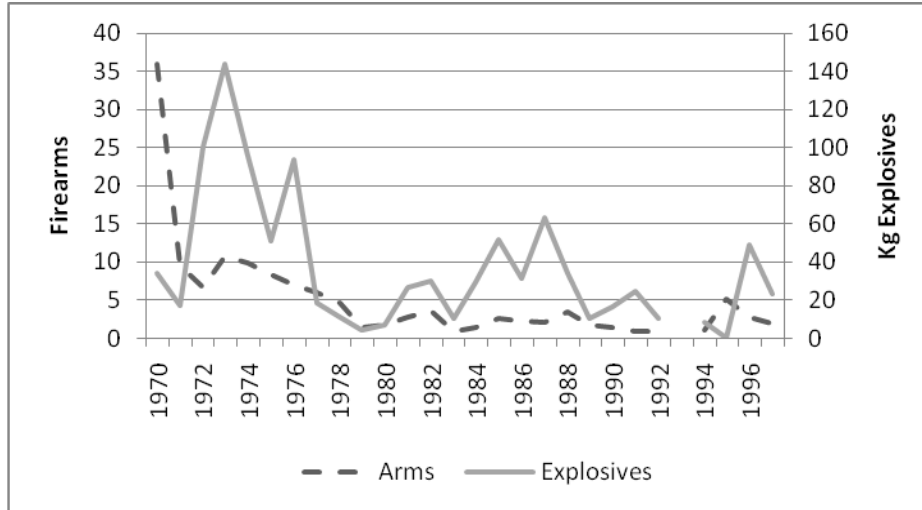


Figure 9.15 Weapons seized per attack⁸⁶²

The marginal costs of weapons seizure appear to have declined considerably from the early Troubles until the 1994 ceasefire. For firearms, this pattern of decline is fairly straightforward: a very rapid descent in 1970–71, then essentially flat for the remainder of the conflict. In contrast, the seizure of explosives appears to have three clusters of increased cost within an overall downward trend: 1972–76, 1985–87, and 1996–97. The first peak appears to follow the loss of the no-go areas in 1972. The second peak is likely tied to the increased availability of these explosives as Libyan shipments came through in the mid-1980s. The third is probably the result of increased opposition to the return to violence after the first ceasefire.

⁸⁶² National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*, University of Maryland, College Park, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>; McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

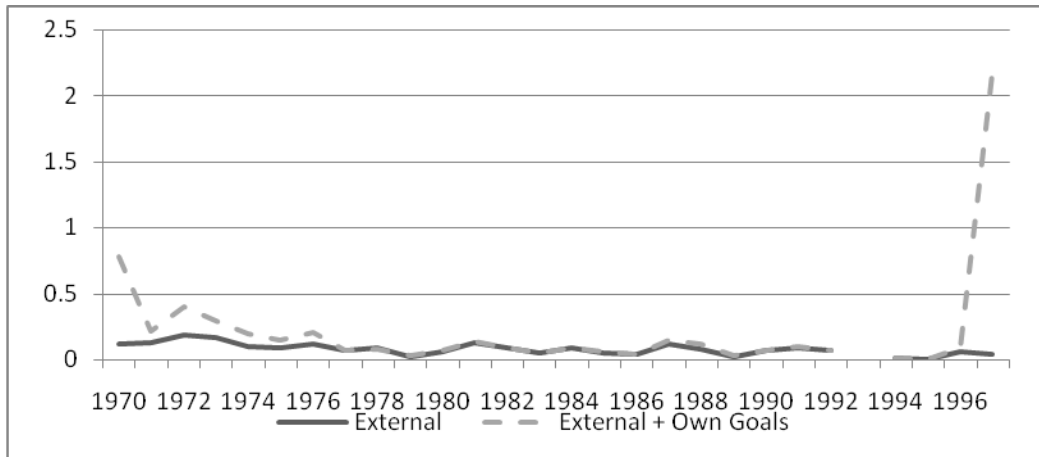


Figure 9.16 Fatal cost of violence production per attack⁸⁶³

For the vast majority of the conflict, paramilitaries tended to be killed at a fairly low rate given the number of attacks produced. Between 1970 and 1974, roughly one volunteer was killed by an external actor every seven attacks. Between 1975 and 1992, only one volunteer per fourteen attacks was killed. Between 1994 and 1997, this rate improved even more, to one volunteer per 36 attacks. However, if one includes own goals in this measure, the conflict is clearly bookended by high marginal costs. The larger number of accidental deaths in the beginning is understandable given the learning curve inherent in violence production. However, the accidental death increase in the 1990s likely the results from a combination of fewer attacks and a reduction in the organizations' professionalism after the ceasefires.

⁸⁶³ Sutton, "An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

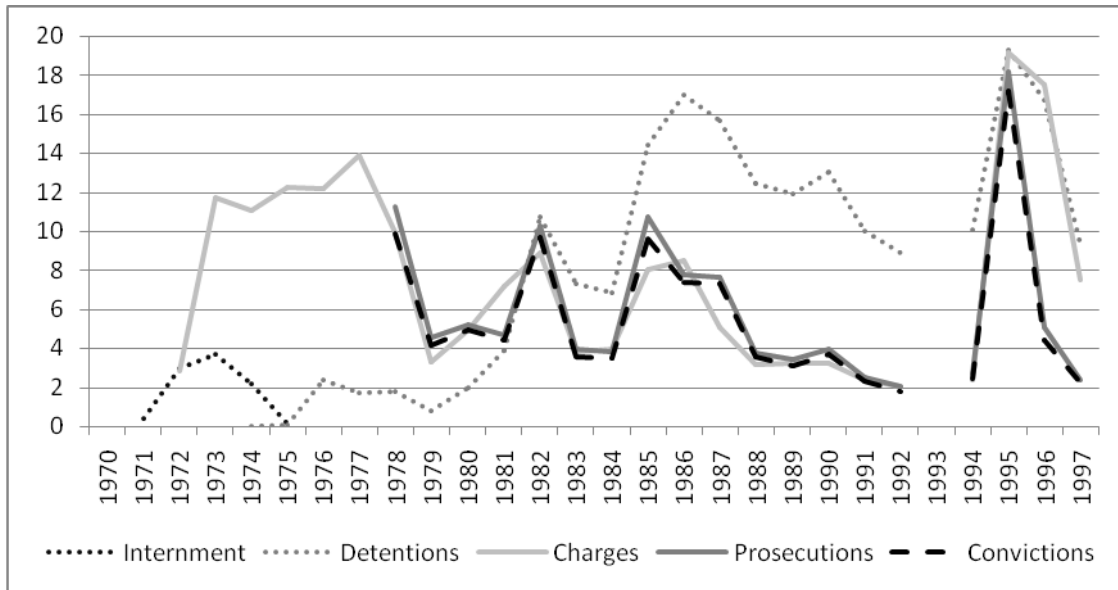


Figure 9.17 Nonfatal cost of violence production per attack⁸⁶⁴

The unit costs for nonfatal measures of violence are fairly closely correlated and as, one might expect, supra-legal and legal methods are inversely related. Indeed, given the extremely high conviction rate for these most serious crimes, the unit costs for prosecution and conviction are virtually indistinguishable from each other. The consensus of these measures is that violence production labor costs were certainly not fixed over time and appear to have been astronomically higher after 1994. Figure 9.18 combines the measures of internment, detention and criminal charges to provide a single measure of the nonlethal costs imposed by the authorities.

⁸⁶⁴ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*, University of Maryland, College Park, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>; United Kingdom, Department of Justice, Freedom of Information Team, e-mail message and letter to author, October 18, 2010; McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*; Spjut, "Internment and Detention without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971-1975: Ministerial Policy and Practice," *Modern Law Review*, 740.

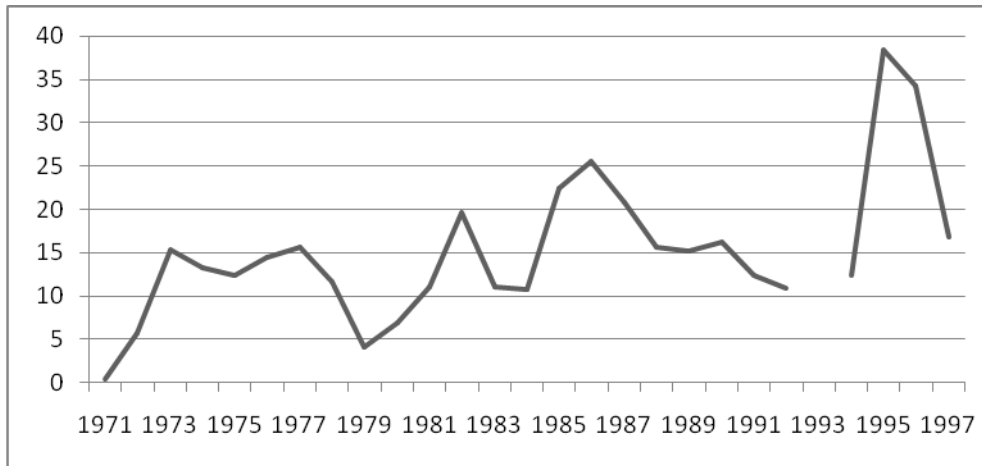


Figure 9.18 Combined nonfatal cost of violence production per attack⁸⁶⁵

VI. Combined Measure

Despite a historical reservoir of skepticism—or even hostility—toward the Republican ideology and its concomitant violence within the Nationalist community, there were virtually no political costs of violence production during the first few years of the Troubles. The greatest costs were involved in the conversion of resources into weapons and replacing those individuals who were killed or detained. After the British Army arrived in 1969, the existential threat from Loyalist attacks declined and many Catholics questioned the expansion of the conflict by targeting the Army. When the Army began to overreact to this Republican provocation, many of these voices fell silent. The one major exception to the passive acceptance was the killing of civilians. By 1972, this opposition to civilian casualties reached the point where the OIRA was no longer able to produce a profitable type of violence and exited the market.

This expression of opposition to violence grew dramatically in the wake of the Provisionals' first ceasefire in 1975. The Peace People movement earned the Nobel

⁸⁶⁵ The combined measure of marginal human costs includes internment, detention, and charged.

Peace Prize for its founders, but quickly disintegrated as individuals became disillusioned with the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Nevertheless, the paramilitaries recognized the need to restrain the wonton production of violence to avoid reawakening this latent opposition.

After 1976, the primary mechanism by which Nationalist opposition was expressed was through secret cooperation with law enforcement, i.e. informing. Such opposition is much harder to measure, but is in some ways more damaging to the violence productions. Instead of being able to identify loci of opposition—and thus avoid or eliminate the threat to operational security—this hidden opposition is potentially omnipresent. This ubiquitous threat may produce an unhealthy sense of paranoia, leading to excessively harsh responses against suspected informants, which can lead to yet further opposition. Naturally, the security forces worked diligently throughout this period to further entice those who might oppose the violence.

The impact of this informant penetration was especially acute during the early 1980s because the loosening of legal standards allowed a handful of individuals to devastate the paramilitary organizations. Beyond the immediate effect, these informants exposed the deeper structures of the organizations, allowing the security forces to better target them for further penetration in the future. This amounted to a permanent leftward shift in the supply curve. Although both the PIRA and INLA were severely damaged by these supergrassers, the INLA never fully recovered.

The costs for the production of Republican violence clearly increased over the course of the 1990s. With the end of the Cold War, the security forces made it much

more difficult for the paramilitaries to operate, imposing considerable financial and human costs. More importantly, it appears the Nationalist community had begun to grow weary of the conflict by the early 1990s and was becoming increasingly eager for peace. PIRA alienated portions of its base with the excessive violence of the proxy bomb campaign and high numbers of civilian casualties from some of its increasingly large bombs. As in 1976, the changes in expectations from the two ceasefires in the mid-1990s radically changed the willingness of Nationalists to oppose violence production. The reaction to the Omagh bomb in 1998 revealed just how far the cost curve had shifted to the left.

CHAPTER 10: Competition

Although the Provisional Republican Movement eventually emerged as the dominant voice within the Nationalist community as a whole, this was far from a foregone conclusion when it first emerged in the winter of 1969. Over the three decades of the Troubles, each of the competitive forces varied considerably. Intense rivalries escalated into feuds and eventually were overcome through the Provisionals' establishment of considerable monopoly power within the market for violence. The threat of new entrants was nearly ubiquitous, but especially potent once the Provisionals diversified into the market for nonviolent politics. Similarly, even before this addition to the Provisional's production portfolio, the moderate Nationalist party, the SDLP, posed a constant threat of negotiating partial solutions that would undermine demand for violence. Despite efforts by both governments to impose buyer power through broadcast bans, it appears to have had only marginal effects. Finally, suppliers, especially those within the Irish-American community, exerted varying degrees of influence on the Republican paramilitaries.

Despite the tempestuous battering of these competitive forces, the Provisionals were able—through tenacity, skill and a little luck—to consolidate a secure position of monopoly by 1998. The PIRA was the single largest and most efficient producer of Republican violence, taking advantage of both economies of scale and decades of institutional learning. It had demonstrated the willingness to use its considerable productive capacity against its rivals, simultaneously securing its monopoly and erecting barriers to entry for new paramilitaries. The Provisionals had vertically

integrated many of their suppliers and amassed a strategic reserve of materiel, increasing their ability to act independently. Finally, they negotiated a cooperative agreement with the SDLP—and through them, the Irish government—that ensured a sufficient level of political profit to more than offset potential losses in the violence market.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five sections addressing each of the forces of competition and a conclusion about the combined competitive effect over time.

I. Threat of Buyer Power

The Republican buyers deeply influenced the types and amounts of violence Republicans produced throughout the Troubles, but none of them exerted significant buyer power. Other than a brief, poorly executed attempt at censorship from 1988 to 1994, the competitive free press had little ability to distort the natural market forces.

The media can potentially act as a buyer, in the sense that it provides the platforms by which violence is transformed into terrorism—very similar to a retailer-wholesaler relationship with the violence producers.⁸⁶⁶ The difficulty in capturing and maintaining the media's attention has widely been discussed in the literature and is often used to explain the “bursty” nature of violent campaigns.⁸⁶⁷ The novelty of the violence quickly fades, requiring the producer to either innovate and escalate into new forms of

⁸⁶⁶ For more on the force multiplying effect of the media for political violence producers, *see* Sawyer, “Press Bias, Not the Problem You Think It Is,” masters thesis, Georgetown University, 2005.

⁸⁶⁷ Bohorquez, Gourley, Dixon, Spagat and Johnson, “Common Ecology Quantities Human Insurgency,” *Nature*.

violence or to reduce production to establish a new, lower baseline before restoring its prior production levels.

Beyond this bursty micro-effect, there does not appear to have been any significant buyer power over the Republican paramilitaries in Northern Ireland. There was extensive media coverage from a variety of sources in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the global community, including both the Soviet Union and the United States. Reporters were largely given unfettered access and were allowed to interact directly with both the paramilitaries and the security forces. Thus, the bursty effect is not a result of the organization of buyers to give them additional leverage, but simply the result of natural market forces.

The one major exception to the otherwise free press in Northern Ireland essentially proves the rule. Both Ireland and the United Kingdom imposed restrictions on the broadcasting of the voices of members of proscribed organizations in 1971 and 1984, respectively. However, very rapidly a cottage industry of impersonators developed to circumvent the bans: interviews and speeches would still be given, then transcribed, then acted out verbatim. This may have raised the production costs to the point that less sensational events were not aired—giving Republicans an incentive to produce slightly more violence than they otherwise might, but there is no clear evidence that the amount of coverage was significantly reduced—or that the tenor of this coverage changed appreciably—as a result of the ban. Likewise, when the bans were lifted in 1994, there was not notable difference in the coverage. The only thing the ban

managed to do was provide Republicans a piece of propaganda about the non-democratic nature of the rules—something they exploited regularly.

II. Threat of Supplier Power

Republican suppliers also heavily influenced the types and amounts of violence produced throughout the Troubles, but they did not possess significant independent supplier power. The Republicans' primary reliance on small arms and basic explosives made switching costs fairly negligible, preventing any single supplier from gaining undue influence over their production decisions—with the *possible* exception of Libya. Finally, the Irish-Americans had enormous potential power through their subsidization of the Republican cause, but the paramilitaries quickly reduced this power by integrating vertically once the Troubles began. If anything, supplier power became a tool for the extension of the Provisionals' monopoly over the production of violence.

Because public knowledge of the connections between paramilitaries and their arms dealers is generally only revealed when shipments are intercepted, one must be cautious about overstating the nature of these relationships. Yet despite the secretive nature of their interactions, the sheer number and variety of sources that were caught over the years indicate that the Republicans were able to draw upon a highly competitive supplier market. However, the clandestine nature of the trade and the need to know the right middle-men left paramilitary organizations vulnerable to their suppliers until they could build up sufficient contacts on their own—a considerable potential barrier to entry for new organizations.

Republican paramilitaries acquired arms from a number of sources throughout the Troubles and manufactured their own explosives and weapons.⁸⁶⁸ The power of the weapons suppliers was initially quite high, but very rapidly declined as the conflict matured. The primary sources were the Irish-American diaspora and Libya, but the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc nations provided additional assistance—both directly and through intermediaries. The Republicans—especially the smaller groups—forged links with the revolutionary left in Europe and the PLO, who provided regular, but relatively small, shipments of weapons. The diaspora and state sponsors often provided the weapons at little or no charge, whereas the other violent groups generally charged for their arms. As such, the paramilitaries that were able to win the support of the subsidizing suppliers had a distinct competitive advantage over their rivals.

When the Troubles first broke out, there was a desperate shortage of arms for the defense of the Catholic community in Northern Ireland. The IRA pulled some older weapons from where they had been dumped after the abortive border campaign ended in 1962. However, the moribund organization had allowed its procurement structures to wither and was unable to quickly acquire the number and quality of weapons they needed in 1969.⁸⁶⁹ Into this void stepped hawkish elements of the Fianna Fail government who were ideologically supportive of defending the Northern Catholics, but

⁸⁶⁸ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*. This self-manufacture is essentially a form of backwards vertical integration, wherein the paramilitaries—especially the Provisionals—became their own suppliers of more advanced weapons. Porter, *Competitive Strategy*, 300–23.

⁸⁶⁹ Equally importantly, the Southern leadership was deeply skeptical and resistant to adopting a more forceful role as the defender of the Northern Catholics. Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 369–71.

sought to win political concessions from the IRA.⁸⁷⁰ When the IRA leadership hesitated to make the internal changes the supplier demanded, the Provisionals formed to accommodate their wishes.⁸⁷¹

After the Irish conduit for weapons was revealed, the Republicans began exploring a number of different options. The bulk of the weapons acquired prior to 1985 were through the American networks, but both wings developed secondary supply channels as well. In the 1970s, the Provisionals received or attempted to receive shipments from the Basque separatist ETA, Czechoslovakia, Libya, the PLO, and unnamed European sources.⁸⁷² The Officials, and subsequently INLA, developed a relationship with the Soviet Union.⁸⁷³ The INLA primarily relied on the Fatah wing of the PLO for its weapons supply, although it also developed linkages with the leftist revolutionary groups in Western Europe.

Although the Officials initially continued to receive arms from American sympathizers, the Provisionals quickly moved to consolidate their control over this source of supply. The traditional vehicle for this Republican support, Clan na Gael, had grown moribund during the 1960s, but was still able to help the Officials rearm in

⁸⁷⁰ Coogan, *The IRA*, 369.

⁸⁷¹ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 4; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 266.

⁸⁷² Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 137–39, 152, 163, 167; Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 10, 137.

⁸⁷³ Brady, Tom, “Soviet Arms Smuggled to Official IRA, spy files reveal,” *Irish Independent*, September 16, 1999. <http://www.independent.ie/national-news/soviet-arms-smuggled-to-official-ira-spy-files-reveal-397070.html>; Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Worker's Party*, 188.

1970.⁸⁷⁴ However, the creation of Northern Aid (Noraid) in 1970 essentially amounted to vertical integration of the American suppliers and they largely fell under Provisional domination. Between 1971 and 1994, Noraid raised approximately \$200,000 a year for the Provisionals (and members supplied a comparable amount in weapons).⁸⁷⁵

Noraid primarily consisted of hardliners who strongly supported the use of force and they provided more arms than the Provisionals could actually use.⁸⁷⁶ These weapons included the famous Armalite, a civilian model of the M-16 assault rifle, as well as M-60 machine guns and other heavy equipment stolen from the US military.⁸⁷⁷ The Provisionals jealously guarded their American arms network and managed to keep solid control over it until the mid-1980s, when a significant minority within Noraid, including its founder, broke away to align with Republican Sinn Fein.⁸⁷⁸

The defectors were largely marginalized by the Provisionals and their American support base was largely converted to support the production of nonviolent politics through a new organization, Friends of Sinn Fein.⁸⁷⁹ With the assistance of John Hume, an internationally respected moderate Nationalist politician, the Provisionals were able to transform their brand name and build a much more profitable supply chain for their secondary product of nonviolent politics. Indeed, this new wellspring of American support became so profitable that the original production line was eventually phased

⁸⁷⁴ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 346; Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Worker's Party*, 49, 142, 150.

⁸⁷⁵ Wilson, "The Conflict between Noraid and the Friends of Irish Freedom," *The Irish Review*, 41.

⁸⁷⁶ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 438–39.

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 438–40; Coogan, *The IRA*, 436.

⁸⁷⁸ Wilson, "The Conflict between Noraid and the Friends of Irish Freedom," *The Irish Review*, 43.

⁸⁷⁹ Cochrane, "Irish-America, the End of the IRA's Armed Struggle and the Utility of 'Soft Power,'" *Journal of Peace Research*.

out. Through this converted supply chain, the Provisionals were able to win the support of the American government under President Bill Clinton. The American government was able to essentially subsidize the production of political goods by granting Gerry Adams an unprecedented degree of legitimacy and international recognition. This opened new revenue streams from the diaspora community for Sinn Fein, but it also helped to transform Adams' image from terrorist spokesperson to international statesman.⁸⁸⁰ Consequently, the newly-formed Friends of Sinn Fein raised over \$1 million in just six months in 1995.⁸⁸¹

When the United States granted Gerry Adams visas in 1994 and 1995, the Republican base viewed it as a major victory over the British. Dixon argues that the British government's loud public complaints, including John Major's refusal to take Clinton's calls for five days, were largely a show to placate the Unionists.⁸⁸² If it was an act, it was masterfully done because the Republican base interpreted it as a “crushing defeat” that provided “a glimpse of new vistas of support which might be made available to them if they changed course. It helped strengthen Adams' leadership of Sinn

⁸⁸⁰ Reynolds, “A Constitutional Pied Piper: The Northern Irish Good Friday Agreement,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 627; O'Duffy, “British and Irish Conflict Regulation from Sunningdale to Belfast, Part II: Playing for a draw 1985–1999,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 415; Rowan, “Going to the Edge,” *Behind the Lines: The Story of the IRA and Loyalist Ceasefires*, ch. 8, p. 11; Curran and Sebenius, “The Mediator as Coalition Builder: George Mitchell in Northern Ireland,” *International Negotiation*, 124.

⁸⁸¹ Dixon, “Performing the Northern Ireland Peace Process on the World Stage,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 77.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*, 76. A major implication of Dixon's thesis is that changes in the international structural conditions, especially the end of the Cold War, were inconsequential. In contrast, others, e.g. Cox and O'Grady, argue that Clinton was able to take greater foreign policy risks, i.e. alienate Major and strain the “special relationship,” for domestic political reason because of the unipolar moment in history.

Fein and by so doing helped him in his own negotiations with hardliners within the wider republican movement.”⁸⁸³

As a result of the changes they themselves had fostered, the backlash in America was substantial when the Provisionals subsequently ended their first ceasefire.⁸⁸⁴ Large peace demonstrations took place in New York after the ceasefire's collapse,⁸⁸⁵ and US Ambassador Jean Kennedy-Smith took part in a Dublin peace march.⁸⁸⁶ Worse yet, there was strong condemnation from prominent traditional supporters of the armed struggle in the US.⁸⁸⁷ Nevertheless, PIRA pressed on with its campaign for over a year until Tony Blair's victory changed the expected utility of negotiations. Thus, Irish-American public opinion was important to the Provisionals and their pressure helped to advance the Republican cause, but it could not dictate changes to the Provisionals' strategic policies.

In contrast, the massive Irish-American condemnation of the Omagh bombing was a critical factor in the dissident Republicans' decision to end their campaigns in 1998. Just as was seen four years before, the vast majority of Irish-Americans reacted swiftly and unambiguously to the Omagh bombing. Fr. Sean McManus, the president of the Irish National Caucus, an organization with long-standing Provisional links, said: “Irish-Americans totally condemn this monstrous act of savagery. If a few misguided Irish-Americans were ever tempted to support the group responsible for the Omagh

⁸⁸³ Cox, “Thinking ‘Globally’ About Peace in Northern Ireland,” *Politics*, 62.

⁸⁸⁴ See the Substitute section below for more information about American influence on the Northern Ireland peace process, i.e. subsidization of nonviolence.

⁸⁸⁵ *Belfast Telegraph*, February 20, 1996.

⁸⁸⁶ Dunne, *Irish Times*, February 24, 1996.

⁸⁸⁷ *Belfast Telegraph*, February 22, 1996.

bombing, then surely they must now reject such a group.”⁸⁸⁸ This kind of strong condemnation brought into question the future supply of weapons from Irish-American suppliers.

The other major supplier who exerted exceptional influence over the production of Republican violence was Libya. Colonel Muammar Gaddafi first expressed his political support for the Republican cause in June 1972, two months before the PIRA had its first meeting with him.⁸⁸⁹ Shortly thereafter, Libya began providing considerable amounts of weapons—including a 5-ton shipment that was seized aboard the *Claudia* in 1973.⁸⁹⁰ In addition, Libya gave the Provisionals roughly \$3.5 million before the openly warm relationship was very publicly terminated in May 1975.⁸⁹¹

After the Hunger Strikes began in 1981, one of the men arrested on the *Claudia*, Joe Cahill, reestablished the Provisionals' relationship with Libya, netting an additional \$1.5 million over the next few years.⁸⁹² The real coup for the Provisionals was the truly massive shipments of Libyan weapons begun in the mid-1980s. These shipments started in July 1985 aboard the *Kula*, and delivered approximately 150 tons of arms, including 5 tons of Semtex military-grade plastic explosives, heavy machine guns, rocket launchers, and even allegedly more advanced surface-to-air missiles (SAM-7s).⁸⁹³ The final shipment—and the largest at roughly 120 tons—was intercepted by French

⁸⁸⁸ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, August 20, 1998.

⁸⁸⁹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 9.

⁸⁹⁰ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 138, 163. Moloney suggests that three other shipments of comparable size made it through. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 10.

⁸⁹¹ This is the equivalent of \$10 million in 2005. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 10–11; Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 163.

⁸⁹² Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 12–13.

⁸⁹³ Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*, 139, 164.

authorities aboard the *Eksund* on November 1, 1987. Colonel Gaddafi apparently also offered the INLA arms shipments in the tons, but they were unable to process such large quantities and declined.⁸⁹⁴ Indeed, these shipments were so large and created a reserve so deep that it essentially destroyed any potential power for future suppliers.

Although this does not appear to have been a significant factor in the Provisionals' decision to declare the 1994 ceasefire, it is worth noting that Libya had decided to stop supplying them shortly beforehand. Given the size of the arsenal the Provisionals had already acquired, Libya's private agreement with the British in 1992 and public declaration in late July 1994—just prior to the first ceasefire—that “at no point in time in the future will we support the IRA militarily” probably had very little effect on the Provisionals' initial decision.⁸⁹⁵ However, it is possible—but unlikely given the range of other potential sources of arms—that the withdrawal of their prime supplier may have helped to secure the Provisionals' commitment to the peace by lessening the prospects of being able to maintain the conflict indefinitely even with their large reserves.

In sum, the competitive effect of supplier power was especially pronounced in the first year of the conflict, then quickly fell to negligible levels. For the majority of the conflict, instead of restricting the production of violence, the most influential suppliers helped to subsidize it. The Provisionals' effective backwards integration into the Irish-American supply chain both insulated it from the hardliners pushing for additional

⁸⁹⁴ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 250–51.

⁸⁹⁵ Boyne, “Uncovering the Irish Republican Army,” pt. 2, *Jane's Intelligence Review*; Kelsey, Tim and Peter Koenig, “Libya will not arm IRA again, Gaddafi aide says,” *The Independent*, July 20, 1994, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/libya-will-not-arm-ira-again-gaddafi-aide-says-1414984.html>.

production and helped to build support for its transition to producing nonviolent politics during the 1980s and 1990s.⁸⁹⁶ Thus, by manipulating the supplier market, the Provisionals were able to put additional pressure on their violent rivals.

III. Threat of Substitutes

The Republican paramilitaries faced two kinds of interrelated substitute threat. First, the paramilitaries derived considerable authority and legitimacy by providing alternative social control to their constituent community through punishment beatings and shootings. Second, both paramilitaries and nonviolent actors regularly attempted to change the political environment to lock in concessions from the British that would enhance their position of power within the Nationalist community. Where the latter was an existential threat that could not be directly controlled, communal policing was largely at the discretion of the paramilitaries and served as a valuable relief valve when normal violence became unprofitable.

A. Alternative Social Control

Communal policing can be a very effective way of shoring up a paramilitary's local base of support, but can require extensive resources and incur considerable political costs. Thus, violence directed inward toward the constituent community can have many of the same effects as violence directed outward toward the perceived enemy. Moreover, the strong similarity between the actual production process between political violence and social control—often produced by the same individuals using the same materiel—further reinforces the substitutability of the two political goods.

⁸⁹⁶ See Porter, *Competitive Strategy*, 210, 300–23.

Part of the Republicans campaign was to delegitimize the Northern Irish state apparatus, including its law enforcement. This left a vacuum that needed to be filled or else popular support for the armed struggle would be endangered. Unfortunately, non-state actors are often at a disadvantage for providing these sorts of goods. States' law enforcement systems provide numerous checks and balances, and sterilize the punishment process by removing the offender from society via the prison system. In contrast, illegal sub-state organizations have much more limited ability to provide such due process and running a jail is extremely impractical for most such groups. Worse yet, there simply are not many options available to non-state actors for sanctioning anti-social behaviors: warnings, shamings, exiles and violence.⁸⁹⁷ As a result, this vigilante justice can often be swift, brutal and misdirected—and often deliberately misused by the public to settle personal scores.⁸⁹⁸

The Republican response to local criminals gave the local communities a sense of empowerment but sorely limited the broader political appeal of the organization. As one of the foremost commentators on Northern Irish vigilantism notes, “[r]ough and ready vigilantism may be popular with many people at a local level, but it reflects poorly on a political party with serious national ambitions.”⁸⁹⁹ The uncensored brutality of these punishments within the local community was a source of opposition that fueled

⁸⁹⁷ Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*; Monaghan, “The Return of ‘Captain Moonlight,’” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*; Monaghan and McLaughlin, “Informal Justice in the City,” *Space and Polity*; Sarma, “Defensive Propaganda and IRA Political Control in Republican Communities,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*.

⁸⁹⁸ Collins and McGovern, *Killing Rage*, 229.

⁸⁹⁹ Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 81.

groups like Families Against Intimidation and Terror (FAIT) and the SDLP, increasing the production costs of all other products affiliated with the paramilitary's brand.

Provision of social control was a careful balancing act for Republicans.⁹⁰⁰ If they produced too little, the populace might turn back to the state and drive up the costs of violence production. If they produced too much, it both created opposition and raised questions about the organization's commitment to the larger conflict. As one PIRA volunteer noted, "[vigilantism] was bad for the public image. People were asking how we could go out and shoot a wee lad when we couldn't shoot the British."⁹⁰¹ Nevertheless, once the need became apparent in the first days of the no-go areas in 1969, Republicans of all stripes joined in the production of this particular kind of violence throughout the Troubles—and even through 2010.

As with the production of political violence, the IRA was ill-prepared to meet the Catholic community's demand for social control during the early Troubles. Instead, this function was carried out by the impromptu Citizen Defense Committees, of which the IRA was but one element. These non-Republican entities tended to adopt a fairly mild set of punishments, including lectures, parental involvement and imposition of community service.⁹⁰² In June 1970, the Derry Citizens Central Council (DCCC) formally took over a joint police function with the RUC for two weeks.⁹⁰³ The following summer, the "Free Derry Police," both wings of the IRA, and IRA auxiliaries

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid., 84.

⁹⁰¹ Ibid., 83.

⁹⁰² Monaghan, "The Return of 'Captain Moonlight,'" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 44.

⁹⁰³ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 213.

shared the responsibility.⁹⁰⁴ Similarly, in Belfast, the Republicans ceded considerable policing authority to the Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association.⁹⁰⁵ After the split, both wings took a more proactive role, especially in Belfast, but the Provisionals embraced the new role more fully. In late 1970, the PIRA launched a campaign against anti-social elements in the Ballymurphy area of Belfast.⁹⁰⁶ These attacks included the horrific practice of tarring and feathering, which badly burned and disfigured the victim.⁹⁰⁷

Although no data were collected on the frequency or severity of Republican punishment attacks before 1973, it appears that both grew considerably by 1972. As a result of this intra-communal violence, the local Republican newspaper in (London)Derry reported that an informal survey showed “it was coming to the stage that the people were becoming more frightened of the IRA than they were of the British Army and this was never meant to be the role of the IRA.”⁹⁰⁸ Thus, the Republicans may have been overproducing social control violence during this period—at least in (London)Derry.

From 1973 on, the RUC began collecting data on punishment shootings for both Republicans and Loyalists; in 1982, the RUC also began reporting punishment assaults (see Figure 10.1). The data show that despite the growing unease in London(Derry), Republican production shot up to 139 shootings in 1975. Many scholars have attributed

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid., 279.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid., 279; Monaghan, “The Return of ‘Captain Moonlight,’” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 44.

⁹⁰⁶ Monaghan, “The Return of ‘Captain Moonlight,’” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 44.

⁹⁰⁷ Taylor, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Féin*, 108–09.

⁹⁰⁸ “Round and About,” *Starry Plough* (Derry) 1, no. 4 (April 1972), 3.

this dramatic spike in punishments to the 1974–75 PIRA ceasefire.⁹⁰⁹ During the ceasefire, Sinn Fein set up incident centers to address community complaints which quickly earned the nickname “Provo Police Stations.”⁹¹⁰ Although the ceasefire proved damaging to the Provisionals’ ability to produce political violence against the British as many volunteers drifted away from the organization, the remainder was kept busy providing alternative social control violence. The Provisional justice system was revamped to provide safeguards and a modicum of due process protections, such as the right to mount a defense before being judged and sentenced.⁹¹¹

Sinn Fein embraced its role as the provider of justice within the community even as the Provisionals’ fortunes in the market for violence declined. The restructuring to the cell system in 1977 meant that the Provisionals had to find a place within the organization for those members who could not be put into Active Service Units (ASUs) because they were too well known to the security forces or otherwise posed a threat to operational security.⁹¹² Simply cutting them loose would create a glut in the labor market that would likely lead to new entrants and/or stronger rivals in the INLA and OIRA. Therefore, they were transferred into an auxiliary function that specialized in communal policing. As a result of new structure, an internal PIRA staff report in 1977

⁹⁰⁹ Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 86; Monaghan and McLaughlin, “Informal Justice in the City,” *Space and Polity*, 180. White argues that during the 1972 and 1975 ceasefires, the violence production did not change significantly, but was merely shifted to different targets within the community. White, “On Measuring Political Violence: Northern Ireland, 1969 to 1980,” *American Sociological Review*, 582.

⁹¹⁰ Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 71; Monaghan, “The Return of ‘Captain Moonlight,’” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 45.

⁹¹¹ Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 76; Monaghan, “The Return of ‘Captain Moonlight,’” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*.

⁹¹² Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 59.

found that “[vigilantism] gains the respect of the people which in turn leads to increased support for the [ASU] cell.”⁹¹³ Even through the difficulties the Provisionals faced over the next six years, by 1983, Sinn Fein was still operating over half of the incident centers—renamed “advice centers”—opened during the ceasefire. These centers each cost a whopping £30,000 a year.⁹¹⁴ It is therefore clear that social control had developed into one of the Provisionals’ core businesses.

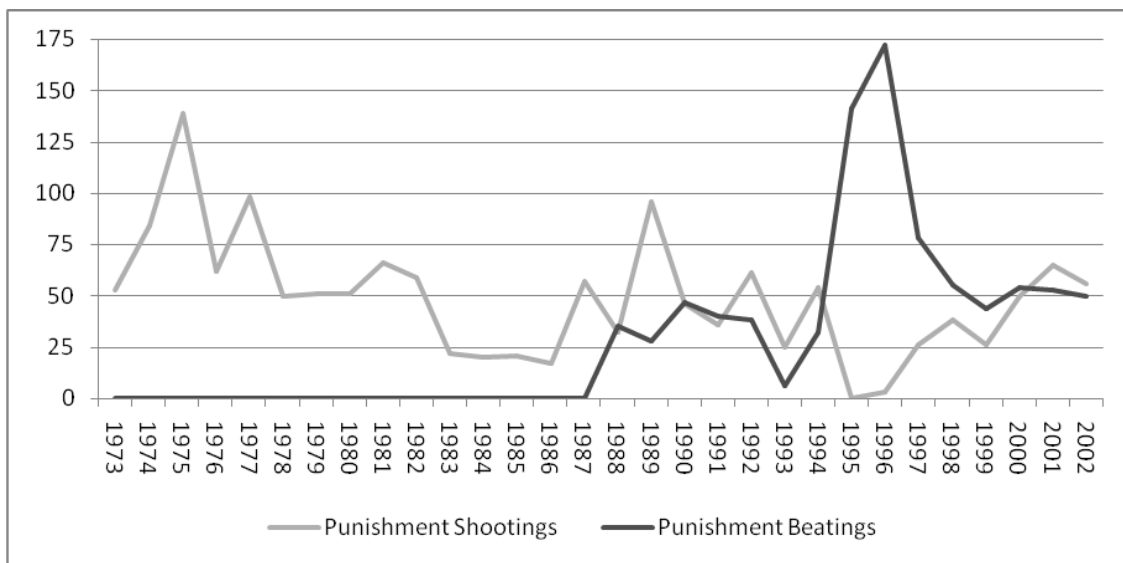


Figure 10.1 Republican punishment attacks 1973–2002⁹¹⁵

The new leadership under Gerry Adams was keen to do away with the “thuggish” image these punishment attacks gave the Provisional brand name. It therefore made a concerted effort to cease the provision of punishment attacks—but within just a few years had to resume them in the face of a clamoring Nationalist

⁹¹³ Ibid., 75.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid., 74.

⁹¹⁵ McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, Table NI-SEC-11: “Casualties as a result of paramilitary attacks in Northern Ireland, 1973–2010.”

community.⁹¹⁶ The INLA apparently saw this period of reduced social control production as an opportunity and reversed its previous policy eschewing such action. Perhaps in an attempt to restore a shred of INLA's brand appeal immediately after the Darkley massacre in 1983, it shot two "thugs" in Divis Flats.⁹¹⁷ Despite this effort to reduce the number of higher-profile punishment shootings, Republican punishment beating rose as public pressure mounted for the paramilitaries to deal with the rise in local crime in 1984.⁹¹⁸

After the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement undercut the Provisionals' position in the nonviolent political market, they essentially returned to the baseline of the late 1970s. In 1989, the number of Republican punishment shootings nearly equaled the number in 1977.⁹¹⁹

In 1991 and 1993, the Provisionals' political leadership again tried unsuccessfully to end the production of social control violence.⁹²⁰ Instead, the 1990s were marked by a dramatic rise in violence, especially after the 1994 ceasefire.⁹²¹ During the ceasefire itself, the number of shootings dropped virtually to zero to avoid accusations of ceasefire breaches—but the less lethal beatings skyrocketed in their stead. The combined annual total for punishment attacks between 1988 and 2002

⁹¹⁶ Silke, "Rebel's Dilemma," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 83.

⁹¹⁷ *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1983.

⁹¹⁸ Monaghan and McLaughlin, "Informal Justice in the City," *Space and Polity*, 180–81.

⁹¹⁹ McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, Table NI-SEC-11: "Casualties as a result of paramilitary attacks in Northern Ireland, 1973–2010."

⁹²⁰ Silke, "Rebel's Dilemma," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 83–84.

⁹²¹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 323.

peaked in 1995 and again in 1996 at 141 and 175, respectively—well up from the previous high of 124 in 1989.⁹²²

Although the lack of punishment beating data prior to 1988 makes it difficult to accurately compare the full time span, it appears that the times when the Republicans were most productive within the social control market were when the primary producer of external political violence was on ceasefire (in both 1975 and the mid-1990s). In contrast, it was at its lowest point when the Provisionals were beginning their entry into the market for nonviolent politics in the early 1980s. This appears to confirm that social control violence is highly substitutable for both political violence and nonviolent politics.

As an interesting aside, the rise of Sinn Fein within the Provisional movement was arguably the result of its role in the incident centers during the first ceasefire in 1975.⁹²³ Without the restructuring of the Provisional organization to embrace this source of political power, Sinn Fein would not have been positioned to take advantage of the next opportunity for product diversification with the entry into electoral politics after 1981. As it was, the incident/advice centers provided the framework on which a highly competent and influential constituency services wing could be built. The initial expansion into a new market made the subsequent expansion that much easier to manage.

⁹²² McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, Table NI-SEC-11: “Casualties as a result of paramilitary attacks in Northern Ireland, 1973–2010.”

⁹²³ Silke, “Rebel’s Dilemma,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 71.

B. Nonviolent Politics

Since the foundation of the Social Democrat and Labour Party (SDLP) in 1970, the producers of violence faced a constant substitute threat. The SDLP was far more willing to settle for a compromise solution that would undermine support for violence. Yet even this more moderate form of Nationalism was still a step too far for many Unionists, so the SDLP's threat only became acute when there existed a sufficient coalition within the Unionist-British elites to make the compromise viable. In addition to this constant threat, there were substitute threats from the violence producers through direct negotiations with the government and participation in normal politics.

The first of these major threats came from the Republican paramilitaries themselves. In 1972, both the OIRA and PIRA declared ceasefires to create the conditions for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Just prior to the announcement of Direct Rule on March 24, the PIRA declared a 72-hour ceasefire and met with Shadow PM Wilson and other top officials within the Opposition. On May 29, the OIRA declared an indefinite conditional ceasefire, from which it would never return. On June 20, top Provisionals met with British government representatives to arrange more formal negotiations within the context of a bilateral truce, which began two days later. During this more than two-week truce, the Provisional leadership flew to London for secret top-level talks that merely confirmed how far apart the two sides were.

After realizing that there would be no common ground with the Republicans, the British instead turned their attention to winning over the more moderate SDLP. In 1973, while the Provisionals were still reeling from the loss of the no-go areas the previous

summer, SSNI Whitelaw began the process of building a coalition of moderates to support a devolved power-sharing arrangement. By December 1973, he had secured the cooperation of a slim majority of Unionists under Brian Faulkner, the SDLP and the non-sectarian Alliance Party with the Sunningdale Agreement. However, the Provisionals expressed their opposition to the move toward compromise by machine-gunning the house of the SDLP's Austin Currie and adopting a more aggressive level of violence productions.⁹²⁴ The Republican intransigence confirmed the worst fears of many Loyalists and they also increased their violence to undermine the agreement. Thus, while Sunningdale was ultimately brought down in the wake of a province-wide Loyalist work stoppage, this Loyalist reaction was largely the result of PIRA actions designed to spoil the agreement.

Despite the Provisionals' unwillingness to allow the SDLP to capitalize on Sunningdale, the Nationalist community's response to it indicated that war weariness was setting in and a second attempt at negotiations was in order. The new SSNI, Merlyn Rees, encouraged this development by outlining terms for negotiation that included a withdrawal of British troops. On December 20, 1974, the PIRA declared a holiday ceasefire, which would be extended for much of the subsequent year. As part of the truce, Sinn Fein set up incident centers that became the locus of power within their neighborhoods, displacing the existing political structures in favor of the Provisionals.

The timing of the Provisional ceasefire was extremely poor for Seamus Costello, who had just led a split with the Officials to promote a middle path of producing both

⁹²⁴ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 402.

violent and nonviolent politics. The more-established Provisionals' ceasefire largely overshadowed the newly formed Republican Socialist Party/Irish National Liberation Army (IRSP/INLA), which was incapable of producing sufficient violence to undermine it. This left the IRSP/INLA in the awkward, brand-damaging situation of being rhetorically committed to producing violence without the means to back it up. As discussed in Section III below, the violent feud with the OIRA exacerbated this discrediting of the IRSP/INLA brand.

Despite the political boon from the incident centers, the peace negotiations stalled and the declining prospects of winning an advantageous settlement led to a shift in the costs of nonviolent production by July 1975. As the hardliners increasingly opposed the negotiations, peace negotiations became less profitable to the Provisionals; as they became less profitable, the Provisionals began to disengage, which made the prospects for peace even more remote. This cycle continued to the point where the only rational option left was a return to violence, even if Nationalist opinion had largely turned against it. On February 10, 1976, the Provisionals and British met for the last time and the PIRA declared it would never again initiate a ceasefire without the prior promise of withdrawal of British troops.

In the wake of this catastrophe, the Provisionals were skittish about engaging in nonviolent production. As a result, they kept their involvement in the H-Blocks campaign fairly minimal, despite the intense efforts of the IRSP to create a broad Nationalist front, until their hands were forced by the prisoners themselves. The prison protests from 1976 until 1981 failed to provoke the public outrage of the early 1970s,

despite repeated escalations. However, the Hunger Strikes and Margaret Thatcher's stubborn refusal to compromise in the face of these gruesome, slow deaths did just that. The election of Bobby Sands to parliament in Westminster revealed the potential source of power from electoral politics.

As a result, the Provisionals tentatively entered the electoral politics market, establishing a beachhead from which it expanded its market share considerably over the next three years. The Provisionals built up a political machine that was renowned for addressing constituent issues. In the 1973 local council elections, the previous election in which Sinn Fein had fielded candidates, it won a mere 0.1 percent—still enough to win two council seats in Dungannon; in the 1982 Northern Ireland Assembly election, this grew two orders of magnitude to 10.1 percent of the population, despite a pre-commitment that Sinn Fein candidates would not take their seats.⁹²⁵ The following year, Sinn Fein's share of the popular vote went up nearly a third to 13.4 percent, where it stayed until 1985.

Recognizing a need to contain the Provisionals' substantial growth within the Nationalist political market, the British began to embrace the SDLP's program for reform over the heads of the Unionists. This process resulted in the Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA) in November 1985, which sealed the Irish dimension into Northern politics and enhanced the SDLP's position as the producer of meaningful reform. The negative impact this had on Sinn Fein is evident from its electoral performance dropping to a low of 6.6 percent of the population just two months after the AIA was

⁹²⁵ Whyte, "Who Won What When and Where?" *Northern Ireland Elections*. ARK, Economic & Social Research Council.

signed.⁹²⁶ The Provisionals continued to suffer at the polls for the next few years, hanging around just 10.5 percent of the vote and losing Gerry Adams's parliamentary seat.

During this period of Provisional decline in the nonviolence market, the SLDP's John Hume and Gerry Adams—and eventually the Irish, British and American governments—came to an understanding that a lasting peace could not be established without the buy-in of the Provisionals. In 1988 and again in 1993, Hume and Adams held talks to explore the creation of a united Nationalist front. The SDLP doubtless believed that it would consolidate its position as the dominant Nationalist party and win leverage over the Unionists to enact its preferred policies by bringing peace to the region. Sinn Fein saw the partnership as an opportunity to regain some momentum in its entry into the nonviolent market and capture additional market share from the SDLP. In the short-term, the SDLP appeared to be correct with a 6–7 point bump in the polls just before the PIRA's ceasefire in 1994, but as the peace process continued, Sinn Fein eventually surpassed the SDLP as the largest Nationalist party in 2001.

Thus, the political market provided two different kinds of threat: controlled and uncontrolled. The direct negotiations with the British government during the ceasefires in the 1970s and 1990s were deliberate attempts to leverage a dominant position in one market into at least a secure position in the other. These controlled substitute threats are the core of the standard coercive bargaining model: produce violence, negotiate, then produce violence again if adequate terms are not agreed upon, repeat. In contrast, the

⁹²⁶ Ibid.

uncontrolled threats are especially dangerous because they can fundamentally alter the strategic calculus in unpredictable ways—but they rarely reward the non-participatory producers of violence. This explains why the Provisionals resisted Sunningdale in 1973–74, but embraced the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

III. Threat of New Entrants

Despite the considerable barriers to entry into the market for political violence, the existing producers faced regular challenges from new or potential entrants throughout the Troubles. In 1969, the IRA was unwilling and unable to ward off the threat of what became the Provisional IRA. Similarly, the OIRA was unable to prevent the emergence of the INLA in 1975, but was able to stunt its growth once it emerged. The INLA was plagued by potential splits until the IPLO finally emerged in late 1986 and nearly subsumed its position in the market. Similarly, as the PIRA signaled its transition from production in the violent market to the nonviolent one, it was challenged first by Republican Sinn Fein in 1986, then the Continuity IRA in 1994, and finally the Real IRA in 1997. These new entrants severely limited the Provisionals' ability to exert their monopoly power by producing less violence. The continued production of violence above the ideal monopoly point imposed additional production costs within the increasingly attractive nonviolent market.

After the abortive border campaign ended in 1962, the IRA was organizationally bankrupt and required massive restructuring: many of the volunteers left and the remainder were demoralized. The leadership under Goulding injected a more socialist bent to the traditional Republican ideology that helped to remobilize the IRA towards

the production of nonviolent politics. However, these changes were largely incompatible with its original *raison d'être* and by 1969 it was no longer able to produce violence efficiently.

With the coercive production capacity of the IRA essentially defunct, the initial phase of the Troubles was characterized by a high degree of entrepreneurialism within the Catholic community. There was considerable violence produced in the form of riots and angry mobs, but this essentially amounted to a highly inefficient cottage industry of political violence. This violence suffered from a lack of coordination and packaging within a coherent ideology and strategic vision, making it difficult for any single producer to develop the market and reap the political profits.

The (Official) IRA was the natural choice for taking such a market leader role by dint of history, but was slow to assume the mantle. A return to violence in the North would alienate many of the leftist supporters Goulding had managed to attract in the intervening years. More importantly, the IRA leadership still saw the target consumers for their political products as the working class—both Catholic and Protestant—and rushing to the defense of the Northern Catholics would destroy any chance of capturing a significant share of this larger market. Finally, the conservatism of the Northern Catholics, especially within the Church, made the new brand of leftist Republicanism distinctly less appealing.⁹²⁷

In contrast, the (soon-to-be) Provisionals saw the opportunity for enormous influence within Northern Ireland by becoming the dominant voice of the Catholic

⁹²⁷ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*.

community—which could be converted into coercive power to force the British out of Ireland. Their dominance by Northerners and lack of a more complicated Republican ideology made their brand more attractive to the besieged Catholics. It did not hurt that the government in the South apparently shared a similar view and was willing to subsidize the entry into this niche market when it started to open in 1969. Nevertheless, it took considerable time for them to develop the new organization and organize for violence production.

Unlike nearly all other new entrants during the Troubles, the Provisionals' arrival in the market did not immediately spark significant retaliatory measures from the market or niche leader. Both sides of the IRA split cooperated with each other “in a twilight world” until the formal split at the November 1969 Army Convention.⁹²⁸ Even for the first couple of years after the split in (London)Derry, it was almost as though the split had not even occurred and Republicans of all stripes were fairly cooperative.⁹²⁹

The next significant threat of a new entrant began in 1972 and culminated in the entry of the INLA in 1974. The OIRA declared an indefinite ceasefire in May 1972 and had been progressively decommissioning its human productive capital—although it jealously guarded the physical capital. Meanwhile, the Provisionals' lack of ideological sophistication stopped being an asset. As the prospect of victory faded into the future, the community began to demand a clearer vision of what the violence was supposed to achieve beyond vague rhetoric about a reunited Ireland. The Provisionals had destroyed the chance for the SDLP's power-sharing arrangement, but did not appear to offer much

⁹²⁸ Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA*, 370.

⁹²⁹ O Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*.

in its place. Thus, by the end of 1974, the OIRA had essentially removed itself from the market, despite maintaining a capacity to reenter at will, and the PIRA's brand appeal was beginning to slip.

Seamus Costello was the ideal political entrepreneur to take advantage of this market opportunity. Having served in the IRA for decades, he had considerable experience arming, organizing, and directing a secret army. He was a highly articulate and intelligent, capable of simultaneously commanding respect within the grassroots community and engaging in high-level discourse with the intellectuals. Given these qualities, the INLA/IRSP promised to produce significant amounts of violence in furtherance of a sophisticated political platform. This was a major challenge to both of the existing paramilitaries and in late 1974 the Irps were poised to make a significant entry into the market.

The Provisionals appeared to welcome the new entrant as a means of weakening its closest rival, the OIRA. Indeed, most of the support the Irps garnered in their initial beachhead came at the expense of the Officials. Although Costello had previously been quite critical of the Provisionals, the IRSP under his direction adopted a much more conciliatory approach.⁹³⁰ More importantly, the INLA helped to further legitimize the PIRA's own use of force by drawing on slightly different ideological foundations and reaching the same conclusions. Therefore, the INLA certainly posed a threat to the PIRA, but also represented an opportunity to expand the size of the market by bringing

⁹³⁰ For example, the IRSP released a statement in February 1975 praising the PIRA as a "genuinely anti-imperialist force" after an informal meeting with the Provisionals. Fionnuala O'Connor, *Irish Times*, February 6, 1975 (INLA1).

in new market segments.⁹³¹ In the end, this would mean more production of coercive force directed against the enemy, but the costs would be shared between them.

In contrast, the Officials reacted strongly to this new challenge and launched one of the bloodiest intra-communal campaigns of the conflict. Given Costello's access to the OIRA's suppliers and ideological proximity to the Officials' platform, the INLA threatened to quickly eclipse the established organization. While the Officials had vastly reduced their violence production after the 1972 ceasefire, the continued capacity to reenter the market in force was a critical component of their overall political strategy. The bloody campaign stanching the flow of support to the Irps, but ultimately damaged both organizations' reputations. However, the campaign was ultimately unsuccessful in the sense that the INLA endured as a prolific producer of violence and the OIRA never reemerged as anything more than a criminal fundraising and protection force for the Officials' political apparatus. Thus, while the market did not grow as the Provisionals might have hoped, the entry of the INLA ended up reinforcing the PIRA's dominant position within it.⁹³²

Although the INLA failed to expand its beachhead in the larger Nationalist market, its ability to endure within a smaller market segment set a dangerous precedent for the market by encouraging niche market strategies for new entrants. The forces of division were already beginning to appear within the INLA even before his death in

⁹³¹ See Porter, *Competitive Strategy*, 233–34.

⁹³² See the discussion of the 1975 “Pogrom” in the next section (Rivalry) for more details on the implications of the INLA entry on the rivalry between the Provisionals and Officials.

1977.⁹³³ Thereafter, the threat dramatically expanded. In January 1980, the INLA chief of staff was deposed by the army council, but he created an autonomous group within the INLA rather than accept the decision. This band never formally split as a result of a combination of external pressure from the Irish authorities and the ability of the new leadership to produce violence more efficiently.⁹³⁴ In January 1981, after the reintegration of many who had followed the chief of staff, the remainder was expelled.⁹³⁵ This grouping nevertheless continued to produce occasional acts of violence—mostly logistical procurement, i.e. criminal fundraising—in the name of the INLA.⁹³⁶ This diversion of revenues amounted to an increase in production costs.

Over the next five years, the threat of internal INLA splits grew enormously as the pressure from the security forces mounted on the more established producers.⁹³⁷ Gerard Steenson attempted a coup in 1981 that nearly split the organization, the Catholic Reaction Force (CRF) emerged—at least in name—as a more sectarian producer with the massacre at Darkley in 1983, and the Irish People’s Liberation Organization (IPLO) was created in 1986 to replace the badly tarnished INLA brand.

⁹³³ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 104–06.

⁹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 147–49.

⁹³⁵ *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, January 1981.

⁹³⁶ *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, March 1982.

⁹³⁷ The Provisionals may have also been under similar pressure. There were allegedly several attacks in 1978 that were initially claimed by the “Irish Freedom Fighters” (IFF) before being claimed by the PIRA. The Provisionals dismissed this as a piece of British psychological operations to sow the impression of dissent within the organization. *Republican News* 8, no. 41 (October 21, 1978): 2. However, the only mention of this grouping by external experts is a discussion of Provisional conspiracy theories that an undercover British Army unit was complicit in the killing of William Smyth on October 25, 1978, using the IFF name. Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 370. The Sutton Index lists Smyth’s killer as unspecified Loyalists. Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*. Gerry Adams also condemned a statement by the IFF threatening Protestant workers in September 1986. Maeve Armstrong, “Sectarian Retaliation Condemned,” *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, September 11, 1986, 5.

Beyond replacing an organization discredited by sectarianism, the IPLO sought to take advantage of perceptions within the market that the Provisionals were going to produce less violence as a result of their controversial decision to end abstentionism.⁹³⁸

Unfortunately for the IPLO, just as the Officials' early attacks had stunted the INLA's growth upon entering the market, the INLA's violence effectively limited the IPLO's potential for growth.

These new entrant threats did not seriously challenge the Provisionals' dominant position within the market, but they did threaten the overall profitability of the market by introducing inferior products. After the 1979 assassination of Airey Neave, the INLA and its successors generally attacked easy targets and did not take as many precautions to prevent civilian casualties. One prominent example of this insensitivity to the larger market costs is the no-warning bomb attack on the Droppin' Well disco in 1982 that killed eleven soldiers and six civilians.⁹³⁹ These lower quality products may have also encouraged a slippage in the PIRA's production standards, resulting in atrocities like Enniskillen in 1987 and Warrington and Shankill in 1993.

Entering into the 1990s, the threat of a new entrant was fairly low. The massive security apparatus in Northern Ireland continued to impose a significant barrier to entry that made the formation of Republican paramilitaries *de novo* extremely unlikely.

⁹³⁸ As Gerry Adams noted upon the IPLO's emergence, "Last Friday's presentation by a faction of the now-almost defunct INLA of armed personnel with weapons is obviously an attempt to cash in on this idea that republicans are going soft on the war. They are the ultra-left element. Previously, in order to justify their existence, they presented themselves as the left conscience and us as the conservatives; now they are the 'hard-liners' and we are the people who are 'going soft.' They should catch themselves on. Armed struggles aren't for posers. "Interview with Gerry Adams," *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 27, 1986.

⁹³⁹ Sutton, "An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland," *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

Instead, the threat was primarily from splinters within existing paramilitaries, and this too was not overly likely. Republican Sinn Fein had split in 1986, but gave no indication of any immediate intention to set up a rival violence-producing organization. Likewise, the INLA and IPLO had largely exhausted themselves and did not appear likely to splinter again—and certainly, the broader Republican community would not find any such splinter particularly appealing.

Although this will be discussed in greater detail in the following section, the 1992 purge of the IPLO by the PIRA effectively raised the barrier to entry and established new ground rules for the smaller producers of violence. The Provisionals clearly held the monopoly power within the market and demonstrated the willingness and ability to wage and win a war against those who would challenge them. As a result, the only potential new entrants were those that could produce violence for a more specialized niche market—and even these entrants risked being eliminated if they threatened the Provisionals' overall position of power.

The first major signs of a possible split within the Provisionals came in the fall of 1993. The October 1993 Shankill Bombing was both a consequence of and nearly a catalyst for exacerbating these tensions. For the most part, the Provisionals had managed to keep a lid on responding in-kind to the Loyalist onslaught in the early 1990s. However, this policy came with a significant cost. As Moloney notes, “the loyalist onslaught directly challenged the IRA’s *raison d’être*, and the pressures on the organization in Belfast to respond were enormous...and any failure to hit back...could

even precipitate a split in the organization.”⁹⁴⁰ Thus, the PIRA leadership approved Shankill despite the serious operational shortcomings of the plan in an attempt to appear responsive to the community’s desires. This need to unify the group also explains Gerry Adams’ controversial decision to carry the coffin of Thomas Begley, the bomber killed by the premature explosion despite its larger political ramifications.⁹⁴¹

Although PIRA mostly succeeded in maintaining discipline, they experienced a slight breakdown the following December. A group calling itself the Catholic Reaction Force (CRF), a cover name that had not been used since the 1983 Darkley massacre, reemerged in December 1993. Although INLA utilized the earlier CRF moniker, during the 1990s it appears to have been used by members of both INLA and PIRA.⁹⁴² It is important to note that no fatalities or major attacks were attributed to CRF during the 1990s, so even if discipline was breaking down, it had negligible results in terms of violence production.

During the tumultuous period after the Downing Street Declaration (DSD), a considerable risk of a split existed within the movement. As one senior Belfast Republican said shortly after the DSD, “What we’re talking about here is that if we accept this we accept that everything we stood for in the last 25 years is for nothing.”⁹⁴³ This is the primary reason the Provisionals chose a neither-yes-nor-no policy and sought

⁹⁴⁰ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 414.

⁹⁴¹ Silke, “Beyond Horror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 52.

⁹⁴² According to Silke, “the CRF was composed primarily of disaffected IRA men frustrated by the IRA’s reluctance to respond to the loyalist murders of Catholics.” *Ibid.*, 53. There is virtually no documentation available to corroborate Silke’s claim that CRF was active during the early 1990s other than its declaration of a unilateral and permanent ceasefire in October 1994. Moreover, a shooting in Fermanagh in January 1998 was linked to both the CRF and INLA. *Irish Times*, January 3, 1998.

⁹⁴³ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 413.

clarification on the DSD. The fear of this is apparent in the Provisional newspaper, which retold the by-now old story of the 1969/70 split as a none-too-subtle reminder of the consequences of factionalization.⁹⁴⁴ Two weeks later, they ran a lengthy story repudiating a number of stories about apparent splits within the Republican movement in the British press. In a case of “the lady doth protest too much,” the authors wrote

Let us be crystal clear. There is no split in republican ranks. There is no potential for any such split. And there will be no split. This point has already been made more than once by Sinn Fein spokespersons. The idea of a split has not once been raised in republican circles as Sinn Fein examines the Joint Declaration issued by the London and Dublin government, and as they continue their efforts to push forward the peace process. Republicans find such suggestions laughable. Following 24 years of the most intense struggle, republicans know who their opponents are. They are not so naïve as to be influenced one iota by amateur psychological operations by enemies of their struggle. Let no one else be fooled either.⁹⁴⁵

Apparently these denials failed to prevent the story from gaining traction, as the following week’s edition issued further denials on multiple pages, including the front page.

This interpretation of these denials is bolstered by the assessments of the security services. Following the Easter 1994 three-day ceasefire, sources reported “massive complaint at the grassroots level” over the lack of consultation.⁹⁴⁶ As the process continued, intelligence revealed three categories of Republican opinion: the leadership that believed the armed struggle no longer made sense, the middle-

⁹⁴⁴ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, January 27, 1994.

⁹⁴⁵ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 10, 1994.

⁹⁴⁶ Rowan, “Going to the Edge,” *Behind the Lines: The Story of the IRA and Loyalist Ceasefires*, ch. 8, p. 5.

management that was willing to experiment with peace despite a conviction that it would ultimately fail, and the grassroots that thought “this is crazy.”⁹⁴⁷

During the peace talks in the mid-1990s, the Provisionals took advantage of their monopolist position to produce violence far below the competitive equilibrium level. As the process dragged on without obvious signs that the Republican agenda was being advanced, demand began to increase. With this increase in demand, the threat of new entrants also dramatically increased. During the first ceasefire, political commentators frequently discussed the prospect of a split within the Provisionals. Indeed, the decision to bomb the English mainland in February 1996 was largely a move to forestall any such split. Moreover, the Provisionals set up squads to proactively identify and mitigate the threat from potential dissidents, increasing the barriers to entry.⁹⁴⁸

The Provisionals’ return to violence came too late to prevent the entry of the Continuity IRA in December 1994. After the Republican Sinn Fein split from the Provisionals in 1986, it had served as a constant reminder of the potential for a new entrant with a more traditionalist Republican brand to emerge. However, when it did finally emerge in the form of the CIRA, it essentially followed the rules set down by the PIRA after the IPLO elimination. The CIRA provided a useful foil for the Provisionals during the negotiations while it also maintained deniable coercive pressure on the British. Thus, the Provisionals received a considerable amount of the benefit from another producer’s violence—a de facto if not deliberate cooperative arrangement.

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid., ch.8, p. 6.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid., ch. 8, p. 15.

After the declaration of the second ceasefire, the Real IRA served almost exactly the same function for the Provisionals. Hardliners within the Provisionals responded to the pent-up demand by splitting into a separate organization.⁹⁴⁹ It was only after they produced excessive violence with the Omagh bombing in 1998 that the Provisionals renewed their threat of elimination and again raised the barriers to entry.

Following the PIRA's 2005 decision to decommission, this barrier to entry was much reduced, but so too was the appeal of excess profits within the market. In the subsequent four years, all three of the existing paramilitaries (INLA, CIRA, RIRA) experienced additional splits. As the market for violence shrank, the remaining sectors began to overlap less and producers had to more closely tailor their products to win support within these micro-niches. Interestingly, these new groups retained their parent identities in what appears to amount to a franchise model of growth.

IV. Threat of Rivalry

The degree of rivalry within the market for Republican violence fluctuated considerably over the three decades of the Troubles. As the Provisionals' market share grew over the decades, the smaller organizations' much more limited production capacity meant they had only a marginal impact on the profitability of Provisional production as long as production levels were kept fairly high. Thus, the periods of the most intense potential rivalry were when the Provisionals' actual production was equal to or less than the production capacity of other actors.

⁹⁴⁹ According to Republican Sinn Fein, three full brigades in the rural areas of Northern Ireland publicly refused to renew the ceasefire in June 1997. "Second ceasefire faces opposition," *Saoirse/Irish Freedom*, July 1996, 6.

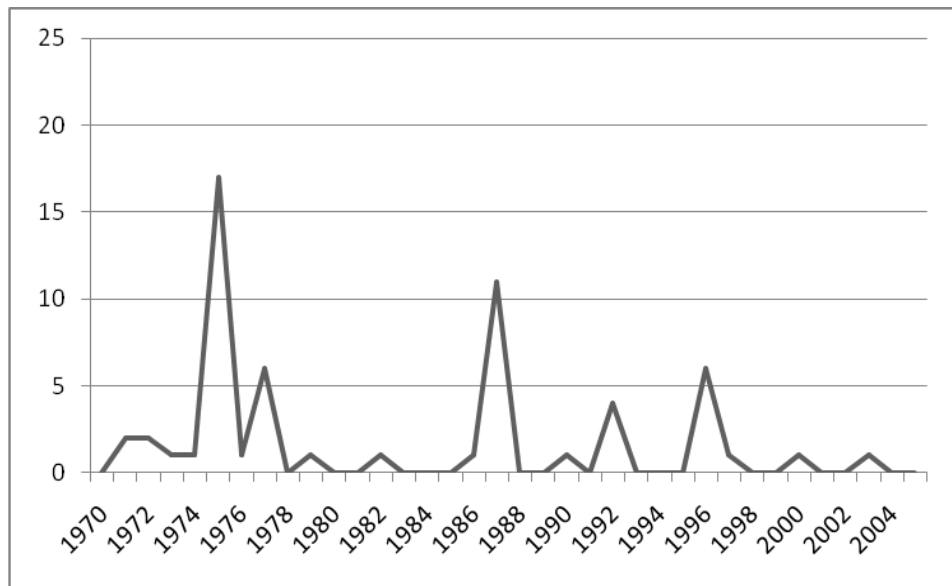


Figure 10.2 Republican feud fatalities 1969–2005⁹⁵⁰

As Figure 10.2 demonstrates, there were fatal feuds between Republican paramilitaries throughout the Troubles. These fatality statistics only capture the most extreme form of rivalry, when violence production capacity is turned from the external enemy to the intracommunal rival. They also fail to capture the non-fatality inducing feuds. Finally, these feuds do not necessarily affect all producers equally, so rivalry may be intense between two groups but others may enjoy a much more cooperative relationship. Despite these weaknesses, these statistics provide a quantifiable metric of the level of rivalry during the conflict. As such, it appears that the most intense periods of rivalry occurred in the mid-1970s, late 1980s, and to a lesser degree 1992 and 1997.

The Troubles began with a low-scale rivalry—bordering on cooperation at times—during the initial growth phase, when demand far outstripped supply and both the Officials and Provisionals were just establishing their brand name and new

⁹⁵⁰ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

organizations. The rivalry increased significantly between 1971 and 1975, resulting in a number of bloody feuds. From 1976 until 1981, the level of rivalry was greatly reduced as the Provisionals and Irps cooperated with each other during the prison protests. The Provisionals adopted a more critical position on the smaller rival producers as they became increasingly sectarian between 1983 and 1992, resulting in a move not attempted since 1975: the PIRA eliminated the IPLO. After this exercise of monopoly power, the market was characterized by an unprecedented degree of cooperation.

During the split, most of the organization had remained with the leadership, so the Officials had a greater organizational capacity overall. In (London)Derry, the Provisionals only managed to set up a small contingent. The Officials maintained their control of nearly all the rural areas in Northern Ireland.⁹⁵¹ However, the Provisionals had the advantage in Belfast. They were quickly able to set up fourteen companies to the Officials' twelve—and the Provisionals' companies were stronger and more secure. As a result of these geographic differences in the distribution of power, the degree of rivalry between the two groups was not even across Northern Ireland.

Even as the situation in the North spiraled out of control, the Official leadership remained committed to producing nonviolent politics and failed to focus its resources on the violent market. The Provisionals—unencumbered by such political distractions—became more confrontational. The competition for prestige and legitimacy gradually descended into a territorial feud. The Provisionals accused the Officials of selling out, while the Officials denounced them for inflaming the situation and recruiting for

⁹⁵¹ Hanley and Millar, *The Lost Revolution*, 151.

quantity rather than quality. At the end of April 1970, the OIRA kneecapped a Provisional who had gotten into a fistfight with an Official, prompting an escalating spiral of attacks. A temporary truce was called in June, but following the invasion of the Lower Falls by the British Army as part of an arms raid, the relationship became openly hostile. The Officials discussed the possibility of eliminating the more problematic leaders within the Provisionals, but dismissed it because “it would have been virtually impossible for us to explain in political terms [why] we had felt it necessary to kill twelve or thirteen republicans, after all these people had been our comrades in arms, it just wasn’t on.”⁹⁵²

The following June, the Provisionals restored the community defender image of the old IRA by warding off a Loyalist mob at St. Matthew’s church in Belfast. Thereafter, the PIRA regularly attempted to force the Officials to produce more violence by antagonizing the British in Official areas of control. Thus, the Provisionals were able to increase the market output of violence but bear fewer of the costs themselves.

The worsening competitive relationship was apparent in early 1971 when the PIRA threatened to shoot members of the OIRA if any Provisionals were harmed as a result of Official attacks. When they followed through on their threat by kidnapping and pistol-whipping a senior Official in the Ballymurphy area of Belfast, it sparked a feud that only ended with the death of a young Provisional in March.

⁹⁵² Ibid., 152.

In the immediate aftermath of internment, the relationship improved considerably and both sides participated in joint operations.⁹⁵³ Instead of direct violence against each other, the subsequent rivalry took the form of outbidding, i.e. producing more violence than the other. The OIRA became considerably more prolific in producing its violence, although it still primarily confined itself to attacks on the British. When the Provisionals expanded their bombing campaign to include economic targets, the Officials continued to criticize their irresponsibility but also began targeting wealthy Unionist targets.⁹⁵⁴ However, the Officials were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain the accelerated pace of violence production. An internal OIRA document captured in early 1972 revealed that “[t]he entire security of our organization is in danger. This emphasises that we cannot survive for much longer with present losses of men and stuff.”⁹⁵⁵ Even the upsurge in recruitment after Bloody Sunday was insufficient to reverse this trend and the Officials withdrew from production the following May.

Following its ceasefire, the Officials continued their rhetorical attacks on the Provisional brand and still carried out the occasional “defensive” action. However, the ceasefire was essentially an admission of defeat that the OIRA could no longer afford to produce violence at the same level as the PIRA. In other words, competition with the Provisionals had virtually bankrupted the Officials, forcing them to turn to their more

⁹⁵³ Ibid., 166–67.

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid., 171.

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid., 172.

politically lucrative activities, i.e. nonviolent politics. From that point on, the PIRA was the clear market leader—if not the sole producer.

After the feud between the OIRA and the newly formed INLA in 1975, the Provisionals saw an opportunity to permanently remove the Official threat. On October 29, 1975, the PIRA initiated what later became known as “The Pogrom” against the OIRA. In a somewhat unexpected turn, the Provisionals massively escalated a simmering feud into a 16-day direct armed confrontation: 100 armed attacks, 11 deaths, and 50 non-fatal casualties.⁹⁵⁶ PIRA apparently sought to take advantage of the OIRA’s weakness after its recent bloody feud with the INLA and to consolidate its control over the Catholic neighborhoods of Belfast.⁹⁵⁷ However, the Provisionals miscalculated the Officials’ remaining strength and ultimately failed to eliminate their rival.

The PIRA attack was so unexpected that the first Officials caught in the attacks believed them to be the work of the INLA, with whom they had so recently feuded.⁹⁵⁸ Roughly 100 PIRA gunmen swept across Belfast and attacked 31 people in less than half-an-hour on that Wednesday evening.⁹⁵⁹ Despite the fury of the initial onslaught, the Officials fought back, killing and wounding several Provisionals the next night. Further attacks continued throughout the weekend, and the OIRA leadership directed its members to go into hiding. In the midst of ongoing attacks on the Officials, the PIRA offered a three-day amnesty on November 3 to Officials who renounced their membership.

⁹⁵⁶ Ibid., 321.

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid., 318.

⁹⁵⁸ Ibid., 316.

⁹⁵⁹ Ibid., 315–16.

In addition to bearing the brunt of the feud's casualties, the OIRA revealed itself to be a less militarily competent organization. Thomas Berry, an Official, was killed on October 31 after his gun jammed while attempting to ambush a group of Provisionals. On November 11, OIRA managed to accidentally kill the wrong person by breaking into the house of a man without connections to either Republican group.⁹⁶⁰ The next day, the Officials successfully targeted and killed the head of Falls Taxi Association, which was closely linked to the Provisionals. This killing of a "civilian" brought the Provisionals to the negotiating table and a ceasefire came into effect on November 13.⁹⁶¹

The Provisionals' violent attack on their erstwhile colleagues dramatically shifted the Officials' strategic thinking, with long-term implications. As one Official activist noted, "Everybody thinks the 29th of October lasted for three weeks...[but] it lasted five years; it lasted five years, every weekend."⁹⁶² OIRA intelligence gathering shifted from preparing for a potential return to war against the British to identifying the Provisionals' habits and vulnerabilities in case a second major feud were to break out.⁹⁶³

Despite the Officials' ability to ward off the Provisional attack, the feud highlighted the degree to which the OIRA had atrophied since the 1972 ceasefire and split with the INLA/IRSP the year prior. This downward trend continued to the point that by March 1976, British intelligence reported that the OIRA was "capable of

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid., 319–20.

⁹⁶¹ Ibid., 320–21.

⁹⁶² Ibid., 322.

⁹⁶³ Ibid., 322.

selective sabotage' but that their military capacity was now 'slight and localized.'"⁹⁶⁴

The final step toward the redundancy of the OIRA as part of the larger Official movement came with the replacement of Goulding as the chief-of-staff in the summer of 1976. His successor, Sean Garland, led a successful campaign to reduce the OIRA to a subordinate role, i.e. it would provide protection from the Provisionals and assist with the party's "fund-raising," but its continued existence would be denied. To emphasize the change, OIRA lost its name, referred thereafter simply as "Group B." A few months later, in January 1977, the political wing began its shift toward a more Leftist identity by changing its name to Sinn Fein-The Workers Party (and later dropping the Sinn Fein prefix). Although this armed organization continued to exist for decades (arguably it still does in one form or another), its primary involvement with criminal activities rather than the production of political violence removes it from further consideration as a source of rivalry within the Republican market analysis.⁹⁶⁵

The attempted purge against the OIRA taught the Provisionals a valuable lesson that their weaker rivals could still do significant damage when attacked. As a result, they would not attempt to eliminate a rival paramilitary for seventeen years. Instead, they developed reasonably warm relations with the smaller groupings and limited their attacks to rhetorical ones and condemnations of particular episodes of violence.

The five years following the Pogrom was marked by an aloof cooperation between the Irps and the Provisionals. The IRSP worked diligently to increase the

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid., 332.

⁹⁶⁵ Rekawek, "How 'Terrorism' Does Not End: The Case of the Official Irish Republican Army," *Critical Studies on Terrorism*.

Provisionals' participation in the H-Block protests, but the Provisional leadership was only lukewarm about their value. Nevertheless, in May 1977, the Provisionals and Irps signed onto a "broad front" with the Nationalist Party and three prisoner support groups.⁹⁶⁶ The IRSP's *Starry Plough* newspaper regularly included reports of Provisional attacks together with those of the INLA; however, the Provisional publications did not extend the same courtesy for their junior partner. Given the massive structural reorganization of the PIRA and the pressure from the security forces, it is unsurprising that the Provisionals did not engage more fully in the broad Nationalist front the IRSP was promoting. After the ending of the Hunger Strike, the Irps were fairly vocal in their criticism of the Provisionals for failing to engage in a full partnership with the other members of the broad Nationalist front.⁹⁶⁷

Despite this frustration on the political front, the relationship between the two paramilitaries was one of friendly rivalry. As one Irp described it, "Relations between the Officials and the Provisionals has [sic] been hostile for many years. Rivalry between PIRA and INLA has been more healthy [sic] in that they tolerate each other and yet are in competition for the same support."⁹⁶⁸ The killing of Airey Neave exemplifies this point. This was quite possibly the most audacious attack of the Troubles until the assassination of Lord Mountbatten and attempted assassination of Lady Thatcher a few later. It put the INLA back on the map of Republican politics and was an enormous boost for the status and power of the group. The fact that the bomb used was technically

⁹⁶⁶ "An Experiment in Anti-Imperialist Unity—The Irish Front," *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, May 1977, 3.

⁹⁶⁷ "The need for a Broad Front," *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, September 1981, 6.

⁹⁶⁸ "Letters," *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, March 1982, 8.

innovative and sophisticated helped even more. However, somewhat counter-intuitively, the INLA traded this new technology for just a handful of weapons from the PIRA.⁹⁶⁹

This positive relationship deteriorated as the INLA began to fall apart after the end of the Hunger Strikes. In September 1982, a member of the IRSP published an open letter with one of the worst insults within the Republican lexicon: “the Provos are following the Sticks [Officials] down the reformist road.”⁹⁷⁰ By December 1983, the relationship bordered on the schizophrenic: simultaneously critical and laudatory. The *Starry Plough* published a story praising the PIRA bombing of Ulster Polytechnic, which killed two and injured 33 others. On the same day, Martin McGuinness criticized a no-warning bomb attack on a pub frequented by RUC officers. An INLA spokesperson responded by suggesting that McGuinness was being disingenuous in an effort to win votes in the upcoming European election.⁹⁷¹ Yet in an interview, Dominic McGlinchey openly embraced the decision of Sinn Fein to expand its political efforts in the South and welcomed the prospect of cooperation with the Provisionals on a range of issues.⁹⁷² Meanwhile the mainstream press was reporting that the two groups were on the edge of a feud, which was strongly denied by the Irps.⁹⁷³ In 1984, Gerry Adams went so far as to publicly question the justification for the IRSP’s continued existence. This prompted the following reply:

⁹⁶⁹ Dillon, *The Dirty War: Covert Strategies and Tactics Used in Political Conflicts*, 263.

⁹⁷⁰ “Letters,” *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, September 1982, 8.

⁹⁷¹ Farrell, “INLA Blitzes RUC Drinking Den,” *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1983, 3.

⁹⁷² “Dominick McGlinchey Interview,” *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1983, 10–11.

⁹⁷³ The Green Mole, “Sticky Trick,” *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1983, 4; *The Sunday Times*, June 17, 1984.

The repeated attacks by Martin Mc Guinness on the INLA, the refusal of Sinn Fein to share public platforms or campaigns with the IRSP, their refusal to attend an attempted unity conference on repression because it was organised by the IRSP are matters of no small concern to us. We abhor dis-unity in anti imperialist ranks. We think, however, the negative attitude of the Provisionals towards us is based on some belief that we are in competition with each other. In that they are totally mistaken.⁹⁷⁴

There was clearly a fair amount of hostility between the two parties, but given the power differential, the Irps appeared somewhat desperate to court the Provisionals' favor.

After the split between the INLA and IPLO turned violent in 1986, the Provisionals quickly responded by calling for both sides to disband. "The Republican Movement calls upon all those involved to realise that they are going nowhere and they are achieving nothing. The Republican Movement dissociates itself from all sides and repeats the call for the INLA to disband."⁹⁷⁵ This is a call they were to repeat several times over the next decade. For example, in 1988, the Provisionals called on the INLA to disband after an INLA volunteer was killed attacking an Army checkpoint with a handgun: the volunteer "was clearly a very brave young man but to attack a checkpoint with a shortarm is suicidal. His death shows just how inept the remnants of the INLA are."⁹⁷⁶

Despite the IRSP's protestations to the contrary, the Provisionals had become increasingly competitive with them as they became more active in the political

⁹⁷⁴ "Why the 'IRPS'?" *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1984, 2.

⁹⁷⁵ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 5, 1987.

⁹⁷⁶ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, August 18, 1988, 3.

market.⁹⁷⁷ The INLA had been set up to capture the market segment within the Nationalist community that was interested in simultaneous production of violence and nonviolence. When the Provisionals also began to produce this mix—and thus compete for the same consumers—the degree of rivalry was bound to escalate. Given the size differentials, the INLA and IPLO had little chance of winning such a direct competition.

As a result of this competitive pressure, the two smaller groups shifted their focus to an even smaller niche: mostly apolitical sectarianism.⁹⁷⁸ In 13 attacks between July 1989 and April 1992, INLA produced very limited damage and killed none of their targets, but had two of their own members killed and a handful more arrested.⁹⁷⁹ In contrast, the IPLO killed nine and wounded six others during this same period (often in purely sectarian attacks), but the only significant loss was that one IPLO member blew off three fingers in a botched grenade attack.⁹⁸⁰ Meanwhile, PIRA killed well over 130 people and caused massive damage, including in England and Europe at the cost of two of its volunteers. Thus, in terms of fatalities, which are an admittedly imperfect proxy for monopoly of violence, PIRA was a far more efficient producer of violence and had an approximate 94 percent market share in the early 1990s. In terms of economic damage caused, PIRA market share is probably closer to 99.9 percent given the billions of dollars of damage inflicted by the large bombs in mainland Britain.

⁹⁷⁷ “Starry Plough Editorial,” *Starry Plough/An Comcheachta*, December 1987, 3.

⁹⁷⁸ The INLA during this period generally attacked former members of the security forces or Loyalists, which were easy targets and could at least be argued to be non-sectarian. The IPLO in contrast carried out random attacks on civilians, and targeted only the occasional Loyalist.

⁹⁷⁹ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 365–66.

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 367–68.

Despite the differentials in size and capacity for violence production between PIRA and the IPLO, the rivalry between these organizations grew in intensity between 1989 and 1992. The IPLO took a controversial decision to supplement its limited war chest with the profits from drug-running, a hitherto taboo activity for paramilitaries in the Catholic community. This taboo-breaking, coupled with fairly permissive recruitment standards, led the organization to be viewed as increasingly criminal.⁹⁸¹ To further complicate matters, the IPLO's specialization in sectarian attacks threatened to undercut the political justification of Republican violence and raise the political costs of the Provisionals' own production.

However, probably the greatest source of tension between them was the refuge the IPLO offered for dissident or deviant members of PIRA.⁹⁸² The IPLO offered a bully-pulpit for vocal critics of the Provisional leadership, many of whom were relatively experienced operatives and had earned considerable respect in the Republican community through years of sacrifice for the cause. Where these Volunteers could still be controlled to some degree as individuals by the threat or use of force, membership in another paramilitary organization made this much more difficult and potentially costly for the PIRA. Furthermore, the mere existence of another paramilitary organization with relatively lax recruitment standards potentially emboldened individuals who remained within the Provisional ranks to defy attempts to impose discipline.

Thus, while ex-Provisionals often brought valuable operational expertise and experience to the IPLO, they were also a potential source of trouble. One prime

⁹⁸¹ Ibid., 311–15.

⁹⁸² Tom Brady, "Feuding Faction Fighters," *Irish Independent*, December 12, 1989.

example of this is Eoin Morley, who was killed in Newry on April 15, 1990, by the Provisionals after defecting to the IPLO. The date of this killing is important: Easter Sunday, one of the most sacred days of the Republican calendar. The PIRA claimed they had executed Morley because he was an informer responsible for the seizure of two arms dumps, and had, “contrary to IRA Standing Orders, joined another pseudo-republican organization.”⁹⁸³ The PIRA strongly denied that this killing was part of a Republican feud. However, Jimmy Brown, the leader of the IPLO, later claimed that Morley’s death was accidental; PIRA had intended to merely wound him as a warning to other local Republicans not to join the IPLO.⁹⁸⁴ Thus, even if no full-blown PIRA-IPLO feud existed at the time, the Provisionals felt considerable pressure from its smaller rival.

The Provisionals took advantage of a large anti-IPLO swing in public opinion following the gang rape of a Nationalist girl in June 1990. At least one member of the IPLO took part in the brutal attack in a utility room in the Divis Flats, a traditional stronghold of the INLA, and subsequently the IPLO. The victim screamed for hours to no avail—the IPLO, the closest thing to a local police force, was complicit in the crime. Women’s groups organized a series of protests against the IPLO, which Sinn Fein joined. The strength of the backlash within the community was so strong that the IPLO publicly discussed disbanding and reforming under a new name: the Irish Republican

⁹⁸³ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, April 19, 1990, 2.

⁹⁸⁴ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 316.

Resistance Force.⁹⁸⁵ While the Provisionals did not publicly join in calls for the IPLO to disband, they demanded that the IPLO punish the rapists. When the IPLO only handed out relatively minor punishments (six youths, including one member of the IPLO were administered punishment shootings), the PIRA broke off a series of mediation meetings it had been holding. However, the Provisionals did little else to interfere in this matter after the IPLO threatened to attack prominent members of Sinn Fein, such as Gerry Adams, if pushed too far.⁹⁸⁶ This threat proved very effective in preventing the Provisionals from being too aggressive against their rivals so long as it was credible.

A little over a year later, in the fall of 1991, the Provisionals began a PR offensive, repeatedly criticizing botched or sectarian IPLO operations and calling on the group to disband.⁹⁸⁷ Interestingly, in October 1991, AP/RN dismissed claims that the uptick in Loyalist violence was a response to a couple of attacks by “the renegade IPLO group” in Belfast and Newry as “ludicrous.”⁹⁸⁸ However, just three weeks later, a letter to the editor in AP/RN lamented that the IPLO was helping to legitimize the official characterization of the Troubles as a sectarian conflict.⁹⁸⁹ Less than a month following, Sinn Fein openly called for the IPLO to disband, describing it as a “criminal band.”⁹⁹⁰

⁹⁸⁵ Clare, “Subcultural Obstacles to the Control of Racketeering in Northern Ireland,” *Journal of Conflict Studies: Conflict Quarterly*, 27.

⁹⁸⁶ *BBC1*, “Spotlight: IPLO Feud,” January 10, 1992; Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 317.

⁹⁸⁷ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, October 17, 1991; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 7, 1991; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, December 19, 1991; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, January 2, 1992; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 20, 1992; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 7, 1992; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 14, 1992.

⁹⁸⁸ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, October 17, 1991, 3.

⁹⁸⁹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 7, 1991, 10.

⁹⁹⁰ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, December 19, 1991, 11.

These calls for the IPLO to disband increased in early 1992 as the group continued to target Protestant civilians. Martin McGuinness said, “The IPLO has no credibility within the republican community. On behalf of the republican people who for 20 years have steadfastly endured and resisted all that the British could inflict on us, I call on the IPLO to immediately cease its activities and to disband.”⁹⁹¹ Over the next few months, the Provisionals remained fairly quiet in their criticism of the IPLO. However, following the killing of an elderly Protestant in a North Belfast Bar, the Provisionals began to use more severely delegitimizing language in reference to the IPLO: “the sectarian gang which refer to themselves as the IPLO.”⁹⁹² Using the nearly sacred commemoration of the Hunger Strikers, McGuinness further excoriated the sectarianism of the IPLO:

Bobby Sands would have seen no difference between those cowards who would shoot a Catholic woman in a chemist’s shop or a 65-year-old Protestant in a public house because of their religion. The purpose of loyalist killing is to drag the republican struggle down a cul-de-sac of sectarianism. This suits the British interest and now, on behalf of the republican people who have withstood everything Britain could throw at them, we are demanding that the opportunistic killers of the IPLO disband immediately.⁹⁹³

However, the Provisionals fell tellingly silent after the IPLO once again threatened key Provisionals in June 1992: there was no further public mention of the IPLO until after the PIRA eliminated the smaller organization later that year in the Night of Long Knives.⁹⁹⁴

⁹⁹¹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 20, 1992, 4.

⁹⁹² *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 7, 1992, 3.

⁹⁹³ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 14, 1992, 7.

⁹⁹⁴ Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 341.

Unfortunately for the IPLO, it began to violently splinter apart in August 1992, opening an opportunity for PIRA to make its move. In the years immediately preceding this split, the IPLO lost several key members capable of providing the kind of leadership necessary to quell internal dissent. The split came to a head on August 18, 1992, when Jimmy Brown was killed by a rival in the IPLO, allegedly over the division of drug profits.⁹⁹⁵ Nine days later, the “Belfast Brigade” faction (IPLO-BB) followed this up by killing another member of Brown’s “Army Council” faction (IPLO-AC). On September 11, IPLO-AC responded by killing one of the IPLO-BB members. Following a public plea for an end to the internecine violence by one of the victims’ sister, the two factions negotiated an uneasy truce by the end of September.⁹⁹⁶

After biding its time, the PIRA launched a dramatic operation on October 31, 1992, in which the two feuding factions of the IPLO were violently disbanded. In a carefully planned series of operations throughout Belfast, which may have involved up to 100 Volunteers, some brazenly carrying automatic rifles, PIRA killed one, Sammy Ward, and wounded at least 30 others.⁹⁹⁷ Interestingly, the Provisionals framed their actions in the context of providing alternative social control by highlighting the IPLO’s involvement in the drug trade. Thus, they painted the IPLO as a drug gang that carried out sectarian attacks rather than an alternative Republican organization that happened to use the drug trade to supplement its income streams.

⁹⁹⁵ Ibid., 334–35.

⁹⁹⁶ Ibid., 340.

⁹⁹⁷ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 5, 1992; Holland and McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions*, 340–42.

The successful elimination of the IPLO fundamentally reshaped the market for Republican violence. Although smaller groups continued to exist, the IPLO purge established the Provisionals as the paramount Republican paramilitary with clear monopoly power—not just the market leader. The other Republican groups thereafter took their cue from the Provisionals and rarely produced more violence than would be tolerated by them, even if the market was still below competitive equilibrium. This monopoly power allowed the Provisionals to produce violence at below-market levels without risk of being undercut. To signal their willingness to maintain a monopoly over Republican violence even as they prepared for the first ceasefire, PIRA created “a ‘team’ under the control of the former republican prisoner Bobby Storey . . . to deal with dissent and to ensure that fringe groups like the Irish National Liberation Army and Republican Sinn Féin . . . did nothing to jeopardise the ‘peace process.’”⁹⁹⁸ As a result, PIRA could safely resist the urge to respond to Loyalist provocations and declare the first ceasefire less than two years later.

Nevertheless, the smaller Republican groups served a distinct purpose for the Provisionals. Their continued low-level production, especially during the ceasefires, helped to partially sate the demand for violence while providing plausible deniability. The PIRA—or at least elements therein—clearly provided support to the other groups at various times during the peace process, and the RIRA was a direct offshoot from the Provisionals that maintained ongoing links, especially through the South Armagh ASUs. Given the Provisionals’ proven capacity to dominate, they received some

⁹⁹⁸ Rowan, *Behind the Lines: The Story of the IRA and Loyalist Ceasefires*, ch. 8, p. 15.

Nationalist credit (and blame from non-Nationalists) for allowing this violence to continue, but relatively little opposition within the community. If anything, the dissidents' violence enhanced the sense of urgency and support for including Sinn Fein in the peace talks.

Unionist politician, Ken Maginnis, pointed out this apparent cooperative arrangement following the killing of a postal worker in Newry by PIRA members in November 1994. Maginnis argued that PIRA had sanctioned “‘high-profile attacks ... under the guise of a break-away faction,’ so that the IRA can have the best of both worlds.”⁹⁹⁹ In other words, by creating a fictional breakaway faction, the Provisionals could continue to put pressure on the government through the use of violence, but maintain the air of legitimacy necessary for peace talks to continue. In a bizarre logical disconnect that seems to somewhat confirm this interpretation, the Provisionals responded to this accusation by simultaneously claiming that Kerr was killed by an unauthorized faction within PIRA and excoriating Ken Maginnis for “sow[ing] the myth of republican disunity.”¹⁰⁰⁰

Although Maginnis' interpretation of the situation overstated the degree of direct culpability for the Provisionals, it does highlight the value these groups' continued violence brought to PIRA in the strategic negotiations. Even though they produced fairly low-level violence, these hard-line groups emphasized the potential for escalation, which bolstered the Provisional's bargaining position during the peace talks. Once these talks had produced an acceptable agreement that won overwhelming backing in both the

⁹⁹⁹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, November 24, 1994, 6.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 1, 6.

North and South, the Provisionals had no problem stepping in and forcing them to cease their violent activities. Thus, it seems that a de facto cooperative relationship between the Provisionals and the smaller Republican VPOs existed during the peace process.¹⁰⁰¹

Moreover, the Provisionals were at times almost laudatory in their treatment of INLA violence during this period. In May 1997, Provisional reporting of the first INLA killing of a member of the security forces in four years highlighted a RUC report that the attack was a “well-thought-out and planned operation.”¹⁰⁰² In January 1998, articles in *An Phoblacht/Republican News* attempted to dispel the notion that the violence was purely sectarian tit-for-tat by comparing INLA’s killing of a top UDA leader to the Loyalist killing of a Catholic civilian, with the implication that INLA’s attack on the former was legitimate while the latter violence was not.¹⁰⁰³

Despite the overall level of monopoly power displayed after 1992, several incidents indicate the smaller Republican groups may have preferred a more competitive market. In September 1996, Direct Action Against Drugs (DAAD), the ceasefire cover name for PIRA, killed Mick Naughton, claiming he was a drug dealer.

Despite their claims about drugs, this could have been a warning to a resurgent INLA:

¹⁰⁰¹ Elements within PIRA also may also have given direct assistance to the smaller groups. Much like the initial split between the Provisionals and Officials, it was not immediately apparent that RIRA’s splitting off would be irreconcilable, and close relationships often existed between members of the two organizations. A number of security assessments indicate that PIRA members provided significant support to RIRA. Even if this assistance was not authorized, the Provisionals apparently turned a blind eye to the clear acquisition of PIRA materiel, including Semtex, by RIRA and CIRA. Taking weapons and skills to a rival organization was defined as an executable offense by the Green Book, but by the end of the decade no one had been tried or executed for doing so. Boyne, “The Real IRA: After Omagh, Now What?,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*; Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and The Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity*; Dingley, “The Bombing of Omagh, 15 August 1998: The Bombers, Their Tactics, Strategy, and Purpose Behind the Incident,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 463.

¹⁰⁰² *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, May 15, 1997, 3.

¹⁰⁰³ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, January 22, 1998; *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, January 29, 1998.

PIRA had kneecapped him for being a RUC informant when he was a member of INLA in the late 1980s.¹⁰⁰⁴ A few months later, the Provisionals condemned four sectarian attacks on Protestant homes in Dungannon and Coalisland by unnamed assailants.¹⁰⁰⁵

Irrespective of a few, fairly isolated incidents of competitive discord, the overall feature of the Republican market between 1992 and 1998 showed a remarkable degree of cooperation. In April 1997, representatives from the Provisionals, Officials, and Republican Socialists all attended the opening of a memorial to Joe McCann, an OIRA Volunteer killed 25 years earlier. Even Provisional editorials noted that this united front was “curious by Belfast standards.”¹⁰⁰⁶ The following August, Sinn Fein’s Mitchel McLaughlin described ongoing talks with the IRSP on a range of issues as “constructive and positive.”¹⁰⁰⁷ Thus, the Provisionals were carefully and actively managing the sources of potential competition even as they were negotiating with the British and Unionists.

In the context of Sinn Fein being removed from the peace talks after the DAAD punishment attacks, the Provisionals sought to restore their legitimacy as a negotiating partner by distancing themselves from and minimizing the legitimacy and importance of the dissident groups. Thus, a PIRA source emphasized the organization’s unity, “ridiculed reports that the IRA has satellite organisations or assisted other groups,” and implied the dissident Republicans were actually serving the British agenda.¹⁰⁰⁸ This was

¹⁰⁰⁴ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, September 19, 1996, 3.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, April 3, 1997, 5.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, April 24, 1997.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, August 21, 1997, 20.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 26, 1998, 9.

a masterful bit of rhetorical gymnastics: first denying any dissent within the movement, then castigating those non-existent dissenters as the enemy's agents provocateurs. This essentially became the official party line within the Provisional movement preceding the Good Friday Agreement, with oft-repeated phrases like "moving forward in unison."¹⁰⁰⁹

Despite these claims to unity, there were clearly frictions between the Republican paramilitaries in 1998, which only increased after the signing of the GFA. For example, in February 1998, a supporter of CIRA interrupted a speech by Gerry Adams at a Sinn Fein meeting in Dublin by shouting, "Up the Continuity IRA." Adams responded with, "Fair play to ye," then derisively called the heckler a "ceasefire soldier."¹⁰¹⁰ Following the INLA's killing of Cyril Stewart, an ex-RUC Reservist who had retired a year prior, in the end of March, Sinn Fein spokesman Mitchel McLaughlin expressed condolences and Gerry Adams called on INLA to disband. Adams went on to say that INLA "had dishonoured the struggle on a number of occasions."¹⁰¹¹ INLA did not disband, but instead went on to carry out a number of small-scale attacks over the next few months. Perhaps the most telling evidence of this increased rivalry is when CIRA accused PIRA of destroying one of its bombs in March 1998:

A senior Continuity IRA source has said that members of the IRA have been "policing" the Irish border area to prevent the Continuity IRA from transporting bombs into Northern Ireland. . . . The source described the IRA actions as "worrying," saying: "They do not carry out military

¹⁰⁰⁹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, April 16–May 7, 1998.

¹⁰¹⁰ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, February 19, 1998, 1.

¹⁰¹¹ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, April 2, 1998, 5.

operations themselves and that is their business. But they have no right to prevent others doing so. They are policing the cease-fire.”¹⁰¹²

Thus, the Provisionals were accused of cooperating with the enemy to the detriment of their Republican rivals—a serious accusation indeed.

By July 1998, RIRA was beginning to establish genuine momentum, and they were starting to pick up recruits from old and current Provisionals as well as from newcomers. According to security sources, they were possibly on the verge of a substantial increase in numbers and could have started to make large inroads into traditional Provisional support.¹⁰¹³

This increased rivalry culminated in the disastrous Omagh Bombing on August 15, 1998. Primary responsibility for the bombing lies with RIRA, but some evidence shows that CIRA might have helped with some of the pre-attack logistics.¹⁰¹⁴ Omagh had historically been a major support base for the Provisionals and had even elected a Sinn Fein mayor. Thus, as Dingley notes, Omagh was an especially attractive target for dissident Republicans; essentially, this particular target enabled a simultaneous attack on both the British and the Provisionals.¹⁰¹⁵

Although nonviolent, the Provisional response was swift and overwhelming in its implication. In a 90-minute operation coordinated across Ireland, the PIRA visited

¹⁰¹² Jane’s Terrorism and Insurgency Centre, “The Continuity IRA has accused the IRA,” April 8, 1998.

¹⁰¹³ Dingley, “The Bombing of Omagh, 15 August 1998: The Bombers, Their Tactics, Strategy, and Purpose Behind the Incident,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 458.

¹⁰¹⁴ Tonge, “‘They Haven’t Gone Away, You Know’. Irish Republican ‘Dissidents’ and ‘Armed Struggle,’” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 693, 684. The INLA, CIRA, and RIRA held a summit immediately after the referendum to establish a mechanism for cooperation between the three groups. McDonald and Wintour, “Republican groups in terror threat.”

¹⁰¹⁵ Dingley, “The Bombing of Omagh, 15 August 1998: The Bombers, Their Tactics, Strategy, and Purpose Behind the Incident,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 459.

the homes of known RIRA members and supporters, including McKevitt, and threatened them if they did not stop.¹⁰¹⁶ Thus, PIRA demonstrated it had the technical ability and the will to remove the competition the way it had eliminated the IPLO, but did not have to incur any of the costs of actually doing so.¹⁰¹⁷ As a result of the nearly unanimous backlash to Omagh, including from the monopolist Provisionals, all three of the remaining active Republican paramilitaries ceased producing violence. The CIRA announced a suspension of military activities, the INLA declared a ceasefire, and the RIRA finally announced a “complete cessation of military activities” following a week of extensive political pressure exerted by Republicans and others.¹⁰¹⁸ Thus, PIRA essentially enforced its monopoly to completely shut down all production of Republican violence.

This total cessation proved fleeting as the Provisionals became increasingly drawn into the political process and lost some of their violence production capacity. Although the market shrunk massively after 1998, several market segments continued to offer support for violence and the remaining paramilitaries pursued a niche strategy to stay politically relevant. While low level, non-fatal attacks were tolerable to the Provisionals, anything more than that threatened the profitability of the nonviolent market. After the second of three waves of PIRA decommissioning, the RIRA killed a workman on a British army base in 2002. This very nearly caused a major feud with the

¹⁰¹⁶ McKittrick, David, “Real IRA ends its deadly campaign,” *The Independent*, September 9, 1998.

¹⁰¹⁷ Maintenance of this ability is likely a major contributing factor to explaining why decommissioning took so long. Even after the official disarmament and ending the armed struggle, the Provisionals appear to have kept an ability to ward off the threat of violent rivals. Most of the weapons unaccounted for are the type necessary for internal policing rather than attacking external enemies.

¹⁰¹⁸ *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, September 10, 1998, 3.

PIRA in 2003, after which the RIRA became much less active.¹⁰¹⁹ The Provisionals declared an end to the armed struggle and fully committed to decommissioning in 2005, which has provided the space for the smaller groups to become more competitive. The fact that each of these groups has become an umbrella organization for even smaller groupings heightens the difficulty of coordinating production. Most of the post-2005 Republican killings are the result of feuds between these groupings or the provision of alternative social control.¹⁰²⁰ Indeed, the degree to which this competition drives the market behavior is evident in the pattern of CIRA and RIRA attacks in March 2009. When the RIRA killed two British soldiers, the CIRA responded by killing a police officer a few days later.

V. Combined Measure

In the very beginning of the Troubles, the level of competition was fairly normal. The IRA had largely disengaged from the market and did not feel the need (or have the ability) to defend its monopoly position and allowed entrepreneurs to pick up the slack. Once the Provisional IRA entered the market it posed a significant threat to the Official IRA, igniting a competitive war that resulted in an overproduction of violence—some of which was turned directly on the two rivals—that ended with the Officials' withdrawal from the market. Meanwhile, the SDLP emerged as a substitute threat to Republican violence, especially with the power-sharing arrangements of Sunningdale in 1973-74. Between 1972 and 1975, the new entry threat was particularly

¹⁰¹⁹ English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 388; United Kingdom, House of Commons, *Twenty-Third Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission*, 21.

¹⁰²⁰ United Kingdom, House of Commons, *Twenty-Third Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission*, 21.

acute as the Officials, or elements within the organization, threatened to return to violence production. Once the INLA finally did emerge and severely weakened the Officials, the Provisionals saw it as an opportunity to engage in a “hostile takeover,” i.e. elimination of the primary rival. This takeover bid proved more costly than expected, and helped to establish a new baseline of limited rivalry within the market.

In the beginning of the Thatcher years, there was fairly low competition within the market for Republican violence. The PIRA had an overwhelming market share and were on good terms with the INLA. The Provisionals’ diversification into nonviolent politics put downward pressure on the profitability of violence. Because it was part of the market leader’s broader strategy, this downward pressure only posed a serious threat to the INLA and its successors. As the Provisionals continued to pursue this course of shrinking the market for violence, the rivalry within the market increased. The increased rivalry with its much smaller competitors allowed the PIRA to finally eliminate one of them in 1992. This violent act removed the façade of competitive rivalry and firmly established the Provisionals’ monopoly power. The threat of new entrants certainly limited the degree to which the Provisionals could manipulate the market, but the PIRA proceeded to exercise this monopoly power to lower violence production in support of its production of nonviolent political goods. In the end, the PIRA proved capable of overcoming the threat from its rivals and essentially closed the market in 1998.

Unfortunately, the closure of the violence market required a continued monopoly capability, but this proved incompatible with the production of nonviolent goods. As a result of the PIRA’s final decommissioning in 2005, the market reopened—

although it is now a much smaller market than previously. Given the extremely high degree of competition in the current market for Republican violence, but very low amount of violence actually being produced, it is abundantly clear that the market for violence has shrunk to nearly negligible levels. The same could be said for the market between 1962 and 1969, so it is not impossible for the conflict to start once more. However, the fundamental market conditions appear to make a second massive escalation unlikely: there is much less desire for radical political change, especially through violence, and the personal, economic and psychological costs of the thirty years of conflict have made the public much more vocal about opposing violence.

CHAPTER 11: Empirical Analysis

Republicans produced considerable violence in Northern Ireland—and the rate of production varied quite a bit over time. Most of the violence occurred fairly early on in the Troubles, but the Republican paramilitaries remained prolific producers of violence through 1998. In the face of this continuous threat, by the late-1980s, the British government openly admitted that it could not militarily defeat the Provisional IRA. Indeed, the Provisionals' ability to wreak economic devastation only increased in the 1990s.

I. Measures of Violence

There are many ways to calculate the amount of violence produced. The number of fatalities tends to be the most accurate measure: dead bodies are easy to quantify and are usually closely tracked by government and external observers. Although the final number of deaths and attributions of responsibility are still subjects of debate, the Sutton Index of Deaths is one of the most respected and comprehensive sources of information.¹⁰²¹ Moreover, this list generally provides sufficient detail to eliminate violence directed at rivals and informants.¹⁰²²

Most conflicts, however, tend to have a large number of nonfatal attacks. The Republican paramilitaries often—but certainly not always—targeted property and/or gave numerous warnings to prevent their attacks from producing fatalities, especially

¹⁰²¹ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

¹⁰²² The Sutton Index is a qualitative list that was transformed by the author into a quantitative dataset. Ibid.

among civilians. Therefore, the wider range of outcomes of political violence must be examined.

Nonfatal events data are drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (both GTD1 and GTD2).¹⁰²³ Several issues with this data must be considered. First, despite efforts to normalize the two GTD datasets, which transition in 1997, they involve different collection methodologies. Therefore, one must be very cautious in comparing results between the two datasets—and some important variables exist in only one or the other. Second, the data for 1993 are missing, leaving a gap in the middle of a period of particular interest.¹⁰²⁴ Third, such events data fail to differentiate between the degree and scale of violence employed during attacks of a similar nature. Thus, a half-pound Semtex bomb directed at a specific individual is weighted as equal to a large truck-bomb that destroys an entire city center. Finally, the global orientation of the dataset limits the granularity and accuracy of the data collection. As a result, smaller or failed incidents tend to be underreported and events are occasionally misattributed or incorrectly coded.¹⁰²⁵ Nevertheless, these data remain an enormously useful tool.

The missing data for 1993 cause serious issues that must be remedied. Although 1993 is just 2.9 percent of the period under review, it immediately precedes the first

¹⁰²³ Using GTD1, it is possible to filter out attacks on criminals and informants—but the coding on this variable is somewhat questionable. However, the certainty of including inappropriate data is of greater concern than the probable skewing of the pattern of observed attacks. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*.

¹⁰²⁴ Apparently, the data literally fell off the back of the truck when it was being transferred before being digitized.

¹⁰²⁵ There is also the risk of similar acts of violence receiving various levels of publicity at different times. For example, a nonfatal attack might not be mentioned by the mainstream media if there are several other more significant attacks in the same time period. However, the same relatively minor act might receive considerable attention during a ceasefire.

major ceasefire in 25 years, making it a critically important year. For this reason, it is important to find another measure of the violence produced during this year. A third, useful, but inherently problematic measure of violence production is the number of attacks Republican groups claimed they carried out through their own media outlets.¹⁰²⁶ Where GTD risks underreporting events, especially failed bombs, hoaxes, and low-level shootings resulting in no casualties, self-reported data risk including non-events that are claimed purely for propagandistic purposes.

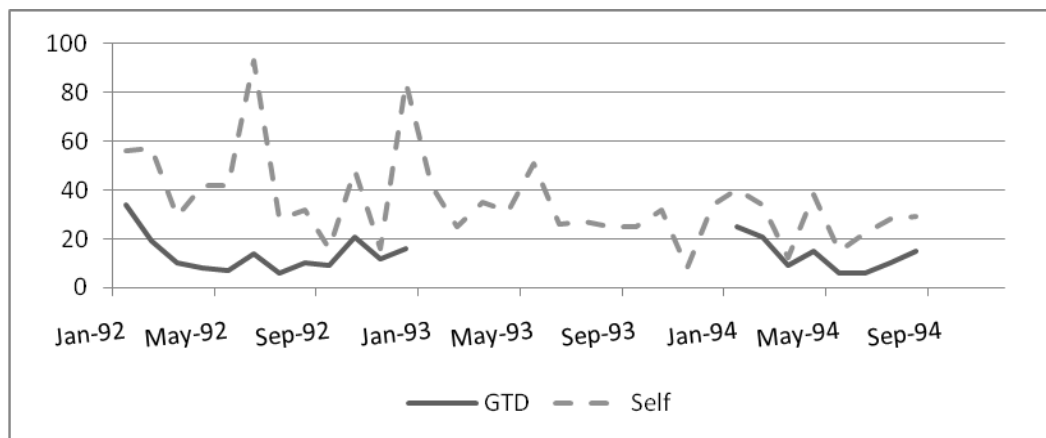


Figure 11.1 Number of Republican attacks 1992–1994¹⁰²⁷

As Figure 11.1 shows, a comparison of GTD1 and self-reported events by the Provisionals in 1992 and 1994 appears to track extremely well.¹⁰²⁸ Although the magnitude of the month-to-month changes was considerably larger in the self-reported data, the directions of these shifts were the same 73 percent of the time. Therefore, it

¹⁰²⁶ The PIRA event data was drawn from the “War News” columns in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*. Attacks mentioned in other articles are therefore not included.

¹⁰²⁷ GTD1 and Self-Reported. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*. Data for Self-Reported is derived from “War News” columns, in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

¹⁰²⁸ The “War News” columns disappeared with the declaration of the first ceasefire in 1994. No other paramilitary was actively and consistently reporting their attacks during this period.

probably provides a fairly accurate depiction of the amount of violence produced during 1993 and allows for a comparison across this missing period.

II. Empirical Results

Between 1969 and 2003, Republicans carried out 2,794 attacks, which resulted in 1,809 fatalities. As Figure 11.2 demonstrates, there are very different patterns of violence in the Troubles depending upon which measure one uses. The fatalities very quickly ratcheted up to 222 in 1972, before gradually declining to essentially 0 by 2003. In contrast, the number of attacks also shot up in 1972, fell for six years, then rebounded even higher in 1979—after which it fluctuated wildly until the ceasefires in the 1990s. Indeed, 1992 was one of the most violent years of the entire Troubles on record at 178 attacks. Thus, the number of deaths per attack declined significantly from roughly 1:1 in the 1970s to approximately 1:3 by the early 1990s.

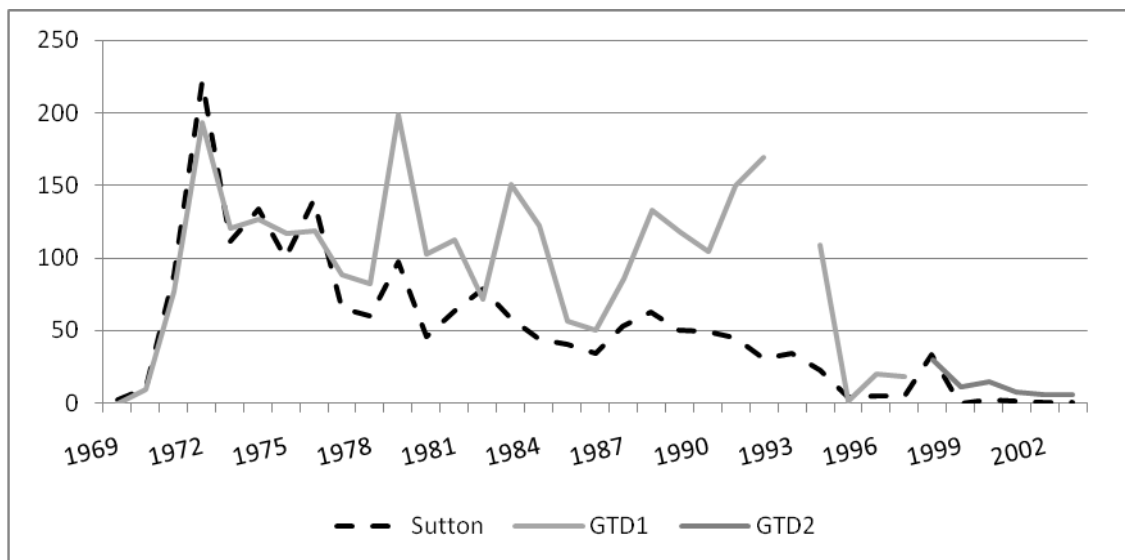


Figure 11.2 Republican violence 1969–2003¹⁰²⁹

¹⁰²⁹ The data for 1993 is missing from the GTD. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*.

There are two different, but not necessarily mutually exclusive explanations for this changing rate of lethality. First, the Republican paramilitaries could have adapted their production to maximize the level of support, but minimize the level of opposition from within the Nationalist community. Non-lethal attacks may have simply been more profitable, so the paramilitaries—especially the PIRA—became more efficient. Second, the Republican paramilitaries could have become increasingly less competitive with the security forces over time and their attacks were increasingly thwarted, i.e. the numbers are inflated by failed attacks. Indeed, as Figure 11.3 indicates, there appears to have been a gradual decline in the success rate from 1987 onward—with the exception of the two attacks in 1995.

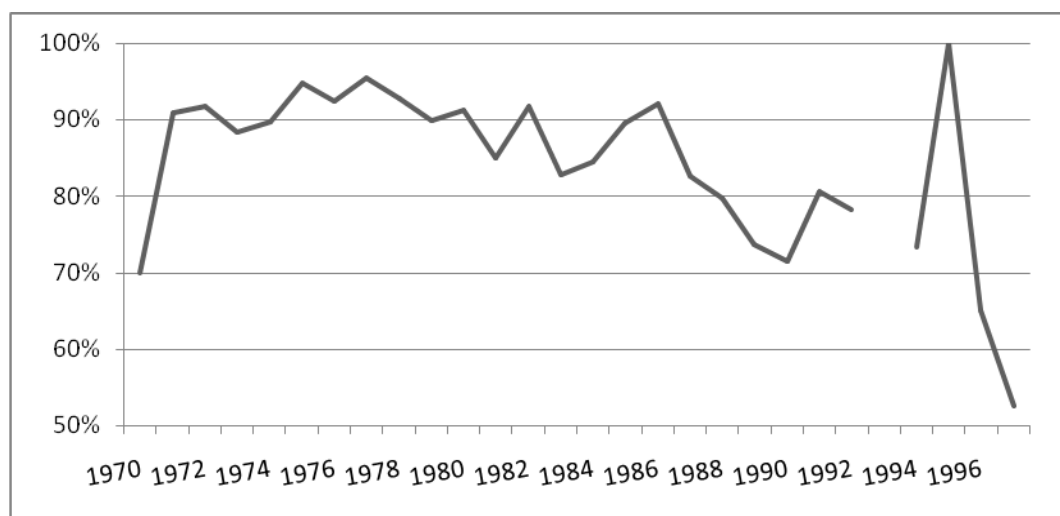


Figure 11.3 Republican attack success rate¹⁰³⁰

Despite the increased rate of failures after 1986, the overall pattern of violence remains virtually indistinguishable if one only examines successful attacks versus all attempted attacks.

¹⁰³⁰ GTD1. Ibid.

III. Theoretical Analysis

As the section above illustrates, there was significant variation in the dependent variable. Similarly, the preceding three chapters explored the changing market conditions in which this violence was produced. Table 11.1 appears to confirm that changes in the level of violence produced are strongly correlated with changes in the supply, demand, and degree of competition within the market.

The following section tests the overarching hypotheses laid out in Chapter 2 while controlling for changes in supply and demand. The first posits that, *ceteris paribus*, an increase in competition—as a combination of the Five Forces—should lead to increases in violence. The second and third posit that resource constraints from producing rival-oriented violence and substitute goods, respectively, make VPOs produce less violence.

Table 11.1 provides a crude annual measure of change within the three principal market forces, as well as in the production of two direct substitutes that potentially impose resource constraints on the producers of violence.¹⁰³¹ Based on the analysis in Chapters 8–10, the market forces of Supply, Demand, and Competition are qualitatively coded as “-” if there was a significant decrease from the prior year, “+” if there was a significant increase, and “=” if there was no major change or there were countervailing changes within the same year. In addition, two variables, Punishments and Feuds, are included to control for the limitations on externally-targeted violence resulting from resource constraints. Punishments compares the number of punishment shootings

¹⁰³¹ These measure change in the variables, but do not capture the magnitude of the change.

reported by the Police Service Northern Ireland between 1973 and 2002, so any increase is coded as “+” and any decrease is “-”. Similarly, Feuds only include fatal feuds drawn from the Sutton Index and “+” and “-” indicate changes in the number of fatalities rather than number of distinct feuds; fatalities are measured in the same way. Attacks primarily draws on changes in the number of attacks in GTD1, although 1969 and 1970 are qualitatively coded, 1993 and 1994 are based on self-reported data, and 1999–2003 are derived from GTD2.

According to the model, increases in demand for violence and decreases in the costs of supplying violence should both lead to greater production of violence against the external enemy (Hypotheses 1 and 2). Similarly, as competition within the market, as measured by the Five Forces, increases, the amount of violence production should also increase (Hypothesis 3). However, because violence targeted at members of the constituent community, i.e. punishments attacks or feuds, consumes resources necessary for production of violence against the enemy, increases in this type of violence should lead to a decrease in violence against the enemy (Hypotheses 4 and 5).

Table 11.1 Comparison of market conditions and violence, 1969–2003¹⁰³²

	<i>Market Forces</i>			<i>Resource Constraints</i>		<i>Expected Outcomes</i>			<i>Violence Produced</i>	
	Supply	Demand	Competition	Punishments ₁₀₃₃	Feuds	Market Equilibrium	Competitive Market	Resource Constraints	Fatalities ₁₀₃₄	Attacks ₁₀₃₅
1969	-	+	=	N/A	=	+	+	=	+	+
1970	=	-	+	N/A	+	-	~	-	+	+
1971	+	+	+	N/A	+	~	+	-	+	+
1972	+	=	=	N/A	+	-	-	-	+	+
1973	+	=	=	N/A	-	-	-	+	-	-
1974	=	=	+	+	=	=	+	-	+	+
1975	=	=	+	+	+	=	+	-	-	-
1976	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
1977	+	=	=	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
1978	=	=	=	-	-	=	=	+	-	-
1979	-	=	=	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
1980	+	=	=	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
1981	=	+	=	+	=	+	+	-	+	+
1982	=	+	=	-	+	+	+	~	+	-
1983	+	=	=	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
1984	=	=	=	-	=	=	=	+	-	-
1985	+	=	+	+	=	-	~	-	-	-

¹⁰³² For the market forces, + and – denote a significant change and = means no obvious changes were observed. In contrast, the violence statistics were never exactly the same between one year and the next, so a + or a – is reported even if the change is negligible.

¹⁰³³ McKenna, Lynn and Melaugh, “Background Information on Northern Ireland Society: Security and Defense,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*, Table NI-SEC-11: “Casualties as a result of paramilitary attacks in Northern Ireland, 1973–2010.”

¹⁰³⁴ Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

¹⁰³⁵ Change in annual attack numbers for 1969 and 1970 estimated qualitatively; self-reporting data is used for 1993 and 1994; all others derived from GTD1 and GTD2. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism*.

Table 11.1 Comparison of market conditions and violence, 1969–2003 (cont.)

	<i>Market Forces</i>			<i>Resource Constraints</i>		<i>Expected Outcomes</i>			<i>Violence Produced</i>	
	Supply	Demand	Competition	Punishments	Feuds	Market Equilibrium	Competitive Market	Resource Constraints	Fatalities	Attacks
1986	=	=	+	-	+	=	+	~	-	-
1987	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
1988	+	=	=	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
1989	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	-	-	-
1990	+	=	=	-	+	-	-	~	-	-
1991	=	+	=	-	-	+	+	+	-	+
1992	=	+	-	+	+	+	~	-	-	+
1993	+	=	=	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
1994	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	+	-	-
1995	+	-	+	-	=	-	-	+	-	-
1996	=	=	=	+	+	=	=	-	+	+
1997	=	=	=	+	-	=	=	~	-	-
1998	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	~	+	N/A
1999	+	-	-	-	=	-	-	+	-	-
2000	=	=	=	+	+	=	=	-	+	+
2001	=	=	=	+	-	=	=	~	-	-
2002	=	=	=	-	=	=	=	+	-	-
2003	=	=	=	-	+	=	=	~	-	-

Of the 35 annual observations, 21 provided predictions for the basic market model, 22 provided predictions for the competitive market model, and 27 provided predictions for the resource constraints model. When one compares these non-ambiguous predicted outcomes with the observed fatalities and attacks, the basic model had a success rate of 61.9 and 66.7 percent, respectively, the competitive model had 63.6 percent for both, and the resource constraints model had 29.6 percent for both. More importantly, 8.6 percent of the observations appeared to be strongly determined by the competition variable, i.e. the level of competition overcame the countervailing pressure from supply or demand. For example, in 1970, the demand appeared to be shrinking after the British Army arrived and were greeted as protectors by the Catholics; yet the competition between the Provisionals and Officials drove up production nonetheless. Similarly, despite little or no change in the supply and demand in 1974, the competitive threat from both Sunningdale and the Irps' market entry drove up production. In 1992, despite an increase in demand from a spate of Loyalist killings, the reduction of competition with the elimination of the IPLO led to a reduced amount of violence—although this could also be a result of resource constraints. In 1998, in spite of a reduction in demand and an increase in supply, the increased competition between the Provisionals and the dissident Republicans, especially the Real IRA, pushed production up—until the Provisionals exercised their latent monopoly power and essentially shut down the other producers.

It is also useful to examine the observations that do not appear to fit with the market model. 1972 was one of the bloodiest years of the Troubles, yet the costs of

production skyrocketed and there was feud violence. This is primarily a result of the crudeness of the yearly aggregator—much of the violence was produced prior to the Aldershot disaster, Bloody Friday and the end of the no-go areas—and the drastic rise in demand for Republican violence after Bloody Sunday. In 1975, at least some of the competitive pressure was a result of the Provisionals' ceasefire and attempt to negotiate with the British government, i.e. substitute threat. A significant amount of the productive capability was converted into alternative social control. Similarly, two of the worst feuds in the history of Republicanism occurred during this period and consumed important resources. The following year saw the venting of pent-up demand in the bloodiest year since 1972—although there were barely more attacks in 1976 than in 1975.¹⁰³⁶ Moreover, given the reduction of lethal violence by over one-half and non-lethal violence by over a quarter in 1977 and 1978, the excessive production in the face of worsening market conditions appears to have been a mistake with lasting consequences for the Republican paramilitaries. Finally, the decrease in violence in 1986 despite increased competition is likely a result of a combination of two factors: feud violence and attempts to bolster Sinn Fein's production of nonviolent goods.

The resource constraints hypothesis does very poorly by itself, but fairly well in conjunction with the market forces. Increases or decreases in the production of punishment or feud violence were the inverse of changes in violence production in only 22.9 percent of the cases; a further 25.9 were ambiguous; and 3.7 were neutral. This left a full 47.5 percent of observations contrary to the predicted values. For those years in

¹⁰³⁶ This comparability between total attacks in 1975 and 1976 could also be an artifact of GTD1 potentially including punishment attacks; therefore production switches would be unobserved.

which there were no major changes in supply, demand or competition, i.e. neutrals, only half appear to confirm the resource constraint hypothesis. In 1989, 1994, 1997, 2001, and 2003, an increase in either alternative social control or feuding violence resulted in the expected reduction in violence production. In 1978, however, a decrease in both resulted in less violence; in 2000, an increase in both resulted in more violence. The former may be the result of a lagged effect in the supply increase from the criminalization policy; the latter is probably a result of the very low violence numbers after 1998, increasing the influence of the few remaining instances of violence.

Moreover, if one solely examines the five cases that were problematic for the market force analysis, resource constraints explains three of them and is ambiguous about one. The sole observation that remained problematic even with this secondary filter was 1972, which was addressed above. Indeed, 75 percent of the observations that supported the resource constraint hypothesis were either neutral or contradictory of the expected results from the market analysis.

IV. Sunningdale versus Good Friday

The Northern Ireland case provides the closest thing to a natural experiment of the effect of competition that one can hope to get in the social sciences.¹⁰³⁷ In December 1973 and April 1998, extremely similar comprehensive peace agreements were signed: both called for a power-sharing government, a limited role for the South in the internal affairs of the North, and affirmation that the constitutional status of Northern Ireland

¹⁰³⁷ The following is an abbreviated version of Sawyer, "A Spiral of Peace: Competition, Monopoly and Diversification in the Market for Political Violence in Northern Ireland," *Quest*.

could only be decided by majority consent in the North.¹⁰³⁸ Indeed the two agreements were so similar that the 1998 Good Friday Agreement has been called “Sunningdale for slow learners.”¹⁰³⁹ While the former collapsed after about six months in the face of increasing paramilitary violence, the latter won the support of the paramilitaries and delivered a lasting peace.

In the months surrounding the negotiations by the SDLP to form the power-sharing executive in 1973, there was a noticeable spike in Republican violence, peaking in the first quarter of 1974 (see Figure 11.4). This is especially interesting because the Provisionals were essentially alone in the market after their main rival, the Officials, declared a ceasefire the year before. However, there were two other forces driving the market toward more competitive conditions. First, there was a serious new entrant threat: a major faction within the Officials was applying considerable pressure to resume the violence. And this faction, led by Seamus Costello, eventually formed a new VPO—the INLA—a year later. Second, and much more importantly, the substitute threat from the SDLP was substantial. The success of the Sunningdale Agreement would have driven down demand for Republican violence and essentially sidelined the Provisionals. Therefore, they successfully engaged in a “dumping” strategy to

¹⁰³⁸ See Tonge, “From Sunningdale to the Good Friday Agreement: Creating Devolved Government in Northern Ireland.” *Contemporary British History*; Rose, “From Sunningdale to Peace?,” *Peace Review*; Dixon, “British Policy towards Northern Ireland 1969-2000,” *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*.

¹⁰³⁹ Generally first attributed to Seamus Mallon of the SDLP.

undermine the SDLP by temporarily producing more than the market equilibrium quantity.¹⁰⁴⁰

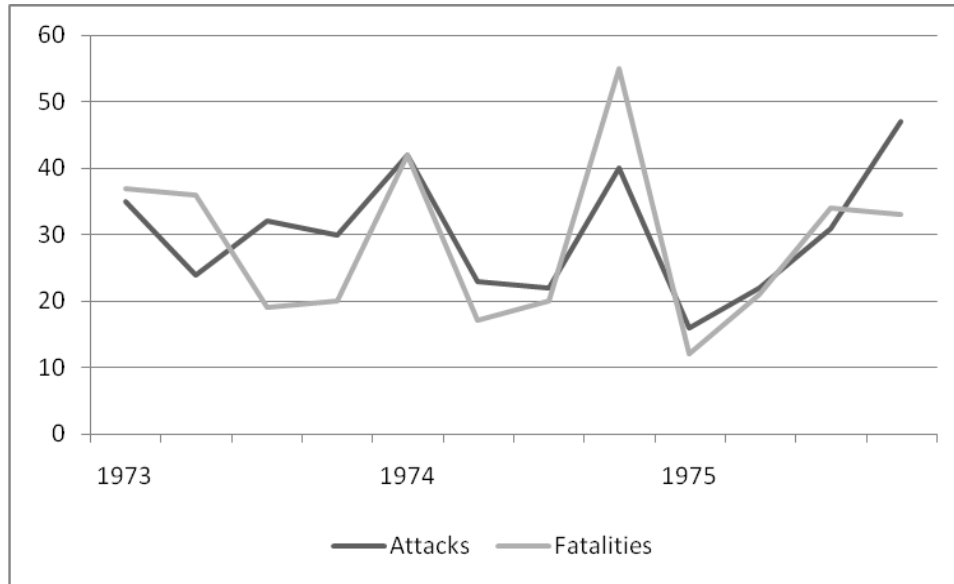


Figure 11.4 Republican attacks and fatalities, 1973–75 (quarterly)¹⁰⁴¹

In the ensuing 25 years, there were many significant changes in Northern Ireland and the international structure. The Cold War ended, Ireland and the United Kingdom began to integrate into the European Union, and the Southern economy began to boom—earning the nickname of the Celtic Tiger. However, the most significant changes underlying the success of the GFA were within the market for Republican violence itself. After the surprise outpouring of popular support around the Hunger Strikes in 1981, the Provisionals had diversified their production portfolio to include both violent and nonviolent politics. This allowed the Provisionals to hedge their

¹⁰⁴⁰ The increased Republican violence sparked considerable Loyalist discontent, causing them to produce additional violence and engage in a massive strike in May 1974, which forced the power-sharing executive to collapse. This reinforced Catholic perceptions of Unionist intransigence and unwillingness to negotiate and renewed demand for violence.

¹⁰⁴¹ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*; Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

production against shifts in either of the substitute markets and maintain their power. Equally significant, whereas the attempt to purge the OIRA in 1975 proved costly and damaging, amounting to a Pyrrhic victory, the elimination of the IPLO in 1992 very clearly demonstrated the PIRA's monopoly power.

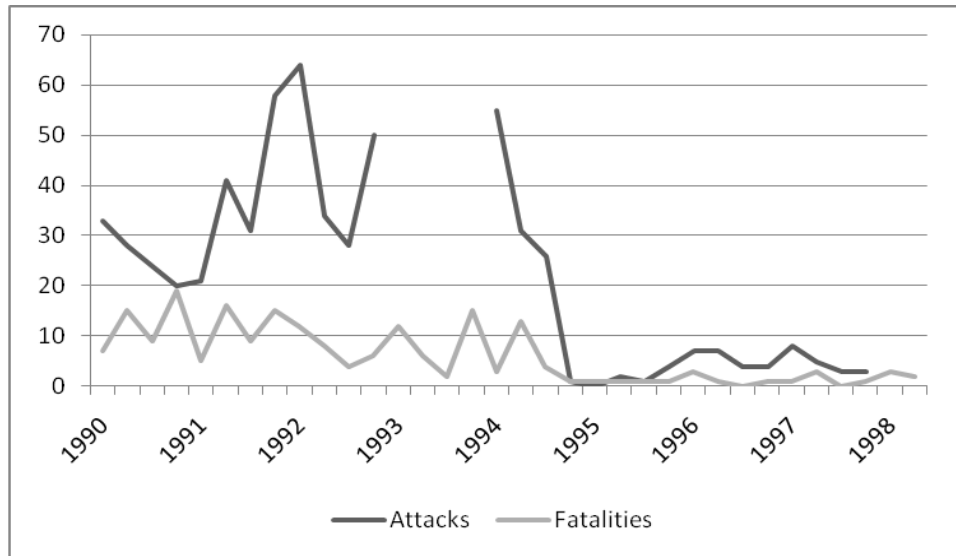


Figure 11.5 Republican attacks and fatalities, 1990–98 (quarterly)¹⁰⁴²

¹⁰⁴² National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*; Sutton, “An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland,” *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*.

Following this demonstration of monopoly power, the Provisionals were confident that they had set up an effective reactive barrier to entry. Therefore, the Provisionals could afford to reduce the level of violence production to a more optimal, sub-equilibrium level to bolster their efforts to expand their beachhead in the nonviolent market, i.e. engagement with the peace process (see Figure 11.5). This manifested in the dramatic reduction of violence in the second half of 1994. This temporary virtual closure of the market shifted consumer patterns and fundamentally altered the costs and benefits of Republican violence. When the market reopened in early 1996, production was much reduced. Much of the violence that was produced was by the smaller groups in something akin to a licensing arrangement—the PIRA still profited from its production without having to bear the direct costs. This lower level of violence helped to reinforce the growth of Provisional nonviolence production, which culminated in the GFA. Finally, after the Omagh bombing of 1998, the PIRA simply had to flex its muscles to remind its rivals of that it had the ability to destroy them in order to protect the GFA from unraveling.

Thus, in conjunction with the findings about annual change in the independent and dependent variables above, the comparison of these two peace agreements strongly support the significance of the Five Forces of Competition.¹⁰⁴³ The manipulation of these forces by the Provisionals allowed them to successfully transition from production of violent to nonviolent political goods, while not only maintaining their level of power, but substantially increasing it.

¹⁰⁴³ In the Northern Irish case, the threat of rivals, new entrants and substitute goods were the most important of the five forces.

V. Conclusion

The competitive market model appears to offer considerable explanatory leverage on the production of externally-targeted violence, especially in conjunction with the resource constraint hypothesis. The crudely aggregated yearly analysis found considerable support for the model, including the ability of competitive forces to overcome deeper structural pressures. Moreover, the comparison between the two nearly identical peace negotiations highlights the critical importance of change in the competitive forces.

Such strong results are actually somewhat surprising. First, the measure used here for the market forces is highly aggregated and lacks much of the nuance highlighted by the theory. For one thing, it captures only the market-level threat of substitutes without evaluating the individual VPO exposure to the risk—such a threat is far more serious to a non-diversified producer than to one that is also producing nonviolent politics. Second, this test only allows for minimal dynamic interaction between the variables over time and does not capture very small, incremental changes. For example, the changes in the housing situation in Northern Ireland were too gradual to be included in any one specific year.

Given these methodological weaknesses of the present test, the results confirm that this is a promising vein of study. As such, more work needs to be done to produce more sophisticated tests of the theory.

CHAPTER 12: Conclusion

The Northern Ireland case provides an excellent example of the importance of competition on the strategic behavior of producers within the market for political violence. The ability of the Provisionals to establish significant monopoly power and, then leverage this dominant position to enter the market for nonviolent politics is one of the most significant causal variables for the virtual market closure after August 1998. As such, the competitive political market model developed in Chapter 2 appears to have considerable validity, resulting in a number of implications for both policy and theory development.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first explores the theoretical implications of the model. The third analyzes the policy implications of the model. The final section suggests avenues of further research.

I. Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this competitive market theory are quite significant. Although the primary purpose of this dissertation is to assess the impact and limitations of competition as a driver of VPO strategic behavior, the deeper purpose is to build a bridge between two fields of study for the enrichment of both. The study of sub-state political violence has drawn on insights from economics for decades, but this research is one of the first to deliberately engage with the business strategy literature in a formal way.¹⁰⁴⁴

¹⁰⁴⁴ Aaron Zelinsky and Martin Shubik have also recently attempted to build a more explicit bridge between these two fields through the introduction of a typology of organizational centralization. Zelinsky and Shubik, "Research Note: Terrorist Groups as Business Firms: A New Typological Framework,"

If the production of political violence is as affected by the Five Forces of Competition as any other good—as appears to be the case—this throws open a huge source of well-developed insights into producers' behavior based on massive quantities of data. These theories have the advantage of data richness that the study of illegal coercive violence does not by dint of its very illegality. One such useful extension of this bridge would be the application of theories on market entry (e.g. Moore's “Crossing the Chasm” theory on creating a sustainable market for disruptive technologies¹⁰⁴⁵) to explain why so few VPOs reach maturity.¹⁰⁴⁶ A second would be to use theories on the selection of joint venture and franchise partnerships to explain cooperation between VPOs and the growth of transnational groups like al Qaeda.¹⁰⁴⁷

Conversely, economists benefit from access to data that provide use-novelty¹⁰⁴⁸ and—equally important—the ability to observe the implications of relaxing some of the basic assumptions about structural limitations on competition within traditional markets. One of the key distinctions between VPOs and the standard economic firm is the ability

Terrorism and Political Violence. The business strategy literature, in turn, has borrowed heavily from traditional concepts of military strategy. Case, *Competition: The Birth of a New Science*, 16–20.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Geoffrey A. Moore, *Crossing the Chasm: Marketing and Selling Disruptive Products to Mainstream Customers*, rev. ed.

¹⁰⁴⁶ According to a widely reported statistic, 90 percent of terrorist organizations survive less than one year, and half of those disappear in less than a decade. Rapoport, “Terrorism,” in Hawkesworth and Kogan, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Government and Politics*, vol. 2:1067.

¹⁰⁴⁷ See Kogut, “Joint ventures: Theoretical and empirical perspectives,” *Strategic Management Journal*; Geringer, “Strategic Determinants of Partner Selection Criteria in International Joint Ventures,” *Journal of International Business Studies*; Fladmoe-Lindquist and Jacque, “Control Modes in International Service Operations: The Propensity to Franchise,” *Management Science*; Altinay, “Selecting Partners in an International Franchise Organisation,” *International Journal of Hospitality Management*.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*; Worrall, “The Ways in Which the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes Improves on Popper's Methodology,” in Gerard Radnitzky and Gunnar Andersson (eds.), *Progress and Rationality in Science*; Mayo, *Error and the Growth of Experimental Knowledge*; Bennett, “A Lakatosian Reading of Lakatos: What Can We Salvage from the Hard Core?,” in Elman and Fendius Elman, ed., *Progress in International Relations: Appraising the Field*.

to compete directly rather than just through the market. However, the potential political and strategic costs of such attacks provide some limitations that might not exist in the purely criminal markets. Patterns of competitive behavior that are fairly obvious under these slightly different conditions may produce insight into more subtle manifestations of the same patterns in the business world.

II. Policy Implications

This market model for conceptualizing political violence serves to organize the various policy options available for encouraging the decline and desistence of terrorist groups. It also highlights the tradeoffs and interactions between these options. States and other non-state actors can seek to end or minimize the violence through reducing demand, increasing costs, and mitigating the competitive threat from violent rivals, new entrants and alternative non-violent political entities.

The first set of policy options aim at decreasing the demand for radical change within the community through compromise, grievance amelioration or empowerment policies. These policies will of course depend on the specific set of grievances that mobilize the community to support the use of political violence and will often require costly political and societal change. In Northern Ireland, perceptions of political, social and economic discrimination were important motivators that were gradually reduced—but not fully eliminated—through a series of reforms. However, it is important to recognize that some constituent communities may require sacrifices beyond what states or societies may be willing to concede. Similarly, a conciliatory policy may encourage additional demand if the reforms are perceived as a result of the violence, i.e. create a

moral hazard or incentives to engage in extortion. Thus, not only might public perceptions of the utility of violence change, but the goalposts may as well.

The second set of potential policies revolves around increasing the costs of violence production. The ideal form of such a policy is to convince members of the constituent community to oppose the production of violence, e.g. cooption or “hearts and minds” campaigns. This opposition deprives the organization of both material and non-material resources, makes recruitment more difficult, and often ties directly into counterterrorism efforts. Alternatively, highly targeted neutralization of the VPOs through both legal and military means can potentially increase the costs—but such policies run the risk of also significantly increasing demand.

The third set of possible policies attempt to intervene in the market dynamics within the constituent community. Each of the Five Forces has its own potential implication, but the overall recommendation is that states should encourage the development of VPO monopoly power unless they are reasonably sure the competition itself will impose considerable resource constraints on the VPOs. The following recommendations assume that states are primarily interested in containing or resolving the conflict and that an agreeable compromise, i.e. an overlapping win-set, is theoretically possible:

- *Buyer Power*: From a competitive perspective, broadcast bans are counterproductive—they increase buyer power and encourage VPOs to produce additional violence to overcome the restrictions.¹⁰⁴⁹
- *Supplier Power*: State sponsorship can prove to be as much of a blessing as a curse. While the VPO gets access to materiel at much lower costs and can therefore produce more violence, the sponsor may act as a brake on the most extreme forms of violence if the VPO becomes dependent on its continued support.¹⁰⁵⁰
- *Substitute Goods*: States should encourage VPOs to engage in the nonviolent political process. While this may increase the VPO's legitimacy and make it easier for the VPO to find and mobilize potential constituents, it creates the possibility of a spiral of peace. At the same time, states should turn a blind eye to the use of alternative social control violence during peace processes.¹⁰⁵¹ This internally-directed violence helps to maintain the VPO's political power within the community and reduce demand for violence against the enemy, which makes the delivery of a stable peace more likely.
- *New Entrant*: Unless the potential new entrants are ideologically more acceptable to the state, i.e. may be willing to settle for a less drastic compromise,

¹⁰⁴⁹ However, these broadcast bans may help to limit the ability of the group to advertise to potential constituents and/or delegitimize their brand, both of which would negatively affect demand for their violence. In the Northern Irish case, the number of attacks was dramatically higher than immediately before and after the British broadcasting ban. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Global Terrorism Database*.

¹⁰⁵⁰ See Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism*, 50–52.

¹⁰⁵¹ As SSNI Mo Mowlam said of the continuing punishment attacks in Northern Ireland, “the peace we have now is imperfect, but better than none.” Monaghan, “An ‘Imperfect Peace’: Paramilitary ‘Punishments’ in Northern Ireland,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*.

it should adopt policies that raise the barriers to entry by discriminately targeting these political entrepreneurs. At the same time, states have a vested interest in lowering the barriers to exit, e.g. offering amnesties or reduced sentences for renunciation of violence—however, such policies often sacrifice justice for expediency.¹⁰⁵²

- *Rivalry*: An admittedly counterintuitive suggestion would be for states to focus counterterrorism efforts on the smaller rival groups rather than the larger VPOs in order to encourage the development of monopoly power. One potentially highly controversial option would be to surreptitiously bolster the violence production capability of the most moderate VPO within the community in the hope that it can establish sufficient monopoly power to deliver a peace in exchange for a compromise that would be less costly.

Ideally, states will adopt policies that build off of the synergistic interactions between the competitive forces. Although Paul Dixon probably gives the British government far too much credit for manipulating the Republicans in a carefully choreographed charade, he at least highlights the potential impact such a nuanced policy could have for ending enduring conflicts.

III. Future Research

This dissertation is simply the first test of the competitive market theory of political violence production. Although the Northern Ireland case gives strong support

¹⁰⁵² These policies have been used successfully in a number of contexts: against the Red Brigades in Italy, the Shining Path in Peru, and the Republican paramilitaries in Northern Ireland. Cronin, “How Al Qaeda Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups,” in Brown, Côté, Jr., Lynn-Jones and Miller, ed. *Contending with Terrorism: Roots Strategies, and Responses*, 397.

for the impact of competition and monopoly power over time, much more work remains to assess the validity of the theory. Such work primarily consists of improving the measure of the critical variables and increasing the number and type of test cases.

A. Measurements

This dissertation used a number of different sources to triangulate the various market conditions and connect them to observed outcomes. One of the advantages of the approach taken here is that, for the most part, it uses readily observable measures to explain VPO behavior. This means that with sufficient data, it should be possible to predict likely outcomes using the model. However, the use of data at this aggregated level makes it difficult to make definitive causal claims about the mechanism by which VPOs translate these environmental forces into specific behavior.

An important next step is to develop better proxy measurements of the supply, demand and competitive forces—preferably quantifiable measures that allow for statistical analysis.¹⁰⁵³ This process should include a methodology for ongoing conflicts that incorporates opinion poll and interview data for a constituent community that is in compliance with the relevant safety protocols for human subject research. Such data may still be subject to preference falsification, but they would be extremely useful to be

¹⁰⁵³ There is also an opportunity to improve the measurement of the independent variable by expanding the nascent database on self-claimed political violence. Currently, data have only been coded for 1992–1994 for the Provisional IRA, but there is a wealth of event information in the “War News” columns for the PIRA prior to those dates, as well as for the smaller paramilitaries during the periods when they had their own newspapers. As the Figure 11.1 indicates, these claims of violence generally exceed that recorded elsewhere. Much of this is the result of inclusion of minor events, hoaxes, and failures that fail to register in the mainstream press. Some of it may also be the result of propagandistic, morale-boosting claims of non-existent attacks to reap the benefits without risking anything. Either way, it would be especially useful to compare how VPOs market themselves with objective measures to identify when—and then explore why—they exaggerate or understate their actual production.

able to map out declared levels of support and opposition for specific VPOs within a constituent community rather than relying on broad proxy measures for support and opposition to generic violence.

For past cases, including a refinement of the Northern Ireland Republican case, a critical extension of this research program would be the use of interviews with the former producers of violence to find out to what extent these different factors influenced their decisions. This is naturally a complicated task because it requires individuals to talk about their participation in illegal activities, the discussion of which can have serious psychological, legal and safety ramifications for both the subject and the interviewer. In addition to these paramount considerations of human well-being, many of those involved in past campaigns of violence are now seeking to minimize their past activities in order to move the political process along and gain additional legitimacy in the current political context. It is therefore somewhat doubtful these interviews would involve the level of candor and accuracy necessary for our purposes, even if sufficient human subject safeguards are put in place and individuals agreed to be interviewed.¹⁰⁵⁴ But given the theoretical importance of such insider knowledge, it is important to advance this research agenda as far as possible.

¹⁰⁵⁴ The failure of this dissertation to acquire Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for a far less intrusive set of questions demonstrates the difficulty and hazards of engaging in this type of research. If relatively innocuous questions about an individual's political support for or opposition to a group that uses violence are problematic, there may be little hope for more specific questions that require admission of culpability in the production of violence. Nevertheless, such information is critical to the advancement of the theory. A second IRB proposal is currently being processed to allow interviews of Republican prisoners and ex-prisoners about the decision-making process involved in the crimes for which they have already been convicted.

A measure of the level of opposition that would be extremely telling for geographically bounded communities, but is likely only available for historical conflicts—if even then—is the number of police reports or confidential tips received about VPOs within those areas over time. Unfortunately, the level of specificity needed to code these police interactions requires access to the original data, which are generally highly restricted for privacy and security concerns.

B. Cases

The market for Republican violence in Northern Ireland was only one case in a very specific political context. Although the longitudinal nature of the analysis has produced a sufficient number of observations to test the theory, an important next step is to apply it to additional cases.

Other ethno-nationalist conflicts, such as those identified in the case selection section in Chapter 3, would be natural choices. However, if the political market frame and the Five Forces theory are to have any traction as universally applicable to all forms of political violence production, the next test should be a harder one. The drive to win constituent support and avoid constituent opposition should theoretically be relevant to all VPOs, but it is possible that ethno-nationalist groups may be far more influenced by these considerations than other types, like apocalyptic, leftist or Islamist groups. There is probably no harder case for a constituency-based theory than a group whose primary constituency is—at least nominally—the supernatural, e.g. apocalyptic or some religious groups. It would therefore be enormously productive to assess the theory

through the study of a group like Aum Shinrikyo, which carried out the 1995 sarin gas attack in Tokyo.

A second equally difficult, but certainly more timely, case would be to examine elements within the global Islamist network. These more amorphous entities are especially challenging because the borders of their constituency are very ill-defined—both geographically and conceptually.¹⁰⁵⁵ While these Islamists generally claim to represent all Muslims, they also denounce as apostates many Muslims that do not embrace their particular ideology. Furthermore, while subsets of the network are geographically bounded, like Al Shabaab in Somalia or Al Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers in Iraq, they are only partially interested in the support of the local constituency. Instead, they primarily draw their support from the international network of similarly minded individuals and groups. However, as the Anbar Awakening demonstrated, these transnational VPOs ignore the local market at their own risk. As discussed above in Section II, the business literature on the selection of partners for franchises and joint ventures may be especially relevant for such an analysis.

C. Methods

This dissertation primarily relied on circumstantial and correlative evidence to demonstrate qualitatively a relationship between competition and the level of violence production. While this methodology has the advantage of using observable data to explain the inner workings of an illegal organization, it relies heavily on theoretical assumptions that need to be tested in the political violence context. As such, it is

¹⁰⁵⁵ Jackson, “Groups, Networks, or Movements: A Command-and-Control-Driven Approach to Classifying Terrorist Organizations and Its Application to Al Qaeda,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*.

critically important to find evidence of the impact of competition on the internal decision-making processes within the VPOs. Therefore, the next phase of this research will feature interviews with (former) Republican paramilitary leaders.¹⁰⁵⁶

While an increase in the qualitative depth of the analysis would certainly improve the theoretical assessment, quantification of the correlative relationship would allow for more rigorous tests of significance using a variety of statistical models. This methodology is largely dependent on the development of more quantitative measures of the independent variables within the competitive market framework, as discussed above.

In sum, the next steps in this research project are to increase its granularity through improvements in the measure of the variables; to increase its depth through additional field work, including interviews; to increase its scope through additional case studies; and to increase confidence in the significance of the observed relationships through statistical analysis.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Although the PIRA kept copious records, it is exceptionally difficult for an external researcher to gain access to these internal files. Such access might eliminate some of the potential bias from live subjects misremembering or deliberately reshaping the historical narrative to better fit current interests.

APPENDIX A: Nationalist Organizations

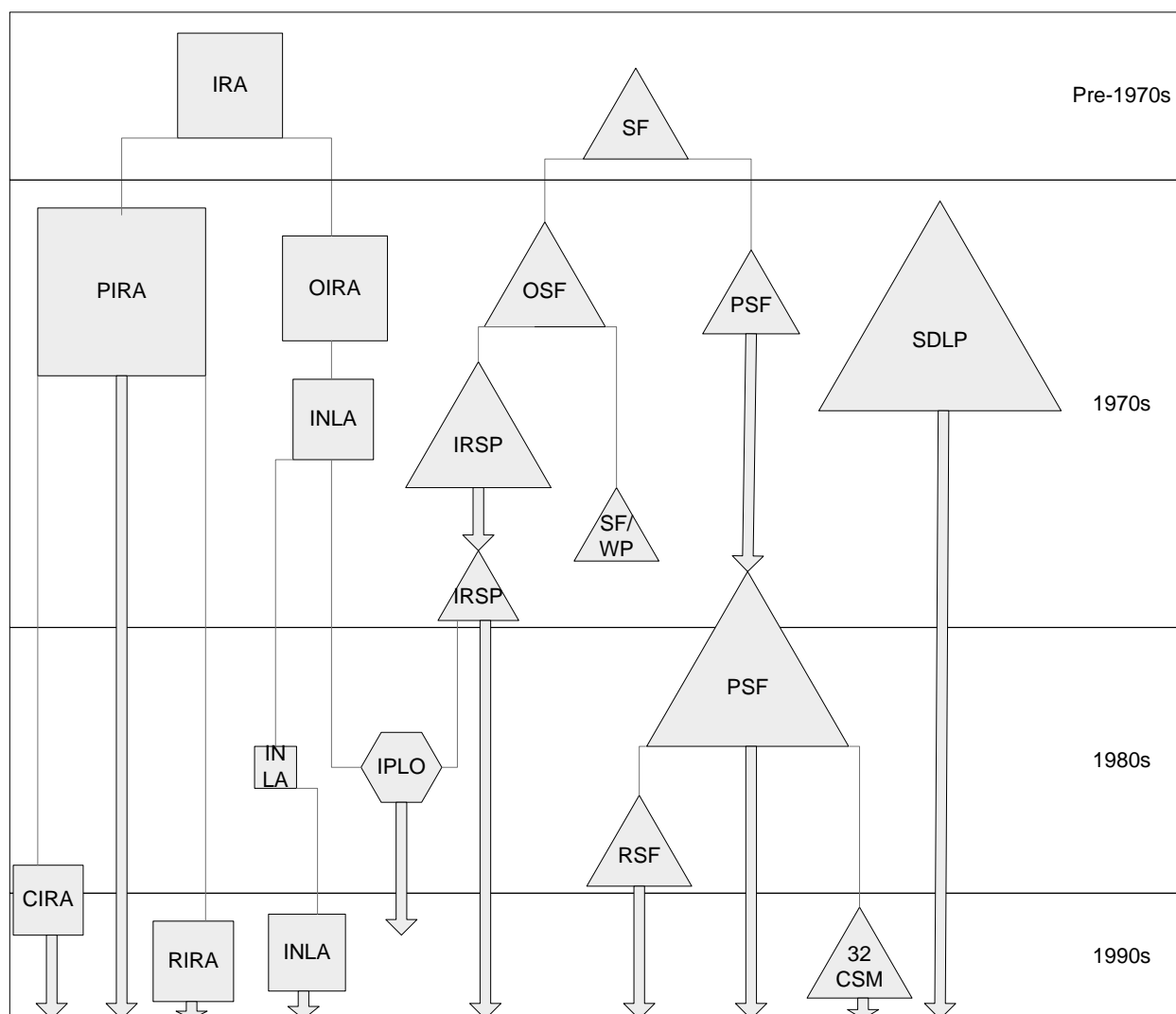


Figure A.1 Nationalist political organizations over time

In Figure A.1 of Nationalist political organizations, the size of the shapes provides a rough sense of the political market share of each organization, but it is not proportional. Squares represent producers of violence, triangles are producers of non-violent political goods, and the octagon is a hybrid organization. In Northern Ireland, most paramilitaries maintained a nominally separate political wing, e.g. the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Sinn Fein (SF) or the Irish National Liberation Army

(INLA) and the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP). The one exception to this was the Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLA), which merged both functions into a single undifferentiated organization.

Thin arrows indicate linkages between organizations and their successors.

Thick arrows indicate duration of the organization at that approximate share of the market. For example, the Provisional IRA (PIRA) remained the dominant producer of violence throughout the period, but two minor organizations, the Continuity and Real IRAs (CIRA and RIRA), split off in the late 1980s and late 1990s.

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