Tuning out the Troubles in Southern Ireland
Revisionist History, Censorship and Problematic Protestants

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Thesis Abstract

**Tuning out the Troubles in Southern Ireland**

**Revisionist History, Censorship and Problematic Protestants**

This thesis is an examination of the influence and impact of the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland, post 1968, on the practice of Irish history, on southern Irish broadcast media and on the southern Irish modernisation process.

I will examine the uneasy and contested transition in systems of hegemony in a society where the state is not coterminous with perceptions of nationhood, where society is anxiously suspended between conservation of its existence and popular nationalist aspirations, where southern economic dependency interacted uneasily with northern political instability and sectarianism.

The thesis examines the ‘Ulsterisation’ of the War of Independence by some historians and its aftermath as an ideological project. It pays particular attention, using the case-study method, to the imposition of a sectarian character on republican forces during the war of independence by the highly influential Newfoundland historian Peter Hart, and will explain why this research is ideologically problematic within Irish historiography. I will link this to (in a second case-study) the project undertaken in the early 1970s by Irish government minister (also an academic historian and political scientist) Conor Cruise O’Brien to undermine and eradicate from popular awareness secular anti-imperialist aspects of Irish nationalist consciousness, primarily through, in case-study three, the imposition of broadcasting censorship and support for repression. I question O’Brien’s positing of a ‘Catholic nationalism’ as an overarching basis for Irish statehood by, in case-study four, an examination the largely unexplored socio-economic position of Protestants in southern Ireland and the forms of social control imposed on and within that community.

The thesis examines how official reaction to the conflict combined repression and broadcasting censorship during the 1970s to revise popular perceptions of Irish history and Irish society. Control of understanding of the present was combined with attempts to take control of perceptions of the past, in order to circumscribe the parameters of what is feasible in the present, so as to preserve the socio-economic status quo. It specifically explores the impact of the post 1968 Northern Ireland conflict on:

- The attempt by proponents of Irish revisionist historiography to portray Irish resistance to British rule as ‘Catholic nationalism’ and as a mirror image generally of Ulster unionist sectarianism;

in the context of

- The simultaneous transformational change of economic direction in the southern Irish economy and society, which imparted to this project increased impetus, opportunity and political scope.
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None of the above is responsible for faults and mistakes in what follows. For that and all else here, I am entirely responsible.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>BMH</td>
<td>Bureau of Military History</td>
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<tr>
<td>CICA</td>
<td>Committee to Investigate Child Abuse</td>
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<td>CofI</td>
<td>Church of Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUP</td>
<td>Democratic Unionist Party</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
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<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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<td>FF</td>
<td>Fianna Fáil</td>
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<td>FG</td>
<td>Fine Gael</td>
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<td>FJ</td>
<td>Freeman’s Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAA</td>
<td>Gaelic Athletic Association</td>
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<td>ICM</td>
<td>Irish Church Missions (to the Roman Catholics)</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
<td>Irish Historical Studies</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>Irish Independent</td>
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<td>Ind (Lon)</td>
<td>Independent (London)</td>
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<td>IP</td>
<td>Irish Press</td>
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<td>IPP</td>
<td>Irish Parliamentary Party</td>
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<td>IPR</td>
<td>Irish Political Review</td>
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<td>IRA</td>
<td>Irish Republican Army</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Irish Times</td>
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<td>ITGWU</td>
<td>Irish Transport and General Workers Union</td>
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<td>LRB</td>
<td>London Review of Books</td>
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<td>MoS</td>
<td>Mail on Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>NESC</td>
<td>National Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>NI</td>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
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<td>NLR</td>
<td>New Left Review</td>
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<td>NS</td>
<td>New Statesman</td>
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<td>National Women’s Council of Ireland</td>
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<td>QUB</td>
<td>Queen’s University Belfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIRB</td>
<td>Residential Institutions Redress Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIC</td>
<td>Royal Irish Constabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>RTÉ</td>
<td>Radio Telefís Éireann</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUC</td>
<td>Royal Ulster Constabulary</td>
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<td>SBP</td>
<td>Sunday Business Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDLP</td>
<td>Social Democratic and Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Sinn Féin</td>
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<td>SFWP</td>
<td>Sinn Fein the Workers’ Party</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Sunday Independent</td>
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<tr>
<td>SILRA</td>
<td>Southern Irish Loyalist Relief Association</td>
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<td>ST</td>
<td>Sunday Times</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCD</td>
<td>Trinity College Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE</td>
<td>Times Higher Education</td>
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<td>TLS</td>
<td>Times Literary Supplement</td>
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<td>UDA</td>
<td>Ulster Defence Association</td>
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<td>UDR</td>
<td>Ulster Defence Regiment</td>
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<td>UFF</td>
<td>Ulster Freedom Fighters</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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<td>UVF</td>
<td>Ulster Volunteer Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>WS</td>
<td>Witness Statement (in BMH)</td>
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<td>WP</td>
<td>Workers Party</td>
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CHAPTER ONE Introduction and Methodology

Dominant societal narratives are formed through contestation between individuals and institutions acting on behalf of social groups. In 1859 Karl Marx asserted that personal outlook is grounded in social experience: ‘It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but their social being that determines their consciousness’. This is because, ‘the economic structure of society’ is its ‘real foundation’ and gives rise to a political and legal superstructure ‘to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness’.¹

No overarching question is settled in an economic system based on capitalist competition, consequent inequality and class contradiction, in which the only constant is change. However, rulers must rule and the system must, if it is to survive, be accepted broadly or regarded as legitimate. Relatively autonomous groups and individuals thus also play an important role in support of or in opposition to the goals and interests of the status quo. How are they incorporated, encouraged, repulsed or simply ignored? What are the roles of social class interest, individual experience and the weight of historical expectation within this process of contestation?

These are questions with which this thesis engages. It specifically explores the impact of the post-1968 Northern Ireland conflict on:

- The attempt by proponents of Irish revisionist historiography to portray Irish resistance to British rule as ‘Catholic nationalism’ and as a mirror-image generally of Ulster unionist sectarianism;
- The simultaneous transformational change of economic direction in the southern Irish economy and society, which imparted to this project impetus, opportunity and political scope.

The thesis asks how the Northern Ireland ‘Troubles’, post-1968, and the southern Ireland modernisation process influenced and impacted on the practice of Irish historiography and its broadcast media, and therefore, more widely, on southern Irish society.

1.1 A Past Centred Present

For Ireland’s ruling elite the imposition of an agreed ‘national interest’ on society at large is unusually difficult. This is due to a contested process of state formation. A troubled past weighs heavily on the present. The newly independent Irish state in 1922, composed of 26 of 32 Irish counties, was prevented from encompassing all of the island’s territory. Six north-

¹ Marx, 1951 [1859], p329.
eastern counties (of the province of Ulster’s nine) had an avowedly Protestant unionist majority in four and remained within the UK. The sectarian origin of Northern Ireland is a basis for configuring the Irish conflict as ethno sectarian, Catholic nationalist versus Protestant unionist, rather than as a residue of colonial and imperial domination.

After October 1968 in Northern Ireland a long simmering revolt by the nationalist, mainly Roman Catholic, minority population against the Northern Ireland state became increasingly violent, largely self-sustained, and intractable. The conflict intensified after internment without trial was imposed on the nationalist population in August 1971. It further escalated after Derry’s ‘Bloody Sunday’ on 31 January 1972, when members the British Paratroop and of the Royal Anglian Regiments mortally wounded 14 civilians and injured 26 attending an anti-internment civil rights protest. Some days later thousands of protesters watched in approval as the British Embassy in Dublin burned to the ground. As the crisis developed and nationalist alienation deepened, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) grew. The Republican Movement, comprised of the Sinn Féin political Party and the IRA, had split during 1969-70. The more militant section, the ‘Provisional’ IRA emerged as the dominant republican organisation during the 1970s.

The northern nationalist critique of unionist anti-Catholicism linked in with an emerging critique of the overtly Roman Catholic nature of southern social structures: as articulated even by mainstream northern nationalist leaders. This was of concern south of the border, in particular the existence of a receptive southern audience increasingly discontented by Roman Catholic institutional and ideological influence. In Northern Ireland, Protestant sectarian loyalty pervaded almost every facet of that society. Protestant clergy there faced right-wing protest if they appeared to abandon sectarian anti-Catholicism. Down south the

2 Though pro-state unionist paramilitary organisations were active also. Of 342 initially incarcerated two were Protestants, one a Provisional IRA republican, the other a member of the left-wing anti-unionist Peoples Democracy organisation, Farrell, 1980, p282. For an account of loyalist paramilitary violence at that time see Dillon, Lehane, 1973.
5 In a report by the ‘Hard Gospel’ group (set up in 2003 to manage north-south Church of Ireland tensions over individual and institutional relationships with the Orange Order, O’Leary, 2012, p116) the Church was described as ‘conservative and evangelical, … Orange and self-righteous’ in the north, while ‘liberal and ecumenical, … Masonic and pretentious’ in the south. Clergy in the north were considered to be ‘going too far’ if they were ‘wishing washy’ and engaged in “fashionable” mixing with Roman Catholics’, ‘attend[ed] the opening of local G[aelic] A[thletic] A[ssociation]
Roman Catholic Church’s position of ideological dominance was contested and weakened from the left by workers, women, young people, and, increasingly, by the middle class.6

The post-1968 ‘Troubles’, so called after the 1919-23 War of Independence and civil war period, caused deep apprehension within certain groups in the Republic of Ireland. Fear of the spread of violence, of the autonomous nature of the nationalist revolt, of left-wing rhetoric and accompanying critiques of conservative features of southern Irish society (of political connectedness between north and south), began to pervade southern Ireland’s ruling elite.7 This thesis will examine how southern society was reconsolidated in the interests of that elite. It will argue that this was accomplished through a combination of ideological reinforcement, censorship, and repression. The thesis examines how new conceptual frameworks were derived from this process of consolidation. In doing so, it explains how aspects of southern Irish society, particularly as they affected southern Protestants and their social interaction, became largely invisible.

1.2 Historiography

In response to and in sympathy with these elite anxieties, an ideologically ‘revisionist’ historiography ‘gathered momentum’ during ‘the course of the Troubles’. It was said to ‘challenge the idea that Irish people are, or should be, exclusively Gaelic and Catholic’.8 Revisionism counterposed itself to this self-constructed stereotype by claiming to explore instead ‘Irish history in all its density, ramifications and complexity’.9 The historian Roy Foster exemplified this approach and announced, prematurely, in 1986, ‘We are all revisionists now’. His 1988 ‘revisionist milestone’,10 Modern Ireland 1600-1972 ‘proved to be the channel through which all the pent-up scepticism of four decades of revisionism could burst into Irish public life’.11 Foster argued that Irish nationalism was shrouded in sentimentalised ‘myth’, masking a reality revealing sectarian anti-Protestantism. Charles grounds’ or were seen in bars, Gardiner, 2008, pp16, 18, 22. Infamously, in 1985 Presbyterian minister the Rev’d David Armstrong was driven by the Orange Order from Limavaddy. He had invited into a service a Roman Catholic priest whose church across the road was destroyed in a sectarian attack, Meehan, 2010, pp30-31. See Jordan, 2008, on Ian Paisley’s role during the 1960s in articulating sectarian sentiments no longer openly espoused by main Protestant denominations.


7 Lyons, 1972, p45.

8 Richtarik, 1995, pp72, 73, a stereotype based on a false premise that speaking the Irish language derived from religious affiliation.

9 Gotzaridis, 2006, p221.


11 Andrew Browne, ‘Saturday Review Profile: Roy Foster, interpreter of myths’, Guardian (Lon), 13 Sep 2003
Townshend summarised fellow revisionist Marianne Elliott’s related view in *The Catholics of Ulster*, that Catholic ‘tribal myth[s]’ ‘are not agreeable or diverting fantasies but dangerous self-deceptions that all too readily form the parapet of an endless pseudoethnic warfare’. Elliot’s contesting of this mythical construct was, remarked Townshend, ‘surely … what Irish historical revisionism is all about’.  

Revisionism is, in other words, a mission-driven project whose central organising idea is that the struggle for Irish independence is or was an ethno sectarian Catholic project. This pursuit of ‘tribal myths’ is criticised in this thesis as an ideological endeavour. Addressing the issue of revisionist histories generally, Losurdo observed, ‘Revisionism is synonymous with the liquidation of the revolutionary tradition and of the war-revolutions of the 20th Century’. Descriptions of historical research within this tradition as merely revisions of previous research are, he suggested, tautological.  

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In the Irish case, attempts to undermine the revolutionary tradition are accompanied by assertions that it is or was a sectarian enterprise. Those who admire Foster’s work sometimes portray criticism as itself sectarian and/or xenophobic. Thus the Irish novelist John Banville noted in 2015 that Foster’s study of the poet W.B. Yeats, ‘provoked nationalist wrath for … well, as so often, it was not quite clear what they were wrathful about, unless it was the fact that Foster is a Protestant Irishman who lives and works in England’. Imaginative assertions such as these are difficult to refute, partly since, as here, they often arrive without evidence.

Within the academic revisionist tradition also, evidence of a specifically Catholic nationalist sectarianism is often simply assumed. For example, Boyce and O’Day’s supportive 1996 essay collection on historical revisionism referred at one point to late 19th century Protestant Nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell as having been ‘incorporated into the republican myth’. This is followed by, ‘Irish nationalism was engaged with … its enemies, the Protestants of Ireland’. We are led to believe, therefore, that Parnell was his own enemy.

The historian Brian Murphy suggested that Foster’s (and more generally, revisionist) historiography on this sectarianism point was ‘quite literally flawed at source’. Murphy’s examination of original source material flatly contradicted Foster’s assertion that ‘emotions’ surrounding the Irish language revival movement, the Gaelic League, were ‘fundamentally

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sectarian and even racist’, and that Irish Nationalism by 1912 ‘was Anglo-phobic and anti-Protestant’. Nevertheless, Foster’s assertions gained ideological traction because, as the thesis will argue, they were part of a self-questioning motif encouraged by southern Irish society’s modernisation process. This motif was conditioned by secular reaction to oppressive Roman Catholic influences on the southern state. It encouraged a critique of an assumed omni-present ‘Catholic nationalist ideology’ that also was construed as underlying the northern revolt. A proponent of this thesis, the Irish Times commentator and essayist Fintan O’Toole, succinctly expressed its central imperative when he wrote of:

The demands of a young, highly educated population and the needs of a pluralist society to disentangle itself from the tribal religions that have made violence endemic in Northern Ireland …

This thesis will explore how revisionist ideas constructed a sectarian nationalist narrative within historical scholarship that it then presumed to undermine. A pivotal history of the War of Independence, Peter Hart’s The IRA and its Enemies, Violence and Community in Cork 1916-1923 (1998), is critiqued as an example of the ‘flawed at source’ methodology Murphy identified. The thesis adopts, as part of this exercise, the ‘case study technique’ recommended in J.J. Lee’s critique of the revisionist debate. He asserted that it is bogged down in generalities and, as a result, ‘standards of the use of evidence’ within Irish historiography have ‘lapsed… lamentably’.

The thesis associates the revisionist project with Irish economic and social modernisation, and with a strictly circumscribed (by Fintan O’Toole) version of a ‘pluralist society’. The thesis therefore considers also a discipline whose emergence is associated with industrialisation and modernisation processes.

1.3 Sociology

For a long historical period, sociology in southern Ireland was ‘a small and mainly priest dominated discipline’, whose primary journal was entitled Christus Rex. It was part of the western European tradition of Catholic sociology, ‘meant to counteract the rise of secularism

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16 Murphy, 1993, p171; Foster, 1988, pp453, 459 (in Murphy, 1993, pp172, 173). Murphy identified Foster’s reliance on ‘a book that has no footnotes’, replete with difficult to trace, inaccurate and out of context quotations. Murphy, 1993, p176, was referring to Patrick O’Farrell’s Ireland’s English Question, on Anglo-Irish relations, published in 1971. O’Farrell argued that in the ‘Irish world view’ ‘religion [was] both the pivot and the lynch-pin’. England ‘was always modern’, whereas Ireland was a ‘constant anachronism’, in Malcolm, 2007, p34. Malcolm noted perceptively that for O’Farrell (as for revisionist historians generally), ‘Irish republicanism was ultimately a misguided enterprise’.

17 O’Toole, 1997, p101; 1994, p133.

18 Lee, 2001, p60.

and socialism’. During the 1960s and 1970s, however, Catholic social teaching was challenged by ‘the modernisation agenda of the [Irish] state’ and by a comparative shift to the Left by those studying social problems. Reiteration of Catholic social principles and suspicions about ‘growing state involvement in welfare services’ became regarded as outmoded and inadequate within increasingly complex urban environments. These influences impacted also on clergy involved in social research.20

Empirically based studies and commentary, some of which were breaking out from within the strictly Catholic tradition (for example, Newman’s *Limerick Rural Survey* in 1964), tended instead to expose and to critique institutionalised and ideologically based Catholic constraints on social actors. Within discussion of social change, however, the important socio-economic position of southern Protestants and the existence of social controls within that community, affecting society at large, were largely ignored and bypassed.21 This thesis will investigate the extent, reasons for, and significance of, this neglect in a society in which religious factors continue to impact on societal practices and political discourse.

Conway’s survey of the state of Irish sociology in 2006 observed that the profession appeared to accept the ‘geographical, political and cultural partitioning of Ireland’.22 It is a broadly accurate assessment, though there are exceptions. Two Sociology Association of Ireland primers, *Ireland, A Sociological Profile* (1986) and *Irish Society, Sociological Perspectives* (1995), suggested, in the words of the latter, that ‘new approaches and research themes are beginning to lay the basis for sociology in Ireland’, which ‘transcend the border [and] encourage north-south cooperation’. The 1995 text reflected that approach in the selection of its subject matter. McVeigh’s chapter, ‘Cherishing the Children of the Nation Unequally’, used the phrase, ‘pluralist theocracy’ to describe how the southern state

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20 Clancy et al, 1995, pp15, 16. Whyte, 1980, p332, noted, as a consequence, that in 1966 the Catholic Workers College (CWC) became the College of Industrial Relations, while the Dublin Institute for Catholic Sociology was renamed the Dublin Institute of Adult Education. See CWC reflections by trade union researcher Francis Devine, 2015, p87.

21 Though statistical evidence was available in Hutchinson, 1969, Walsh, 1970. Also see White, 1975. Kurt Bowen’s impressive 1983 study on ‘Ireland’s privileged minority’ was widely admired. However, it was not reprinted and became, essentially, a curiosity. It is not a book with which Roy Foster engaged in his ‘How the Catholics became Protestants’ essay (in Foster, 2008), though reading it might have corrected mistaken impressions (see Section Three). Bowen’s research was not considered also in the ‘Religion’ chapter of Share, Corcoran, Conway, *A Sociology of Ireland* (4th ed., 2012, pp332-352).

22 Conway, 2006, p19. He noted (pp11-12) a comprehensive critique of British rule and of unionist sectarianism in the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland report in 1921. Nobel Prize winning US sociologist Jane Addams, ‘arguably the World’s most famous sociologist in 1920’, contributed to it in large part. However, her contribution was subsequently ignored within Irish sociology. Addams et al, report (1921), at www.academia.edu/6310490/ (accessed 29 Dec 2014).
incorporated in its system of rule ‘other religious blocks’ besides the dominant Catholic Church. He also noted, accurately, that southern Protestants were ‘relatively privileged’.23 These interesting observations were not developed then by McVeigh or subsequently by others within overarching considerations of Irish social structures.

Conway’s view of Irish sociology’s 26-County focus is accurate, however, if applied to the Gill & MacMillan primer *A Sociology of Ireland* (Share et al, 2000, 2007, 2012, the latest edition part-edited by Conway). It has, despite its title, an almost exclusively southern Irish and, in so far as religion is considered, Roman Catholic, focus. Indeed, the 2012 edition chapter on religion suggests, before ignoring them, that ‘historically’ Protestant churches were ‘involved in a number of philanthropic, education and healthcare institutions’. The Roman Catholic Church is then identified as ‘increasingly involved’ in ‘hospitals… homes for “unmarried mothers”, elite boarding schools and residential homes for excluded young people’. However, Protestant institutions were, as will be demonstrated in Section Three, equally involved in a southern Irish ‘apparatus of “containment”’.24 While many Protestants attended ‘elite boarding schools’, others were resident, like their Roman Catholic counterparts, in less ostentatious homes for excluded unmarred mothers and their abandoned offspring. McVeigh’s ‘pluralist theocracy’ phrase is mentioned by Share et al, but not applied. The focus is relentlessly Roman Catholic, as in the section on ‘Scandals in Religious Institutions’. Only Roman Catholic clergy are mentioned as being involved in child sex abuse.25

Since this activity involved other clergy, it is incumbent on researchers to be aware of it. In 2005 a Church of Ireland clergyman, Rev’d Norman Ruddock, noted a lack of media attention directed at Church of Ireland, as compared to Roman Catholic, clergy. However, he thought the ‘trend’ ‘reversed’ after the conviction for child abuse in 2004 of his (unnamed by Ruddock) Castlepollard, Co Westmeath successor, Rev’d Glenn Milne.26 Underreporting requires consideration by social scientists. If researchers are not cognisant of the phenomenon, it may indicate use of methodological blinkers. The thesis will explore the

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24 The ‘containment’ phraseology is James Smith’s, 2007.
extent to which a focus on Catholic institutions and personnel in the southern state tended to leave Protestant victims of institutional care regimes and their alleged abusers under-scrutinised. The thesis will explore also how this perceptual gap discouraged a focus on state responsibility for a dysfunctional sectarian regulation regime. It will argue that the failure to engage with the related, though complex, issue of Protestant involvement in southern Irish society was because inclusion potentially confused an ideologically sustained focus on Catholic nationalism.

1.4 Economy, EEC, and Society

Conway remarked that a third, and also positive, influence on the development of post-1960s Irish sociology was external. Such influence was encouraged if it assisted in embedding Irish society within the European Economic Community (EEC, later European Community, EC, then EU, European Union) after entry in 1973. European integration was perceived as undermining insularity

The novelist and commentator Colm Tóibín confirmed and endorsed a relationship between revisionist historiography and EEC membership, in a review in 1993 of Roy Foster’s newly published *Paddy and Mr. Punch, Connections in Irish and English History*:

This revisionism is precisely what our state needed once the North blew up and we joined the EC, in order to isolate Northern Ireland from us and our history, in order to improve relations with Britain, in order to make us concentrate on a European future. Foster and his fellow historians’ work became useful, not for its purity, or its truth, but its politics.

Tóibín concluded, that ‘ambiguity’, possibly meaning obfuscation, ‘is what is needed’. ‘Our’ revised ‘history’ and ‘European future’ was designed to isolate southerners (Tóibín’s ‘us’) from events and people increasingly portrayed as foreign to their interests north of the Irish border. As another Irish novelist, Ronan Bennett, noted in his review of Foster’s book,

Revisionists attack Irish socialists and nationalists as backward-looking conservatives (and even racists), and portray themselves – predominantly centrists and centre–rightists – as progressives.

Christine Kinealy, a historian of the 1845-52 Great Famine and critic of revisionist historiography, made a similar point when she asserted that its approach created,

A false - but emotionally powerful - dichotomy … between traditional, reactionary nationalism and secular, modern revisionism.

The class content and origin of proffered advice conditioned its reception. If critical

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27 Discussed in Section Three, chapters Eleven and Thirteen.
commentary arrived down south from over the Irish border, as distinct from across the water and English Channel, it was apt to be spurned. For example, in 1971 *Irish Times* political correspondent Michael McInerney noted perceptively that the young republican-socialist Mid Ulster MP Bernadette Devlin (later McAliskey),

> ... was great so long as she stayed north of the border. But when she set foot on the soil of the 26 Counties she became, to the southern defenders, what she was already to the northern defenders of the status quo: a little bitch who should keep her nose out of things.30

In time, as will be explained in Section Two of the thesis, these southern defenders largely subtracted northern concerns and commentary from southern politics, with the aid of repression, broadcasting censorship and propaganda.

Isolating Northern Ireland ‘from us and our history’ was accomplished also, therefore, through fear of the spread of violence, often characterised as mindlessly sectarian. It was transformed into a political weapon, in particular after Ulster loyalists set off the May 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings that killed 34 people.31 Political exploitation of fear and death is explored in the thesis by drawing upon Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony (1971). For Gramsci ‘the fundamental categories of power’ are the ‘interdependent realities’ of ‘force and consensus’.32 A dominant view of the conflict, aided by censorship and the inculcation of fear, was inserted into the southern Irish public sphere.

The thesis attempts to explain this shift in outlook through examining the material basis for transitional changes in the dominant ideology of southern society. The pursuit of economic as well as political independence from the 1930s to the 1960s by the ruling elite was accompanied by anti-partition rhetoric. Economic and political nationalism appeared to walk hand in hand. Protectionist economic policies were an attempt to reverse the effects of colonial administration during the 19th Century, that had resulted in famine and also deindustrialisation south of the territory that became Northern Ireland in 1920. Between 1845-52 over a million died due to the effects of the Great Famine, from a population in 1841 of over eight million. If the extent of famine mortality was exceptional, so too were its effects. Paul Sweeney pointed out in 2004:

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30 ‘Perspective on the year’, *IT*, 1 Jan 1971.
In the context of a population of 5.5 million for the whole island today, there is no comparable level of emigration from any country in modern times.\textsuperscript{33} In excess of five million emigrated during 150 years after the Famine. This continual exodus reduced relative discontent at home, particularly after southern independence in 1922.

Emigration also stymied the development of an indigenous market. Protectionism, that was intended to counteract these structural deficits, collapsed by the late 1950s, when net emigration reached a post-independence high of over 400,000. As a consequence, an Anglo-Irish Free Trade Area Agreement was signed in 1965, and was combined with attempts to attract foreign multinational investment. The strategy became particularly successful after EEC entry in 1973, with the state being used as a base for tariff-free multinational penetration of European markets, and the registration by companies of worldwide profits within southern Ireland’s low corporation tax regime. It stimulated ‘one of the most FDI [Foreign Direct Investment] intensive economies in the world’. So much so in recent years, between 2000 and 2010, US multinational profits in Irish subsidiaries grew from $13 to $95 billion. Their tax rate ‘plummeted from 9 to 3 per cent’ while employment ‘barely grew’.\textsuperscript{34}

The material basis of the union between economic and political nationalism thus ceased to be. The thesis argues that the parameters of the Irish public sphere shifted from a framework derived from an outmoded national capitalism to one based on subservience to the needs of international capital. This requirement was promoted in the context of EEC membership and dovetailed with a need to modernise social structures. Southern Irish integration into a socio-economic block dominated by states with continuing imperialist interests created its own impetus toward undermining anti-imperialist emphases within Irish political and historiographical discourse.

Modernisation had profound effects on lives and life chances. Whereas in 1963-4 129,365 and 16,819 students attended second and third level, respectively, that number increased to 362,230 and 84,140 by 1992-3. This rise was driven by the introduction of a free secondary education scheme in 1967 and by the later introduction of means-tested third level grants. Higher participation rates in third level education were skewed during this period toward affluent sectors of society. Within professional, employer, managerial and

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{33} Sweeney, 2004, p.6.
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salaried employee households, third level attendance rose from 58 to 66%, whereas the rate for manual workers increased from 8 to a mere 11%.\textsuperscript{35}

Educational provision was driven by new employment patterns resulting from economic restructuring. This process of modernisation relied on post-1973 EEC membership and the advent of US and Japanese companies surmounting European tariff barriers. Between 1958 and 1988 manufacturing output rose five fold, but manufacturing employment by just a quarter. However, public sector employment grew to subsume one-third of the non-agricultural labour force, from 118,000 in 1961 to 235,00 in 1981. Between 1951-1990, those engaged in agricultural work declined from 10.6 to 3.3% of the working population. Reflecting an erosion of the small-scale indigenous industrial base, employers and self-employed declined from 38.4 to 17.6%. However, as if to compensate, the salaried upper middle class rose from 5.3 to 18.1% of the total. Lower middle class and manual (non-agricultural) numbers grew from 13.8 and 24% to 19.6 and 27.2% respectively in the same period. Ominously, however the percentage unemployed increased from 3.7 to 15.5% of the workforce.\textsuperscript{36}

The extent of restructuring is reflected in the fact that whereas in 1955 the UK took 89% of Irish exports, that reduced to 35% in 1988. The share for other EU countries increased from 5 to 39%.\textsuperscript{37} The value of exports by sector indicated the arrival of new export-orientated multinational firms. Food, drink and tobacco exports, based on indigenous activity, were worth 65% of the total in 1955, but only 25% in 1988. However, chemicals and machinery exports, an increasingly multinational dominated sector, increased from 3% of export values in 1955 to 44.3% in 1988. Much of this activity consisted of packaging and assembly of parts manufactured elsewhere, with few downstream linkages within the Irish economy. This is partly indicated by the fact that chemicals and machinery imports were worth 47.1% of the total in value terms in 1988. In addition, as a Telesis Consultancy Group report, commissioned by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), pointed out in 1983, multinational activity was predicated on the ability of firms to engage in transfer pricing. This mechanism permitted inflated worldwide profits to be registered artificially by a multinational subsidiary in the low corporation tax Irish economy. At the same time the economy was increasingly dependent on EU grants and subsides, for example in agriculture where these increased from 1.4 to 5.7% of GNP between 1973 and 1986.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{35} Clancy, 1995, pp468, 485.
\textsuperscript{36} Breen, Whelan, 1996, pp17, 18.
\textsuperscript{37} National Economic & Social Council (NESC) 88, 1989, p79.
\textsuperscript{38} NESC 64, 1983; NESC 89, 1989, pp80, 81, 93.
The process of state-directed modernisation of economy and society resulted in dislocation and volatility. It witnessed ‘small net changes in employment’ but ‘very large job gains and job losses’. Successive governments moved Irish economic eggs from the national capitalism to the EU/multinational capitalism basket. The retreat from economic and therefore also from political nationalism in the name of progress created an impetus towards re-educating the growing middle class and their incorporation into a new political framework for Irish identity.

This process saw the demise not only of indigenous firms generally but also of definably ‘Protestant firm[s]’, many of which, as we shall see in Chapter Eleven, discriminated against aspirational Catholics. Their largely cosseted existence was ensured, ironically, by previously mentioned protectionism driven by economic nationalism from 1932 to 1959.39 These significant phenomena, sectarian ownership patterns and discrimination, largely bypassed social science inquiry, and discussion generally within the public sphere. As noted earlier, this thesis will examine this gap in the literature, suggesting, again, that it is partly explicable as a consequence of a fixation with Catholic nationalism.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This thesis looks at the mobilisation of opinion and the transition from a particular hegemonic balance of forces at a certain period in Irish history to another. It is an examination of the means by which social forces and groups were constrained by a modernisation process, but one that liberated them also from previous controls. It is an examination of what was encouraged within social science and the humanities, a critique of Irish capitalism transformed into a critique of Catholicism. A critique of the real material base of Irish conservatism was discouraged. Protestant members of the elite, who formed a distinct group, had a significant stake in this conservative ethos, within which the state sustained ‘balanced’ Protestant and Catholic systems of socio-economic control. By means of these transformed power relations, inequality was modernised.

To ground this approach theoretically, the thesis draws upon Gramsci’s framework in which a dominant elite rules society, whose power rests on ownership and control of economic resources and whose political institutions are free up to a point, beyond which these interests are threatened. Subordinate groups in society accept the status quo, in practice, to the extent that the system appears to supply socially determined needs and wants

and appears to uphold the appearance of freedom and of choice. It is, in that sense, democratic. Social equilibrium in society is normally characterised by,

… a combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed, the attempt is always made to ensure that force will appear to be based on the consent of the majority expressed by so-called organs of public opinion – newspapers and associations, which therefore, in certain situations, are artificially multiplied.40

Gramsci explained how in western capitalist societies ‘the consent of the governed’ is intended to be ensured while ‘the real nature of power relations in capitalist society’ are obscured.41 In times of crisis such as the period of the 1968-1994 armed conflict in Northern Ireland, force played a greater role, accompanied by assertions that its deployment prevented greater chaos. In a discussion of the parameters of the phenomenon of false consciousness, Lukes refers to ‘the power to mislead’ and also to the subject of ‘willing’ and ‘unwilling’ compliance to domination, where social actors may ‘consent to power and resent the mode of its exercise’.42

Gramsci and Lukes’ assertions will frame the investigation of the application and effect of censorship and repression in Radio Telefís Éireann (RTÉ) during the 1970s. For the defenders of the southern Irish status quo the task was to prevent the groundswell for southern reform from joining the proponents of northern revolution and reunification. Northern noses were to be kept out of the south, while southerners required alienation from six and 32-county concerns.

The ‘growing anti-clericalism among educated Catholics’43 in the 1960s and early 70s in southern Ireland was a potentially sympathetic ingredient cultivated assiduously by Conor Cruise O’Brien (1972), a highly influential figure in politics, journalism and academia. O’Brien and others portrayed republican armed militants, who were targeted and censored by the state, as being motivated by the same violent and ethnically-charged ideas that had led to southern state formation. It seemed like objective self-critique of the ideological basis of Irish nationalism.44 The thesis examines how revision of a narrative of colonial

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40 Gramsci, 1971, p80.
41 Merrington, 1977, p15.
42 Lukes, 2005, pp149, 150.
43 White, 1975, p143.
44 For a period before the 1985 Anglo Irish Agreement was agreed, the southern government adopted, temporarily, a more openly nationalist stance. For instance, Foreign Minister Peter Barry referred to a ‘nationalist nightmare’ in Northern Ireland, Dick Walsh, ‘Barry pledges support for the
dispossession and resistance was transformed into a process of introspection that tended to invert causation. ‘Our school histories’ and media reporting, rather than intolerable circumstances, were implicated by O’Brien in fanning flames of resistance to imperial rule, increasingly portrayed as driven by sectarian intolerance.\(^45\) O’Brien played a pivotal transitional political role in promoting this shift in emphasis. His role in framing broadcasting censorship provisions and practices during the 1970s, in order to give practical political effect to this revisionist object, will be examined.

Perceived political consequences of Sinn Féin’s entry into electoral politics in the 1980s and of the 1994 IRA ceasefire coincided with a discernable change of revisionist tone and direction. Journalists and academics promoted ideologically revised history in ‘a more explicitly populist direction’ at a ‘more strident level’, combined with, suggested Whelan, a ‘coarsening of the rhetoric’. This may have been due to alarm at a phenomenon noted by Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd, in which, in a post-censorship and post-armed conflict environment, ‘the ceasefires led to a new openness in the south to the north and northerners’.\(^46\)

This study will therefore examine the interaction of contested histories inside and outside of the academy, in the political sphere and in journalism. This method is in line with

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\(^45\) The previous view, linking Irish self determination to other colonial conflicts, even to the Vietnam War, was articulated by Costigan, 1968, pp65-9; O’Brien, 1972a, p89.

\(^46\) The new ‘tone’ typified by, ‘If we persist with the peace process it will end with sectarian slaughter in the North, with bombs in Dublin, Cork and Galway and with the ruthless reign by powerful Provisional gangs over the ghettos of Dublin’, Eoghan Harris, ‘Informing on the peace process to save lives’, ST, 15 Dec 1996. Whelan, 2004, p192; Ruane Todd, 1996, p254. Kinealy, 2002, p223, n19, noted Harris’s attempt in 1995 to characterise non-revisionist perspectives on the Famine, as ‘a ploy by the IRA to humiliate the British government’.\(^{14}\)
Antoniou’s observation that ‘the importance of politics to scholarship is the matrix within which most revisionist approaches are developed’.

Revisionist histories generally, but more particularly Peter Hart’s research on the War of Independence IRA, were promoted as stimulating tolerance through an enlightened investigation of hitherto unexplored recesses of the Irish past. This positing of tolerance as an ideological project by social actors who supported broadcasting censorship during the 1980s interested the author, who was an anti-censorship campaigner during the period. In 1987, RTÉ producer Eoghan Harris, who later incessantly promoted Peter Hart’s research, defended broadcasting censorship. He had also, in 1985, written a polemical play, *Souper Sullivan*, that prefigured themes explored in Hart’s research. It portrayed some evangelical Protestant clergy in West Cork during the 1845-52 Irish Famine as heroic rather than opportunist proselytisers. The former republican socialist followed up during the 1990s as adviser to the Orange Order, of then Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble, in support of the British military intervention in Iraq and of neo-conservatism generally.

The political tradition within which Harris’s view emerged, Official Irish Republicanism, similarly specified a connection between Catholicism, nationalism, and economic retardation during the 1970s. This analysis provided a polemical basis for opposition to Provisional republicans after the 1969-70 split in the movement. There appeared to be something going on in the heads of social actors like O’Brien and Harris, as well as in the thought processes of co-thinkers such as Kevin Myers and Ruth Dudley Edwards.

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47 Antoniou, December 2007, p112, a research article detailing ‘case studies of Germany, Spain, Israel, the Soviet Union, and Ireland’ (p93). Antoniou’s Irish commentary was hampered by reliance for elucidation on revisionist practitioners, in particular Boyce and O’Day, eds, 1996, and Fitzpatrick, 2006, pp95, 96, 101, 106, 112. A gestural reference was made, p106, to the more even-handed Brady, ed., 2004, collection. *Interpreting Irish History: the debate on historical revisionism*, which Antoniou’s study then ignored.

48 Harris claimed then that negative responses to his 1995 drama were due to his being ‘someone […] whose politics are hostile to the politics of the national bourgeois[i]e’, ‘Harris in the soup’, *Phoenix*, 25 Oct 1985. Harris later claimed that he had previously been a follower of Lenin rather than Stalin, while simultaneously asserting, ‘I believe in selective internment’ and in subjecting sentenced prisoners to compulsory ‘serious solitary confinement’, interviewed by Jason O’Toole, ‘Speaking his mind’, *Hot Press*, 9 Apr 2008.

49 ‘Rocking the boat’, *Times* (Lon), 9 Dec 1987, in which Harris observed that RTÉ, ‘management are more worried by socialists in RTÉ [i.e. Harris] than they are by terrorists [opponents of censorship]’. For a later right-wing articulation of essentially the same views, see a British Council Ireland profile of Harris, plus Harris on the Iraq invasion, 2005, pp64, 66. See also Dudley Edwards, 1999, p378, on Harris providing the Orange Order with media advice.

(encountered in chapters Four and Five), that surpassed mere idiosyncrasy. Progress appeared to be linked, in the words of UCD sociologist Tom Inglis, to creating ‘a more Protestant, secular, liberal, pluralist society’, albeit one in which actual Protestant contributions and experiences were largely ignored.

To explore these issues, and to discover whether Irish nationalism has a predominantly sectarian agenda, my research will be grounded empirically in four case studies in three sections:

**Section One**
1. In a critique of the construction and reception of key revisionist arguments in Peter Hart’s *The IRA and its Enemies* (1998);

**Section Two**
2. On the influential role of Conor Cruise O’Brien as an articulate and informed creature of circumstances in revising his own and southern Irish society’s dominant narrative;
3. On O’Brien’s linked role in subduing alternative voices by reinforcing Irish broadcasting censorship;

**Section Three**
4. As part of a critique of revisionism’s ‘Catholic nationalist’ emphasis, rediscovering and integrating the absent narrative of the social and economic role and experience of southern Irish Protestants.

Each case study provided justification for the choice of others in a ‘snowball’ process. Earlier stages of research informed those conducted later. This also called for the adaptation of methods employed. Empirical data encountered varied in form and in quality, necessitating the selection of methodological tools that could engage with the diverse body of texts and evidence encountered in the case studies. This condition supported a broad application of methods. Although consisting primarily of document analysis, some fieldwork was also carried out.

A mixed methods approach is appropriate as the research adopts a sociological lens grounded in historiography. As C. Wright Mills explained, ‘knowledge of the history of a society is often indispensible to its understanding’, and ‘the intersections of biography and history within society’ allow us to ‘grasp what is going on in the world’. In addition, the

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51 Inglis, 1998, p257.
53 In particular in discovery of the unknown burial places of nameless marginalised mainly Protestant children, see Chapter Thirteen.
‘personal troubles of the milieu ’ are based on ‘the public issues of social structure’.\textsuperscript{54} These methods are applied within the four case studies.\textsuperscript{55} A case study is defined as intensive study of a single unit, conceived of as a ‘spatially and temporally bound’ phenomenon, which permits understanding a larger set of similar units. In-depth knowledge at this level may produce a deeper comprehension than fleeting knowledge of a proliferation of examples. The method permits drawing conclusions at a society-wide level on the basis of such in-depth analysis.\textsuperscript{56}

At the empirical level, the unit of analysis was found through comparative document analysis, identified as relevant scholarship, newspaper articles and advertising, public pronouncements, archival material and field research. Inevitably limitations of scale and scope resulted in some material being selected by a process of respondent-driven ‘snowballing’.\textsuperscript{57} This process, in turn, allowed for the integration of newly-identified and relevant cases, in particular the generally under-researched phenomenon of Protestant-run mother and baby homes and orphanages, plus sectarian employment practices. Scans of employment advertising from the 1950s to the 1970s, mainly in the \textit{Irish Times}, revealed the extent of the latter phenomenon.\textsuperscript{58}

Exploratory research in Case Study One, on Protestants within the historiography of the War of Independence, led to Case Four, on Protestants in the Irish Free State/Republic. The critique of revisionist historiography in Case One led also to Cases Two and Three on the political basis for revisionism in the context of socio economic change and the northern conflict, as articulated through the career, utterances, and actions of Conor Cruise O’Bien. The case study chapters reproduce media reports and other archival information. This is so that the reader may more easily grasp the points being addressed. In Chapter Ten on broadcasting censorship the thesis details also particular examples of RTÉ censorship to illustrate its comprehensive scope and character.

In what follows the case studies are outlined in greater detail.

\begin{footnotes}
54 Mills 2000 [1959], pp8, 9, 150.
56 Gerring 2007, p1.
58 They were observed also in the \textit{Irish Independent}, \textit{Irish Press}, and \textit{Cork Examiner}.
\end{footnotes}
1.6 Section One, Case Study One

Case Study One (Section One) will examine and critically deconstruct a pivotal revisionist history of the Irish War of Independence, Peter Hart’s *The IRA and its Enemies* (1998). The work purported to establish the essential tropes of revisionist insight, the War of Independence as a pursuit of Catholic power, ethnic supremacy and anti-Protestantism. In the tradition of such work it hit raw nerves, except that, on this occasion, extensive promotion also provoked a determined counter-critique in a ‘ferocious revisionist controversy’, initially from subaltern voices *vis-à-vis* the academy, whose persistence eventually provoked responses within.\(^59\)

In addition to critiquing what Roy Foster termed Hart’s ‘scrupulous exploration’ of IRA sectarianism, that quickly won three academic prizes, the thesis examines its largely uncritical academic and media reception.\(^60\) That reception is linked to the revisionist historical project. As part of the critique of Hart’s research, the thesis will examine also the differential dynamic of southern as compared to northern sectarianism. The thesis examines how revisionist historiography incorporated in particular the educational intelligentsia into the southern state’s conservative modernisation project.

1.7 Case Study One Research Methodology

In order to assess the changes within Irish society that produced these effects, this thesis engaged in a number of different forms of research. It first of all tests the empirical basis of Hart’s findings with regard to the ethnic sectarian nature of the Irish War of Independence, by examining archival material in the Irish National Library, National Archives and Bureau of Military History\(^61\) (all in Dublin), and in the British National Archive in Kew.\(^62\) It also looks at contemporary media accounts of the period considered by Hart’s research, to assess the adequacy of Hart’s representation. The thesis presents contemporary Protestant views and compares these with the evidence Hart cited. The thesis did so in agreement with Lee’s observation that, ‘the close case study of individual texts is a basic prerequisite for serious discussion of Irish history’ and ‘the search for true history revolves around constant

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\(^{59}\) Perry, 2013, p25. Lane, Clifford, 1998; Murphy, 1998; Ryan, 2003. The term ‘subaltern’ is Gramsci’s and refers to groups excluded from hegemonic discourse. See Hoare, Nowell Smith, preface to Gramsci, 1971, pXIV.


\(^{61}\) Before War of Independence Witness Statements went online in 2012.

\(^{62}\) For which latter quest I am indebted to Jack Lane of the Aubane Historical Society.
debate’. The analysis of Hart’s text is part of the ongoing debate about historical revisionism.

The thesis also compares Hart’s PhD with his subsequently published book and it notes anomalies related to his empirical methodology. It reports contact with Trinity College Dublin’s History Department to ask whether the PhD thesis was constrained by rules with regard to the use of unverifiable source material, and about its examination.

1.8 Section Two, Case Studies Two and Three

The second and third case studies (in Section Two) analyse the effect of historian, politician and commentator, Conor Cruise O’Brien’s emerging critique of nationalist historiography and of the politics of southern Irish nationalism. The thesis traces O’Brien’s promotion of IRA sectarianism as an aspect of ‘Catholic nationalism’. It combines this with an examination of O’Brien’s enactment of state censorship and repression inside and outside of RTÉ, southern Ireland’s then only public service broadcaster. Following the tradition of C. Wright Mills, O’Brien will be viewed as a creature of his milieu. Mills observed that the history affecting every individual is world history. In O’Brien’s case it is a question of ‘the larger historical scene’ impacting on O’Brien’s social psychology and career.

From 1956 to December 1961 O’Brien moved from the Irish Civil Service to a larger UN forum during the latter stages of the anti-colonial revolution. That activity had limits, within which O’Brien’s UN career crashed in a spectacular public debacle. He blamed British and US imperialism for his demise. He reinvented himself as an academic activist within the emerging 1960s New Left anti-imperialist current. O’Brien successfully surfed that wave until his return to Ireland and parliamentary politics in 1969. He then encountered a revolt against partition and altered southern Irish socio-economic priorities. Coping with the contradictory tensions between these imperatives drove O’Brien rightwards, while seeming left, and gave birth to the IRA sectarianism thesis.

The analysis in Section Two will evaluate for the first time O’Brien’s left anti-imperialist stance in the 1960s and his initially balanced analysis of the northern conflict and of southern society. O’Brien jettisoned and obscured this approach as he began the revisionist project.

63 Lee, 2001, pp80, 81.
64 And as such, elements were articulated for the Aubane Historical Society, Cedar Lounge Revolution (website), Field Day Review, Irish Political Review, Irish Times, Irish Independent, Reviews in History, and Spinwatch (website).
65 Mills, 1959, pp4, 5.
Also, the thesis examines how O'Brien articulated the changing and as yet inchoate needs of the southern ruling elite after 1969. O'Brien came to view taught nationalist versions of Irish history as dangerous. They could and should be ‘untaught’, in other words replaced with a revised version, perceived as verifiable and legitimate, he could endorse. He attempted to transform the narrative of Irish separatist-nationalism from that of a democratic movement in opposition to sectarian and colonial rule into an expression of sectarian irrationality. It was transformed from a narrative with which many Irish people generally were comfortable, as an anti-imperialist inheritance, into something from which they could be alienated. The thesis will examine the extent to which Hart’s kind of history became a logical, even anticipated, outcome of O’Brien’s religion - as distinct from society - centred quest to discover ‘Catholic nationalism with the lid off’. It will examine the extent to which Hart’s was a history imaginatively anticipated if not actually foretold.

Promotion of Peter Hart’s analysis in newspapers by the previously mentioned widely read journalists Eoghan Harris and Kevin Myers is noted in sections One and Two. Section Two in particular examines how their careers became, ironically, derailed during the 1970s by opposition to increasing censorship of RTÉ’s Northern Ireland coverage. Their difficulties were attributable to Conor Cruise O’Brien’s implementation of censorship provisions as Minister for Posts & Telegraphs from 1973-77. The thesis examines how, during the 1980s, Harris and Myers revised their previous opinions in line with the left republican current with which they associated, that embraced the southern modernisation project (while enjoying less success in Northern Ireland). As Harris and Myers moved rightwards politically they actively promoted Peter Hart’s analysis to justify their conversion to O’Brien’s point of view. Changing views of Irish history appeared to inform their change of mind. Central to their mutually-supportive rationale in discarding their youthful outlook was that sectarianism and anti-Protestantism was central to separatist Irish nationalism. A contributing factor was a discarding of socialist ideas under the weight of the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. They were no longer personally moved by the language of social class even as, arguably, shifting social forces affected the consciousness of both individuals.

69 Myers, 2006, p87; Eoghan Harris, ‘In search of Sam Maguire and the Bandon Valley pogroms’, *SI*, 21 Sep 2003. It should be noted that Sam Maguire was a West Cork Protestant member of the IRA.
This aspect of the thesis (Section Two, chapters Six to Ten) concerns O’Brien’s place as a politician and as a minister within a contested process of transformation, who reinforced broadcasting censorship and undermined the public service ethos of Irish broadcasting. It concerns history and its usefulness, the abuse of evidence, the use of power and the power of media. It is also about resistance to manipulation and to being manipulated.

1.9 Case Study Two & Three Research Methodology

Chapters Six to Ten trace the manner in which O’Brien adopted new narrative frameworks within Irish political and social discourse, both within and across time periods, in particular the 1960s versus O’Brien’s 1969-77 period in parliament and beyond. An application of the narrative method was employed.

1.10 Narrative Methodology

A narrative method ‘traces the evolution of [ideas] through changing historical contexts, seeking to examine how the norm influences states and vice versa at different points in time’. If we are to capture the evolution and influence of O’Brien in Irish politics and the narratives he sought to establish as historical ‘fact’, it is necessary to examine the historical record utilising an empirical research methodology. The narrative approach is closely related to the genealogical method as advanced by Price. Both methods attempt to ‘explain the present in terms of the past’. They consider how ideas interact with their environment and how the present became logically possible.

To do this, the research employed in Section Two required a three-pronged approach:

a) an examination of how O’Brien’s Catholic nationalism narrative was adopted in Irish society and how it related to Hart’s thesis and the Southern Irish ruling elite’s agenda;

b) an inquiry into the changing composition of these narratives, in particular between the two periods identified;

c) and finally an analysis of what components emerged as dominant in Irish society.

Extensive bibliographical analysis of O’Brien’s pre-revisionist left-wing observations and reported activities, in books, magazines and in newspapers in Ireland, the UK and the US, is combined with assessments of his stance as he began his unannounced drift to the right and adapted to the political interests of the Irish state after 1969. O’Brien’s pluralist rhetoric is contrasted with his repressive activity. In particular Case Study Three (Chapter Ten) catalogues O’Brien’s foray into RTE, over which he had ministerial control from 1973-77.

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70 Percy 2007, p3; Wendt 1987, p365.
The analysis was based on the collection and collation of relevant material written by, or reported on, O’Brien. This involved use of personal files and searching online databases for the three main Irish daily newspapers, the Irish Times, Irish Independent and Irish Press; as well as the British Observer, Guardian and Times newspapers; the New York Times, New York Review of Books and other publications. Relevant information was saved with key words relating to the content in folder sub-sets and catalogued by date.

1.11 Section Three, Case Study Four

The thesis researched also sectarian features of southern society and their origin within the southern economy, plus health, education and welfare provision (in Section Three). It did so because it is often simplistically assumed that these features are an end product of the ‘Catholic nationalist’ ideology which allegedly triumphed during the War of Independence. The empirical analysis suggests a more complex picture. The thesis examines state-regulated relationships between Protestant and Roman Catholic communities and their origin during the last phase of British rule during the 19th and early 20th Centuries. It examines the regulation of Protestants most and least privileged by Protestant-inspired socio-economic controls during the 20th Century. This aspect of the research grew out of all initial expectations. The discovery of significant new features of southern Irish sectarianism required their incorporation into the analysis.

The Protestant population in the south was small at fewer than 4% and in decline since the 1830s. Unlike in the north, the southern religious minority was relatively more affluent than the majority. The community has been portrayed as a small ineffectual minority, too peripheral to be the object of ‘Catholic nationalist’ inspired discrimination. However, despite the community’s small size, Protestants played an identifiably important role in the southern economy, based, in part, on ‘inherited advantage’. As the Church of Ireland Gazette put it on 19 May 1922, ‘the Protestant community holds a commanding position in the economic life of the country’. Relative privilege within the Protestant community was


74 Semple, 2007, p62. D’Alton, 2009, p28, suggested, however, following Peter Hart, that the Cork Protestant population was of a ‘just right’ size to attract sectarian violence during the War of Independence. I question this contention in chapters Three and Four.

75 Hutchinson, 1969, p7. I discuss an apparent exception, the ‘Fethard on Sea boycott’ in Chapter Eleven.
then perpetuated in the southern Irish state by economic nationalism, augmented by employment discrimination, plus the sectarian organisation of health, education and welfare provision. In turn, inequalities in health, education and social welfare provision were maintained by regulation of those services within Roman Catholic and Protestant communities. Protestant educational, welfare and detention institutions were given at least equal scope to that of Roman Catholic counterparts.

Leading southern Protestants publicly refuted suggestions that they suffered discrimination. Simply reiterating that fact\textsuperscript{76} failed to describe complex interrelationships within and between communities and with the state. The thesis examines whether, within socially secluded institutions, Protestants were subject to the same sorts of institutional controls as Catholics. It examines this largely hidden history, the absence of which has facilitated a Catholic-centred critique of Irish nationalism and of Irish society, north and south. It examines why, in this context, critical reports on institutional care tended to exclude Protestant experience.

What happened to problematic Protestants, in the form of unwed mothers or children and teenagers interacting with official agencies? This gap in the academic literature, that is significant from any research vantage point, is systematically critiqued. It followed from the evidence uncovered in the earlier stages of the research. The information had to be searched out, identified and interpreted.

The thesis examines, consequently, why the Protestant community was written out of understandings of southern Irish society. It examines whether this stance relates to the power of the so-called ‘Catholic nationalism’ framework informing consideration of Irish history, politics, economy and society.

In order to ground this observation empirically, using extensive newspaper and bibliographical research, the thesis will attempt to demonstrate that evidence of discrimination and of social control was in plain sight (in newspaper advertising) and also was generally ignored. It will examine also, therefore, Protestant homes for marginalised unmarried mothers and abandoned children, types of institutions assumed by some to be a Roman Catholic preserve.\textsuperscript{77} In particular it will look at the Bethany Home, referred to as ‘the major institution for Protestant women in need of institutional care’, to assess whether its practices mirrored those of Roman Catholic counterparts.\textsuperscript{78} The latter have been subject to extensive investigation in recent years, the former relatively little. The thesis examines the extent to which limitations in the critique of Catholic control of southern Irish society, that commenced during the 1960s and discussed earlier, is responsible for this conceptual

\textsuperscript{76} As does Gallagher, 1957, p198-199
\textsuperscript{77} See Share, Corcoran, Conway, 2012, p346.
\textsuperscript{78} Bowen, 1983, p132.
weakness. The thesis critically evaluates whether the Roman Catholic dominated Irish state in fact reinforced, rather than undermined or challenged, relative Protestant privilege.

1.12 Case Study Four Research Methodology

This examination involved newspaper, archival and bibliographical research, plus successful efforts to trace minutes thought lost from the Protestant evangelical Bethany Home, which closed in 1972. Arising from reading the minutes, field research in a nearby one-time exclusively Protestant cemetery revealed the graves of Bethany children. This aspect of the research developed originally from chance contact with Bethany Home survivor Derek Leinster in 2009 that led to meeting others effectively excluded by a focus on marginalised Catholic women and children. Though he self-published two volumes of autobiography, Leinster’s indefatigable personal campaign for recognition and redress gained very little traction within southern Irish media. However, his efforts resulted in receipt of a tranche of archival material relating to Bethany and some other institutions from an anonymous source in 2007.

The thesis examines the extent to which Leinster’s narrative did not fit the conceptual framework pursued by the intelligentsia over many years and as reflected in media commentary. It examines also the *Irish Times*, which pioneered investigations into limitations in the Irish social structure during the 1960s, but whose one-time owners discriminated against Catholics in businesses they ran and also participated in social control of Protestant communities, including in the Bethany Home. Using online archival research it explores the newspaper’s role in reporting the Home and other institutions as part of the apparatus of social control within the Protestant community from the 1920s to the mid 1960s. It explores also the newspaper’s significant silence about this and similar institutions as it began to promote secular modernisation, alongside the growing numbers of disaffected Roman Catholics who became its readers. As conservatism within Catholicism was exposed, similar activity within the smaller Protestant community tended to be ignored. This gave rise to a perception that Protestant religious institutions (apart perhaps from Ian Paisley’s Free Presbyterian Church) were noticeably more liberal than were the Catholic variety.

Incorporating the state archival material, alongside assembled media, bibliographical and other archival data, helped to construct a coherent narrative. Bethany Home Management Committee minutes indicated monthly statistics on child mortality. Field research in Mount Jerome Cemetery over a number of days revealed (initially through an interested graveyard official) the whereabouts of some nameless children’s graves from the late 1930s. This led to further examination of graveyard records and identification of the names, cause and date

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of death, of 223 children who died in the home between 1922-49.\textsuperscript{80} Newspaper, archival
and other research relating to the home and some of its surviving former residents helped to
put these deaths in context. The author also worked with Derek Leinster and others to place
information in the public domain. Reports and briefing documents were written for the
media and for meetings with ministers north and south, as part of the former residents’
claim for recognition from their community and redress from the state.\textsuperscript{81}

Due to publicity surrounding the discovery of the graves, a Bethany Home resident born
in 1966 and sent to a related Protestant institution, the Westbank Orphanage in County
Wicklow, then made contact. This led to meeting survivors of yet more institutions. This
process produced further insights with regard to institutionalised Protestant relationships
north and south of the Irish border, plus southern state interest, if any, in these relationships.

This stage in the research helped to clarify aspects of state regulation of Protestants that
differed in detail but not substance from those directed at Roman Catholic institutions. This
enabled conclusions to be drawn with regard to similarities in the sectarian self-regulation
of socially-segregated communities and state regulation of the institutions themselves. The
analysis established the extent to which conservative attitudes imposed by religious
ideology affected both communities and how the state facilitated this measure of social
control. The thesis therefore examines sectarian regulation of welfare and detention services
in a socio-economic and political context.

It became possible, as a result, to understand the consequences and limitations of the
attitudes that framed the critique of southern Irish society that emerged during and after the
1960s. These tended increasingly to fixate on the Roman Catholic Church, rather than on
state facilitation of discretionary welfare services undertaken by voluntary - mainly
religious - bodies, both Roman Catholic and Protestant. The thesis examines whether this
Roman Catholic fixation, understandable and perhaps justified to a degree, became a means
whereby pent-up resentment by Catholics over experiences of Catholic social control were
vented. It asks whether ignorance of Protestant-inspired controls and regulation transformed
understanding of a church-state alliance in the popular imagination into a Catholic Church-
state alliance. Was this outcome an outworking of the Catholic nationalism motif? The
thesis will attempt to answer that question.

\textsuperscript{80} Media research identified an additional death in 1934.
\textsuperscript{81} ‘Presentation on Bethany Home Westbank Orphanage for Ministers, MLAs Belfast, 22 July
2013’, at www.academia.edu/4094063/; ‘The Irish State & the Bethany Home - submission to
Minister for Education, Ruairi Quinn (24 May 2011)’, at www.academia.edu/1423646/; ‘Proposal to
include Bethany Home within the remit of Senator Martin McAleese’s investigation of state
interactions with Magdalene institutions’, 14 July 2011, at www.academia.edu/1423762/ (accessed
14 Mar 2015).
1.13 Chapter Conclusion

This thesis examines how, in order to distance the sectarianism of the northern state from southern consciousness, responsibility for sectarianism became inverted. It will be a primary research task to pinpoint, to understand and to explain the key points and transitional phases that led to the creation of an intellectual climate conducive to an anti-nationalist written history that migrated backwards from 1968 to the 1919-1921 Irish War of Independence, and then forwards again to re-frame understanding of events in Northern Ireland after 1968. This will involve sociological investigation and understanding combined with historical research. By integrating these two disciplines, the thesis hopes to explain complex social processes through an examination of what is promoted as historical ‘fact’. It involves interpreting Irish history and conceptions of what was possible, impossible and thus was made to seem either desirable or undesirable to political and social actors.

The thesis will attempt to demonstrate how Irish society was turned on its head and how its intelligentsia, encouraged by powerful social forces, began to see its Irish world upside down.
Section One

Examining Peter Hart’s Historiography

Níall Meehan Chapters 2-5
Preamble

In January 2008, Professor Charles Townshend of Keele University emailed me to state that he had never examined a history thesis within the southern Irish University system. Therefore, he was not the external examiner of Peter Hart’s 1993 Trinity College Dublin (TCD) PhD thesis, *The Irish Republican Army and its Enemies, Violence and Community in Cork, 1916-1923*. He also observed that he first encountered Hart’s research when he reviewed the subsequent book manuscript, based on Hart’s thesis, for Oxford University Press,\(^1\) and considered it odd that Hart did not acknowledge his examiners.

I attempted to discover the name of the external examiner from TCD’s Graduate Studies Office, without success. At my request, in April 2008 a TCD librarian asked the internal examiner and thesis supervisor, Professor David Fitzpatrick. He replied that Professor Townshend was the external examiner.

On 18 April 2008 I sent a letter to Ciarán Brady, Head of the Department of Modern History in TCD, copied to Provost John Hegarty. The letter noted the discrepancy with regard to the name of the external examiner and requested clarity.

I telephoned Professor Townshend who had asked me why I had contacted him on the subject. I sent him my letter to Ciarán Brady that contained the Trinity Library information. Townshend observed by email, also on 18 April,

I’m even more puzzled by this now. It’s possible that I have had a catastrophic memory lapse, but PhD vivas are the kind of thing one never usually forgets… Two further inquiries you might make: who was the internal examiner? and is there any record of TCD paying me a fee?

I emailed to Professor Townshend my understanding that there was no *viva voce* examination, to which he responded, again on 18 April,

No viva? - now that really is more than puzzling.

Townshend received a communication from TCD and wrote on 6 May,

It appears that Trinity cannot retrieve the records of the examination. Not a very satisfactory situation, I think. I still can’t find out the date of the examination, or the name of my supposed co-examiner. Apparently, however, David Fitzpatrick has a copy of my report, which he will fax to me next week.

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On 16 May 2008 Professor Brady wrote to me,

I can now confirm that the external examiner’s report has been located and has been sent to Prof Townshend.

Professor Townshend responded to this information on 19 May:

It turns out that I have indeed had a memory lapse on this - I did agree to act as External examiner in 1992. I think the unusual fact that there were no meetings involved (I was in the USA, the internal examiner was in Australia, the candidate I think in Canada) might be the explanation for my faulty belief that I had never examined a history thesis in an Irish university. (As for the fee, it turns out that they sent the cheque to my American address after I had returned to the UK, so I never received it.) I have kept the MSS of all the theses I have examined, but not, for some reason, this one.²

Townshend and TCD refused sight of the examiner’s report that brought about this change of mind.

This was a most unusual experience for all concerned, one I did not at the time or subsequently comment on publicly. For instance, it was not mentioned in ‘Troubles in Irish History’, an essay in Troubled History, a tenth anniversary critique of Peter Hart’s The IRA and its Enemies (2008).³

As the external examiner’s identity appeared resolved, however unsatisfactorily, I proceeded in November 2008 with my main purpose. I asked Professor Fitzpatrick initially and then Professor Townshend about protocols that may, or may not, have been in place in relation to Peter Hart’s use of anonymous interviews in a piece of historical research. I enclosed a copy of Troubled History. Professor Fitzpatrick replied that revealing this information would be ‘a gross breach of confidentiality’. I politely disagreed and, qualifying my enquiry, asked again, without reply. Professor Townshend did not respond.⁴

The anomalous conclusion to the examination process may have contributed to the survival of anomalies in Hart’s thesis and in his subsequent book, that I will now outline.

³ Publication was noted in Times Higher Education, John Gill, ‘Troubles and strife as IRA historian draws peers’ fire’, THE, 3 Jul 2008.
⁴ The correspondence is in Section One, Appendix.
Introduction


The April massacre is as unknown as the Kilmichael ambush is celebrated; yet one is as important as the other to an understanding of the Cork IRA. Nor can the murders be relegated to the fringes of the revolution or described as an isolated event. They were as much a part of the reality of revolutionary violence as the killings at Kilmichael.

The patterns of perception and victimisation revealed by these events are also of a piece with the whole revolution. These deaths can be seen as the culmination of a long process of social definition which produced both the heroes of Kilmichael and the victims of the April massacre. The identity of the former cannot be fully understood without the latter.

In addition, Hart alleged that ‘at least one’ unnamed Kilmichael ambush participant ‘may have been involved’ in the April 1922 ‘massacre’ (thesis,161; book, 132). Of course, Peter Hart, in his professional role as historian, was perfectly entitled to explore and to present evidence leading to such conclusions. However, there were concerns, first intimated by Brian Murphy in September 1998, that Hart’s evidence...

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presentation breached scholarly standards. Evidence contradicting his conclusions appeared to be obscured, misrepresented or excluded. Hart’s subsequent 1998 book introduced some changes, but a close examination of these exposed in sharp relief errors and anomalies in the thesis. Occasionally changes corrected errors, but not the argument the errors sustained. It thus appeared that for Hart conclusions had priority.

In order to explore and to explain why I have formed this conclusion, the following case-study chapters will deal with the November 1920 Kilmichael Ambush and then with the 1922 April killings. Following chapters Two and Three, contemporary Protestant views of the conflict will be examined and contrasted with Hart’s presentation. The intellectual climate within which Hart’s research was considered and promoted will then be discussed.

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CHAPTER TWO The Kilmichael Ambush

The Kilmichael Ambush on 28 November 1920 occurred two years after Sinn Féin’s victory in the November 1918 General Election, taking 73 of 105 Irish seats, and refusal to sit in the British House of Commons.\(^1\) It was over a year since Britain had outlawed the separatist Dáil (parliament) set up by Sinn Féin in January 1919. In the meantime, the IRA had emerged as a military force that defended the legitimacy of Dáil institutions and defied British jurisdiction. The hotbed of this defiance and resistance outside Dublin was in Ireland’s largest and southernmost county, Cork.

The Kilmichael Ambush in west Cork occurred one week after ‘Bloody Sunday’ in the capital, Dublin. On the morning of 21 November the IRA executed 12 British officers, two Auxiliary police and a civilian; the majority of those killed were senior intelligence operatives. Later that day, in apparent reprisal, Crown forces fired into a crowd at a Gaelic football match in Croke Park, Dublin, killing ten spectators and a footballer. Finally, three suspected IRA volunteers, Dick McKee, Peadar Clancy and Conor Clune, were tortured before being executed in Dublin Castle, allegedly (in that the claim was an elaborate fabrication) during an escape attempt.\(^2\)

The two Auxiliary casualties on Bloody Sunday were the first killed openly in action since that force’s deployment in Ireland.\(^3\)

During 1920 the British press had promoted the new Auxiliary Division of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), recruited

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\(^1\) No votes were cast in 25 seats that Sinn Féin won uncontested, due to negligible support for other parties. This has led to confusion in reporting the considerable Sinn Féin mandate estimated conservatively at between 60 and 70 per cent. Counting only votes cast, some ideologues minimise Sinn Féin support at 47 per cent. For example, Kevin Myers, *IT*, 14 Oct 2000 and Eoghan Harris, *SI*, 15 Dec 2013.


\(^3\) Bennett, 1995, p122. Two other plain-clothes Auxiliary intelligence officers stationed at Macroom were arrested on 6 November and executed as spies. See David Grant’s excellent, http://www.theauxiliaries.com/INCIDENTS/agnew-mitchel/agnew-mitchell.html (accessed, 13 March 2014), also Charles Browne, Bureau of Military History Witness Statement (hereafter WS) 873. Witness statements from War of Independence participants were completed in the 1950s (mainly), and released in 2003 by the Irish Army’s Bureau of Military History (BMH), Available online since 2012: http://www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/bmhsearch/browse.jsp (accessed 20 Mar 2015).
from ‘ex-officers’, as an elite counter-insurgency force (see *Times* (Lon) advertisement, previous page). The Auxiliaries inherited the name ‘Black & Tans’, which had been applied earlier in 1920 to RIC recruits from lower ranks of the British Army, who were issued with mix-and-match dark green (police) and khaki (army) uniforms. The Auxiliary Division’s first commander, Brigadier General F.P. Crozier, resigned in February 1921. He described the force as, ‘soldiers in disguise under no army and no RIC code’. A fact-finding British Labour Party Commission reported in January 1921 that ‘things are being done in the name of Britain which must make her name stink in the nostrils of the whole world’. In the mid-1930s Pakenham listed reprisal killings, torture, and systematic destruction of homes and businesses, combined with generalised criminality, attributed to these forces. Mowat asserted that the Auxiliaries and Black & Tans were ‘the greatest blot … perhaps on Britain’s name in the twentieth century’. Hittle later summed up their role as, ‘a sort of English Freikorps’ that engaged in ‘clearing out towns, and burning and looting of houses, farms, factories, and dairies, while shooting or arresting unnamed citizens and sending them to internment camps’.

While elements of the regular British Army came in for similar criticism, the combined Black & Tan / Auxiliary forces deservedly received most. At Kilmichael, a force of 17 Auxiliaries (plus one Black & Tan) was wiped out by the Flying Column of the IRA’s Third West Cork Brigade. Sixteen lay dead on the battlefield, one survivor was left for dead, and another who escaped was later captured and executed.

Privately, British Prime Minister Lloyd George noted,

> The Chief Secretary went to Ireland last night. The last attack of the rebels (killing of cadets near Cork) seemed to him, Bonar Law and myself to partake of a different character from the preceding operations. The others were assassinations. This last was a military operation.  

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4 The original Black & Tans were a pack of hounds from Limerick. Recruitment advertisement, *Times* (Lon), 2 November 1922 (reproduced page 35).


6 In Jones, 1971, p41.
Publicly, however, the Kilmichael affair was portrayed quite differently. To counter this setback, Irish Secretary, Sir Hamar Greenwood delivered a lurid tale to the British House of Commons of a hundred IRA fighters, disguised as British soldiers, surrounding and killing the Auxiliaries, before savagely mutilating their bodies with axes. British propagandists further amplified this account in newspapers, that reportedly were denied access to the ambush site.\(^7\) It was reinforced in TCD historian W. Allison Phillips’ *Revolution in Ireland* in 1923. In his memoir, *Guerrilla Days in Ireland* published in 1949, ambush Commander Tom Barry rejected these allegations as ‘atrocity propaganda’. He countered that the Auxiliaries called a ‘false surrender’ during the fight,\(^7\)

\(^7\) ‘[P]ress representatives were “held up” at various points and it was almost an impossibility to secure an independent narrative’, according to the *Irish Times* on 1 December. However, despite reliance on the ‘official’ version, its correspondent reported on ‘a number of burnings … in the neighbouring locality’, including two farmhouses adjacent to the ambush location. The *Illustrated London News* published a photograph of one such farmhouse on 11 December 1920 (reproduced, page 35). ‘Indiscriminate reprisals’ were a feature of Crown force behaviour, see ‘“The Times” policy vindicated’, *Times* (Lon) 11 Dec 1920. A letter appeared on 2 December in the *Irish Times*, denying that journalists were ‘stopped several times’. The author, ‘C.H.’, possibly London *Morning Post* and, to 1924, *Irish Times*, correspondent C.H. Bretherton, was nevertheless ‘frightened’ by ‘the attitude of surrounding officers… and it was not impossible for us to have been shot in error’. See also on Bretherton, Chapter Four, pages 100-1.
causing two (of three) fatalities from his force of thirty-six. That event justified for Barry a fight-to-the-finish without prisoners. It also created the basis for Hart’s revision.\textsuperscript{8}

The Kilmichael Ambush position was planned carefully (as illustrated, page 34). Barry’s force was deployed between bends on the Macroom-Dunmanway Road. He expected two open-deck Crossley Tender lorries with nine Auxiliary troops in each. Section One of Barry’s force with ten fighters and Barry’s Command Post, with three more, were positioned to attack the first lorry. Section Two, with ten more fighters some 150 yards off on the same side of the road, would tackle the second. A six-man group spread out higher up across the road, half of Section Three, would prevent Auxiliaries in both lorries taking up positions on that side. The other half of Section Three, positioned before the bend of the road that formed the ambush position, were deployed to tackle the possibility of a third lorry. In addition to these thirty-seven fighters (including Barry), three unarmed scouts were positioned, the nearest reportedly 150 yards away.\textsuperscript{9}

After 5pm and a wet, near-freezing, day-long wait, scouts signalled two Auxiliary lorries approaching. The IRA force remained concealed, apart from Barry. Wearing an Irish Volunteer officer’s uniform,\textsuperscript{10} he stood in the road with his hand in a ‘halt’ position as the first lorry approached. As intended, Barry’s presence and appearance appeared to confuse the driver, who slowed down. At a prearranged point, Barry commenced the action by blowing his whistle and throwing a Mills Bomb that exploded in the driver’s cab. The driver and Auxiliary Commander Colonel F.W. Craik were killed; the other surprised occupants died in the sharp, very bloody, close-
quarter encounter that followed. There were no Command Post or Section One IRA fatalities.

The second lorry was simultaneously attacked by Section Two, but its occupants were better positioned. Suffering casualties, they deployed to the road and returned fire. The driver began reversing but broke the lorry’s suspension in the roadside ditch. The first IRA casualty, Section Two commander Michael McCarthy, reportedly was killed at this stage.11 With the first lorry force out of action, Barry and his three Command Post fighters moved to surprise these remaining Auxiliaries. On approach, Barry reported that he heard them shouting, ‘We surrender, we surrender’, and observed rifles being discarded. The Auxiliaries reportedly then fired their revolvers at three IRA fighters who exposed their positions to accept the surrender, killing Jim O’Sullivan and mortally wounding Pat Deasy. Consequently, according to Barry's account, he ordered, ‘rapid fire and do not stop until I tell you’. He refused further surrenders and ordered a fight to the finish without prisoners, resulting in the execution of at least one unarmed Auxiliary. Barry later contended that ‘soldiers who had cheated in war deserved to die.’12 Afterwards, all of the Auxiliaries were assumed dead. However, one survived though severely wounded. Another escaped but was captured later and executed. Barry drilled his traumatised volunteers after what he called ‘the bloodiest fight in Ireland’ during the conflict. The IRA set the lorries on fire and, before departing, collected arms and intelligence material plus the bodies of their two dead and one mortally-wounded comrades.

In his historical reconstruction of the ambush sixty-eight years later, Peter Hart did not endorse British allegations that Barry’s men had engaged in mutilation. The medical examination did not substantiate it. Alternatively, however, Hart charged that

Barry’s “history” of Kilmichael … is riddled with lies and evasions. There was no false surrender as he described it. The surviving Auxiliaries were simply exterminated. (thesis, 51; book, 36)

Thus, Hart pitched his academic history of a massacre, that resembled the official British position, against Barry’s recollection of a military engagement, that was in line with the British cabinet’s original private assessment.

11 Barry, 1941, republished in O’Reilly, ed., 2009, pp11, 103; implied in Jack Hennessy, WS 1,234.
12 In Ryan, 2003, p56.
Hart claimed that IRA veteran testimony he accessed supported his conclusions. However, his unusual decision to anonymise elderly informants’ testimony (twelve in the thesis, thirteen in the book) complicated the task of unravelling his narrative. Hart reported that an unquantified ‘large number’ of his interviewees requested anonymity. He then, for an unknown reason, obscured all their identities (thesis, 478; book, 330). Why did Hart anonymise even those content to associate their names with their testimonies? What justification was offered to, and accepted by, TCD examiners about a decision that lacked an apparent historiographical precedent? What protocols (if any), ensuring academic rigour, were put in place? Hart did not discuss them and his examiners declined to explain. At this point Hart’s methodology, as distinct from his interpretation, requires examination.

Hart’s methodology implied that anonymity was required to obtain information that otherwise might have remained hidden. It enhanced an impression of exploring a secret, hidden, history. Alternatively, it was Hart who obscured information that was otherwise available, and it hampered investigation of Hart’s claims. Moreover, such an investigation was made more difficult because Hart’s elderly informants were dead by the time his research was published in 1998.

Of his initial twelve elderly anonymous republican informants, Hart claimed that two, interviewed by him in 1988–89, were Kilmichael Ambush veterans. Hart reported access additionally to three more ambush accounts recorded on audiotapes in the ‘late 1960s’, in the possession of a Fr. John Chisholm (thesis, 478; book, 330). This access was also ‘under condition of anonymity’. Chisholm taped veterans while assisting IRA veteran Liam Deasy to write his War of Independence memoir, *Towards Ireland Free* (1973). Here is how Hart introduced these interviewees (thesis, 46, n50):

The following reconstruction [of the Kilmichael Ambush] is primarily based on five detailed interviews carried out with Kilmichael veterans, three of them conducted by Dr. John Chisholm and two by myself (interviews with E. Y., 3 April, 25 June 1988; H.

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13 Hart observed in his second article based on his research, ‘As several of the veterans I interviewed asked not to be quoted by name I will refer to all of them by their initials’, 1993, p983, n34. In 2005 Hart implied that the decision was possibly his alone: ‘Why did I conceal the names of my informants? Because I said I would’, ‘Peter Hart and his Enemies’, *HI*, v13, n4, Jul Aug 2005.

14 Liam Deasy’s brother, Pat, was a Kilmichael ambush fatality.
J., 19 Nov., 1989). I was also fortunate enough to be given a tour of the ambush site by the latter.15

Hart implied, therefore, that five ambush participants were interviewed (Hart’s two and Chisholm’s three). His note could, however, accommodate the possibility of Hart interviewing two of Chisholm’s three veterans. But, if so, that unquestionably should have been declared. This textual ambiguity, typical of Hart’s presentation, will form part of the discussion.

Hart’s thesis convention of identifying his own informants by their initials (sometimes reversed) led me in 2008 to suggest that Hart’s interviewee, ‘E. Y.’, above, was Edward ‘Ned’ Young.16 Young died aged ninety-seven on 13 November 1989. On 18 November the weekly Southern Star printed a report and photograph headlined (left), ‘Ned Young – last of the ‘Boys of Kilmichael’’. Throughout the 1980s, this widely-read newspaper referred progressively to Ned Young as, respectively, one of the last three, then one of the last two, and, from 1987, as the very last and only Kilmichael survivor. The second-to-last surviving veteran, Jack O’Sullivan, died in December 1986.17 Ned Young appeared in a large front-page photograph in the daily Cork Examiner on 30 November 1997 under the headline, ‘The last Boy of Kilmichael’. No-one contradicted these seemingly uncontroversial designations.

Hart’s second ambush interviewee, ‘H. J.’

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15 Renamed AA and AF in book, p33, n56. In the thesis (p46, n50), Hart referred to Chisholm ‘tapes’ in the possession of Fr. John Chisholm, whereas the book mentioned ‘research’ (p33, n56). However, the bibliography in both publications refers to tapes (thesis, p478; book, p330).
16 He became ‘AA’ in Hart’s book. I pointed out in Troubled History, 21, that thesis interviewees were identified by their initials, sometimes reversed, whereas in the book they appeared sequentially and less identifiably as AA, AB, AC, etc.
(renamed ‘AF’ in Hart’s book), was reportedly interviewed six days after Young died, one day after his death was reported, on 19 November 1989. These dates constitute a major problem. Hart’s other three accounts, taped in the late 1960s by Fr. Chisholm, were not individually differentiated in either the thesis or book.

Various problems have arisen concerning the informants. Let us discuss them in detail.

2.1 The H.J. / ‘Scout’ Problem, 19 November 1989

The informant who Hart reportedly interviewed on 19 November 1989 was presented differently in his thesis and book.

In the thesis H.J. was presented as one of the ambush party. In Hart’s 1998 book, renamed AF, he became an unarmed ‘scout rather than a rifleman and therefore further away from the ambush site’ (compare book 35, n61, with thesis 49, n55). And yet, in both the thesis and the book, this person was reportedly engaged in shooting British Auxiliaries (book, 35; thesis, 50, n56). Additionally, the thesis reported that this interviewee had toured Hart around the ambush site, an attribution the book withdrew (compare book 33, n56 with thesis 46, n50, cited here page 38). Likewise, a thesis reference to the IRA’s time of arrival at the ambush site is ascribed to the same interviewee but, again for no apparent reason, this is altered in the book by citing someone who was not there (compare thesis 33, n11 with book 24, n11). Finally,

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18 Ryan, 2005, p69, first noted a problem with Hart’s claim that he interviewed two ambush veterans in 1988–89 when only Young was alive.

19 The 1998 book (p24, n11), cites ‘interviews with AA 3 Apr. 1988, and AE, 19 Nov. 1989’. The 1992 thesis (p33, n11), cites ‘interviews with E.Y. 3 April 1988, and H.J. 19 Nov. 1989’. In all other citations 1992’s H.J.=AF, whereas C.D.=AE. C.D. is Dan Cahalane who, though a member of Barry’s flying column, did not participate in the Kilmichael ambush (and Hart did not assert that he did). Hart’s dating of his Dan Cahalane interview is problematic. His ‘Youth Culture and the Cork IRA’ (1990), referred to interviewing eleven IRA veterans, including the same C.D., once. But Hart gives different dates, on 17 (p11) and 19 November 1989 (p21). In his 1992 thesis, Hart interviewed Cahalane on 19 November (p43, n39), whereas on another page (p176, n79) it is 18 November (no date here in book, p142, n65). Was his interview date 17, 18 or 19 November 1989? Whichever, it is surprising that Hart did not become aware that Ned Young, from Dunmanway, died on 13 November. Cahalane lived in Dunmanway, so he might have told Hart this. This point is reinforced since Hart reported interviewing an ‘I.R.A. veteran’ in his Dunmanway home, that once belonged to one of the Protestant victims of the April 1922 Killings, solicitor Francis Fitzmaurice (the subject of Chapter Three). That was the same Dan Cahalane in Carbery House, Dunmanway. This made an impression on Hart, who embellished the fact. In his April killings chapter conclusion, Hart professed himself ‘struck by the
Hart’s thesis narrative and a sketch of the ambush position (47 and below, not reproduced in book), indicating the deployment of IRA personnel, ignored scouts entirely, an odd omission if Hart had interviewed one. There are further significant differences.

But first, why was this claimed interviewee reported differently in the two publications? Also, why did Hart make this mistake in 1992?

Hart may have accepted and also misread a significant published mistake. The December 1989 *Southern Star* Centenary Supplement published on page 46 a photograph of the recently deceased Ned Young. It was mistakenly captioned, ‘one of the few surviving veterans’. Hart most likely saw this, as his thesis cited the facing page, 47 (thesis, 415, n111; book 286, n47, illustrated above and on page 41). The mistaken caption may have given Hart the false impression that a) Young was still alive and also b) that he was ‘one of the few surviving veterans’ of the Kilmichael

symbolic reversal involved in the former guerrilla living in the grand *ancien regime* home, and by his denial of what this suggested: that the nationalist revolution had also been a sectarian one’ (thesis, pp391–92; book, pp291–92). To establish this observation, Hart asserted that the veteran ‘bought the house a few years later, after it had fallen into disrepair’. That is not accurate. Initially, the house functioned as a Free State ‘military post’. A Dr Francis E. Fitzmaurice sold the contents by public auction in 1925. Dunmanway auctioneer Henry Smith bought and occupied the house in 1933. Cahalane purchased Carbery House from Smith in 1955, thirty-four years after the April killings (F. Fitzmaurice solicitors had carriage of sale). Had he not died in 1996, Cahalane could have sought a correction when Hart’s book appeared in 1998. See *Southern Star*, 12 Mar 1923, 8 Sep 1923, 25 Apr 1925, 6 May 1933, 22 Jan 1955, 27 Apr 1996.

Probably, the extensive supplement of over 100-pages was written and laid out prior to Young’s death.
Ambush, rather than of the entire War of Independence. Hart’s thesis interview dating may have seemed to him, therefore, as non-contentious.\(^{21}\)

Hart probably became aware of a problem, however, after submission of his thesis (1992) and before book publication (1998). In 1995, the Ballineen Enniskean Heritage Group published a booklet on ambush participants, *The Wild Heather Glen, the Kilmichael Story in Grief and in Glory*. Hart acknowledged that it contained ‘a profile of every man at the ambush, with many valuable biographical details’ (book 131, n17). The details included when participants were born and died: the second last, Jack O’Sullivan, in 1986; the last, Ned Young, in 1989. In other words, Hart’s observation undermined his simultaneous claim to have interviewed H.J. / AF on 19 November 1989, six days after Young died.

\(^{21}\) Hart was unclear as to who fought at Kilmichael. In the thesis (p54, n66) he cited a ‘Michael O’Sullivan’ as a ‘veteran of Kilmichael’ (referencing, *Southern Star*, 16 Jan 1971). Hart changed this designation to an ‘I.R.A. survivor’ in his book (p38, n74), presumably because a 1995 published list of ambush participants (discussed below) contained no one of that name. Hart changed a newspaper mistake, within a TV review of a programme on Kilmichael, into inaccurate citation.
That is possibly why the ambush participant named H.J. in the thesis was newly described in the book as an unarmed ‘scout’ (named AF). If so, however, that change did not resolve Hart’s problem. *The Wild Heather Glen* booklet included Kilmichael scouts in its largely undifferentiated list of forty-six IRA ambush participants (thirty-seven armed fighters, including Tom Barry, three scouts, two dispatch scouts, four post-ambush helpers). All five scouts were later identified individually by Tom Barry biographer Meda Ryan. The last two reportedly died in 1967 and 1971.22

Hart appears to have made claims with regard to anonymous witnesses he could not have made had he named them. It was incumbent on Hart to establish the authenticity of his sources in ordinary circumstances. Using anonymous information heightened, not diminished, this responsibility. It was correspondingly incumbent on Hart’s examiners to ensure authenticity. If Hart failed at this hurdle then so also did his examiners. It is surprising if it is the case that examiners did not establish the provenance of anonymous interviewees during the supervision and examination process.

**2.2 New Anomalies**

That last point brings us to an essay collection, *Terror in Ireland 1916–1923*, edited by David Fitzpatrick, published in Hart’s memory in 2012. It contained a chapter in general support of Hart’s approach by Dr. Eve Morrison, ‘Kilmichael Revisited’. Morrison obtained privileged access to the audio taped interviews held by Fr. John Chisholm, and to an unpublished paper by Hart, responding to critics.

Morrison’s essay gave rise to new anomalies she debated with me. Whereas I viewed Hart’s mistakes as systemic, Morrison suggested that they arose from ‘muddled’ notation. Professor Fitzpatrick conceded in the same publication that Hart was ‘occasionally careless in citing’ ‘primary sources’.23 Hart’s muddle may be his message if it follows from attempts to obscure evidence. Let us take the discussion further to explore this point. New anomalies are:

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22 Ryan, 2005, p69.
1. Morrison reported that the Chisholm audiotapes of the late 1960s recorded two Kilmichael veterans speaking about the ambush, not three as Hart stated.24

2. A 2004 unpublished riposte to critics by Hart, to which Morrison was given privileged access, named all his sources (as of 2004) except for one, the ‘scout’. The ‘scout’ thus remained anonymous, even to his anonymiser.25

3. An utterance from one audiotaped armed participant Jack O’Sullivan, was wrongly attributed in Hart’s book to the ‘scout’ (35, n61). Hart therefore confused an utterance from someone whom he reportedly interviewed in 1989 with testimony on what was, at that time, a twenty-year-old audio recording.

4. However, unknown to Morrison, this attribution mistake was new to the book. It was unclear in the thesis. The change introduced to the book was obviously mistaken. Three quotations were ascribed to the ‘scout’, but the second contained the physically impossible, ““Barry made us”, said another’.26

24 Morrison indicated also that two of Hart’s ‘quotations remain unattributable’ but not which ones, 2012, p161.

25 In reply to my review Morrison reported being on the trail of the scout. He should, if he existed, have the initials, HJ or JH. Hart’s unpublished reply was possibly in response to Meda Ryan’s 2003 Tom Barry IRA Freedom Fighter. In a 2005 interview in History Ireland and in a subsequent article, Hart avoided giving a detailed response to criticism. He asserted instead that Ryan’s book contained no new research and that her analysis was not ‘rational’. He claimed also that Brian Murphy’s criticism was not published. After these and other claims were contested, Hart responded in a manner typical of revisionist attempts to depict critics as equivalent to religious fundamentalists, “[Ryan] and most of the other Kilmichael critics practice a kind of faith-based or creationist history: faith in the purity of the IRA; creationism with regard to their politics’. A previously uninvolved observer, Andreas Boldt, then admonished Hart’s emotional ad hominem approach that ignored evidence. See History Ireland, five issues, v13, n2–6, Mar–Apr to Nov–Dec, 2005.

26 My emphasis. See Meehan, 2008, p23, after ‘Fifth’. Compare Hart’s book (35, n62), which introduces the new ‘scout’ reference, with his thesis (50, n56), which is ambiguous as to attribution. Hart may have confused himself. His preceding note referred to five following ‘Chisholm interviews’ quotations, intermingled with other source material (thesis, 48, n53; book, 34, n59). This included an Auxiliary reportedly pleading, ‘I’m a Catholic, don’t shoot me’ (thesis, 48; book, 35). As noted by Morrison (p170), no veteran reported that plea on tape. It was in a recorded question from Fr. Chisholm to Ned Young. Chisholm told Young that the sad anecdote was relayed to Chisholm by ambush veteran Paddy O’Brien (who was not recorded speaking about the ambush). Had Hart stated this in the thesis, instead of leaving the anecdote unattributed, he might not in the book have seemingly included it as one of five Chisholm interview quotations. Once he did, the book contained an orphaned sixth quotation, O’Sullivan’s, that Hart then attributed to the ‘scout’.
2.3 Edward ‘Ned’ Young

There are further anomalies associated with Hart’s reporting Ned Young’s testimony.

1. Eve Morrison revealed that the second audiotaped Chisholm interviewee, alongside Jack O’Sullivan, was Ned Young. This is surprising because Young was also (as noted) reportedly the sole Kilmichael Ambush participant theoretically (though, as we shall see, problematically) available for Hart to interview in 1989. Hart consequently presented Ned Young as two different people: he was Chisholm’s late 1960s audiotaped interviewee as well as Hart’s 1988 interviewee. Anonymity made double-counting Ned Young possible.

2. Hart’s previously noted failure to distinguish individually audiotaped interviewees may therefore make a kind of (albeit unethical) sense. Distinguishing them, even anonymously as with his own claimed interviewees, would have necessitated reporting E.Y. (Edward ‘Ned’ Young) as one person who had been interviewed by both Chisholm and Hart, rather than, by implication, two separate people, one of whom Chisholm had interviewed on tape, the other with whom Hart had spoken personally.

27 Morrison’s reply to my review confirmed my deduction (2008, p22) that in the thesis E.Y. was Ned or ‘Edward’ Young, who then became AA in Hart’s book.

28 Father John Chisholm, a custodian of the tapes to which he gave Hart preferential access, has been inconsistent. In 2010, after 40 years, eight in all were made available to a second researcher, television producer Jerry O’Callaghan. He reviewed them for a January 2011 TG4 television documentary, Scéal Tom Barry (trans., ‘Tom Barry’s Story’). The eight tapes contained one interview with an ambush veteran, Jack O’Sullivan. Then, in 2011, nine tapes were reported, which Eve Morrison reviewed for her Kilmichael essay. O’Callaghan queried the ninth tape discrepancy at a talk at TCD, 26 October 2011, given by Morrison. Chisholm, who was present, admitted mislaying the ninth tape that he gave to Morrison. Ned Young turned up on the ninth tape, though Chisholm had informed Ned Young’s son, John Young (letter 12 Apr 2008, copy in author’s possession), that his father was not interviewed. According to John Borgonovo, for this and other reasons, ‘Chisholm’s partisanship and inconsistencies have polluted this evidential well’ (2012, p330). See also Ryan, 2005, p56-7, on Chisholm admitting (in Deasy, 1973), to ‘my own style’ prevailing over ‘manuscripts supplied to me’, and (to Ryan) in using a ‘free hand’ to rewrite Paddy O’Brien’s account of the Kilmichael Ambush in Deasy’s memoir. Morrison, 2012, p176, n8, cites Chisholm denying rewriting O’Brien’s original manuscript, found in Deasy’s papers. I requested that Morrison publish the complete Young transcript. I publish a substantial portion of the Jack O’Sullivan / Fr. Chisholm audiotape interchange on pages 50-51 and I can provide an entire transcript, that Jerry O’Callaghan kindly gave to me.
3. Morrison paraphrased Young on the audiotape affirming a false surrender. In fact, Young mentioned it at least twice. This was revealed at a talk where Morrison played part of Chisholm’s Young interview. Hart’s report of the tape’s contents ignored both of Young’s utterances, although the question of whether there was indeed a false surrender is absolutely central to Hart’s characterisation of Barry as a liar.

Before proceeding with discussion of Young’s testimony, a general point must be made.

Hart reported that he interviewed two ambush participants (Young and H.J./AF - i.e., the ‘scout’) in 1988–89, when only one (Young) was alive, and that he had listened to three additional participants on the late 1960s audiotape, when, according to Eve Morrison, it appears that merely two (O’Sullivan and Young) were recorded. Hart’s total of five anonymous accounts is therefore cut initially to four, if we accept Morrison’s report of merely two on the audiotapes; to three once we cease double-counting Ned Young; and to only two if we advisedly discount the ‘scout’, since former scouts were reportedly dead in 1988–89 (and since Hart’s ‘scout’ has additional problematic baggage). Thus, we are left with two audiotaped Chisholm interviews, with Ned Young and with Jack O’Sullivan, together with Hart’s claimed Young interview, for a total of three spoken accounts from two people.

There is more to be said about Hart’s claimed encounter with Ned Young, however.

His son, John Young, stated in a sworn affidavit in 2007 that Hart would have found it impossible to interview the sole surviving ambush veteran during 1988, using the normal meaning of ‘interview’. Reportedly, Ned Young suffered a debilitating stroke in late 1986 and ‘virtually lost the power of speech’. He was in the care of John Young, who controlled access to his father. John Young stated and continued to state that Peter Hart did not interview his then ninety-six-year-old father.30

Adding to the Ned Young puzzle is that Hart, later in the doctoral thesis and book, stated he had access to ‘Edward Young[’s] statement’. That is, Young’s then

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Hart did not state that Young was a Kilmichael Ambush veteran at that point. Young’s statement explained, among other Irish War of Independence activities, his role in the Kilmichael Ambush. Yet Hart’s earlier ambush chapter (thesis, 29-54; book, 21-38) ignored Young’s statement.  
Peculiarly, Hart privileged anonymous presentation of evidence.

In effect then, Hart presented Ned Young as three separate people in his research but without informing readers: (a) under his own name in the 1956 Witness Statement, when Young was 64; (b) on a late-1960s recording, when Young was in his late seventies; and (c) as Hart’s 1988 interviewee, when he was ninety-six. Presumably, informing readers would have defeated the purpose of anonymity (and might have diminished the reputed scope of Hart’s research). But the availability to Hart of the first two Young testimonies raises the question of what usefully could have been added by interviewing Young again in 1988, four years short of his 100th birthday.

By far the most significant anomaly is Hart’s reporting of Ned Young’s testimony about his role in, and memories of, the Kilmichael Ambush. Young was in ambush Section Three, which Barry had deployed high up and spread out across the road from Sections One and Two. In his 1956 Witness Statement, Young reported that he was pursuing an escaping Auxiliary soldier at Kilmichael at a time when the false surrender event was said to have happened. In other words he did not witness personally that aspect of the action, a fact Hart did not report. Nevertheless, Young stated on the Chisholm audiotape that after the fighting ‘stopped’,

*They [other IRA volunteers] told me afterwards that … the Tans said, “we surrender”, and then started to fire again.*

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31 ‘Edward Young statement’, copy in author’s possession, is identical to BMH version.

32 Hart’s book (33, 56n) also noted ‘a detailed statement … by one of the ambush party’ and an additional taped interview, both held by the Ballineen Enniskeane Area Heritage Group. Hart ignored the ‘statement’ thereafter and the heritage group denied that the new anonymously presented tape belonged to them, Meda Ryan, *History Ireland*, v13, n4, Jul–Aug 2005. I discuss it later.

33 Hart misreported the then 96-year-old Ned Young as 87 (thesis, p100, 178n; book, p80, 46n). This error, like others, was obscured by anonymity.

34 Young also spoke about this in a 1970 radio interview on the 50th anniversary of the ambush, rebroadcast RTÉ Radio One, 28 November 2008 (copy in author’s possession).
While Hart (and Morrison’s essay) did not cite Young’s interview statement on this vital point, Morrison did paraphrase Ned Young reporting separately,

[H]e had seen [John] Lordon bayonet an Auxiliary and that after the ambush members of the column had informed him that this Auxiliary had surrendered falsely.\(^{35}\)

Remarkably, then, Hart’s thesis and published narratives ignored some of Young’s most significant testimonies on the Chisholm tape—that referred twice to a false surrender event at Kilmichael. This is a stunning example of an extraordinary flaw in Hart’s methodology: he simply ignored information that contradicted his point of view. It is difficult to discern a logical basis for ignoring Young’s testimony on this point.

Hart concluded instead that ambush commander Tom Barry was one of a number of ‘political serial killers’ (thesis, 118; book, 100) on the Republican side in the War of Independence, and that Barry later concocted his untrue ‘false surrender’ narrative in 1949 by using ‘lies and evasions’ (thesis, 51; book, 36) to justify killing unarmed prisoners at Kilmichael. While omitting information demonstrating this was not the case, Hart also obscured related important information in footnotes.\(^{36}\)

In his thesis (37, n19, book, 27, n21), nine pages prior to his almost blow-by-blow report of the actual fight at Kilmichael, Hart noted without further elaboration that as ‘interviews confirm, the ‘false surrender’ story was circulating within the I.R.A. as early as 1921’. Hart’s main text failed to cite specific sources for this admission. He also censored the fact that a ‘false surrender’ narrative was reportedly enunciated to Ned Young by fellow ambush participants after the fighting ‘stopped’ on 28 November 1920. Moreover, an account of the false surrender at Kilmichael did indeed appear in 1921 in the journal *Round Table*. It was written by British Prime Minister Lloyd George’s imperial adviser, Lionel Curtis, who noted:

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\(^{35}\) Young testimony from Chisholm tape played by Morrison at a TCD Contemporary History seminar I attended, entitled ‘Kilmichael, the Veterans speak’, 26 October 2011. Morrison’s Young/Lordon revelation, 2012, p168.

\(^{36}\) Hart elaborated on his view of Barry in the *Sunday Times*, 19 Apr 1998, Barry is still considered to be an idealistic figure, unlike the great majority of his comrades he was little more than a serial killer and thought of the revolution largely in terms of shooting people. His politics were very primitive. Though quoted directly, Hart later claimed, *History Ireland*, Mar-Apr, 2005, that these comments were published out of context.
It is reported by Sinn Féin that a white flag was put up by the [Auxiliary] police, and that when the attacking party approached to accept the surrender fire was opened upon them.

In addition, in 1926 Piaras Beáslaí published an account in his Michael Collins biography. However, Hart appeared unaware of these. He claimed that former Auxiliary Commander F.P. Crozier’s *Ireland Forever* (1932) contained the first published account of a false surrender. That mistaken claim in turn enabled Hart to suggest, in the same note, that Barry’s 1949 false surrender narrative, and one by Kilmichael veteran Stephen O’Neill in 1937, ‘may in part have been prompted by Crozier’, whose account Hart discounted. Hart presented no evidence for his speculations, that discounted O’Neill’s account, the first published by a participant.  

### 2.4 Footnoted Paraphrasing

In another footnote, within his ambush narrative, Hart paraphrased testimony by the mysterious H.J. who reported, in Hart’s paraphrase, a ‘sort of false surrender’ in which

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37 Curtis, 1921, p500; Beáslaí, 1926, p97; Crozier, 1971, p128; Stephen O’Neill, ‘The Ambush at Kilmichael’, *The Kerryman*, ‘Christmas Number’, 11 Dec 1937, republished as ‘Auxiliaries Annihilated at Kilmichael’, 1947, 2009. Hart also thought it significant that a 26 November 1932 *Irish Press* article on Kilmichael by Barry omitted the false surrender (thesis, p36, n18; book, p26, n19). Meda Ryan reported (2005, pp87-8) that Barry’s reference was edited out, to which he objected. Hart also wrote that the authenticity of a ‘captured’ typewritten, ‘rebel commandant’s report’ of the ambush in General Strickland’s papers at the Imperial War Museum, ‘seems unquestionable’. It did not mention a false surrender. But Hart’s almost full citation of the document (thesis, pp35–36, n16; book, pp25–26, n18) omitted the following, Our casualties were, one killed and two who have subsequently died of wounds… P. Deasy was killed by a revolver bullet from one of the enemy whom he thought dead.

It is generally agreed it was the other way around, that two IRA ambush participants were killed and one ‘subsequently died of wounds’. Pat Deasy unquestionably was wounded and died later, yet in the ‘report’ he is the one ‘killed’. Barry noted in his memoir that he was approached during the Truce to provide a report of the ambush to the British for family compensation purposes, but refused (1989, p51). If the British had captured a report they would hardly have asked Barry and, requiring it but being refused, they had reason instead to concoct their own. Ryan, 2005, p83, cited the son of Macroom Church of Ireland Rector A.J.S. (Stephen) Brady on Auxiliaries working with solicitor T.P. Grainger to provide documentation required to process compensation claims, including for the Kilmichael Ambush. According to Brady, ‘I won’t say how it [Kilmichael documentation] came about, but it helped the families to get good compensation’. Ryan, pp73-84, and Brian Murphy, *IT* letters 10 Aug, 1 Sep 1998, have placed further question marks over the document’s authenticity (plus see Peter Hart, 1, 7 Sep 1998). Townshend, 2013, p215, wondered at the purpose of a forgery, though he ignored Barry, Ryan and Murphy. However, he queried the document’s assertion that the ammunition-strapped volunteers each possessed 100 rounds, ‘which sounds[s] more like a regular military than volunteer level’.
‘no I.R.A. man died’ (thesis, 49, n55). Hart’s main text ignored this interesting claim. And readers will recall that the book version of this same note reintroduced H.J. as AF, an unarmed ‘scout … further away from the ambush site’ (book, 35, n61).  

In this context it may be possible to identify the mysterious ‘scout’.

That is because Hart cited by name in his book (132, n20), but not the thesis, the BMH WS (No. 1,234) of another Kilmichael veteran, Jack Hennessy. As with Ned Young’s Witness Statement, Hennessy’s was not divulged or cited in Hart’s Kilmichael Ambush chapter. Hennessy, who died in 1970, was involved in the thick of the fighting in Section Two at Kilmichael. Nevertheless, he appears to be the best fit for Hart’s unarmed ‘scout’, AF—not least because Jack Hennessy’s initials reversed are H.J., the seemingly armed 19 November 1989 thesis interviewee who in the book became an unarmed ‘scout’, AF.

Hennessy’s uncited (by Hart) Kilmichael Ambush narrative noted the death in action of Section Two leader Michael McCarthy. After suffering a head wound, Hennessy took up McCarthy’s rifle because his own was jammed with blood. Significantly, Hennessy reported shouting ‘hands up’ to an Auxiliary who had ‘thrown down his rifle’, followed by the same Auxiliary drawing his revolver. Hennessy reportedly then ‘shot him dead’. Hart’s notation of the previously mentioned ‘sort of false surrender’ in which ‘no I.R.A. men died’, was attributed to his H.J. interview. Is Hennessy’s testimony in his witness statement therefore also the ‘sort of false surrender’ in Hart’s claimed interview?

Hart did not cite Hennessy’s Witness Statement in his thesis. It may be, however, given the above, that Hart also had access to this statement when writing his PhD thesis. Hart cited Hennessy’s statement at length in a later book chapter on ambush participants, entitled ‘The Boys of Kilmichael’: on Hennessy’s family home being torched and on Hennessy being tortured by the Essex Regiment in July 1920 (book, 132). But Hart ignored the statement’s significant Kilmichael Ambush testimony. As with Ned Young, that makes no sense.

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38 Barry stated, 1989 [1949], p42, that the nearest scout was positioned 150 yards away, in which case a capacity to either see or hear detailed evidence in the November twilight is questionable.
40 Hart reversed the initials of Dan Cahalane, C.D., also.
41 Particularly also as Hart followed this citation with a British intelligence assessment, ‘should have a trace of a bullet wound somewhere about his head,'
on the Chisholm audiotape, may have been inconvenient to Hart and hence either obscured or ignored. Anonymous evidence presentation was preferred.

The absence of verbatim citation is evident in another quotationless footnote. In both his thesis and his book, Hart paraphrased ‘all’ of his interviewees as follows:

All of the men interviewed agree on this point: [Michael] McCarthy and [Jim] O’Sullivan did not stand up and did not die because of a fake surrender. Two of these veterans considered Barry’s account to be an insult to the memory of these men. (thesis, 48, n52; book, 34, n58)

We will leave aside the implicit assumption that the third IRA fatality at Kilmichael, Pat Deasy, did succumb to a ‘fake surrender’. The problem with Hart’s statement is that ‘all of the men’ are (it appears) in fact also merely those to whom this same note referred to as ‘[t]wo of these veterans’. They are the only two veterans verifiably interviewed—although not by Hart himself: that is, they are Ned Young and Jack O’Sullivan on the Chisholm audiotapes. Thus, any testimony confirming that Barry insulted the memory of McCarthy and Jim Sullivan and in relation to the false surrender should be recorded in their taped Chisholm testimonies. Unfortunately, Hart (and Morrison) did not publish those testimonies. However, I obtained a transcript of the Jack O’Sullivan/Chisholm interview.42 With respect to what he told Chisholm about the Kilmichael Ambush, remember that Jack O’Sullivan, like Ned Young, was in Section Three, stationed higher up across the road. Here is the excerpt in which Jack O’Sullivan discusses, with Chisholm, Michael McCarthy’s death:


Jack O’Sullivan — That’d tell you. That’s what I’m coming at, that McCarthy never got credit for his bravery as a soldier and then …

Chisholm — Yes.

O’Sullivan — Another thing I think is very wrong.

Chisholm — Yes.

O’Sullivan — And it wasn’t up to me because his own pals from Dunmanway should have taken care of it. It was a

received at Kilmichael’. Hart’s index entry for Hennessy tantalisingly states, ‘Hennessey, Jack, Kilmichael Ambush’.

42 From Jerry O’Callaghan, Blackrock Pictures, who made it while producing Scéal Tom Barry (trans., ‘Tom Barry’s Story’), TG4 19 January 2011. O’Callaghan’s transcription exactly matches short segments Morrison published in her ‘Kilmichael Revisited’ essay.
wrong thing to say that Michael McCarthy got up out of his position …

Chisholm — Yes.
O’Sullivan — and got shot. Now there could be two meanings to it.
Chisholm — Yes, yes, yes, well you see the way Tom Barry put it was that the Auxiliaries cried, ‘we surrender, we surrender’ …

O’Sullivan — Yes.
Chisholm — … and then, only then Michael McCarthy stood up and he said that once the Auxiliaries saw him they just shot.

O’Sullivan — Yes.
Chisholm — And shot, it was a bogus surrender.
O’Sullivan — I know, I know, that covers my story, but ah then I, I always say that Michael McCarthy was even dead before …

Chisholm — was dead before the Auxiliaries surrendered.
O’Sullivan — Before they surrendered.
Chisholm — Yes.
O’Sullivan — Yes.
Chisholm — And I’d say the same of Jim Hurley ... Jim O’Sullivan.
O’Sullivan — Yes, Jim O’Sullivan, yes, Jim O’Sullivan hadn’t a hope.
Chisholm — No.
O’Sullivan — He was up high.
Chisholm — Yes. And I’d say the very same thing happened about …
O’Sullivan — ‘Tis very likely.
Chisholm — Pat Deasy too.
O’Sullivan — Yes.
Chisholm — The whole three of them, so you wouldn’t be satisfied with Tom Barry’s story as history but you think it good, a good dramatic account.

O’Sullivan — Well now I’ll tell ya I read it and I tell you it couldn’t remind me of anything only a Wild West story. I mean a man can get away with escapes once, twice or three times but there was too many of them in Tom Barry’s story.

Chisholm — Yes.
O’Sullivan — I mean, it wasn’t Tom Barry’s ‘twas somebody else that wrote this story. I suppose he just told them what to say.

In 1941, writing for the Irish Defence Forces journal An Cosantóir, Tom Barry also reported that McCarthy had died before the false surrender. Barry did not assert that McCarthy rose from his position. Also, Barry habitually stated (contrary to Chisholm’s assertion and Hart’s footnote) that only Jim O’Sullivan and Pat Deasy

43 There was no ‘Jim Hurley’, Chisholm meant Jim O’Sullivan.
(and not McCarthy) were shot during the false surrender episode. In other words, of the three IRA fatalities, two died from the false surrender. On tape, Jack O’Sullivan responded to Chisholm’s mistaken interpretation of Barry’s narrative with regard to McCarthy. Significantly, O’Sullivan then said in relation to the ‘bogus surrender’, ‘that covers my story’. In other words, for O’Sullivan there was a false surrender and McCarthy died before it—precisely the same account that Barry articulated in 1941.44

Unfortunately, Chisholm as interviewer interrupted Jack O’Sullivan to press his own opinion. He confusingly interjected that Jim O’Sullivan and Pat Deasy were not false surrender victims when Jack O’Sullivan was observing that Jim O’Sullivan was ‘up high’ and ‘hadn’t a hope’. Jack O’Sullivan responded ‘Tis very likely’ and ‘yes’, perhaps not wishing to contradict Chisholm’s perceptions. O’Sullivan expressed no personal view other than that the ‘bogus surrender’ ‘covers my story’. Chisholm should have asked Jack O’Sullivan to explain what happened to Jim O’Sullivan.45 His eagerness to interject prevented O’Sullivan also from elaborating on, ‘there could be two meanings’ to McCarthy’s death. In prioritising his own interpretation and in attempting to lead his interviewee, Chisholm failed to elicit a denial of the false surrender story from a veteran who had no difficulty disparaging the style of Barry’s memoir.

Hart’s paraphrased and footnoted report of this interview is unsustainable: O’Sullivan did not challenge the false surrender account; nor did his testimony substantiate Hart’s charge that Barry insulted the memory of his dead comrades. Jack O’Sullivan asserted, in another part of the transcript, ‘I liked [Barry] as a soldier’ and praised his bravery.

That covers O’Sullivan. Morrison had access to Ned Young’s testimony and should have been in a position to clarify what it said on Barry’s alleged ‘insult’.

44 McCarthy named by ‘Eyewitness’ (pseud., Tom Barry, 1941) (republished in O’Reilly, ed., 2009, pp11, 103). Barry named Pat Deasy and Jim O’Sullivan as false surrender casualties in ibid. and Guerilla Days, 1989, p44. For the record, Morrison also reported (p167), ‘Jack O’Sullivan categorically denied to Chisholm that there had been a false surrender’. The assertion is followed by Morrison’s n45, containing (p178), ‘This denial is more emphatic in the untaped version of the interview with O’Sullivan: telephone interview with Chisholm, 27 July 2011’ (my emphasis). In other words, Chisholm claimed O’Sullivan unequivocally rejected the false surrender, but not in the evidence he supplied to Morrison. See note 28, page 44, here, on Chisholm’s other inconsistencies.

45 Ryan, 2005, pp66–7, spoke to ambush veterans in the 1970s and 1980s. She cited Dan Hourihan, who was beside Jim O’Sullivan: ‘After they shouted that surrender, it was silence! Jim lifted himself. Thought it was all over. God rest his soul!’
Unfortunately, she did not do so in relation to either Young or Jack O’Sullivan, although she did report one of Young’s two affirmations, on the Chisholm tape, that a false surrender had occurred. Be that as it may, it is demonstrated again that Jack O’Sullivan’s and Ned Young’s taped evidence about the ambush, which Chisholm made available to Hart but to no-one else for over twenty years, undermined Hart’s own interpretation of what had happened at Kilmichael. Because of that, we may surmise, Hart misreported that evidence. Moreover, his mis-identification of false surrender fatalities was in any case based on a significant misreading of Barry’s account.

2.5 Misreading Tom Barry

Hart misreported Tom Barry’s account of how the ambush unfolded. Barry consistently reported that there were two false surrender IRA fatalities, Jim O’Sullivan and Pat Deasy (of three in total, including Michael McCarthy). Hart (and Morrison following Hart) misreported Barry as having stated that all three of his men died because of the false surrender. The misreporting is easily demonstrated. A long citation by Hart, in his book and thesis narrative, included Barry stating that the false surrender ‘killed two’ of the IRA fighters. Hart then mistakenly reported that Barry claimed that it ‘caused the death of three IRA men’ (thesis, 31–32; book, 22–23).

Hart’s assault on Barry’s account is partly based on this clear misreading.46

Hart’s introduction in the book of a new anonymous taped source47 is affected by his misunderstanding of Michael McCarthy’s death. Hart cited his new source (book, 36) in a discussion of how volunteers may have been enraged by the deaths of ‘their comrades’:

They died to my mind a cruel death, because the men that were in with Mick McCarthy, where he was shot, they knew their two men were shot and they came out and they shot them and I think a bayonet was used on one or maybe two of them.

46 Also in Barry, 1974, p16: ‘the Auxiliaries were firing again … and two volunteers fell’. On pp13-14 we find, ‘two IRA men were killed’ by the false surrender. In response to my review, Morrison pointed to an ambiguous footnote in a 1974 pamphlet by Barry (a critique of Liam Deasy’s 1973 memoir, edited by Fr. John Chisholm), referring to ‘two, at least’ false surrender victims (p16, n11). Barry did not write it. A prominent ‘Publisher’s Notice’ asserted, ‘[f]ootnotes… have been drafted and inserted by us as publishers’.

The use of ‘they’ and ‘them’ is potentially confusing, a confusion encouraged by Hart’s ambiguous presentation. Are those indicated by the first ‘they’ IRA Volunteers, or are ‘they’ Auxiliaries? It is possible that ‘they’ are the IRA and ‘them’ near the end are Auxiliaries. If so, two IRA Volunteers adjudged by Barry to have been victims of the false surrender, Jim O’Sullivan and Pat Deasy, are explicitly separated out from Michael (Mick) McCarthy. It may plausibly be implied that they, unlike him, suffered a ‘cruel death’, if they were killed during a false surrender. Since Hart, did not understand the distinction between McCarthy and his comrades in the context of the false surrender, he was not in a position, therefore, to accurately frame this oral evidence for the reader. It is possible also that ‘they’ are Auxiliaries without violating the sense of this interpretation, in which the alleged cruelty of their death is due to the animation of IRA Section Two survivors targeting Auxiliaries they believed responsible for the false surrender. It was Hart’s task to clarify ambiguity, in particular within anonymous testimony. He failed to do so.

48 Hart clarified this aspect in a response to the author, Meda Ryan and others, ‘Peter Hart and his Enemies’, HI, v13, n4, Jul Aug 2005, but introduced further ambiguity. In reproducing the anonymous quotation, the first ‘they’ in Hart’s citation is followed now by ‘[two surrendered Auxiliaries]’. ‘[T]heir two men’ in 1998 became ‘these two [IRA] men’ in the 2005 article. More importantly, the magazine article included an important preceding quotation that Hart’s book omitted. It stated: ‘No, there was no such thing as a [false] surrender’. A new quotation, allegedly from the same ‘witness’, followed, in which it is confusingly implied that the same two Auxiliaries ‘went up the road and went back the road’ with their hands up in surrender, before being killed. Hart’s 1998 quotation implied that the Auxiliaries were killed immediately. It may be that, in 2005, Hart amalgamated one or more statements. Also, Hart did not state what, if any, part the speaker who was not himself ‘in with Michael McCarthy’, may have played in the ambush. Meda Ryan responded, ‘Tom Barry and the Kilmichael Ambush’, v13, n6:

Hart quotes ‘a witness’ from his own notes, […]: ‘No, there was no such thing as a [false] surrender…’ In response to a question as to whether ‘the two Auxiliaries got up and surrendered’, the man replied: ‘Oh, they did . . . ’. There is a dilemma here. First, the unnamed man says that there was no surrender - therefore it was a fight to its conclusion. Then he says that the Auxiliaries surrendered, but we are not told whether he was asked if the Auxiliaries’ comrades picked up their guns and recommenced firing, thereby falsifying the surrender. To make matters worse, Peter Hart has inserted ‘[false]’. But the man did not imply that. He said ‘there was no such thing as a surrender…’ (One is the antithesis of the other—not clarification, as square brackets generally denote.) Of course, stating that there was no genuine surrender does not rule out the implication of a false one (which is not an actual surrender, but the opposite of one).

Instead of clarification, Hart added to concerns regarding what Fitzpatrick referred to as ‘careless[ness]’ in citing source material (see page 42).
Hart appears to have misquoted and/or ignored a combination of evidence and individuals to create jumbled up utterances moulded together to suggest that the IRA at Kilmichael could not claim a justifiable basis for killing all of their Auxiliary adversaries. These mistakes and the misreported taped interviews were used, it appears, to create an aura of suspicion surrounding the veracity of Barry’s account, that also allowed Hart to later ignore Barry’s significant views on the subject of spies and informers.

2.6 Auxiliaries

On the other hand, Hart consistently understated the reputation of the Auxiliaries for brutality. For example, he cited reminiscences by IRA veterans Charlie Browne and Micheál Ó Suilleabháín, which, Hart claimed, demonstrated the Auxiliaries’ ‘decency and restraint’ (thesis, 40, n30; book, 29, n33). In fact, however, on the pages that Hart cited, Ó Suilleabháín had written of ‘John Bull’s terrorists’ and ‘that riff-raff’.

Likewise, Browne’s memoir, whose Chapter Seven devoted four pages to the ‘Auxiliaries’ Arrival’, mentioned ‘their almost total lack of discipline’ and asserted that each Auxiliary ‘seemed a law unto himself’. The only possible justification for Hart’s characterisation is Browne’s report of what happened after the Kilmichael Ambush, when three Auxiliaries expelled his parents from their home and set it on fire: ‘Major Mitchell and [Auxiliary] O/C Col. [Buxton] Smith sent a party of men to extinguish the blaze’. Hart also cited Liam Deasy on the ‘soldierly humanity’ of Colonel Craik, the British commander at Kilmichael. However, Deasy’s remark was made in odd appreciation of Craik’s ineptitude. He arrested and freed Deasy twice within four-days soon before the Kilmichael Ambush, despite Deasy providing different false names each time. Deasy’s next sentence noted the ‘mercenary depravity of the majority of the Auxiliaries’, a statement Hart ignored. In general, Hart seemed to go out of his way to subdue popular perceptions of the unpopular force. Thus, Lionel Fleming, son of the Church of Ireland Rector of Timoleague in West Cork, observed in his memoir,


I have never met anyone with experience of the Black and Tans who has defended them, or who has been able to justify the extraordinary policy of using a Crown force for the sole purpose of indiscriminate terrorism.

Although Hart cited Fleming’s memoir for other purposes, he never quoted or referred to this passage.51

2.7 Chapter Conclusion

The issue addressed here is not the existence or precise delineation of a ‘false surrender’ at Kilmichael, although no verifiable evidence has emerged that contradicts it. Nor is the discussion about the wisdom of attempting to recreate in minute detail what exactly happened in the twilight of 28 November 1920. Rather, what is most important, at least from an academic and historiographical perspective, is Hart’s apparent attempt to obscure, misrepresent, or simply ignore participant testimony that qualified or contradicted his interpretations of events.

It is difficult to construe Hart’s misreporting and mistakes as merely the random effect of incompetently reported or ‘muddled’ citations. Hart’s text, based on these mistakes, undermined Tom Barry’s historical reputation and created space for Hart’s later speculations with regard to the IRA killing of alleged spies and informers. The inconvenient presence of Barry’s non-sectarian justifications of these actions was surmounted by Hart ignoring what he termed ‘lies and evasions’ in ‘Barry’s “history”’ (thesis, 51; book, 36).52 By portraying Tom Barry and his IRA force in a negative manner early in his narrative, Hart conditioned readers for his chapter on the April 1922 killings in West Cork, to which we now give our attention.

51 Fleming, 1965, p70, Fleming’s emphasis. See further reference to Fleming’s memoir, pages 100-1. Hart’s use of this text, mostly about Fleming’s life as an Irish Times journalist, attempted to demonstrate a deep sectarian divide, though without page numbers (thesis p389, n86; book, p290, n121). The journalist Kevin Myers is a latter day champion of the these British counterinsurgency forces, and of Peter Hart (see pages 110-12), ‘Laziness and Propaganda have unfairly tarnished the Black and Tans’ reputation’, II, 29 Aug 2006.

52 See discussion leading to note 36, page 47. Hart’s dismissal of Barry ignored, in addition, Barry’s dismissal, in turn, of an excess of piety bestowed upon him in Liam Deasy’s Toward Ireland Free, 1973, that was edited and completed by Father Chisholm. Barry, 1974, p19, rejected as not only mistaken, but also implausible, an assertion that he and Deasy ‘assist[ed] at Mass and receiv[ed] Our Lord in Holy Communion’ on New Year’s Eve 1920. Barry explained that he was then ‘firmly excommunicated’, due to a post-Kilmichael Ambush decree from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork, Dr. Daniel Cohalan. Deasy’s Fr. Chisholm-assisted memoir ignored that quite important historical detail.
CHAPTER THREE IRA Sectarianism Thesis

Table 1
West Cork 26-29 April 1922 Killings - Who, When, Where
(Including, 'Richard Harbord' and 'Ralph of Rosscarbery' from Hart thesis in italics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When (date)</th>
<th>When (time)</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Hart Map Number</th>
<th>Hart narrative Sequence + Page No (thesis)</th>
<th>Sources: (newspaper news + inquest reports)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballygroman House Killings 26 April 1922</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Neill, Michael</td>
<td>Wed 26 April</td>
<td>3am</td>
<td>Ballygroman (near Ovens)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13, p.373</td>
<td>SS 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woods, Herbert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14, p.374</td>
<td>SS 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornibrook, Thomas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15, p.374</td>
<td>SS 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornibrook, Samuel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16, p.374</td>
<td>SS 29Apr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Macroom Killings 26 April 1922

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When (date)</th>
<th>When (time)</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Hart Map Number</th>
<th>Hart narrative Sequence + Page No (thesis)</th>
<th>Sources: (newspaper news + inquest reports)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lt R. A. Hendy</td>
<td>Wed 26 April</td>
<td>3pm</td>
<td>Dick Williams Hotel Macroom</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not discussed by Hart</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Bandon Valley Killings 27-29 April 1922

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When (date)</th>
<th>When (time)</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Hart Map Number</th>
<th>Hart narrative Sequence + Page No (thesis)</th>
<th>Sources: (newspaper news + inquest reports)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fitzmaurice, Francis</td>
<td>Thurs 27 April</td>
<td>12.15am</td>
<td>Dunmanway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 p.366</td>
<td>SS,IT 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray, David</td>
<td></td>
<td>1am (after)</td>
<td>Dunmanway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 p.365</td>
<td>SS,IT 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttimer, James</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.20am (about)</td>
<td>Dunmanway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 p.365</td>
<td>SS,IT 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howe, Robert</td>
<td>Thurs 27 April</td>
<td>10.30pm</td>
<td>Ballaghanure (near Ballineen)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 p.366</td>
<td>IT 2May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagle, Robert</td>
<td></td>
<td>11pm (after)</td>
<td>Clonakilty - McCurtain Hill</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11 p.368</td>
<td>IT 2May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbord, Ralph (survived)</td>
<td>Thurs 27 or 28 April</td>
<td>Not known</td>
<td>Murragh (near Enniskean)</td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>IT,CC,BN 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimney, John</td>
<td>Fri 28 April</td>
<td>Early... morning</td>
<td>Castletown (near Ballineen)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 p.367</td>
<td>IT 29Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley, Alexander</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.30am</td>
<td>Ballineen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6 p.367</td>
<td>IT 1May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttimer, John</td>
<td></td>
<td>2am</td>
<td>Caher (near Ballineen)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8 p.368</td>
<td>IT 2May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield, James</td>
<td></td>
<td>2am</td>
<td>Caher (near Ballineen)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9 p.368</td>
<td>IT 2May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradfield, John</td>
<td>Sat 29 April</td>
<td>11pm</td>
<td>Kilowen (b/w Enniskean-Bandon)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12 p.369</td>
<td>IT 2May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fictitious (Hart thesis) events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When (date)</th>
<th>When (time)</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Hart Map Number</th>
<th>Hart narrative Sequence + Page No (thesis)</th>
<th>Sources: (newspaper news + inquest reports)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard Harbord</td>
<td>Thurs '27-28 April'</td>
<td>'same night'</td>
<td>'Enniskean – Murragh'</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7 p.367</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph of Rosscarbery</td>
<td>Fri '28 April'</td>
<td>'same night'</td>
<td>'Rosscarbery'</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10 p.369</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[SS = Southern Star, IT = Irish Times, CC = Cork Constitution, BN = Belfast News Letter. Material within inverted commas by Peter Hart]

If Peter Hart was to sustain or strengthen his thesis, that the Cork IRA (and Irish Republicanism, generally) were characterised by ethno-religious fanaticism, then it was strategically useful to link his interpretation of the British Auxiliary deaths at the Kilmichael Ambush of November 1921 to what he would allege to be the IRA’s senseless sectarian ‘massacre’ of innocent Protestants in April 1922. Thus, in both his PhD thesis (392) and his book (292), Hart linked the ambush and the IRA who carried it out, under their officers’ orders, to later killings of Protestant civilians (see Chapter Two, page 30, for Hart’s assertion on this point).

2 Ralph Harbord said 27, whereas Richard reported 28 April, in separate Grants Committee claims, CO/762/58, CO/762/155, Possibly around 12 midnight.
No evidence was adduced that the killings were ordered or authorised by IRA command and Hart’s book removed thesis speculation as to individual culpability. The absence of evidence was a means by which Hart grounded his conclusions. Hart’s characterisation of the April 1922 killings as sectarian is therefore quite problematic.
That characterisation (like his reconstruction of events at Kilmichael) depended in turn on serious misuse, distortion, or non-use of much of the available evidence.

The central focus of Hart’s ‘sectarian massacre’ thesis is the killing of ten Protestant men, who lived in Cork’s Bandon Valley, that took place between 27 and 29 April 1922. First, soon after midnight on Thursday, 27 April, three men—Francis Fitzmaurice, David Gray, and James Buttimer—were shot dead in Dunmanway. Later, between 10.30 p.m. and 2 a.m. over 27–28 April, further along the Dunmanway to Bandon road, five more Protestant men were shot dead in or near the adjacent towns of Ballineen and Enniskean: John Chinnery\(^5\), Robert Howe, Alexander Gerald McKinley, John Buttimer and James Greenfield. The Reverend Ralph Harbord was wounded at Murragh Rectory, to the west of Enniskean. One additional outlying victim was shot dead after 11 p.m., Robert Nagle of Clonakilty\(^6\), some 15 km south. Finally, on 29 April the final victim, John Bradfield, was shot dead in Kilowen, again near Enniskean. These intertwined details of time and geography are more easily understood by consulting Table One and a map of the territory on which is superimposed each cluster of killings, on pages 57, 58. Those ten deaths (plus the wounding of Rev’d Harbord) constitute what we shall call, for convenience, the ‘Bandon Valley Killings’.

However, there were two other sets of killings that also occurred in West Cork on Wednesday 26 April, the day before the Bandon Valley Killings began. The first set began at approximately 3:00 a.m., when one of the Protestant occupants of Ballygroman House, near Ovens (off the main Ballincollig-Macroom road, about 31 km from Ballineen-Enniskeane), shot and killed an IRA officer, Michael O’Neill. The inhabitants failed to admit O’Neill who reportedly identified himself and two companions. He was shot dead after entering the house unarmed through a window. Later that same morning, three Protestant loyalists from Ballygroman House—Herbert Woods, Thomas Hornibrook, and his son Samuel—who were believed

\(^5\) The timing of Chinnery’s death, possibly on the cusp of 27-8 April, is uncertain. His death certificate and gravestone give 27 April, while newspapers reported ‘early morning’ on the 28\(^{th}\). Bielenberg, Bordonevovo and Donnelly (2014, p27, n70) opt for 27 April on the basis of the certificate and subsequent gravestone inscription. They also correct (p18) a ‘Mass card’ notice of the death of Michael O’Neill giving 29 (instead of the correct 26) April.

\(^6\) See Chapter Four discussion of the killing of Nagle, pages 95-96, notes 36-38.
responsible for O’Neill’s death, disappeared and were presumed killed. For convenience, we shall refer to the deaths of Woods and the two Hornibrooks as the ‘Ballygroman House Killings’.

The second set of killings took place later but also on the same day, Wednesday 26 April, when three British Intelligence officers, Lieutenants R.A. Hendy, G.R. Dove, and K.L. Henderson, plus their driver, R.A. Brooks (and Hendy’s dog), disappeared from the Dick Williams Hotel in Macroom. They, like the occupants of Ballygroman House, were presumed killed by the IRA. These we shall call the ‘Macroom Killings’. All three sets of killings are set out in Table One, page 57, and map, page 58.

Logically, either set of disappearances and presumed killings—or, indeed, both sets—that took place on Wednesday, 26 April, might have been crucially linked to, and even causal in triggering and hence explaining, the ten Bandon Valley Killings that began early on the morning of Thursday, 27 April. As we shall see, however, Peter Hart oddly emphasised only one set of killings, those at Ballygroman House, and linked them to the Bandon Valley Killings, while practically ignoring the second set that occurred at Macroom. Hart could argue that the Ballygroman House Killings of Protestant civilians sparked a sectarian chain of events. The Macroom Killings, of British Intelligence Officers, suggested, as we will see, the possibility of a non-sectarian interpretation of the ten deaths that occurred shortly afterwards in the Bandon Valley. Also, even if not connected, did not these Macroom ‘enemies’ of the IRA deserve academic consideration? Or were they, from Hart’s perspective, the wrong kind of enemy and ignored also for that reason?

Before we evaluate what happened in West Cork in late April 1922, we need to establish the overall political and social contexts in which those tragic events occurred.

The Bandon Valley Killings took place after the Truce of June 1921 had concluded the ‘Black and Tan War’ and after the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921 had imposed on the future Irish Free State significant limitations on Irish sovereignty, including an oath of loyalty to the British Crown and, arguably most importantly, Partition. Of course, Partition was first imposed in June 1920 by the Government of

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8 Another term used to describe the War of Independence of 1919–21, in addition to the ‘Anglo-Irish War’.
Ireland Act. Nationalists in what was now, officially, Northern Ireland, had endured what amounted to a sectarian reign of terror under unionist rule. In January 1922, both Sinn Féin and Republican forces in the IRA split over the Treaty and over the legitimacy of the new Free State regime, which anti-Treaty Republicans viewed as having been imposed by British duplicity and coercion. During this period also the RIC was being disbanded and British troops began a process of withdrawal. Thus, in the period January–June 1922, Irish society experienced months of acute political and military instability: intra-Republican hostilities; vicious sectarian strife, primarily in the North; class conflicts between urban and rural employers and workers; plus extensive opportunistic criminality. Overlaying this turmoil was the prospect of a renewed ‘state of war with the British Empire’ if Treaty terms were not fulfilled, as Winston Churchill threatened Michael Collins. The events in West Cork of April 1922 took place, therefore, in a tense, uncertain period when the pro- and anti-Treaty Republicans were drifting into the Irish Civil War that began on 28 June 1922, two months after the April Killings.

At the time, the Bandon Valley Killings of 27–29 April 1922 were seen in an all-Ireland context. According to Dorothy Macardle writing in 1937, they were ‘violently in conflict with the traditions and principles of the Republican Army [and] created shame and anger throughout Ireland.’ The attacks were initially thought to have been sectarian retaliation for persecution of Catholics in the new Northern Ireland. More died there each month between February and May 1922 than in any previous month since June 1920, 229 in all. A month-old pact between Michael Collins and James Craig, representing the North and South administrations, purporting to resolve the crisis, collapsed on 28 April. Collins responded to a 25 April letter from Craig, accusing the latter of bad faith. Revealingly, according to Macardle, the deaths in the Six Counties,

11 In Regan, 2013, p116.
12 Collins reply, IT 29 April 1922. See, Kenna, 1922, pp186–94. Kenna noted the difficulty of using a sectarian headcount to assess deaths, given that crown forces killed some Protestants in the act of shooting Catholics, and some were killed by co-religionists for associating with Catholics, or being mistaken for them, pp67, 133,
… became so familiar that they occupied little space in the press … in comparison with the murders which took place during the last week of April in County Cork.\footnote{Macardle, [1937], 1965, p704. Glennon, 2013, p69. See also, Cunningham, 2013, p7; Farrell,1980, pp55–56. Hart did not cite Macardle’s history, first published in 1937.}

Soon afterwards on 5 June, the Manchester \textit{Guardian} noted,

\ldots the very tolerable [situation of southern Protestants] compared with that of Catholics in Belfast [where], in three days of last week … some 1,500 Catholics, men women and children, had the roofs pulled or burned over their heads.

Southern Protestants condemned unionist attacks on Catholics in the North before and after the southern April killings, and rejected outright Ulster Unionist assertions that they received in the south treatment comparable to what Catholics endured in Northern Ireland.\footnote{14 ‘Intolerance condemned, Voice of southern Protestants’, ‘Southern Protestants speak, Tribute to Catholic Population, \textit{IT, II}, 12 May 1922, discussed later.} They differed with northern Protestant clergy who identified with the new unionist power structure. On 29 April 1922, the day it began reporting the April killings and Collins’ response to Craig, the \textit{Irish Times} (and \textit{Independent}) also reported a denial by four ‘heads of the Protestant Churches in the Northern Ireland area’ that Catholics there were subject to persecution. The Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist leaders defended, for example, the expulsion of over 6,000 Catholics (including former British forces personnel) and socialists (including Protestants), from their jobs in Belfast shipyard and engineering works in July 1920. They asserted:

\begin{quote}
It is not true that Roman Catholics have been denied their natural right to earn their daily bread. The shipyard workers did not exclude any man because of his religion. They refused to work with men who would not pledge their word of honour that they disapproved of the terrible murders which were then taking place.
\end{quote}

However, James Baird, an expelled Protestant trade union activist, had testified in the \textit{Dublin Evening Telegraph} on 11 November 1920,

\begin{quote}
On the 21\textsuperscript{st} of July [1920], and on succeeding dates, every Roman Catholic—whether ex-service man who had proved his loyalty to England during the Great War, or Sinn Féiner who claims to be loyal to Ireland and Ireland alone—was expelled from the shipyards and other works … Almost 10,000 workers are at present affected, and on several
\end{quote}

142, 173. Glennon, 2013, p264, makes the point that Catholics suffered more casualties in areas where the IRA was not present to protect them.
occasions men have attempted to resume work only to find the ‘loyal’ men still determined to keep them out.

Given the resumption of sectarian attacks, which by June 1922 had seen over 20,000 Catholics expelled from their homes, it is possible that north-south Protestant differences might have deepened, had the April Killings not intervened to create a fleeting impression of north-south sectarian similarity, followed by the southern civil war.\(^\text{15}\)

Historical discussion of the sectarian violence in Belfast during 1920–22 is sometimes avoided. For example, David Fitzpatrick’s edited collection, *Terror in Ireland 1916–1923*, published in 2012, did not analyse unionist ‘terror’ in Northern Ireland. Ironically, contributor Brian Hanley commented in the same volume on historians’ failure to do so.\(^\text{16}\)

To be sure, the sudden eruption of killings in West Cork caused panic among local Protestants. The 1 May 1922 *Irish Times* reported over 100 men leaving the area by train en route to Britain.\(^\text{17}\) Contemporaries who viewed the killings as sectarian also thought them exceptional. However, Peter Hart employed the Bandon Valley Killings to validate his insistence that the IRA had pursued a sectarian agenda during the 1919–22 period and to corroborate his assertion that Protestants were “‘fair game’ [for] the I.R.A. [and] for a large segment of the Catholic population’ (thesis, 390; book, 290). In his book (291) Hart reinforced the point by arguing further that the ‘minority [i.e., Protestant] population of West Cork were seen not only as past enemies and current undesirables, but also as a future fifth column’.\(^\text{18}\) He contended,

These men were shot because they were Protestant. No Catholic loyalists, landlords or ‘spies’ were shot or even shot at.\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{15}\) Kenna, p148. Southern Protestant attitudes discussed further in Chapter Four.

\(^{16}\) Hanley, 2012, pp18-19, 20-22. Pádraic Ó Ruairc’s doctoral research, 2014, on the Belfast violence (which he kindly allowed me to read), indicated that the IRA played a defensive role throughout. Overwhelmingly, nationalists were victims of sectarian violence. Some sectarian reaction to unionist, including police, assaults on nationalist areas emanated from ‘Hibernian’ supporters of West Belfast’s nationalist MP, Joe Devlin, concerned at increasing post-Truce support for Sinn Féin.

\(^{17}\) See Willie Kingston’s contemporary Protestant memoir, 2005, pp35–35. Keane (2014, p189) remarked, ‘a lot in one weekend but certainly no “pogrom”’.

\(^{18}\) In his thesis (p390) Hart referred instead to West Cork’s ‘loyalist’ – not ‘minority’ - population, a non-sectarian, political, description.

\(^{19}\) This is not accurate. The premises of Roman Catholic loyalist James McCarthy were shot at over 27–28 April, as were those of Protestants cited by Hart as victims:
antagonism which drove this massacre was interwoven with political hysteria and local vendettas, but it was sectarian none the less: ‘our fellas [sic] took it out on the Protestants’. The gunmen, it may be inferred, did not seek merely to punish Protestants but to drive them out altogether.

Within this rhetoric of ethnic intolerance can be detected the quasi-millenarian idea of a final reckoning of the ancient conflict between settlers and natives. (thesis, 386; book, 288)

Thus, Hart claimed later that the Bandon Valley Killings were the culmination of a sectarian IRA campaign that had commenced in ‘the summer of 1920’. He concluded that ‘[t]he nationalist revolution had also been a sectarian one’ (thesis, 392; book, 292).

Peter Hart’s interpretation of IRA activities as sectarian in Cork (and in the South of Ireland, generally) depended partly on an official British document, *The Record of the Rebellion in the Sixth Divisional Area*, which Hart characterised as ‘probably the most trustworthy [account] that we have’. Setting aside the question of why Hart might so describe an official British military history, which in fact contained anti-Irish...

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20 Hart’s ‘fellas’ should be ‘fellows’. His citation of IRA volunteer Denis Lordan, here, is misleading. It is taken from Ó Broin’s, 1985, p177, research on Protestant republicans, in particular Dorothy Stopford in West Cork. Lordan, a friend of Stopford’s, addressed an event resembling a description of the Ballygroman House killings and the existence in the area of a sectarian ‘anti-independence movement’. The term ‘Protestants’ was probably descriptive of those perceived as sectarian loyalists (as is the case in Lordan’s account, also p177, of the killing of two informers). The important phrase ‘anti-independence movement’ is cited dismissively in the thesis (p386). It is excised from the book’s discussion of republican ‘paranoia’ (p280). The event described by Lordan, who does not mention fatalities, is identified as having occurred during the later Irish Civil War. Despite this uncertainty (which does not preclude a reference to the Ballygroman House killings), Hart cited the phrase, ‘took it out on the Protestants’ at this point in his regular text. He also entitled his April Killings chapter, ‘Taking it out on the Protestants’. Given this acknowledgement of its apparent significance, it is surprising that Hart did not adequately discuss Ó Broin’s research on Stopford’s work as a Protestant friend of the West Cork IRA. Instead, partial citations are scattered over a number of book pages, pp280, 283, 288. Possibly, as with the Macroom officers, Stopford presented as the wrong sort of Protestant and was ignored for that reason.


22 See Chapter Two, page 39, note 19, for this assertion’s questionable evidential premise.
prejudice, what is of far greater importance is that Hart had to censor the document to make it support his charge of IRA sectarianism. In order to make his case that the victims of the Bandon Valley Killings were murdered because they were Protestants, Hart had to discount the possibility that, during the Irish War of Independence, they had been British informers, whose information had cost IRA volunteers their lives or liberty, and thus were killed primarily or only for that reason. To support his hypothesis, Hart observed, citing *The Record*:

[T]he truth was that, as British intelligence officers recognised “in the south the Protestants and those who supported the Government rarely gave much information because, except by chance, they had not got it to give.” (thesis, 413; book, 305–6)24

Hart ignored, however, and failed to alert his readers to, the existence of the *Record*’s immediately following passage, which indicated that, exceptionally, the Bandon Valley region, in which the April 1922 killings took place, had witnessed widespread loyalist informing:

[A]n exception to this rule was in the Bandon area where there were many Protestant farmers who gave information. Although the Intelligence Officer of the area was exceptionally experienced and although the troops were most active it proved almost impossible to protect those brave men, many of whom were murdered while almost all the remainder suffered grave material loss.25

There seems to be no justifiable basis for Hart’s failure to cite the latter passage, irrespective of whether it referred directly to the April killings.26 That passage clearly

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23 Hart, ed., 2002, p6. Hart’s omission of a chapter on ‘The People’ in the *Record*, from an edition he edited in 2002, without informing readers, hid this fact, a possible further act of suppression. The missing chapter noted that, Commanders and intelligence officers considered that 90% of the people were Sinn Féiners or sympathisers with Sinn Féin, and that all Sinn Féiners were murderers or sympathised with murder. Judged by English standards the Irish are a difficult and unsatisfactory people. Their civilisation is different and in many ways lower than that of the English. They are entirely lacking in the Englishman’s distinctive respect for the truth. Intriguingly, despite supposed deficiencies ‘the Irish’ were not accused of sectarianism, in Brian Murphy, ‘Peter Hart, the Issue of Sources’, *IPR*, v20, n7, Jul 2005, appended to, Murphy, Meehan, 2008.

24 This is self-serving. Many Protestants refused to inform. See, for example, Pyne Clarke, 1985, pp52–53 (discussed, page 94).


26 It has been suggested that Hart thought the *Record* was written after the April killings. Information confirming that a first draft was written in early April 1922 was
identified ‘the Bandon area’ as having generated significant loyalist collaboration with Crown forces. It therefore signified a plausible basis for suggesting that the April 1922 victims were targeted for suspected loyalist activity, not simply because of their Protestant identity. Ironically, the supervisor/internal examiner of Hart’s thesis had cited in his own research the paragraph from the Record Hart omitted.27 Professor Fitzpatrick did not, it appears, notice Hart’s rather blatant censorship and require restoration of the full text. Likewise, Hart’s external examiner had also previously researched and cited this source.28 Their failure, during the supervision and/or examination process, to direct Hart to consider what the source actually stated is arguably surprising. As in Hart’s treatment of the Kilmichael Ambush, it appears that evidence tending to question Hart’s interpretations was overlooked.

Hart also published in his thesis a mistake resulting in an extra fictional victim of the April 1922 killings. Both the mistake and Hart’s later correction are instructive as an example of how Hart promoted his view of republican sectarianism despite the evidence.

In his thesis (136) Hart claimed that at Ballygroman House and in the Bandon Valley, fifteen Protestant civilians were shot; his book, (115) mentions (correctly) fourteen—thirteen killed and one wounded (see Table One, page 57).29 The thesis stated (367) that at Murragh rectory, near Enniskean, ‘the son of the Rector, Richard Harbord, was killed’.30 He reported also that, ‘The Reverend Ralph Harbord was shot … in Rosscarbery, but escaped with only a wound’ (369).31 This outlying Rosscarbery victim (the furthest from the main site of killings, see map, page 58) was used by Hart to establish a random widespread sectarian pattern, based on the killings’ simultaneity and territorial spread. However, the apparent fact that two Harbord family members were reportedly attacked should have tempered this

released in 2001. The critical issue is that Crown forces successfully and exceptionally recruited Protestant loyalists as collaborators in the area. Either way, Hart’s censorship had no justifiable basis. On this, see Barry Keane, ‘Chasing Shadows—Peter Hart, John Regan, Eve Morrison, Gerard Murphy, the Record of the Rebellion and the Dunmanway Killings’, at www.academia.edu/4960537/ (accessed 19 November 2013), also discussed in Keane’s Massacre in West Cork, 2014.

28 Townshend, 1975, p226.
29 These formulations exclude the Macroom killings of four British Army personnel.
30 Is this a reference to the Rector himself or to a son also named Richard? This unnecessarily unclear writing is problematic. See also note 33.
31 Citing, n17, ‘Rev. Ralph Harbord statement (C0/762/58)’. 
conclusion. Attacks on members of the same family in different places in sequence might, with difficulty, be explained as random. But Hart offered none.

In fact, however, no ‘Richard Harbord’ was shot dead and no attack took place in Rosscarbery. The Rev’d Ralph Harbord was certainly wounded, but at Murragh rectory by rifle fire from the adjoining road. He was the son of the unharmed Rev’d Richard C.M. Harbord who resided at Murragh. Hart silently rectified the mistake in his book, a correction that should have constrained claims of spontaneous sectarian activity over a wide geographic area. That area was now constricted considerably (see Hart’s and also my, more detailed, map on page 58).

However, loss of 1992’s oddly named ‘Reverend Ralph of Rosscarbery’ had no affect on Hart’s 1998 conclusions about the geography of the killings. Compare contrasting sentences, first the thesis (378),

The other two victims, Robert Nagle in Clonakilty and the Reverend Ralph of Rosscarbery, lived south of the Bandon River and were clearly attacked by a different party—or parties—altogether.

In the book, the clear exposition above became this vague assertion (282),

The other victims, in and around Clonakilty, lived south of the Bandon Valley and were clearly attacked by a different party—or parties—altogether.

This example again indicates that for Hart, evidence, even when withdrawn, served pre-determined conclusions. His sectarianism thesis came first.

This point may be further elaborated upon.

In Hart’s book, the problem of the removal of the fictitious Rosscarbery wounding of Rev’d Ralph Harbord was resolved by inserting an unharmed April killings survivor, Richard Helen from Clonakilty. Helen stated he was apprehended but escaped the same day Robert Nagle was shot dead in Clonakilty, during the late evening of Thursday, 27 April. Clonakilty could have been visited by some of the killers operating in and around Ballineen and Enniskean over 27–28 April.

32 Rev’d Richard Harbord (CO/762/155). His son’s compensation claim was possibly a basis for the Rosscarbery mistake, as Ralph Harbord ministered there in the later 1920s. No source accompanied Hart’s ‘Richard Harbord’ claim (thesis, p367).
33 The absence of a surname created an impression that ‘Ralph’ was Harbord’s surname. See also note 30.
34 Hart asserted that the victims were not ‘chosen entirely at random’, meaning that Protestant men were targeted, ‘with the exception of James McCarthy, who was Catholic (and whose life was not threatened)’, thesis, p383.
Significantly, Hart’s introduction of Richard Helen compounds the problem of evidence misuse. The British government’s Irish Grants Committee later compensated loyalists who claimed to have suffered materially due to activity in support of British rule. Hart asserted that claims from the Bandon Valley region did not reveal evidence of informing (thesis, 369, n15; book, 276, n19). Hart’s claim, if accurate, would reinforce a view of the killings as sectarian. But he was inaccurate in the case of Richard Helen. Helen’s significance is that he survived to claim he was an informer. His testimony was supported by a statement from a former RIC District Inspector.\textsuperscript{35}

Helen initially received £225 from British funds to relocate to England. The Grants Committee later awarded him an additional £200 ‘ex gratia’.\textsuperscript{36} Helen then appealed his ‘beggarly treatment’. He asserted, ‘my loyalty cost me thousands of pounds’, and enlisted support from former RAF Flight Lieutenant and Clonakilty RIC District Inspector, B.D. Higmaw.

Higmaw lauded Helen as ‘a resolute fearless supporter of the British flag’. He stated, ‘it was entirely due to the action of Helen that I was not murdered’. Higmaw described information he claimed Helen supplied. It concerned an alleged IRA plan to ambush and kill the son of RIC District Inspector Richard Kenny, who was wounded when the IRA killed Kenny in February 1922.\textsuperscript{37}

Hart ignored Higmaw and his evidence. He instead wrote that Helen, … had been active in the volunteer recruitment movement, had been on good terms with the police, and helped them in February 1922 when their barracks was under threat of attack (thesis, 384, n66; book, 286, n96). That is misleading. Helen actually wrote that on an unspecified date,

I organised the party who held the Constabulary Barrack in Clonakilty against the I.R.A. and joined that party remaining with them for about a week.

Higmaw, not Helen, mentioned February 1922, but not an IRA attack on the RIC barracks.\textsuperscript{38} Helen’s informing on an alleged IRA plan to ambush an RIC transport of District Inspector Kenny’s wounded son to hospital saved lives, asserted Higmaw. Hart ignored this. Without attribution, Hart lifted Higmaw’s February 1922 dating of

\textsuperscript{35} Richard Helen, Irish Grants Committee compensation claim, CO/762/33.
\textsuperscript{37} Aboott, 2000, p277, refers mistakenly to ‘Keaney’.
\textsuperscript{38} Helen’s reference to an undated attack on the barracks possibly referred to an earlier event prior to the end of the War of Independence in June 1921.
Helen’s activities in support of the authorities (a date and activity Helen did not mention). Hart further minimised Helen’s claim of collaboration by ignoring Higmaw’s supportive testimony.

Is this a case again of Hart ‘muddl[ing]’ his sources? Or was this a calculated failure to detail Helen’s alleged anti-IRA activities? It was open to Hart to question the veracity of Helen and Higmaw’s claims in pursuit of a substantial monetary reward (instead of cherry-picking the parts that suited his argument), but he would then have been obliged to state why he accepted some compensation claims but rejected others. Had Hart reported Helen’s claim adequately he would have been unable to observe,

If the victims had been active in opposing the I.R.A. they or their relatives would almost certainly have mentioned it in their applications to the Irish Grants Committee. (thesis, 382, n57; book, 285, n79)

Clearly, Richard Helen ‘mentioned it’. This evidence was surely significant, but evidently not to Hart, because it suggested that the Bandon Valley victims were targeted by their attackers for their specific political and military activities, not chosen randomly for sectarian reasons.

3.1 The Frank Busteed Problem

But, who did Hart think was responsible for at least some of the April 1922 killings in West Cork? In his thesis Hart named one individual as partly responsible for the killings. According to Hart, IRA officer Frank Busteed claimed that he had ‘killed five to six loyalists, Protestant farmers’, at the time of the April killings (thesis 377, n47). Hart wrote in this footnote that,

39 Keane (2014, p168) makes this point. As Helen was reported at a race meeting in May 1922 and was elected to Chair Clonakilty Urban District Council in 1926, Keane questioned Helen’s assertion that he was banished from Ireland. He then observed,

How are historians expected to approach the rest of the claims made to the British compensation committees if it can be shown that the first citizen of Clonakilty might not be telling the truth? …[I]t is probably best to be highly sceptical about uncorroborated testimony from witnesses in this story, especially when the evidence is in their own interest. Taylor, 2015, p73, referred to claims rejected as ‘nonsense’ from Ennistymon, Clare.

40 An aside: why would relatives of necessity be informed of clandestine activities? And, of course, the dead victims were hardly in a position to mention anything.

Frank Busteed, the Blarney I.R.A. leader … was quoted by Ernie O’Malley as saying ‘We shot four or five locals, then we could move anywhere’ in the Civil War. He also said that ‘We shot five to six loyalists, Protestant farmers, as reprisals’ in the same period (O’Malley Papers, P17b/112). As these killings certainly did not take place after July 1922, the only events which fit this description are those of April.  

Oddly, however, Hart withdrew that note from his published book (282). In his thesis, Hart had also stated emphatically (117–18) that Busteed,

… was involved in [killing] … three British officers in Macroom and a massacre of Protestants in the early months of 1922. [my emphasis]

Yet again, those last eleven words were omitted from the same sentence in Hart’s book (100). So too was the following (thesis, 379): ‘Frank Busteed of Blarney, the hardest of diehards, also seems to have claimed a share of responsibility.’

The unexplained excisions from the book, of such seemingly crucial phrases and evidence, are of interest. Hart named Busteed three times in his thesis, twice in his April killings chapter, as having had a major responsibility for the April 1922 killings in West Cork. Why did Hart eliminate those references from his book? Might it have been because Busteed’s father was a Protestant and Busteed, himself, although raised as a Roman Catholic, later became ‘an outspoken atheist’ (thesis, 330, n145; book, 248, n149)? Arguably, such a person would be unlikely to shoot Protestants randomly on a sectarian basis and was also therefore unhelpful to Hart’s overall thesis. If, on the other hand, Hart had evidence that ruled out Busteed, an apparently self-confessed killer, that too would have been of significant interest. It may be, also,

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42 Hart misinterpreted O’Malley’s notation. According to Pádraig Ó Ruairc, the correct manner is as follows,

‘[O’Malley:] (In the (C/W) we shot 4 or 5 locals — then we could move anywhere.) [Busteed:] We shot 5 to 6 Loyalists, Protestant farmers as reprisals. …’.

In other words, while Busteed did claim responsibility for shooting loyalist Protestant farmers, the first sentence within parentheses is O’Malley’s. I am indebted to Pádraig Ó Ruairc on this point, by email 5 Dec 2013. O’Malley’s notebooks are being transcribed from his near illegible handwriting by Ó Ruairc and others. See, O’Malley, Horgan, ed., 2012; O’Malley, Ó Comhraí, ed., 2013.

43 This note on Busteed, after Hart’s withdrawn thesis comment, is placed earlier in the book.

44 Busteed’s grandson, Brian O’Donoghue, noted in a letter to History Ireland (v20, n3, May-Jun 2012), that Busteed ‘possessed both understanding and empathy regarding [the Protestant] part of his heritage’. O’Donoghue further observed, ‘Frank’s having Protestant relations was not unusual in the IRA owing to “mixed marriages” going back generations in a relatively stable community’.
that Busteed falsely inserted himself retrospectively into these events. If Hart suspected that, it too required discussion.45

Hart’s failure, in his book, to discuss Busteed’s possible involvement in the April 1922 killings may also have been a means of dissociating the Macroom Killings of 26 April from a possible causal link to the first Bandon Valley Killings early on the following morning. Readers will recall that the Macroom Killings involved the disappearance from Dick Williams Hotel of three British intelligence officers (Hendy, Dove, and Henderson) and their driver (Brooks).46 Hart’s apparent disinterest in the Macroom Killings is notable for several reasons. First, the Macroom Killings of 26 April were more proximate in both time and geography to the killing of the three Protestant civilians (Fitzmaurice, Gray, and James Buttimer) in Dunmanway, which initiated the Bandon Valley Killings early on the morning of 27 April. By contrast, the Ballygroman House Killings, which Hart did link causally to the Bandon Valley Killings, had occurred earlier on 26 April, before the abduction of the British intelligence officers in Macroom. Second, according to Hart, Busteed claimed involvement in both the Macroom Killings and the Bandon Valley Killings (although not the ones at Ballygroman House). Logically, therefore, Busteed would seem to be a self-declared link between the Macroom and Bandon Valley Killings, suggesting a possible causal (or at least a coincidental) relationship between both sets of killings.

Hart noted, but did not discuss, Busteed’s claim in relation to the Macroom Killings in his thesis (117-18) and book (100). However, he did so separately from his later chapter on the April 1922 killings (thesis, 365-392; book, 273-292).47 Since Hart never identified other participants in either set of killings, his decision to drop Busteed from his book’s April killings chapter, and Hart’s cursory treatment of the simultaneous British intelligence officers’ disappearance, makes no evidential sense.

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45 Bielenberg, Borgonovo, Donnelly, 2014, p41, dismiss Busteed as an unreliable witness. They state that Irish Republican Police records place him at a court hearing in Blarney, 26 kilometres away, on 26 April, though, probably because the detail is unavailable, without indicating in what capacity or the time of day.

46 Their execution was confirmed by Dan Corkery OC, Macroom Battalion, Cork No.1 Brigade, WS 1719. The four bodies were later exhumed and repatriated to England, Southern. Star, 15 Dec 1923, Irish Independent, 13, 14 Dec 1923. On officer’s arrest, Brady, 2010, pp194–6.

47 Busteed’s claims were originally detailed in O’Callaghan, Execution (1974). Hart reported O’Callaghan’s account ‘substantially accurate’, though subject to Busteed’s ‘excessive egotism and at times fallible memory’ (book, 15, n.55; thesis, 21, n.52 and 377, n47).
3.2 The Macroom Officers Problem

The plain-clothes British officers abducted in Macroom were under direct orders since early April to re-establish intelligence contacts that had lain fallow since official hostilities ended in June 1921. As noted, such links had been, exceptionally, with Protestant loyalists. On 26 April 1922, the southern based Sixth Division Brigade Intelligence Officer Lieutenant R.A. Hendy, acting on British Army orders, ‘wished to see the state of affairs at Macroom, … making the excuse’, as their orders advised, ‘of lunching with a mutual friend along the way’. Two battalion officers, Lieutenants G.R. Dove and K.L. Henderson, plus Private R.A. Brooks, their driver, accompanied Hendy. All were in civilian attire.48 Hendy’s father later reported that the officers were acting under ‘imperative orders’, but not the source of his information.49 They travelled from Ballincollig to Macroom, stopping in Farran to interview an ex-British army officer (the ‘mutual friend’) before leaving at noon. The IRA in Macroom became suspicious, partly because they recognised two of the officers, Hendy and Dove, as having ‘tortured and shot unarmed [IRA] prisoners’ as part of their intelligence duties.50 In his ‘account of Protestant family life in early 20th century Cork’, A.J.S. (Stephen) Brady, son of the Anglican rector of Macroom, recalled their wartime mistreatment of IRA prisoners: he observed that either Hendy or Dove had, ‘trussed an IRA [prisoner] like a fowl, had a rope tied to his ankles, was thrown on the road and dragged behind an army vehicle at high speed to his death’.51

Likewise, Busteed accused two of the three officers of having thrown his mother downstairs on a raid, after which she died.52

Hendy, Dove, and Henderson explained to the IRA, as their orders additionally advised, that they were on a fishing trip, although they had no rods or other fishing

49 Regan, 2013, p190.
50 Dan Corkery, WS 1719, also Sean Healy 1479, James Murphy 1633, Tomás Ó Maoileoin (Malone) 845, Michael Walsh 1521; Borgonovo, 2011, p38.
51 Brady, 2010, p196. See also, Twohig, 1994, pp227–8; Browne, 2007, p82; Borgonovo, 2011, p38..
52 O’Callaghan, 1974, pp181–82, 189–92. The British raid on Busteed’s family home was in response to the disappearance of Protestant loyalist Mary Lindsay. She informed on the 28 January 1921 Dripsey ambush at which Busteed was second in command, leading to the capture of eight and subsequent execution of five IRA volunteers. The British spurned an offer to spare Lindsay’s life in return for those of the IRA prisoners. When they were executed, so was she and her house was burned, Sheehan, 2008, pp81–103, 116, 154, 166, 176–77. Also in O’Callaghan, 1974, pp106–9, 154–5, 175–9, who details Busteed’s role in exposing Mary Lindsay’s role, arresting and then executing her.
As also advised in their orders, the officers had lunched *en route* with their ‘mutual friend’ in Farran, which was near Ballygroman.\(^{54}\) That was not, for Hendy and his companions, a favourable accidental or intended coincidence, because earlier that same morning, at Ballygroman House, IRA officer Michael O’Neill was shot dead, followed by the disappearance of those held responsible, Protestant loyalist Thomas Hornibrook, his son, Samuel, and a former British officer, Captain Herbert Woods. Peter Hart suggested that the Ballygroman House Killings initiated the Bandon Valley Killings in the days following. That is certainly plausible. However, as Hart’s thesis noted in relation to Busteed (117–18), there was at least as much basis for suggesting that the immediate appearance and then disappearance of the three British intelligence officers was also related. Hart’s book suppressed this interpretation.

52 years later, in 1974, Busteed named the three intelligence officers responsible for his mother’s death as Viney, Dove and Macallister. He stated also that these were the officers he shot on 26 April. The first and last names are mistaken. Busteed was also mistaken in describing where the officers were abducted. He described ‘Viney’ during the process of execution. Busteed said he shot him because ‘Viney’ was a one-armed intelligence officer allegedly responsible for Busteed’s mother’s death.\(^{55}\) ‘Viney’ might be a corruption of Hendy, who was considered one-armed. He was ‘[s]everely wounded in the right arm’ as a result of a ‘[b]omb wound’ in March 1917 in France.\(^{56}\) This physical condition is corroborated by IRA volunteer Michael Walsh.
who reported being tortured by three officers, including Hendy and Henderson. He noted, ‘one of the officers (a one-armed man) then attacked me’ by attempting to force a small grenade into Walsh’s mouth while the other interrogators held him. Busteed may have been wrong about two of the officer’s names many years later, but correct about how they conducted their intelligence activity.

The Macroom Killings—the IRA’s arrest and execution of the three British intelligence officers and their driver—were highly significant in their own right and almost sparked a return of full-scale Anglo-Irish hostilities. They halted temporarily British troop withdrawal from southern Ireland. Crown forces fruitlessly scoured the countryside for the missing officers and engaged in large formation military stand-offs with the IRA locally (see Freeman's Journal report, above). The Macroom Killings comprised an event of historical significance. This is not merely because the commander of the British forces, ‘evidently in a savage mood’, was then Sixth Division Brigade Major Bernard Law Montgomery, of Donegal Anglican ancestry and later World War Two fame in North Africa at El Alamein.⁵⁷

Despite the significance of the Macroom Killings, Hart failed, even in his thesis, to consider the event, or the possibility that the deaths of the British intelligence officers were connected with either the Ballygroman or the Bandon Valley Killings. That is even though timing, territorial proximity, and Frank Busteed linked them closely. However, in Hart’s perspective, the Macroom Killings and, by extension, any of the April killings, could not be associated with ‘intelligence’ or any other rational military or political considerations. Rather, Hart asserted, they were best explained by irrational Irish ethno-religious or sectarian hatreds of Protestants. Thus, Hart argued that the Macroom Killings (and, by extension, those that followed) were associated with IRA ‘conspiracy theories’ that:

another reason to question Hart’s exclusion of a Busteed connection between the Macroom events and at least some of the civilian killings in April 1922.

were flourishing in southern Ireland at this time, fed by political uncertainty, paranoia and the continuing fear of renewed war with Britain. On the same day that O’Neill was shot [at Ballygroman House], for example, another republican was killed in a raid in Wexford after receiving ‘information that certain Orangemen possessed firearms’ and four British soldiers were kidnapped - and later shot as ‘spies’ - in Macroom. (thesis, 375; book, 280)

Hart further minimised the importance of the Macroom killings by noting: ‘Three [additional] British officers’ travelling from Cork to Bantry ‘were also [captured by the IRA and] released on 30 April’ (book, 280, n49; thesis, 375, n40). However, those three did not exist, and Hart’s source, the 1 May 1922 issue of The Irish Times, contains no such report (as illustrated above). It is unclear how this further Hart ‘muddle’ arose.58

While, in his thesis, Hart suggested that the British officers killed at Macroom were ‘off-duty’ (135), he corrected this early in his book (before his chapter on the April 1922 killings) to admit they were ‘still plying their dangerous [intelligence] trade— though the government denied it’ (114). It is notable therefore that, in his ‘conspiracy theories’ statement in his April killings chapter, cited above, Hart still presented three of the Macroom victims’ status as ‘spies’ in inverted commas. He identified them merely as ‘British soldiers’ rather than with a status Hart now knew they had as intelligence officers, in other words as spies in civilian clothing.59

Hart’s overall disinterest in discussing a possible connection, in his book’s April killings chapter, between the Macroom and Bandon Valley killings (and his continued usage of inverted commas around the word ‘spies’), therefore, made no sense— particularly so since Hart asserted that Busteed was involved, or claimed to have been involved, in both sets of killings. Arguably, however, an adequate consideration of a

58 These British officers are as fictitious as Hart’s additional April killings victim, ‘Richard Harbord’. The Cork Examiner reported on 1 May that rumours of the officer’s release were officially discounted. It is therefore unclear where Hart obtained his mistaken impression, unless he misread the Examiner and transposed his mistake to the Times.

possible connection would have upset the primacy of Hart’s seemingly unshakable conviction that all of the April 1922 killings were motivated by religious animosities. Put simply, the officers did not conform to his preferred IRA ‘enemies’ typology. These were depicted typically as helpless, innocent, Protestant, civilians. Republican assertions of loyalist informing were characterised by Hart as fantasies acting ‘as a spur to rage and hysteria’ (thesis, 383; book 285).

This is not to say the events at Macroom and in the Bandon Valley were definitively intertwined. All connections are circumstantial. Rather, it is to state that evidence of a connection, however tentative, between the Macroom, Ballygroman and Bandon Valley killings was demonstrably stronger than Hart’s speculations about ‘religious antagonism’ based on sectarian jealousies and long-nurtured grudges (thesis, 388, 389–91; book, 289, 290–91). The absence of clear evidence of sectarianism liberated Hart’s interpretive imagination. His language presented the appearance of sociological depth. It was merely a species of academic rhetoric.

3.3 Targeting Protestant Civilians

Arguably, if the events at Macroom were linked to those in the Bandon Valley and at Ballygroman, it may ironically have been in the interests of both the British and the IRA to deny any connections between them. The British wished to deny their dead officers’ intelligence functions, and also to avoid admitting that they possessed civilian intelligence assets in the Bandon Valley area. On their part, the Irish Republicans denied vehemently, to the British, having had anything to do with the officers’ disappearance. For the IRA, revealing an intelligence-related reason for the civilian shootings would inevitably have drawn attention to the near-simultaneous disappearance of the senior British intelligence personnel. Militarily and politically, therefore, and in their mutual interest in avoiding a renewal of Anglo-Irish hostilities, it made sense for the British to promote a ‘sectarian’ narrative of all the April 1922

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60 The killing of the officers was treated in depth in works cited by Hart: Neeson, 1966; Hamilton, 1981; Twohig, 1994.


62 Neeson, the first to write on the episode (1966, pp100–02), suggested, without evidence, that Black & Tans or Auxiliaries were responsible. Hamilton (1981, p162-3), revealed strenuous IRA denials and Montgomery’s fruitless efforts at discovery. John Borgonovo (2011, pp38–40), detailed threats and manoeuvres by both sides, leading to a standoff on 30 April, and on 2 May, when then Major Montgomery might have been killed had he not retreated.
killings, and for the Irish Republicans to acquiesce in it. Admittedly, the explanation here is speculative but, in the absence of other information, surely plausible. The victims were targeted in an area British intelligence stipulated as the unique locus of informing based on a sectarian ‘Protestant’ identity. The attacks occurred very soon after the shooting dead of a prominent IRA officer by loyalists and the subsequent nearby arrest and killing of well-known and (to the IRA) notorious British intelligence officers, who were tasked with rebuilding intelligence networks. This was followed by heavy and threatening British military activity.

The question remains, why the subsequent secrecy in relation to these events?

The author Patrick J. Twohig revealed in *Green Tears for Hecuba* (1994) a successful attempt to persuade him not to relate the story of the intelligence officers in 1959. One persuader was former IRA officer Charlie Browne, who, Twohig suggested, indentified one of the Macroom British officers as having tortured prisoners. Browne, like Busted of ‘mixed’ Protestant-Catholic parentage, is named also in A.J.S. (Stephen) Brady’s memoir as placing an IRA guard on the home of Brady’s father, the Anglican Rector of Macroom, immediately following the Bandon Valley killings.63 Twohig, who did not write on the latter event, wondered at,

… the Macroom affair [being] the most hushed up of any other incident in the Troubled Times … [O]ne tends to look for cause [for the secrecy]. On the surface, there seems to be none.64

The complication of the simultaneous civilian killings might have been the catalyst for an IRA cover-up of what had happened and why it had happened, or it may be that there was simply reticence in discussing a truce violation (though it was on both sides). It is possible also that those who carried out the civilian killings were not authorised to do so. Perhaps they independently connected the Ballygroman House killings, of IRA officer Michael O’Neill by former British officer Herbert Woods, during the early morning of 26 April, with the appearance at 3pm of three of Woods’s fellow officers at Macroom. As noted, the officers had stopped earlier for lunch with a ‘mutual friend’ near Ballygroman and were afterwards recognised as intelligence personnel who previously had tortured and killed IRA prisoners.

But, even if these speculations as to an ‘intelligence’ connection between the Macroom and Bandon Valley Killings are plausible, another question remains. How and why did (or could) the IRA select their Bandon Valley targets?

63 Curiously, Brady reversed the historical sequence by writing on the Bandon Valley Killings immediately before those of Macroom, about which ‘[a]n armed I.R.A. man, who was a friend of mine approached me in Main Street. “I just want to give you a tip,” he said. “Be discreet; whatever you know keep your mouth shut. If you’re wise, you know nothing”’, Brady, 2010, p194.

64 Twohig, 1994, pp 341, 343.
In 2003, Meda Ryan drew attention in her Tom Barry biography to a British intelligence dossier that contained a list of ‘helpful citizens’, i.e., local informers, in West Cork, which she reported she had studied prior to the 1998 publication of Hart’s book. According to Ryan, departing British Auxiliaries left this dossier behind when they evacuated their Dunmanway headquarters. Ryan reported that the dossier listed as ‘helpful citizens’, all the persons who were killed in the Bandon Valley on 27–29 April 1922. That is apart from the brother and son of two individuals whose surnames only were included in the dossier.\(^{65}\) Unfortunately, this document was, and apparently still is, in private and unknown custody. Ryan saw it in the presence of Dan Cahalane, to whom it was loaned for a short period in the early 1980s. Ryan’s research claim has been strengthened because a Bureau of Military History Witness Statement (No. 1,741), given in 1958\(^{66}\) by former IRA soldier Michael O’Donoghue (discovered by Barry Keane in August 2012), contained:

Poor Mick O’Neill ... a grand chivalrous warrior of the I.R.A. … called at the house of a British loyalist, named Hornibrook, to get help for a broken-down motor. As he knocked on the door, he was treacherously shot dead without the slightest warning by a hidden hand from inside the house. The I.R.A. in Bandon were alerted. The house was surrounded. Under threat of bombing and burning, the inmates surrendered. Three men, Hornibrook, his son and son-in-law, a Captain Woods. The latter, a British Secret Service agent,\(^{67}\) confessed to firing the fatal shot. Why? God alone knows. None of the three knew O’Neill or he them. Probably Woods got scared at seeing the strange young man in I.R.A. attire knocking, thought he was cornered and fired at him in a panic. The sequel was tragic. Several prominent loyalists—


\(^{66}\) Letter, P.J. Brennan, Secretary, Bureau of Military History, 3 Sep 1958, referring to O’Donoghue statement of 19 Aug 1958. I am grateful to Noel Grothier, Duty Archivist, Military Archives, for this information, by email 26 Jan 2015.

\(^{67}\) This designation of Woods, while important as a matter of perception, is not independently verified.

\(^{68}\) IRA intelligence grouped organised loyalist activity under the umbrella of the ‘Anti-Sinn Fein Society’. The name originated as a cover for Crown force reprisal attacks on people and property (for example, see O’Callaghan’s research on revolutionary Limerick, 2010, p113). Borgonovo (2006) suggested that some Cork loyalists were mobilised as an organised body. Barry, 1989, pp110, 111, also addressed this issue during 1920–21. He referred to a former British officer, ‘an important organiser of espionage’ who was executed, and to ‘a Protestant Minister, head of an intelligence group’, who escaped. The clergyman was exposed by a member of the group, Tom Bradfield in January 1921. He divulged to IRA soldiers he thought were British, ‘the Rev Mr. [John Charles] Lord is my man and I give him information’. After Bradfield implicated himself the IRA executed him. Ó Broin suggested, 1985, p177, the existence of a sectarian based ‘anti-independence movement’ in the area. This evidence supports the previously noted Record of the
blacklisted as such in I.R.A. Intelligence Records—in Bandon, Clonakilty, Ballineen and Dunmanway, were seized at night by armed men, taken out and killed. [My emphasis] Some were hung, most were shot. All were Protestants. This gave the slaughter a sectarian appearance. Religious animosity had nothing whatever to do with it. These people were done to death as savage, wholesale, murderous reprisal for the murder of Mick O’Neill. They were doomed to die because they were listed as aiders and abettors of the British Secret Service, one of whom, Captain Woods, had confessed to shooting dead treacherously and in cold blood Vice-Commandant Michael O’Neill that day near Crookstown in May 1922. Fifteen or sixteen loyalists in all went to gory graves in brutal reprisal for O’Neill’s murder.

To be sure, O’Donoghue’s statement was not an eyewitness account; it is second-hand evidence (as indicated by the assertion that O’Neill was shot as he knocked at the door).69 Also, O’Donoghue explicitly linked the Ballygroman House and Bandon Valley Killings, as did Hart (but for very different, ‘irrational’ causes), whereas I have postulated that the Macroom Killings may have been important also, either directly or indirectly. Nevertheless, O’Donoghue’s statement is significant, for several reasons. First, it was composed in 1958, 30 years before Peter Hart researched the subject. Second, it stressed a ‘British intelligence’ connection between the deaths at Ballygroman House and the Bandon Valley Killings—and, the reader will recall that, those killed at Macroom also shared that ‘intelligence’ connection. Third, O’Donoghue testified that the Bandon Valley victims were selected by reference to ‘IRA intelligence records’. Indeed, O’Donoghue himself apparently thought it important to report that Woods (O’Neill’s killer) was a ‘British Secret Service agent’, like the British officers killed at Macroom. He implied also that the fact was crucial in generating the ‘sequel’—the reprisal killings, based on ‘IRA intelligence records’, of the ten Bandon Valley Protestants.

How were IRA ‘intelligence records’, that apparently sealed the fate of the Bandon Valley victims assembled? Auxiliaries may have abandoned intelligence documentation when they left Dunmanway, which Meda Ryan reported she examined over 60 years later. The IRA may have obtained information on 26 April from Woods Rebellion admission on informing in the area that Hart censored. Hart paid no attention to this information (not least as he had characterised Barry as a liar), though he cited the page on which it appeared (see page 64, note 20). See also on Bradfield, WS 470, 540, 1648, by, respectively, Dennis Lordan, Ann Hurley-O’Mahony, James ‘Spud’ Murphy. In addition, see Chapter Four, page 94, note 35; Chapter Five, page 115, note 29.

69 The medical report (in Keane, 2014, p121) that O’Neill was ‘shot in the chest 2 inches below the collarbone in a downward direction’ supports the view that he was inside the house at the bottom of the stairs, shot from above.
of Ballygroman House or under duress before execution from Hendy, Dove, or Henderson at Macroom. After all, the latter were tasked with renewing intelligence contacts. We do not know for sure. However, the existence of an intelligence record compiled during hostilities is confirmed in the Military Pension application of Cumann na mBan (IRA women’s auxiliary) officer, Mary Kate Falvey (nee Nyhan). She operated an IRA safe house in Castletown-Kenneigh, north of Ballineen-Enniskean, and engaged in intelligence duties. Her 1943 application reported that ‘local unionists’ named ‘Chinnery, Buttimer, Howe, [and] Joe Moore’, ‘suspected of giving information to the enemy’, were kept ‘under observation’. Her application noted also, ‘two or three of these were shot. The others cleared out’. Falvey was referring to April killings victims: Robert Howe of Ballaghanure (near Ballineen); John Chinnery of Castletown (near Ballineen), and to John Buttimer of Caher (near Ballineen). Another allusive application, by Patrick Carroll from Ballineen, referred in 1936 to four members of the ‘Anti-Sinn Féin Society’ ‘executed in the area in Jan-Feb 1921’ (see Note 68, page 78), but also to others ‘who were not known until later’, when ‘five more’ were killed. This seems likely to refer, though the information is not definitive, to the five persons (including the three above) killed near Ballineen over 27-8 April 1922 (see Table One, page 57).

3.4 Chapter Conclusion

Much of the information presented here in Chapter Three was not available to Hart, for which he cannot be faulted, though a substantial amount was. However, as noted, Hart passed over important evidence, which he was in a position to consider, that indicated a non-sectarian explanation for the April 1922 killings. He also ignored further important information, about which he was aware, pertaining to the April killings and to southern Protestant attitudes. We will now consider those attitudes, which will be contrasted with Hart’s presentation.

70 Pension applications: Carroll MSP34REF26441; Falvey WMSP34REF52679. Released October 2014, at http://www.military archives.ie/collections/online-collections/military-service-pensions-collection (accessed 20 Nov 2015). I am indebted to Barry Keane for drawing my attention to the Falvey application and to John Borgonovo for Carroll’s. Note: ‘The Military Service Pensions Collection (MSPC) owes its origins to the decision of the Óireachtas of Saorstát Éireann in June 1923 to recognize and compensate wounded members, and the widows, children and dependents of deceased members, of Óglaigh na hÉireann including the National Army, the Irish Volunteers, and the Irish Citizen Army through the payment of allowances and gratuities … Over time, provision was enhanced and broadened…’ Legislation was introduced, in 1924, 1934 and 1949, ‘to recognize the service of veterans … through the payment of service pensions’. From, http://www.militaryarchives.ie/en/ collections/online-collections/military-service-pensions-collection/about-the-collection/origin-and-scope (accessed 20 Nov 2015).
CHAPTER FOUR Protestant Views

A broadly supported and representative ‘Protestant Convention’ met publicly in Dublin on 11 May 1922, during Church of Ireland Synod week. It adopted the following resolution, amended to take account of the Bandon Valley Killings which had occurred two weeks earlier:

That we place on record that, until the recent tragedies in the County Cork, hostility to Protestants by reason of their religion has been almost, if not wholly, unknown in the Twenty-six counties in which Protestants are in a minority.

The Convention was reported prominently in the 12 May 1922 Irish Times and Irish Independent. The amended resolution was published in the Irish Times on 3 May. It appeared in its initial form, referring to an absence of sectarian attacks on Protestants, in the 7 April Irish Times (left). In that issue, an E.A. Aston, whose name is significant (and who is discussed below), was listed as one of the ‘Hon. Secretaries’ of the Provisional Organising Committee of the ‘The Southern Protestant Appeal.’ The Appeal linked in with and became the Protestant Convention, that also was launched in the Irish Times on 7 April (left) with an assertion that, Southern Irish Protestants never suffered any religious intolerance of any kind from their Roman Catholic neighbours.

Though he cited the 7 April 1922 Irish Times, Peter Hart ignored this expression of Protestant opinion and the successful event it inaugurated.

Hart drew readers’ attention instead to a separate 7 April report of ‘six [RIC veterans] ... shot in one day in Clare and Kerry’ by the IRA. This citation formed part of Hart’s argument, in both thesis and book, that

IRISH TIMES 7 April 1922. Protestant Appeal and Protestant Convention letters, ignored by Hart who cited a false story that day.
KERRY AND CLARE REPORTS.

With reference to the reports in yesterday’s Irish Times that certain ex-police officers had been murdered in Co. Kerry and Co. Clare, we understand that no official confirmation has been received in Dublin, and it is hoped that the report may not be correct. The source from which we received the information is usually well informed by telegraph yesterday failed to bring any confirmation.

It is reported that telegraphic communication with Kerry has been interrupted for some days, and our Ennis Correspondent telegraphs that nothing is known there of the reported murders in Co. Clare.

IRISH TIMES 7 April 1922, above: Hart cited this, while ignoring Protestant views reported same day

IRISH TIMES 8 April 1922, above, the story was without foundation. Irish Independent, 8 April 1922, right, the story was false propaganda

the IRA targeted its ‘enemies’ at random. Hart included in this context the West Cork killings and the disappearance of the three British officers in Macroom (thesis, 137–8, n264; book 114–15).

The 7 April Irish Times indeed headed five RIC veterans killed in Clare and Kerry, with another badly wounded. However, the 8 April edition admitted, in a shorter less prominent report, that the news of the six shootings was ‘unconfirmed’.

The Clare correspondent reported, ‘nothing is known’ about them. That day’s Irish Independent went further: the reports were ‘denied and discredited in the localities concerned’. The Independent criticised the Irish Times (as well as the Daily Mail and the Belfast Newsletter) for poor, questionable and biased reporting—which it
associated with propaganda designed to halt RIC disbandment and to promote political destabilisation (these newspaper reports illustrated page 82).\(^1\)

Hart’s referencing perhaps facilitated entry of this questionable report into the historical record. Following Hart, Abbott’s *Police Casualties in Ireland 1919-22* inflated the results of the alleged incident. He noted for 7 April (a day later):

Five recently retired members of the RIC were shot and killed with another six being seriously wounded. Abbott published no names and cited no source. Hart’s formulation that the victims were ‘shot’ might have suggested to Abbott that all six were merely wounded, as distinct from the *Times* report of five shot dead and one wounded. Seamus Fox’s independently constructed online database followed and stated, for 6 April, five dead and five wounded, again unnamed. Fox’s sources were Abbott and Hart. Hart’s misreporting of a false report may, therefore, have increased six fictitious casualties to 10 or 11 in Abbott and then Fox’s research.\(^2\)

It seems clear that the events described never occurred. For our purposes it is important to note that, rather than reporting accurately southern Protestant rejection of sectarian victimhood in the 7 April *Irish Times*, Hart reported instead questionable propaganda about the IRA shooting former RIC personnel (thesis, 137; book, 114). In the process he ignored the *Irish Times* questioning of its own bogus story.

Hart’s seemingly strategic newspaper citations can be illustrated further. The origin of the 7 April Protestant Appeal (later Convention) letter in the *Irish Times* was a 21 March letter to the newspaper. In it the previously mentioned E.A. Aston called on southern Protestants to oppose sectarian violence in Northern Ireland, and stated,

> We owe it as a matter of decency to our Catholic fellow citizens who have so steadfastly refused to visit the sins of Ulster upon us.

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Hart noted a report of this letter in another newspaper without quoting it, in the 25 March edition of the West Cork Southern Star. Hart wrote,

It was widely—and wrongly—believed (and not just by republicans) that the local Protestant community had remained silent on [killings of Catholics] and thus tacitly supported the [Belfast] pogroms’.

Hart’s accompanying note stated (thesis, 372, n29; book, 278, n32),

See Star, 25 March, 29 Apr. 1922. In fact, there were frequent Protestant meetings and letters to the editor condemning the northern pogroms and testifying to southern tolerance in the months before the [Bandon Valley] massacre.

Hart’s citation of the Star report was, therefore, misleading. He used it to insinuate that republicans and unspecified others (who in fact were Protestants) resented southern Protestants. The Star report named Aston and cited ‘his letter to the press’.

In refraining from naming him, Hart obscured an obligation to mention that Aston was a Protestant. Hart’s accompanying note mentioned unspecified ‘Protestant meetings and letters’, without informing readers that he had just referenced two examples. However, additionally, if Protestants spoke authoritatively in March and April of 1922 of ‘southern tolerance’ and in opposition to ‘the northern pogroms’, Hart’s overall thesis collapsed at that juncture.

The 29 April Southern Star report is highly significant. Under the headline ‘Pogrom Denounced’, the Star reported a ‘largely attended meeting of the Protestants of various denominations in the [West Cork] parish of Schull’ (report above). They condemned ‘the atrocious crimes recently committed in the North of Ireland’ and disassociated Protestants from,

… the acts of violence committed against our Roman Catholic fellow countrymen. Living as a small minority … we wish to place on record the fact that we have lived in harmony with the Roman Catholic majority and that we have never been subjected to any oppression or injustice as a result of different religious beliefs.

The paper also began reporting the April killings that day.

Hart, in his thesis and book, ‘remained silent’ on this West Cork Protestant opinion and on the subsequent highly important 12 May Protestant Convention resolution, that opposed unionist violence against Catholics in Northern Ireland. As noted, that
resolution’s final version noted the West Cork April 1922 killings, but also asserted that southern Protestants had not previously been subject to sectarian hostility.

Hart’s failure to report the Protestant Convention, the largest, most expressive and definitive meeting, is anomalous. Its motion in its final form was advertised in the Irish Times around the time Hart cited the newspaper on the April killings (thesis, 366, n9; 367, n11; 370, n18; 371, n23, 25; 375, n39, 40; 379, n53; 389, n87, for 28, 29 April, 1, 2 May). The resolution, amended to take account of the West Cork killings, was published in the 3 May Irish Times under the headline, ‘Sectarian Outrages, Protestant Convention in Dublin’. The Convention was advertised prominently on 4 May with, ‘Public Notice, Irish Protestant Convention to condemn sectarian outrages and intolerance’ (above). Hart stated that he did a ‘complete survey … of the Irish Times from ‘May 1916 to May 1923’ (thesis, 459, 489; book, 316), yet he failed to report this event. His ‘complete survey’ of the West Cork Southern Star (book, 316; thesis, 449) also failed to note a report of the Convention on 25 May 1922. This suggests either that he missed the items or that he decided not to cite them. While neither constitutes grounds for confidence in his method, Hart did see the 4 May Irish Times. He cited it in a 1996 essay that laid the basis for his controversial reputation.

4.1 Ethnic Cleansing, from Bosnia to Belfast

In ‘The Protestant Experience of Revolution in Southern Ireland’ Hart asserted that IRA attacks on Protestants ‘might be termed “ethnic cleansing”’. The April killings were, Hart observed, the ‘worst of all’ example of the phenomenon. He continued, ‘All the nightmare images of ethnic conflict in the twentieth century are here’. He referred, without evidence, to,

… the massacres and the anonymous death squads, the burning homes and churches, the mass expulsions and trains filled with refugees, the transformation of lifelong neighbours into enemies, the conspiracy theories and terminology of hatred. Munster, Leinster, and Connaught can take their places with fellow imperial provinces, Silesia, Galicia, and Bosnia as part of the post war ‘unmixing’ of peoples in Europe.

Hart cited his then forthcoming book as support for these assertions. The book’s
depiction of IRA violence was, in turn, associated immediately with accusations of 
ethnic cleansing.3 Hart’s 1996 essay referenced also, in addition to his forthcoming 
book, the 4 May 1922 edition of the Irish Times, but without specifying an article.4 
On 4 May the paper advertised the 11 May ‘Irish Protestant Convention, to Condemn 
Sectarian outrages and Intolerance’ that emphatically denied the validity of Hart’s 
argument.5 It was denied also that day in reports of Church of Ireland Easter Vestry 
meetings in Kildare and Meath, ‘unanimously endors[ing]’ the Convention resolution. 
Another article reported ‘drastic action’ by the Limerick IRA against ‘cowardly and 
unjust’ ‘anonymous persons’ who sent ‘threatening messages to local Protestants’, the 
opposite of Hart’s claim. In South Donegal Protestant property owners reportedly 
ignored warnings ‘ordering them “to clear out”’. Their ‘apprehension’, 
notwithstanding, there is no evidence here of IRA ethnic cleansing. 

The term ‘ethnic cleansing’ came into general usage during 1991-2 in the former 
Yugoslavia. It was used to describe the actions of Croat and Serb armed forces 
targeting each other’s populations, and Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.6 The term 
described a form of genocide in which ‘the deliberate, systematic attempt to wipe out 
a particular population’7 is based on their perceived ethnic identity. 

Wars in the former Yugoslavia may indirectly have influenced Hart’s use of ethnic 
cleansing terminology. It is likely, however, that the post-1968 Northern Ireland 
conflict exercised a more substantive effect. That is because the ‘narrative of “ethnic 

3 Hart, 1996, pp92, 97 (n68). The essay was contained in the Richard English, 
Graham Walker collection, Unionism in Modern Ireland. For associations between 
Hart’s 1998 book and ‘ethnic cleansing’; Geoffrey Wheatcroft, ‘Ethnic cleansing in 
the Free State’, NS, 10 Jul 1998; Eoghan Harris, ‘Cork’s ethnic cleansing exposed in 
masterpiece’, ST, 4 Apr 1999; Fergal Keane (twice, discussed on page 107), ‘Mr 
McGuinness has opened the way to truth’, ‘A timely reminder of the Irish Republic’s 
brush with a kind of ethnic cleansing’, Ind (Lon), 5 May 2001, 28 Sep 2002. 
4 He cited similarly, minimally, the 2, 19, 27 May IT editions, plus on 13, 15, 17, 
22 Jun, 8 Jul 1922. Note absence of 3 May edition containing Protestant Convention 
resolution and 12 May report of the Convention. 
5 There was time to revise the 1998 book narrative to include this information. For 
instance identifying initials of interviewees in the essay were changed for the 
subsequent book, p96, n30–3, 34-9, 43. Also, a reference to a ‘massacre of 14 
[Protestant] men in West Cork’ (p92) implies that the fictitious Harbord victims in the 
thesis had not yet been identified and excluded (see pages 66-7 here). 
6 ‘5,000 Muslims, held hostage in Sarajevo’, ‘More than a million driven from 
homes in Yugoslav civil war’, JT, 21, 23 May 1992; ‘“Nazi purge” fears rise in 
7 Mann, 1999, p22.
“ethnic cleansing” became a ‘unionist buzzword’ during the 1990s and substituted for the previously favoured term, ‘genocide’. Unionists characterised IRA attacks on local Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) and RUC recruits in border areas as attacks on Protestants. In August 1992 *Irish Times* security correspondent Jim Cusack applied the term locally. He noted that at the start of the Troubles ‘in the early 1970s’,

> Large sections of [Northern Ireland’s] urban population underwent a process of intimidation and eviction that was similar to the “ethnic cleansing” process in the former Yugoslavia.

Cusack did not mention that, as in the early 1920s, overwhelmingly it was nationalists who were affected.

Social science attempts to apply the term to IRA actions in Northern Ireland created methodological difficulties. That is partly because the scale and intent of post-1968 republican violence paled in comparison with the Balkan conflict. By the end of 1991 the considerably shorter Serbo-Croat war, ‘caused 18,000 confirmed casualties...and some 14,000 missing [...] probably dead. Refugees numbered 703,000 [with] some 100,000 dwellings [...] destroyed or damaged’. During seven years before 1993 in Fermanagh’s border regions, where allegations of IRA genocide and then ethnic cleansing of Protestants were promoted, just two casualties were inflicted. Over 1969-94 or 25 years of the ‘Troubles’ in Fermanagh, 110 in total were killed: 43 from the locally recruited UDR, RUC and Royal Irish Regiment (RIR), 21 from the British Army.

Perhaps reflecting these concerns, in 2010 a University of Ulster political scientist Professor Henry Patterson, ‘reject[ed] current attempts to label [IRA actions] a form of “ethnic cleansing”’. In 2011 he contributed similarly, ‘The narrative of ethnic cleansing misses the point’ and cited Colm Tóibín’s observation,

> I read as much as I could about [south Fermanagh]. I discovered

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9 Patterson, 2010, p351.


12 McKay, 2000, p215.

13 Patterson, 2007, pxiii; 2010, p337.
certain things that were useful and interesting. One suggested that the IRA were picking off the only sons of Protestant farms in Fermanagh, that turned out not to be true.14

As a supporter of the revisionist project, Patterson’s objection to the term was partly, ironically, based on Hart’s research:

Fermanagh did not experience the wholesale forced emigration of Protestants that occurred in West Cork during the War of Independence (1919-21) and which Peter Hart has chronicled.15

However, in an example of how revisionist research may sometimes adapt to political imperatives, in 2013 Patterson revised and reversed his presentation of the subject. His Ireland’s Violent Frontier asserted that ethnic cleansing claims expressed ‘an emotional truth’. The term appeared six times within the book’s concluding seven pages and was used by those promoting interest in the book.16 In partial recognition of conceptual and evidential difficulties, Patterson at one point cited a British Army officer on ‘ethnic cleansing over a long period… [that] can go largely unnoticed’.17 However, as noticed, during the period unionists made the claim incessantly.

In 2011 Patterson cited Graham Dawson who contributed in 2004, ‘one of the few pieces of academic work which address the experiences of border Protestants’. Significantly, Dawson’s research admitted that

The potency of this [ethnic cleansing] narrative derives not from the accuracy of its analysis of the [Northern Ireland] conflict, but from its interweaving of psychic and political imperatives’.18

In other words it was propaganda. Dawson even suggested that in 1969 in Belfast nationalists ‘might claim with most justice to have been ‘ethnically cleansed”’. Dawson’s analysis was replete with phraseology such as, ‘mythic cultural memory’, ‘psychic … political dimension’, ‘subjectivities or psyches of

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14 In Patterson, 2011, p166.
16 It appeared also three times over the book’s first 196 pages, Patterson, 2013, pp2, 23, 43, 193, 194, 197 (thrice), 198. See the previously cited (in note 10) Jim Cusack, ‘IRA engaged in ‘ethnic cleansing’ of Protestants along border’, SI, 24 March, 2013. Cusack observed that Patterson’s book ‘assert[ed]’ that the “ethnic cleansing” of Protestants living in Border areas over 20 years of the Troubles was a “tool” [utilised by the IRA] to stop unionists coming to a political accommodation’. The book did not state that.
Protestants and unionists’, ‘psychic and emotional realities’, ‘psychic effects’, ‘psychic value’, ‘psychic energy’, ‘psychic disturbance’, etc.. \textsuperscript{19} At one point Dawson suggested that to,

... deny or marginalise the cultural memory of ‘genocide/ethnic cleansing’ would be to contribute of the social exclusion, the psychic disturbance, and the crisis of belonging [of unionists].\textsuperscript{20}

Whereas revisionist research tends to identify and to expose nationalist ‘myths’, unionist ‘emotional truth[s]’ with little evidential basis should be supported, it appears.

Irish republicans rejected accusations of ethnic cleansing during the post-1968 Troubles. Ironically, given its use in anti-republican polemics and revisionist research on republican activity, in 1994 a loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Defence association (UDA), endorsed the concept. Ethnic cleansing was for use, they said, in a ‘doomsday’ situation, to create an ‘ethnic Protestant homeland’ \textit{(Irish Times} report, 17 January 1994, left). The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) supported the proposal, in order ‘to maintain our separate Ulster identity’.\textsuperscript{21}

The 1994 UDA plan was partly based on a 1986 study, \textit{Two Ulsters, a Case for Repartition}, by Queen’s University economic (revisionist) historian and critic of Sinn Féin, Liam Kennedy. Kennedy envisaged grant-aided voluntary population movements based on sectarian headcounts, resulting in separate ‘British’ and ‘Irish’ Ulsters, each retaining residual minorities of between 16 and 20%. The latter would enjoy ‘generosity tempered by political firmness’; advocacy of further constitutional change would be incompatible with public sector employment; and election candidates would be required to take ‘oaths of

\begin{quote}
\textbf{Anger at UDA plan for ‘ethnic cleansing’}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
From Suzanne Breen, \textit{in} Belfast
\end{quote}

THE publication of plans by the UDA which foresee three Northern counties being handed over to the Republic and the “ethnic cleansing” of Catholics in other areas in a “Doomsday situation” has been described as “a very valuable return to reality” by the DUP. [Two Paragraphs excised here, NM]

The document discusses taking large sections of the Catholic community hostage as “bargaining chips” for the release of Protestants “trapped” west of the Bann.

The objective would be to “establish an ethnic Protestant homeland”. There was media speculation last night that a former member of the British army may have helped draw up the plans.

The DUP’s press officer, Mr Sammy Wilson, said: “While some will no doubt denounce and ridicule their plan, nevertheless it shows that some loyalist paramilitaries are looking ahead and contemplating what needs to be done to maintain our separate Ulster identity.

“While I have always been careful never to threaten a Bosnian-type situation in Northern Ireland, it is clear that others foresee such a possibility. It is unfortunate that Ulstermen are now having to contemplate such dramatic and radical action.

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\textsuperscript{20} Dawson, 2004, pp370-1.
\end{flushright}
loyalty’. Michael Mann defined this practice as ‘coerced assimilation’, that is sometimes a precursor to actual ethnic cleansing. Kennedy’s peaceful goal, two new states with ‘around 80 percent composed of one ethnicity’, was a ‘solution’ achieved violently in Yugoslavia during the 1990s. In the unlikely event that Kennedy’s mini-balkanisation were attempted and were it to succeed (perhaps more unlikely), the north of Ireland would then have comprised (to use again Mann’s framework) not one but two, albeit ethnically cleansed, ‘ethnocrocies’. Inexplicably, therefore, Kennedy expressed himself ‘outraged’ at the UDA’s use of his research.

The Orange Order, which from 1995 operated a Protestants-only fund in Fermanagh so as to prevent Catholics from buying land, somewhat incongruously weaved into its use of ethnic cleansing terminology allusions to ‘Republican ‘pogroms’ against Protestants’ during the 1919-21 War of Independence.

For these reasons, Hart’s 1996 adoption of the term to describe IRA actions in the 1920s may therefore have been prompted by parochial influences. As Tóibín observed in 1993 (see Chapter One, page 8), the ‘revisionism’ of ‘Foster and his fellow historians… [was] useful, not for its purity, or its truth, but its politics’, a usefulness Hart’s work, and more latterly Patterson’s, served also.

4.2 Protestant Divisions

Returning to the early 1920s, one could argue that members of the South’s Protestant minority, now isolated from their northern brethren by a Partition that the former

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24 Barry McCaffrey, ‘Concern at Order link to dubious land firm’, ‘Document links Order to property company’, Irish News, 11 Nov 2004. It was reported that the Order’s linked Ulster Land and Property Company spent £1.46m up to 2002 and hoped to have raised and spent £5m by 2005.
25 Patterson, 2011, p165. Dawson, 2004, pp367-8. See also, continuing the cycle, Gerry Moriarty, ‘From sashes to sambas?’, IT, 17 Jun 2006: Drew Nelson, grand secretary of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, … visited a local history group… in [Dunmanway] … “On the wall I saw a timeline of all the events that had happened around the War of Independence in west Cork… But what was obviously missing was the massacre of Protestants that took place … [in] Dunmanway, in April 1922”. He had gleaned this information from Peter Hart’s book The IRA and Its Enemies.

The author noted the Orange Order’s use of Hart’s research. Hart responded, surprisingly, ‘I have never argued that “ethnic cleansing” took place in Cork or elsewhere in the 1920s - in fact, quite the opposite’. The author then pointed out that he had so argued IT, 23, 28 Jun, 3 Jul 2006.
never wanted, had reasons to conciliate the majority in the Irish Free State by denying they had been victimised by Catholic-Nationalist sectarianism. What is implausible, however, is the argument that Hart was therefore somehow justified in ignoring entirely an explicit denial of his own hypothesis made in 1922, after the April killings, by the largest and most representative body of southern Irish Protestants. Yet, Hart’s non-treatment of the Protestant Convention seems entirely in character with his overall approaches to, and his misuses of evidence concerning, both the Kilmichael Ambush and the tragic events of April 1922.

Hart’s allegations that IRA actions in 1919–22 were driven primarily by bitter sectarian hatred of Protestants surely required more robust evidence and analysis. This would be true for PhD research produced in any academic institution. In TCD itself, contrasting views of the subject were available.

In 1924 the Rev’d John Henry Bernard, TCD Provost from 1919 to 1927 whose family was from Co. Kerry, declared,

> During the melancholy years 1920–1923, there have, indeed, been outbursts of violence directed at loyalist minorities, but for the most part it has been qua loyalist and not qua Protestant that the members of the Church of Ireland have suffered.²⁶

Bernard was (in TCD’s description) ‘a convinced unionist’. Indeed, as, previously, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin he called after the 1916 Rising for ‘punishment swift and stern’ and even ‘argued [later] against the general [British] pardon’. In 1918 Bernard privately instructed Church of Ireland clergy to cease publicly opposing a failed British attempt to impose conscription on Ireland.²⁷

Alternatively, however, TCD Lecky Professor of Modern History from 1914-1939, W. Allison Phillips, published Revolution in Ireland in 1923. Its analysis reflected Hart’s later research. Phillips interspersed allegations of republican persecution of ‘Protestants, and obnoxious people generally’, in addition to ex-soldiers and former RIC personnel, with assertions that, ‘foreign communists[,] notably Polish and Russian Jews from Glasgow… and committees of the Third

²⁶ ‘The Church of Ireland since Disestablishment’, *The Review of the Churches*, v1, n1, 1924, in *IT*, 14 Jan 1924.
International… in [Ireland’s] principal cites’ were ‘sowing unrest’. A Hart thesis note (170, n47), accompanying citation of Phillips’ description of IRA recruits (‘shop assistants and town labourers’), contains:

Phillips was involved in the British Intelligence effort in Ireland, and had access to the RIC’s files in 1921.

The observation is not in the book (139, n41). Phillips’ combination of prejudice and paranoia was typical of loyalist accounts and of British propaganda. In Hart’s research, political irrationality was ascribed instead mainly to the IRA and to the Catholic population generally.

Leaving Phillips aside, one might expect that Provost Bernard, reminiscing afterwards as a unionist, would have lamented IRA sectarianism had he believed it to be one of the organisation’s motives during 1919–22. Bernard’s later opinions in fact mirrored others often expressed within the southern Protestant community, and so, arguably, Hart should at least have considered them to be important if not authoritative.

Such Protestant views were commonplace during 1919–22 and easily available to later historians, not least at the previously noted Protestant Convention. In 1921, for instance, a US fact-finding delegation reported a Limerick Methodist minister asserting that Wesleyan ministers ‘entirely ridiculed’ the idea that southern unionists were in danger. A Protestant businessman from the same city commented that Protestants were ‘more fearful’ of Crown forces than of ‘Sinn Féiners’.

The experience of Bantry’s leading trader and southern unionist, G.W. Biggs, demonstrated why. He

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28 Phillips [1923] 1926, pp259, 268. Remarkably, a notorious Glaswegian Jew featured in another propaganda account, Tales of the RIC, see Chapter Five, page 112, note 20. Additionally, the later discussed C.H. Bretherton (pages 100-1) also reproduced pro-British anti-Semitism. Robert Tobin’s study of ‘Hubert Butler and Southern Irish Protestantism’, 2012, p33, cited Phillips, 1923, p143, on Protestant fears that ‘a pogrom against them might erupt’, a term Phillips did not employ. Tobin went on to cite Hart (1998) and Gerard Murphy’s equally controversial research (2010) on ‘sustained violence against Protestants’. However, it is noticeable that the subject of Tobin’s study, southern Protestant essayist Hubert Butler, an acute observer of Irish Protestantism and severe critic of Catholic domination, did not allege sectarianism on the part of the IRA. Instead, Butler observed, ‘I became an Irish nationalist when I was very young’, that is aged twenty in 1920, 1986, p95.

29 See Brian Murphy, 2006, and also Murphy, in Murphy, Meehan, 2008, on Hart’s editorship and (relatedly) censorship of British intelligence in Ireland, The Final Reports (1992), see, Chapter Three here, page 64, note 23.

30 In a comment to the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland, Interim Report, ‘Supplemental Report, the Religious issue’, 1921, p115.
wrote opposing Ulster Unionist claims in the *Irish Times* on 24 July 1920:

I feel it my duty to protest very strongly against this unfounded slander [of intolerance on the part of] our Catholic neighbours ... I have been resident in Bantry for 43 years, during 33 of which I have been engaged in business, and I have received the greatest kindness, courtesy, and support from all classes and creeds in the country.

After the publication of this letter, the Black & Tans burned down Biggs’ substantial business premises and the British military commandeered his home, forcing Biggs to send his family to Dublin while he went to live in a hotel. 31

31 Sixth Division Brigade Major Bernard Law Montgomery afterwards remarked, ‘it never bothered me a bit how many houses we burned’ and ‘I regarded all civilians as “shinners”’, including, it seems, G.W. Biggs. In the London *Times* on 30 September 1920 John Annan Bryce, a younger brother of a former British Chief Secretary for Ireland, noted what had happened (see letter, left). He complained of a British threat to burn republican-owned properties, if loyalist dwellings were targeted. Citing Biggs’ experience, Annan Bryce observed:

There is no justification for the issue of such a notice in this district, where the only damage to loyalists’ premises has been done by the police.

In later correspondence Annan Bryce also reported the arrest and deportation back to Ireland of his wife Violet for attempting to speak in Wales on British reprisal burnings and other atrocities.

Southern Protestant alienation from British forces may be gleaned also from Olga Pyne Clarke’s observation concerning her father’s and grandfather’s clash with the British Army in Cork during December-January 1920-21.

One day [Cork Divisional Commander General Strickland] stamped into my father’s office and in his extremely rude, brusque manner said, ‘Look here Clarke, you are trusted by both sides: it’s your duty to give me information’. Father, looking him in the eye, calmly said, ‘I will not inform against my own countrymen. It is your duty to control the rabble your government has let loose on Ireland. Good morning’. Going purple in the face, the General stormed out, crossed the Mall to Grandfather’s office, and received virtually the same reply.\(^33\)

Strickland’s efforts arose after the burning and looting of Cork City Centre by Crown forces on 11 December 1920, and a consequent switch from unofficial to officially sanctioned reprisal burnings in January 1921.\(^34\) John Borgonovo’s analysis (2006) suggests that Strickland’s attempts to recruit local informers, such as Olga Pyne Clarke’s kinsmen, were countered by the IRA shooting informers during the early months of 1921. Though some were Protestant, it appears that Strickland’s attempts to polarise local communities increased at least some Protestants’ alienation from British policies and actions.

On 27 January 1921 the *Times* (London) Cork correspondent reported ‘many’ loyalist protests against Strickland. They complained, ‘it is now an offence to remain neutral’ (report, left) The report described the fate of the recently executed west Cork loyalist John (a.k.a. Tom) Bradfield, … found guilty of having attempted to inform the enemy of the presence and movement of republican troops.\(^35\)

It is clear that there were distinctions among southern loyalists and unionists (both

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\(^{33}\) Pyne Clarke, 1985, pp51–52.

\(^{34}\) Macardle, [1937] 1965, pp423-44.

\(^{35}\) Bradfield’s fate is commented upon also in Chapter Three, page 79, note 68, plus in Chapter Five, page 115, note 29, where his featuring in a song, performed at the Magdalen College Cambridge Parnell Lecture, 2013, is discussed.
Protestant and Roman Catholic) and within the Protestant community itself. Southern Protestant opinion was split, and there appears to have been an active minority who identified both with British military policies and with contemporary actions by northern unionist forces. Clearly, for security reasons, such people did not advertise their activities, but it appears that their stance was more or less understood.

On this point, reference was made on page 84 to the Schull Protestant condemnation of ‘violence… against our Roman Catholic fellow countrymen’. The Clonakilty Church of Ireland Select Vestry held a similar meeting on 20 April 1922. The Clonakilty resolution testified to ‘extremely good feeling and friendship … always existing between the Protestants and Roman Catholics in this parish and district’. However, unlike in Schull, it did not condemn anti-Catholic violence ‘in the North of Ireland’. Clonakilty’s resolution instead condemned, in an anodyne manner, ‘murders and violence, or crimes of any kind, especially when committed under the name of religion’. The statement indicated a reluctance to accept the stance taken by most southern Protestants in opposition to northern unionist activities. The resolution does not constitute evidence of activity on behalf of British forces. However, compared to the Schull meeting outcome, it is indicative of ambivalence toward the historically sectarian basis of British rule.

The fourteen Clonakilty Select Vestry meeting participants included ‘F. & R. Nagle’, plus ‘R.J. Helen’ who proposed the motion. Helen, an admitted informer (discussed pages 67-9), reported that he escaped from his IRA captors during the April Killings one week later. While the exact identity of the two Nagles is uncertain, a Robert Nagle was shot dead during the April killings. His father Thomas claimed he survived by hiding in a cupboard. Robert Nagle was aged sixteen and a half in April 1922. He appears to have been targeted alongside his father due to his work in the post office, a hive of espionage activity for both sides in the conflict. Thomas Nagle’s later compensation application contains a claim that ‘the raiders declared that they had come to murder Nagle and two of his sons’. It appears also from the report of Robert Nagle’s inquest that his killers targeted him specifically, in addition to his father. Another brother, Henry, claimed he had been ordered by the IRA to leave Mountmellick, Queen’s County (Laois) and did so after April 1922.

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36 No ‘F’ Nagle lived in Clonakilty in 1911 according to the census, which may indicate a misprint of ‘T’ for Thomas. The other ‘R’ Nagle might, if not Robert himself, have been older brother, Richard, aged 24, or one of three other Richard Nagles within the ‘Clonakilty Urban’ area in 1911, see census online, http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Cork/Clonakilty_Urban/Barrack_Street/379109/, accessed 30 Oct 2015.
37 Thomas Nagle, CO/762/5/6; ‘Clonakilty inquest, story of midnight shooting’,
The terms ‘Protestant’ and ‘loyalist’ were clearly distinguishable (the latter description not confined to Protestants). In 1997, Trinity College historian, Professor R.B. McDowell, stated, in relation to the April 1922 killings, ‘armed bands shot down a dozen Protestants, several of them well known loyalists’. McDowell, a Protestant unionist, lived through the period. Of six compensation claims from reported April killings survivors Hart saw, four referred only to loyalists under attack. Rev’d Ralph Harbord, one of the other two, referred to ‘Protestant loyalists’, while the self-admitted informer Richard Helen spoke of ‘the massacre of Protestants’, before detailing attacks on ‘loyalists’. William Jagoe, who claimed his premises in Dunmanway were shot at, was typical. He reported that in the early morning of 27 April 1922,

… an armed gang visited the town and murdered three well-known loyalists. Several other loyalists escaped… On the next night 5 other loyalists were murdered.

These categorisations appear to place the April killings within a pre-existing frame of reference. That is not to say that it was not challenged. A claim of sectarian

_Cork Examiner_, 1 May 1922. Bielenberg, Borgonovo, Donnelly, suggest that Robert Nagle was shot in substitution for his father (2014, p55, Robert misnamed ‘Richard’ in n194). The evidential record appears to suggest otherwise. They also suggest that John Bradfield’s death on 29 April was a substitute killing, in that case for his brother. On this basis, plus their understanding that James Greenfield was shot due to his being alongside John Buttimer, Bielenberg _et al_ view these killings as sectarian. However, since they also agree that ‘the majority of the … victims appear to have been loyalists outwardly hostile to the IRA’, the evidence may point to guilt by loyalist rather than Protestant association. Because the intended victims may not have been capable of discerning a difference between religious and political identity does not necessarily mean their killers, however much they may have escaped from military controls, viewed matters similarly. This article contributes much new evidence, including some very well founded interpretations and insights. However, the article fails to point out Peter Hart’s censorship of the Record of the Rebellion, while it cites the evidence in the Record Hart distorted. Agreement with ‘Peter Hart’s conclusion that the killings were sectarian’ (p57), even if viewed, contra Hart, as exceptional, does not flow from the evidence adduced. In part that evidence suggested pro-British activity on the part of some victims. The lowest common denominator amongst the victims, Protestantism, does not necessarily mean it was the highest common factor in their demise. That is the category mistake Hart made in the first place.

38 Taylor, 2015, p70. Paul Taylor’s research on southern World War One veterans undermined Hart’s suggestion that the IRA persecuted this group. Taylor suggested that ex-service personnel were welcomed in the IRA and, apart from those few who worked with British forces, were ‘not specifically targeted’, p78.


40 Ralph C.V. Harbord (CO/762/58), Richard James Helen (CO/762/33), William Jagoe (CO/762/4), James McCarthy (CO/762/13), William Perrot (CO/762/121), Thomas Sullivan (CO/762/175).
persecution was asserted in a motion at the Dublin diocesan Church of Ireland Synod in October 1920. It ‘reaffirm[ed] loyalty’ to King George and ‘deplor[ed]’ the,

... unhappy campaign of murder and terrorism which has deprived loyal citizens in the South and West of Ireland of the support and sanction of the ordinary law; and hereby calls upon the General Synod to take such steps as may appear to it desirable to secure protection for the lives and property of Churchmen who are subjected to injury and intimidation for their political and religious opinions.

There were initial attempts to rule the motion out of order. In an effort to save his text, the proposer, Rev’d T.C. Hammond, retreated. He did not wish to imply that ‘acts of violence’ were confined to any particular section of the population and conceded,

It was a matter of very deep regret to many of them that associated with the campaign of terror there were some, happily only a few, who regarded themselves as members of the Church of Ireland.

After this grudging admission (in which a Protestant republican was considered a contradiction in terms), Hammond then claimed that the motion’s ‘loyal citizens’ included members of ‘the Church that had secured the allegiance of the majority of the people’. Even that was insufficient. There followed a series of backtracking amendments, one of which proposed to ‘deplore the unhappy campaign of murder and terrorism in the South and West of Ireland’. A Brigadier-General Crosbie from Cork could not accept this ‘invidious distinction’ and ‘the aspersion that was cast upon the South and West of Ireland’. ‘The North is far worse than the South and West’, he said. The Fermanagh-based Earl of Belmore then interjected, ‘Not the North-West, but the North East’, with its post-July 1920 anti-Catholic pogroms. Eventually, a motion deploring the ‘unhappy campaign of murder and terrorism in Ireland’ was passed, in which culpability was open to interpretation.\footnote{An Irish Times editorial noted that ‘delet[ion] of the passage which referred to persecution on religious grounds’ ‘showed… a wise recognition of facts’ and affirmed, ‘[t]here is no evidence… that Southern churchmen have been persecuted merely on account of their religious opinions’. The newspaper noted agreement on the point from the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Gregg.\footnote{The Campaign of murder, Mr. Hammond’s resolution, Appeal to General Synod’, IT, 19 Oct 1020. \footnote{Churchmen and Politics’ (editorial), IT, 19 Oct 1920.}}

The avowedly unionist and determinedly Protestant Irish Times, plus representatives of Ireland’s largest Protestant denomination, would surely have expressed themselves differently had their experience of Irish life been different.
Indeed, the newspaper continued to express this opinion. In 1935, during an outbreak of sectarian reaction in the west of Ireland (that quickly fizzled out) to reports of renewed attacks on Catholics in Belfast, the paper observed that,

… the South is too familiar with political disturbance, but not, during the last two hundred years, with bigotry… [A]lthough many Protestants suffered during the “troubles,” it was not for their faith but for their political views.

The *Irish Times* view was echoed in the unionist leaning *Church of Ireland Gazette*, whose reaction to the April 1922 killings included:

We represent the Protestant minority in Southern Ireland, a minority which is defenceless, not so much on account of its numerical inferiority as on account of the fact that it has not needed to defend itself against anything or anybody.\(^{43}\)

If anything, a sectarian shoe was on the other foot. Rev’d Hammond, who moved the Dublin Synod motion, was a leading member of the Orange Order\(^{44}\) and was also General Superintendent of the proselytising ‘Irish Church Missions (to the Roman Catholics’). Despite his criticisms of Irish republicans and denunciations of Roman Catholicism, Hammond’s organisation made no claim of IRA persecution, apart from the one rejected by Hammond’s co-religionists. During 1921–22 the Connellan Mission, for which Hammond acted as Secretary, openly distributed a Protestant Truth Society pamphlet, *Rome Behind Sinn Féin* (a sequel to the equally imaginative *Rome behind the Great War*).\(^{45}\)

According to Martin Maguire, minutes of the exclusively Protestant-unionist City and County of Dublin Conservative Workingmen’s Club (1921-26), and of the Association for the Relief of Distressed Protestants (1915-21), demonstrate ‘no

\(^{43}\) ‘Ugly symptoms’ (editorial), *IT*, 22 Jul 1935 (see also Chapter Eleven, page 262); ‘The Southern Minority’, *Church of Ireland Gazette*, 26 May 1922. In August, the *Gazette* encouraged harsher Free State methods in the Civil War and accused IRA ‘hooligan[s]’ of an ‘excruciating desecration’ of a Church of Ireland graveyard in Kilmacthomas, Waterford. The claim met with immediate refutation from the Rector, who wrote that he had ‘received nothing but respect’ from the local IRA, with whom he disagreed. ‘One or two hooligans’ had ‘pushed down’ five gravestones, he observed, ‘Hooliganism’, Kilmacthomas graveyard’, *ibid.*, 11, 18 Aug 1922. Thus corrected, by 13 October (‘The Protestant’s lot’), the *Gazette* observed, ‘we would counsel our readers not to distort such incidents … into symptoms of an organised campaign against Protestantism’.

\(^{44}\) In 1915 (‘Dublin Diocesan Synod’, *IT*, 16 Nov), Hammond denied he was ‘the leader of the [Dublin Diocesan Synod’s] Orange section’, but explained, ‘I would be proud of the privilege if I were.’

\(^{45}\) ‘Injunction against “Rome Behind Sinn Féin”’, *IT*, 30 Jul 1921; ‘Law reports, copyright law, action against missionary society’, *IT*, 22 Mar 1922. See note 47.
evidence of fear and terror’. He observed, ‘Except for the inconvenience of the curfew, business was very much as usual’. Indeed, the Orange Order met openly in Dublin in 1920 and condemned ‘the worst form of agitation that Ireland had ever witnessed… that of the Sinn Fein movement’, which agitation did not appear to preclude public expression of this opinion.46

Hammond’s Irish Church Missions was opposed to Roman Catholics irrespective of what they did. In 1917 the organisation’s AGM heard a protest against ‘too many’ ‘not wanted’ Roman Catholic chaplains serving at the front with the British Army. It was feared that,

When their true young men came home from the Front there would be a great many tinged with that religion. (Applause.)47

4.3 ‘The bogey of Catholic Intolerance’
A commonly-held southern Protestant understanding was underlined by Lionel Curtis, British Prime Minister Lloyd George’s imperial adviser and British delegation secretary during Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations in 1921. Curtis had been editor also of Round Table, the journal of a powerful group supporting imperial interests.48 In a lengthy June 1921 article, ‘Ireland’, based on a recent tour, Curtis declared,

To conceive the struggle as religious in character is in any case

46 Maguire, 1993, p51; ‘Twelfth of July Anniversary, celebration in Dublin, law and order in the country’, IT, 10 Jul 1920.
47 ‘Irish Church Missions’, IT, 17 April 1917, also discussed, Chapter Twelve, pages 306–7. In Warren Nelson’s 1994 in-house T.C. Hammond biography, apart from a fear of being unwanted in the New Free State, there is no discussion of an IRA campaign against Protestants (pp66–69). Nelson suggested, remarkably, that potential ‘danger [to Hammond] lay in the fact that he was used by both sides as an intermediary’, and that, due to a ‘misunderstanding’, Hammond was ‘for a time on a “hit list”’. Reportedly, a republican who later became a Protestant evangelist explained that Hammond was saved due to his ‘reputation for helping people regardless of their religion’. As noted, the Irish Times reported Hammond as a distributor of Rome Behind Sinn Féin (1921, 2nd ed., republished in 2000 with a preface by Hammond admirer, Rev’d Ian Paisley), in a court case alleging breach of copyright. Hammond unquestionably raised the ire of devout Roman Catholics. He spared no effort insulting the ‘Romish’ church, in converting waverers and parading successes publicly. He was ever vigilant also in detecting papist influences within the Church of Ireland (see Chapter Eleven). Hammond emigrated to Australia in 1935 where, in the mid 1940s, he accused an Anglican Bishop of importing Romanist ‘ritualism’ into a prayer book. In an ensuing legal challenge Hammond was accused in turn of inheriting from his homeland, ‘an obviously anti-Roman Catholic complex and tends to find something Romish in everything he can’, in Teale, 1982, p79.
misleading. Protestants in the south do not complain of persecution on sectarian grounds. If Protestant farmers are murdered, it is not by reason of their religion, but rather because they are under suspicion as loyalists. The distinction is a fine but a real one.\textsuperscript{49}

It is unfortunate that, since he did not cite them, Hart apparently did not encounter Curtis’s considered views. They might have helped answer Hart’s curiously echoing questions fifty years later:

If a Protestant farmer was attacked, was it because of his religion, his politics or his land, or all three? Was personal spite involved? (thesis, 62; book, 320)

Curtis was also the first to publish (in the same article) an account of an Auxiliary false surrender at Kilmichael, only seven months after the ambush, which contradicted Hart’s later interpretation of that incident.\textsuperscript{50}

\textit{Round Table} commented in June 1922 with reference to the April 1922 West Cork killings that, ‘Southern Ireland boasts with justice that it has been remarkably free from the purely sectarian hatreds that have come to characterise Belfast’.\textsuperscript{51} This perception was treated as so self-evident that \textit{Daily News} correspondent, Hugh Martin, felt confident observing in 1921,

The bogey of Catholic intolerance in Ireland is no more to-day than a chimera kept alive to frighten political children with on this [English] side of the channel.\textsuperscript{52}

\textit{Morning Post} (and, to 1924, \textit{Irish Times}) correspondent, C.H. Bretherton, an English Roman Catholic loyalist, unwittingly reinforced a non-sectarian view of Irish resistance. His 1925 account, \textit{The Real Ireland}, noted the following Protestant women, ‘Mrs Erskine Childers asking [English journalists] to tea, and Madame Maud Gonne MacBride, and Mrs Stopford Green [giving them] a lively account of brutal British atrocities that they claimed to have witnessed’. Bretherton’s view was that the Black & Tans were unjustly maligned and that the ‘Irish themselves’ were one hundred times worse.

Bretherton, who considered the Irish intellectually inferior, suggested,

The impetus that set the ball of rebellion rolling in 1916 was supplied in Ireland, as in other slave-minded countries, by the international Jew.

This was presaged by an observation that Dáil President Eamon De Valera’s ‘father

\textsuperscript{49} Curtis, 1921, pp496–97; Mowat, 1965, p72, referred to Curtis’s article as the ‘most fair minded’ of his sources, though it is in fact suffused with imperial condescension toward the Irish.

\textsuperscript{50} Cited earlier, see Chapter Two discussion, pages 47-8.

\textsuperscript{51} ‘The Brink of Civil War’, \textit{Round Table}, XII, n47, June 1922.

\textsuperscript{52} Martin, 1921, p205 (at academia.edu/6292615/, accessed 11 Mar 2014).
was a Maltese Jew’. The *Morning Post* wrote (29 April 1922) of the April killings,

The southern Irish native is a barbarous savage, with a strong inherent penchant for murder, which those responsible for him - his priests, his politicians and his alleged organs of enlightenment – have not only failed to eradicate from his primitive bosom, but have actually fostered.

Former *Irish Times* journalist Lionel Fleming, a West Cork native and son of the Rector of Timoleague in West Cork, noted that unharmed but fearful members of ‘the gentry’ who ‘made their way instantly to England’ became ‘a powerful factor in ... anti-Irish propaganda by all the right wing newspapers’. As a result, ‘the stories of persecution multiplied and a warm hearted British public subscribed thousands of pounds to the Distressed Irish Loyalists Fund’. Fleming particularly singled out the *Morning Post* and Bretherton’s contributions in this context. Hart’s thesis (p374) reported the *Morning Post*’s 1 June account of the April killings the ‘most reliable’, but as merely ‘partially reliable’, in his book (p279).

The influential newspaper had characterised the War of Independence as a Jewish Communist plot. So much so, it reportedly imparted anti-Semitic thoughts to William Joyce, who was said to have been a young (lucky to escape) pro-British collaborator in Galway during 1920-22. After life as a prominent British fascist (and Ulster loyalist supporter) Joyce left Britain in 1939 on the eve of World War Two, ‘a repeat of [his] flight from Ireland’ in 1922. He then gained world notoriety as ‘Lord Haw Haw’, broadcasting for Hitler’s Nazi regime. Joyce was captured in 1945 and controversially tried successfully for treason. He was executed by hanging in 1946 in Wandsworth Prison, London, by the government he had once fervently supported.

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53 Bretherton, 1925, pp73, 77, 24-5, 26-7. See also page 91 on Phillips’ *Revolution in Ireland* (1926) and note 28 (page 92) plus, later, on *Tales of the RIC*, in Chapter Five, page 112, note 20. For a discussion linking Bretherton’s ‘extreme expression of diehard racialism’ to British fascist attitudes pre-Second World War, see Douglas, 1997, pp61-2.

54 According to Fleming, the Post, ‘or more probably Bretherton’, later achieved a new low in stating that the burials of deceased Protestants ‘had to be conducted secretly at dead of night’, and that ‘the sound of gunfire was so common that people no longer even bothered to turn round in the street if a volley was loosed off behind them’. Fleming noted that ‘such absurdities would have been allowed to pass without correction’ in the *Irish Times* in 1907-34 editor ‘John Healy’s day’. However, in 1936 Fleming and Alec Newman (1954-61 editor) persuaded 1934-54 editor Bertie Smylie to ‘counter-attack’. An editorial written by Fleming ‘den[ied] very strongly that loyalists are being victimised’. He asserted that ‘the ex-unionists’ were ill served, ‘by pandering to false sentiment’ and were ‘very well able to look after themselves’, Fleming, 1965, pp168-9; ‘Southern Loyalists’ (editorial), *IT*, 22 Dec 1936.

In *The Republic, the Fight for Irish Independence* (2013), Charles Townshend, the external examiner of Hart’s PhD thesis, queried southern Protestant assertions. He suggested, ‘there is a problem taking [the 11 May 1922 Protestant Convention resolution] as unforced testimony’. He asserted,

> If Protestants had been subject to ‘hostility’, or even to what F.S.L. Lyons in a famous phrase called ‘repressive tolerance’, they would be more likely to play it down than to emphasise it.  

Taking Townshend’s point at face value, arguably it would be eccentric for the representatives of victims experiencing murderous treatment to deny their community’s experience. Shooting people for sectarian reasons is clearly repressive intolerance. Logically, Townshend’s view implies that the worse the treatment, the more likely that its victims would deny or disavow it. In theory, then, Lionel Curtis’s statement that southern Protestants did not complain of sectarian persecution was evidence that it had occurred. In which case, surely the Protestant Convention would reportedly contained one Jew, ibid., p87. See, Jos. J. Togher WS 1729, that links Joyce with the Auxiliary shooting and disappearance of a Father Griffin:

In November, 1920, at about 2am, a person called to Father Griffin’s house. He answered the door himself, and after a conversation with the caller in Irish, he departed with him on an alleged sick call. We were convinced that the caller (a tout for the Auxiliaries) was none other than William Joyce, later executed by the British after World War II for his activities as an announcer from Berlin Radio Station on behalf of Germany.

Reportedly, Joyce’s complicity was established in 1922, after which he fled to England. As Togher put it, ‘Had we had this information earlier, Joyce would have been executed’. See also William Staines WS 944. Joyce biographer Mary Kenny, 2003, pp69-72, referred to reports of Joyce’s involvement in the Griffin killing as unsubstantiated. However, she did not have access to the Togher and Staines statements. Cormac Ó Comhráí, author of *Revolution in Connaught*, 2013, described Togher as ‘a competent and level-headed intelligence officer’, email communication, 18 Nov 2015. Kenny, 2003, pp158, 281-310.

Townshend, 2013, p371. The phrase ‘repressive tolerance’ was famous for originating in a 1965 essay by the Marxist critic of consumer capitalism, Herbert Marcuse. Townshend’s observation did not source Lyons (1979, p163), who in turn had not mentioned Marcuse. Townshend instead directed readers to Chapter 50 (of 58) of Gerard Murphy’s ‘richly detailed (albeit often speculative)’ *The Year of Disappearances* (2010). That chapter alleged that 6 unnamed, untraceable, though, paradoxically, ‘well known and prominent’, Cork Protestants were disappeared by the IRA on St Patrick’s Day, 1922. No hard evidence was advanced. Instead the Peter Hart-inspired Murphy cited Cork Protestants in business soon afterwards condemning attacks on Catholics in Northern Ireland, and ‘deny[ing] that they have been subject to any form of oppression or injustice by their Catholic fellow citizens’. This interesting ‘detail’ occasioned a ‘speculative’ observation from Murphy: ‘for southern Protestants in general, suppression was the price of survival’, Murphy, 2010, p272 (n62, p498). This is not reliable historical research and should not be cited as such.
have ignored the April killings. There is no compelling reason to believe that southern Irish Protestants evinced signs of such counter-intuitive behaviour when the Convention took place in May 1922. Rather, their representatives’ view appears to have accurately reflected a settled understanding. Questioning that understanding - or, in Hart’s case, ignoring entirely its expression by the Convention - may signify an adherence to a preferred reading of Irish history that is a product of ideology, not evidence.

While claiming to question nationalist mythology, Hart appears instead, and ironically, to have systematically dismissed and undermined the views of many, perhaps most, southern Protestant unionists. His analysis was essentially a rationalisation of sectarian ‘ethnic’ separation of Protestants and Roman Catholics in Ireland. It was in effect a justification of Partition that was influenced by the political nomenclature associated with post-1968 violence in Northern Ireland. Hart referred later to republican and to loyalist ‘paramilitaries’ during the 1912–22 period, as ‘a symptom of democratic and state failure… Full democracy was restored once ethnic sovereignty or security was secured’. In other words, Partition was portrayed as a ‘good’ or ‘best-case-possible solution’ to intractable ethno-religious differences and hatred. However, republicans in northern and southern Ireland did not aspire to create a sectarian ‘ethnic’ state. Likewise, Northern Ireland was hardly a democracy in the ‘[f]ull’ sense, and, by contrast with the nationalists’ goal, it was based on a sectarian identity claimed by unionists who comprised a majority in only four of Northern Ireland’s six counties (and in the province of Ulster’s nine).

Irish but more particularly Ulster unionists recognised that a system of sectarian privilege was threatened by majority rule even under British jurisdiction. That is why Ulster unionists successfully rebelled against Home Rule during 1912–14, even threatening a bloody Irish and British civil war to thwart the will of Parliament and of the great majority of Ireland’s inhabitants. Ironically, Hart was, in effect, imposing sectarian categories, more appropriate to Ulster Unionism, on Irish nationalist ideologies, in ways that made political sense only within an imperial or colonial context. That is why such categories endured in Northern Ireland.

To be sure, southern Ireland did become a conservative state dominated by a

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Roman Catholic ethos, largely as a result of Partition and the Irish Civil War, but it did not become anti-Protestant. The southern state incorporated Protestant institutions into pre-existing education, health and social and moral welfare provision and also, remarkably, tolerated anti-Catholic employment discrimination. Southern Protestants and Catholics became subject separately to denominational social control, and arguably the main object of this architecture was the new Dublin establishment’s control of the popular majority. In the popular imagination, freedom from imperial persecution was also freedom from religious persecution. For this reason institutional Roman Catholicism successfully associated with the new state in a manner institutionalised Protestantism, which opposed Irish independence and had developed historically on the basis of discrimination against Catholics, found problematic.

4.4 Chapter Conclusion

Hart’s conclusion that the April 1922 killings happened because Protestants were ‘fair game’ is not supported by evidence. On the contrary, Hart supported his published views only by ignoring or misrepresenting facts that contradicted it. In effect, Hart wrote a sectarian history that displaced Unionist and British responsibilities for sectarianism in Irish history. Hart placed responsibility instead on those who were the historic victims of imperial and colonial sectarianism, and who since the 1790s had sought a non-sectarian form of self-government. Indeed, that is why non-sectarian Protestants were, to T.C. Hammond’s consternation, in republican ranks in small but significant numbers. Had Irish republicanism during the 1916–22 period been sectarian, as in Hart’s depiction, this Protestant participation would have been unlikely. To paraphrase and reverse Oxford professor Roy Foster’s dismissive phrase, Hart’s denial of the Irish historical record was merely revisionism with footnotes. That being so, let us now consider and critique the important role of revisionist ideas and ideology within the Hart controversy.

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60 Discussed in detail in Chapter Eleven.
61 See on Church of Ireland opposition to Home Rule, Scholes, 2009.
62 This included Sinn Féin Ministers Robert Barton and Ernest Blythe, as well as head of publicity Erskine Childers. Cork IRA Protestants included Sam Maguire from Dunmanway and transportation officers, the brothers Jim and Miah Grey (I am indebted to John Borgonoovo for this latter information). See also, WS 1242 A.K. Wordsworth on ‘visits of IRA leaders to her home … 1918–1921’; WS 394 Presbyterian Minister Rev’d J.A. Irwin on speaking with Eamon De Valera in the USA (a remarkable document); WS 632 Elizabeth Bloxam, who refuted tales of attacks on Protestants. See also: S.B in Limerick’s Fighting Story on ‘The Honourable Mary Spring-Rice’, [1948] 2009, pp304-6; and Martin Maguire, 2008, on ‘Harry Nicholls & Kathleen Emerson: Protestant Rebels’.
63 Roy Foster, 1986, entitled, ‘We are all Revisionists Now’. Foster, a supporter of Hart’s analysis, concluded optimistically (p5), ‘to say “revisionist” should just be another way of saying “historian”’.
CHAPTER FIVE Academic Attitudes

Peter Hart could have explained anomalies in his research before his untimely death in June 2010. He had an opportunity after publication of Brian Murphy’s review of *The IRA and its Enemies* in 1998, Meda Ryan’s *Tom Barry IRA Freedom Fighter* in 2003, and Murphy and Meehan’s *Troubled History* in 2008—all of which raised aspects of the critique further developed here.¹ Hart’s thesis supervisor and examiner might have posed at least some of these critical questions in or prior to 1992, when a TCD PhD was awarded to the then graduate student. Given the absence of a *viva voce* examination, perhaps there was no opportunity to do so. Hart’s work was subject instead, in its published book form, to the verdict of his peers and of the wider public.

Hart’s analysis in *The IRA and its Enemies*, published in mid 1998, received high praise, while critics were summarily dismissed.² The research had already been cited and endorsed in January 1997, in journalist, historian, and commentator, Mary Kenney’s widely read *Goodbye to Catholic Ireland.*³ Professor Roy Foster nominated the work as one of his books of the year in December 1998. In addition, Foster chaired the Ewart Biggs Prize panel that awarded the prize to Hart that year. He referred later to Hart’s ‘scrupulous exploration of guerrilla activity in Cork from 1916 to 1923’.⁴ The point was first made in Professor Eunan O’Halpin’s 1998 review:

[Hart] has set a standard of forensic documentary research which … those rushing to the defence of the good name of Cork republicanism may conceivably emulate but will surely not surpass.⁵

¹ See also *History Ireland* five issues, v13, n2-6, 2005; discussed in Chapter Two, page 43, note 25.
² It continues. For Anne Dolan, 2014, p146, the 2008 Meehan, Murphy, *Troubled History* critique of Hart’s Kilmichael research was an example of ‘the fury of those who did not want to hear what IRA veterans said about themselves’. Specific instances of ‘fury’ (beyond all 48 pages of *Troubled History*) were not indicated. Marianne Elliot’s review of Charles Townsendshd’s *The Republic* construed unspecified criticism of Hart as ‘vilification’, to which the author responded, *THE*, 3, 17 Oct 2013. See also Margaret O’Callaghan, 2013, pp68, 69, 70, in which Conor Cruise O’Brien and Peter Hart’s work was, respectively, ‘vilified’ and ‘demonised’, instead of being, merely, criticised. In addition, Charles Townsendshd’s work was ‘brilliant’ and David Fitzpatrick’s ‘path breaking’. Again, no examples were presented.
⁴ Roy Foster, NS, 4 Dec 1998. Foster complained (*IT*, 7 Jul 2006) that Declan Kiberd gave ‘an inaccurate and inadequate impression’ of the Ewart Biggs prize, after Kiberd observed, ‘for years some who explored the blind-spots of Irish nationalism were awarded prize’. Foster then listed winners, including Hart. Foster, 2003b, p10.
⁵ O’Halpin review of *The IRA and its Enemies*, TLS, 6 Nov 1998
Hart’s standards have been criticised rather than emulated. In 1999 the historian turned journalist Ruth Dudley Edwards’ ‘intimate portrayal’ of the Protestant supremacist Orange Order cited ‘Hart’s horrifying description of persecution [of Protestants] during the period 1920-23’. 6 Professor Paul Bew effused, also in 1999:

This is a great book. The first work on the Irish revolution which can stand comparison with the best of the historiography of the French Revolution: brilliantly documented, statistically sophisticated, and superbly written.

Likewise, in 2000 Foster’s Oxford University colleague, Dr. Senia Paseta, approved of Hart’s ‘first class historical writing’ that was ‘innovative and brilliant’, ‘ultimately persuasive’, ‘superbly researched [and] constantly provocative’. 7

Arguably, the failure of most reviewers of Hart’s works to perceive faults may have been conditioned by two factors. The first was alarm, within political, media, and academic establishments with regard to any historical accounts that might induce:

a) any sympathy in the South for the post-1968 nationalist revolt in Northern Ireland;

b) any objective understanding (in the South, in Irish-America, etc.) of the historical and contemporary reasons for the IRA’s armed campaign;

c) any popular support for Sinn Féin’s enhanced political role after either the 1981 Hunger Strikes or, especially, the 1994 IRA ceasefire. 9

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8 See Meehan, Miller, 2011.

9 In the Irish Times Kevin Myers anticipated, Cassandra-like, the IRA ceasefire on 31 August 1994 by writing (27 August) that the Truce in 1921 had led to sectarian bloodletting. Violence in Belfast against thousands of Catholics in 1920 was precipitated by Myers on IRA attacks on Crown forces. In the south in April 1922, he observed, ‘[t]he IRA mounted a pogrom against [ten] Protestants in the Dunmanway area’. He continued, ‘Hundreds of Protestants were put out of that part of West Cork’. Myers carried on relentlessly in opposition to the Northern Ireland Peace Process, though he wavered momentarily, admitting at one point, (IT, 15 Apr 1998),

Blessed are the peacemakers... Wrong: totally and utterly wrong, wrong, wrong. It’s an unsettling, disorienting thing finally to realise that the prediction about which I have written thousands of words turns out to have been complete rubbish.

Myers then effectively admitted, in the words of former Irish Times Editor, Conor Brady, that he had been ‘wrong about being wrong’, by reverting to his former position, IT, 17 January 2007. Myers was also wrong in his 27 August 1994 article in
Instead, revisionist accounts described as courageously self-questioning and de-mythologising were preferred and promoted.

Examining British motives and actions was de-prioritised in favour of interrogating and misrepresenting Irish attitudes. The liberal intelligentsia were encouraged to believe - and to promote the belief that – there were hidden sectarian depths that exposed Irish nationalism’s true nature, especially as applied to republican ideology and practice. Hart was important in this context. For example UCD’s Diarmaid Ferriter claimed that Hart’s research ‘expos[ed] the murkier and fascistic side of the IRA’. In the same vein, a survey by Foster, ‘Something to Hate: Intimate Enmities in Irish History’, concluded by citing Tom Garvin’s review of The IRA and its Enemies. For Garvin the IRA were a ‘pre-political’ body with ‘a clearer idea of what they hated’, which engaged in ‘sectarian and agrarian murder’. Foster embraced and extended Garvin’s observation with, ‘everyday Protestants would do just as well’ as ‘traditional Ascendancy representatives of the oppressor’.10

The respected Irish-born BBC journalist Fergal Keane exemplified this motif in the London Independent in 2001. In a commentary on the post-1968 Northern Ireland conflict, while adopting the guise of a deceived schoolboy, Keane observed,

The campaign of terror waged against Protestants in the Bandon valley in County Cork was never in our textbooks, though our classrooms were only a matter of miles away. In fact, I had to wait until a Canadian academic, Peter Hart, produced his exceptional The IRA and its Enemies before I learnt the extent of ‘ethnic cleansing’ in my own home country. He referred to,

… a new generation of historians and writers such as Roy Foster and Peter Hart [who] cast a colder eye backwards. The label “revisionist” is frequently applied to those who see Irish history in terms more complicated than Orange and Green and Imperial Brits - I prefer the term “realist”.11

Arguably, then, some revisionist historians and their supporters concluded that any truly objective understanding of the distinction in 1919–22, between the majority of


11 Fergal Keane, ‘Mr McGuinness has opened the way to truth’, Ind (Lon), 5 May 2001. Repeated in ‘A timely reminder of the Irish Republic’s brush with a kind of ethnic cleansing’, Ind (Lon), 28 Sep 2002, containing ‘The ethnic cleansing of the Bandon Valley is one of the most odious chapters in our history, though I learned nothing about it at school’. Another journalist, Geoffrey Wheatcroft, contributed, ‘The conflict [in Cork] was at its most brutal, close to ethnic cleansing – and no one can call that phrase excessive after reading the Canadian historian Peter Hart’s remarkable and frightening book The IRA and Its Enemies’, ‘Ethnic cleansing in the Free State’, NS, 10 Jul 1998. See Chapter Four discussion of ethnic cleansing, pages 85-90.
southern Protestant unionists and an active minority of southern Protestant loyalists who informed the British about IRA activities, was too politically sensitive. Identifying the entire Irish War of Independence as ‘sectarian’ could, in turn, locate both it and the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland within an acceptable, pro-Partition, ideological paradigm that could reel in the unwary with its claims to academic impartiality.

The second, closely related factor, was the emergence of a ‘liberal’ (tending towards ‘neoliberal’) consensus in southern Ireland that questioned pervasive Roman Catholic influence. A focus on increasingly discredited Catholic authoritarianism helped also to discredit and dismantle ideological and institutional barriers, traditional Irish nationalism included, to the Irish Republic’s full incorporation into transatlantic capitalism and the European Union.

For many Irish ‘liberals’, historical interpretations that identified the southern Irish state, from the very moment of its creation, as ‘Catholic-nationalist’ and anti-Protestant appeared at least superficially attractive. They represented both historical and contemporary Irish republicanism in ways that appeared decidedly unattractive, ‘backward’, and ‘atavistic’. This framework of ideas located structural and sectarian problems outside the modernising Irish state, which now was perceived as freeing itself from overtly Roman Catholic and republican influences, but which also masked the maintenance of socio-economic privilege and inequality.

Thus, Irish republicanism and Irish Roman Catholicism were symbiotically linked with a ‘demythologised’ and discredited southern past and an abhorrent northern present. Hart’s history therefore answered an ideological and political need, the imperatives and perspectives of which framed the initially and enthusiastically favourable scholarly reaction to his book’s publication. This systematic celebration became also newspaper endorsement in which, as we have seen, the respected Irish-born BBC journalist Fergal Keane supported the revisionist project generally and Peter Hart’s research particularly. These encomiums were joined by the efforts of overtly anti-republican journalists who saw in Hart’s work a means of undermining what they considered the secular pretences of Irish republican ideology and practice. Gramsci remarked that ‘the hegemony of the ruling class’ depended not merely on its system of education, but also ‘private initiatives and activities tend[ing] towards the same end’. The reinvention of Irish history depended not merely, therefore, on its transformation in universities and schools, but also propagation through the media in order to enable, in Walter Lippmann’s phrase, the ‘manufacture of consent’.

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ONE DOES not take issue lightly with David Fitzpatrick, for he is one of the most brilliant and revolutionary historians this century; yet I fear I am about to do just that.

David is a contributor to the Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland, a book which has attracted remarkably little publicity considering the daring, invigorating approach its contributors have taken. David's chapter deals with Ireland from 1870 to the present; yet that present seems to be so negligibly delineated as not to be touched upon at all.

Even a cursory look at Northern Ireland which does not mention the police trancheeoning of the civil rights Marry in October, 1968, or the introduction of massive and crude one-sided internment in 1971 is going to leave untutored readers—who have been assured by the publishers that this is the most authoritative history of Ireland ever published—for them—a little in the dark. But perhaps David would say that as the Troubles are quite clearly nowhere near over, that is the position—in the dark—he too is in; for he does indicate in his text that no assessment of the Troubles is possible while they persist.

Judicious and Ironic

His essay is often a judicious and ironic observation of the follies that have guided us through this last terrible century. It is almost amusing to read a single page of the register for prohibited books for March 31st, 1931—almost. More sobering—Aldus Huxley's "Point Counter Point" and "Brief Candles"; Paul Caughin's "Intimate Journals"; Marie Stopes's many works such as "What Every Mother Should Know"; "Radiant Motherhood" and "The New Motherhood".

What villainies were being protected from; yet future observers will doubtless be amazed in the baying of the "Life of Brian" or of UCG Film Society being prevented from showing of the film, "Hail Mary", by Colm O'hEocha, chairman of the New Ireland Forum, no less.

Ghastly Period

David's approach to that ghastly period of troubles from 1916 to 1922 is hardly less fresh and courageous than we have come to expect; "GHQ resisted demands for renewed urban insurrection by zealots such as MacSwiney, the bloodthirsty Cork commandant, who achieved droll apotheosis as martyr and man of peace when he died on hunger strike in October, 1920."

A man of peace, indeed; one of his prime notions was to murder the Catholic bishop of Cork, a scheme which fortunately his less bizarre colleagues were able to prevent him implementing. It is Terence MacSwiney the martyr who is remembered today, but others in Ireland at the time were guided by MacSwiney's other side. When the dead mayor's body was returned to Ireland a closure of all businesses was ordered by the IRA as a mark of respect.

William Kennedy, a known supporter of constitutional nationalism in Borris, declined to close his business in the village on that day.

And so the IRA ordered a boycott. In reply the doughty Mr Kennedy got his solicitor, Michael O'Dempsey, an Old Clongowian and former member of the United Irish League, to have a writ issued at Carlow assizes against further boycotting. The IRA's response was to shoot both men dead.

Crazy Perversions

David does not mention this because he cannot; he does not have the space to dwell upon the crazy perversions of behaviour that occur in war. But one observation he makes I do have to disagree with: "Despite this provocation (from the Ulster unionists determining to decide their own destiny) few attacks upon Southern Protestants were reported during the Troubles though many vacant houses were burnt."

Many of the 17 men Tom Barry had killed on account of their being untried "informers" were Protestants. One such was Warren Peacocke, murdered by the IRA in 1921 in Innishannon. A few days after Peacocke's funeral, Tom Barry's men were back at the Peacocke house; they put his young widow and baby son out of their home, and set fire to it. We will call the murderer here T.

Another of Barry's men, by dressing as a British Army officer, inveigled one of Peacocke's fellow Cork Protestants by the name of Bradfield into admitting he supplied evidence to the RIC. He too was shot.

Pogrom of Protestants

We will call the author of this crime P. But P went on to do other things. For it was he who organised a pogrom of Protestants in the Dunmanway area in April, 1922. A gang of IRA men raided Protestant homesteads one weekend, taking out whatever men they could find and shooting them.

They murdered a Mr Buttiner, an 83-year-old retired draper, and Alexander McKenney, aged 16, shot dead in his sickbed; Robert Nagle, aged 18; Francis Fitzmaurice, aged 80; Mr D. Grey, a chemist; the Rev Robert Harbord, a clergyman; Gerald Peyton, aged 20; John Chinnery, a 32-year-old farmer; Robert Howe, aged 60; and John Bradfield, the second of his family P had helped kill.

Hundreds of Protestants fled the area, and the reputation in the North were frighten. But P and T were not finished creating repercussions, for a time later they were both in action again, and this time their target was not poor unfortunate Cork Protestants; this time it was a Cork Catholic. His name was Michael Collins, and the place of ambush was Beal na MBlath.

KEVIN MYERS
5.1 Kevin Myers Champions Peter Hart

Kevin Myers of the *Irish Times* (later, *Irish Independent*, currently, *Sunday Times*), promoted Hart’s research from an early stage. He first praised Hart on 23 May 1990, in an *Irish Times* piece on Hart’s first published essay on IRA ‘youth culture’. ‘As Peter points out’, wrote Myers, ‘the [IRA] functioned as a form of morality police, enforcing norms which the new state in due course would impose with the rule of law’. In 1995, Myers called for Hart’s ‘brilliant’ thesis to be published, even before TCD’s library made it available. In 1998, on publication, Hart’s ‘masterly study’ explained, suggested Myers, ‘how mythology has concealed the truth in Irish history’.13

Myers had been assiduous in promoting the IRA sectarianism thesis from 19 December 1989, when he admonished David Fitzpatrick’s chapter, ‘Ireland since 1870’, in Roy Foster’s authoritative and classic-revisionist collection of essays, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland* (Myers column reproduced, page 109). Fitzpatrick had observed that despite Ulster Unionist ‘provocation’, ‘few attacks upon southern Protestants were reported during the ‘Troubles’, though many vacant houses were burned’.14 Myers argued, to the contrary, that ‘[Tom] Barry’s men … organised a pogrom of Protestants in the Dunmanway area in April 1922’. He pursued the issue the following month and persistently thereafter.15 Hart noted in his thesis (372), that, ‘I did not even know [the April 1922 killings] had taken place until a year into my research’ in the late 1980s.16 It is therefore possible that Myers, whom Hart acknowledged and also cited in the thesis (377, 399), was Hart’s initial source (though Hart merely footnoted Myers in the book, 282, n67). Myers’s interpretation may have helped to change Fitzpatrick’s mind and also to have encouraged a switch of

13 *IT*, 12 Jan 1995 (Hart thesis available TCD Library, 29 Jan 1996), 25 May 1998. Myers’s initial promotion of Hart’s Kilmichael Ambush analysis led to a six-month controversy on the letters page. The letters were later collected in a pamphlet, *Kilmichael, the False Surrender*, edited by Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford of the Aubane Historical Society. It included also an unpublished (by the *IT*) letter from Meda Ryan questioning for the first time Hart’s interview dating, as well as Brian Murphy’s September 1998 review noting censorship of archive material by Hart.


16 An admission not included in the book.
revisionist historiographical emphasis toward alleged IRA sectarianism. Myers later made the extraordinary sweeping assertion that,

Murdering people for their religion was what republicans had always done, especially in their most celebrated period 1919–22. Only the successful seizure of Irish historiography by Irish republicans has concealed this vital truth.\(^{17}\)

Both Myers and the academic community’s promotion of Hart’s history set off a low-level culture war because the academy refused to acknowledge criticism of Hart’s work, apart from issuing occasional, contemptuous, dismissals. However, Myers’s statements often were highly questionable and indeed he later apologised for two. First, his December 1989 column that addressed the April killings ‘pogrom’ also alleged that a ‘prime notion’ of Sinn Féin Cork Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney (who died on hunger strike in Brixton prison in October 1920) ‘was to murder the Catholic bishop of Cork’. Second, Myers had also asserted earlier that in September 1920, Alan Lendrum, Acting Resident Magistrate in Kilkee, Co Clare, recently returned from fighting Bolsheviks in the new Soviet Union, was ‘buried up to his neck on a … beach, to await the incoming tide and death’. In addition, Myers claimed, Lendrum’s IRA captors, becoming impatient, dug up and reburied their victim nearer to the water’s edge, so as to hasten his demise. Lendrum’s tragic story so impressed the diarist, he mentioned it four times over five weeks, between May and July 1989.\(^{18}\)

A year and a half later, in January 1992, Myers mentioned the story a fifth and final time. The grisly tale was, he now admitted, ‘not true’, because the event in question never happened. Instead, when the IRA attempted either to seize Lendrum’s car or to kidnap him, he apparently produced a gun and was shot dead. Lendrum’s body was secretly buried near a lake edge and, on discovery, was found to have clear water in his lungs, leading to the salt-water saga concocted by British propagandists.\(^{19}\) In that same January 1992 column, after representations from relatives, Myers apologised as well for his untrue allegation about Terence MacSwiney’s designs on the life of Cork’s Roman Catholic Bishop.

The story told by Myers, about Lendrum’s watery grave, had been immortalised in Tales of the RIC in 1921, which had constructed a parallel, British propaganda,

\(^{17}\) Myers, 2006, p87. Myers’s support for Hart is outlined in more detail in my ‘Distorting Irish History [One]’, 2010, pp6–8.

\(^{18}\) IT, 30 May, 22 June, 3 & 6 July 1989.

narrative of the War of Independence. In a chapter entitled, ‘R.M.’, the book renamed Lendrum as ‘Mayne’ and concluded with, ‘The next flood tide put an end to a torture the like of which Lenin and Trotsky could hardly exceed for sheer devilry’ - a clever phrasing that associated Lendrum’s death with British propaganda efforts to link Irish Republicanism with ‘Bolshevism’. Another class-conscious and typically anti-Semitic RIC ‘tale’ concluded by identifying a ‘Gaelic organiser’ named ‘Pádraig O’Kelly’ as in reality ‘a Jewish Bolshevik agent’, recently ‘suddenly disappeared from Glasgow when the police began to get unpleasantly attentive’. W. Alison Philips’ previously mentioned (in Chapter Four) Revolution in Ireland gave academic respectability to the Jewish-Bolshevik-from-Glasgow theory.  

Hart’s history elevated Myers’ contemporary observations on republican sectarianism, that replicated British propaganda, to the plane of academic research, where critics of the republican sectarianism narrative received short shrift. Typically, in defending Peter Hart and his work, David Fitzpatrick has referred to sometimes ‘foul’ as well as ‘fair’ criticisms from those whom he branded as ‘apologists for contemporary republicanism’. These unnamed (by Fitzpatrick) persons engaged in ‘counter “revisionist” polemic, often ugly and personally offensive’. Professor Eunan O’Halpin, also of TCD’s Modern History Department, likewise (if more vaguely) characterised critics of Gerard Murphy’s Peter Hart–inspired research (2010), which O’Halpin in turn promoted, as ‘ultramontane anti-revisionists, fastidious academics or hybrids with a foot in both camps’.  

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20 Anonymous, 1921, p75; ‘A Jew in Gaelic Clothing’, p261; Phillips, 1923, p259 (see also Chapter Four, page 92, note 28; plus pages 100-1, notes 52-5). Paul Bew referred to Tales of the RIC, whose chapters first appeared in Blackwoods magazine, as a ‘powerful anti-Sinn Féin series of articles’, 1999, p742. The British anti-semit, A.H. Lane, 1933, p132, was similarly fixated, ‘As the Morning Post, 1 February, 1919, remarked: “The bell-wether in the Glasgow upheaval is a Jewish tailor called Shinwell; in the Belfast strike Shinwell’s counterpart is one Simon Greenspon, a Jew of Russian descent. These two are the Trotskys of Belfast and Glasgow”’. De Valera was termed, p134, ‘a Spanish-American Jew’.  

5.2 Revisionism in Song and in Story

Despite these and other efforts to defend Hart’s methodology, the inexorable logic of criticism gradually undermined his historiography that was, as Fitzpatrick observed, ‘corroded’. Nevertheless, the attraction of the sectarianism thesis is such that some historians still support it, despite the lack of corroborating evidence, albeit often now in ways that appear more ‘fair and balanced’. For instance, UCD’s Professor Ronan Fanning observed in Fatal Path (2013),

> Although the scale of sectarian murders is the source of enduring historiographical controversy, there can be no doubt that at local level, most notably in Cork, the IRA targeted some Protestants simply because they were Protestants.

‘[N]o doubt’?—and yet, no source given either. However, Fanning preceded his observation with:

> ‘Favourite targets of the IRA’, in Tom Bartlett’s words, ‘apart from soldiers and policemen, were informers or “touts”, a catch-all category that appears to have included the likes of tinkers, tramps, ex-servicemen and Protestants’.

But what, then, was Bartlett’s source on page 403 of his celebrated textbook, Ireland, a History (2010)? Surprisingly (or not?), no note cluttered his narrative on pages 402–405. However, Bartlett’s introduction to that chapter, ‘The Making of the Two Irelands, 1914–45’, indicated a principal source, David Fitzpatrick’s 1998 study, The Two Irelands. Bartlett’s identification of the IRA’s ‘favourite targets’ may, therefore, have originated in Fitzpatrick’s text. Perhaps Bartlett was referencing in particular Fitzpatrick’s un-sourced observation, that

> Adulterers, homosexuals, tinkers, beggars, ex-servicemen, Protestants: these were the many dangerous and potentially dangerous lethal labels for Ireland’s inhabitants in the revolutionary period.

If so, then it is peculiar that both Bartlett and Fanning, for whatever reasons, omitted Fitzpatrick’s startling suggestion that the IRA systematically targeted adulterers and homosexuals. Fitzpatrick’s notable claim in turn may have relied (although it was not referenced) on some of Peter Hart’s, also un-sourced, observations: in 1990 that

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22 ‘Dr. Regan and Mr. Snide’, History Ireland, v20, n3, May–Jun 2012.
23 Fanning, 2013, p194.
25 Fitzpatrick, 1998, p95. The Irish Separatist and former British colonial official, Sir Roger Casement, was executed for treason in 1916. British government officials showed clemency campaigners explicit homosexual material from Casement’s diaries and successfully undermined their campaign. See Angus Mitchell, an adherent of the ‘forged-diary’ theory, ‘Casement’s Black Diaries: closed books reopened’, History Ireland, v1, n3, Autumn 1997. This is not a point that exercised Fitzpatrick.
'Adulterers, wife-beaters, drunkards and tramps got short-shrift with the IRA'; and in 1993 that the IRA attacked ‘unmarried mothers, adulterers and mixed (Catholic and Protestant) couples’.  

Essentially, many Irish historians, building on and adapting each other’s words, have written that the IRA were sectarian, bigoted, and viciously so, because that assertion has become a necessary article of a political faith that subsists without benefit of the veneer of evidence that Hart’s 1998 history once appeared to provide. By contrast, acknowledging that ‘Roman Catholic’ was a more dangerous label in the new Northern Ireland area than was ‘Protestant’ in the South does not seem to have occurred to those who supported Hart or Fitzpatrick’s observations.

For many years, Professor Fitzpatrick cited without question Peter Hart’s 1996 essay claim, that what ‘might be termed “ethnic cleansing”’ occurred in Cork in 1922 (discussed in Chapter Four, pages 85-90). Fitzpatrick failed to note that Hart retreated from this claim in 2003. In an essay collection, The IRA at War, Hart instead stated, ‘What happened in Southern Ireland did not constitute ethnic cleansing’. Paradoxically, that collection confusingly contained also Hart’s 1996 essay, with its ‘ethnic cleansing’ observation. Indeed, the contrasting arguments are within nine pages of each other. On two occasions subsequently Fitzpatrick cited Hart’s 1996 ethnic cleansing claim, but he ignored Hart’s new 2003 view. The author pointed out the error to Professor Fitzpatrick on each occasion, publicly and also privately.  

In an invited response to the author’s 2012 review of Terror in Ireland 1916-1923, Fitzpatrick, as editor, minimally acknowledged Hart’s change of mind. In 2013 Fitzpatrick noted it similarly in a journal article, in an essay on Protestant population decline that analyzed the twentieth-century history of County Cork’s Methodist congregations. Fitzpatrick introduced his acknowledgment, however, by citing in his

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26 Hart, 1990, p22; 1993, p977. I have been unable to trace a foundation for Fitzpatrick’s ‘homosexuals’ reference. No reports have emerged of participation in punitive ‘mixed-marriage’ expeditions. Had they occurred, the previously encountered (in Chapter Three) IRA officers Charlie Browne and Frank Busteed might, as products of such relationships, have noticed and said something.

text Hart’s 1996 (and 2003 republished) ethnic cleansing claim, while disparaging what he termed the ‘vicious ad hominem attacks on Hart and his allies’. At that point (ten years later) Fitzpatrick footnoted Hart’s new 2003 view. And Fitzpatrick concluded his discussion by arguing, without irony and with ultimate chutzpah, that,

The spectre of Protestant extermination has distracted debate about revolutionary Ireland for too long, and should be laid to rest. The inexorable decline of Southern Protestantism was mainly self-inflicted.28

Fitzpatrick’s 2013 analysis overturned the assertions that he (and others) had promoted, based largely on the work of his student, Peter Hart. Now, however, it appears that Hart’s claim (or, rather, its refutations) had ‘distracted debate’, and thus Fitzpatrick wanted that ‘distraction’ relegated or suppressed. Fitzpatrick’s new analysis of Cork’s Methodist community, that partly returned him to his 1989 position (which Kevin Myers had assailed), put the subject to rest for him - at least intellectually. Whether it had otherwise done so, however, is unclear. On 11 January 2013, Fitzpatrick spoke about his Methodist research at the annual Parnell Lecture in Magdalene College Cambridge. He surprised his audience by prefacing his remarks with a song, a ballad entitled,

\textit{A New Revenge for Skibbereen:}

\begin{quote}
‘Twas in the month of April in the year of ’22
We took it out on the Protestants; we could only catch a few
In Bandon and Dunmanway, Kinsale and Skibbereen
Their colour it was Orange and they trampled on the Green
Old Buttmer came down quaking
‘What do you want’, says he
‘Come out or we’ll make ye, we want your drapery"
The missus tried to argue
‘Go to bed old women’, says we
We sprayed his brains with bullets that Ireland might be free
We visited Tom Bradfield\cite{29}, we dressed up in Khaki
\end{quote}


\footnote{The ‘old [James] Buttmer’ mentioned was an April 1922 killings victim (although there is no evidence that his drapery business was a motive). ‘Tom Bradfield’ was previously discussed as one of two cousins (the other was named T.J.) who were killed as admitted spies during late January 1921 by, respectively, Denis Lordan and Tom Barry. Both Bradfields thought the armed men to whom they divulged information were British, the first time to Denis Lordan by accident, the second to Tom Barry by the latter’s design. This is the same Tom Bradfield referred to earlier, Chapter Three, page 78, note 68, Chapter Four, page 94, note 35, and in a previously cited \textit{Times} (London) report of 27 January 1921. A third Bradfield cousin, John Bradfield, was the final victim of the 1922 April/Bandon Valley Killings. Barry related his encounter with Tom Bradfield in his memoir. On foot of his publisher’s}
Says he, ‘You’re welcome officers’
A fine snug farm had he
We gave him a grand court martial
And sentenced Tom for to die
We tried a note around his neck
It read ‘convicted spy’
Farewell to all ye Protestants, so prim and dry and tight
Ye thought ye owned old Ireland
Yet ye fled without a fight
From Bandon and Dunmanway, Kinsale and Skibbereen
Ye scuttled out of the County Cork and never since was seen
‘Twas revenge for Skibbereen

Based on their remarks after Fitzpatrick’s performance, members of his ‘amazed’
audience believed this sad sectarian doggerel to be a genuine republican ballad.

Fitzpatrick responded as follows (square-bracketed words spoken by others):

Well, I think at this stage Chairman I need to make an admission. One of the most unfair and unkind claims made about my lamented former student Peter Hart was that he had falsified historical evidence in pursuit of the thesis. In my opinion he did nothing of the kind. What he did was to exaggerate evidence of sectarianism, which was particular in violent manifestations to a couple of fairly brief phases, and to over-dramatise what occurred in a manner which has misled all but the close readers of what he actually wrote. But I do not wish to lay myself open to this accusation so I have to confess that the genesis of the ballad was that I wrote it yesterday morning. [Laughter, ‘Oh wonderful’.] I hasten to add I did not write the tune, which I presume plenty of people here despite my poor performance would have been able vaguely to identify as the Galtee Mountain Boy. No, I see many perplexed and amazed at the claim.’ [‘You have almost silenced your audience’].

Fitzpatrick’s revisionist views of Irish republican intent and of the dynamics of Protestant-Catholic relations, ‘in song and in story’, differ in form from Peter Hart's prose. Though more orthodox in expression, Hart’s content was in tune with his mentor’s performance. Both suffer a common weakness, however, in that the evidence is against them. Southern Protestants did not in general experience sectarian attacks because republicans did not generally engage in them.

request, out of deference to ‘these traitors’ descendants’, Barry decided not to name those executed, although he pointed out that their names appeared in press reports, Barry, [1949] 1989, pp105, 109–10. See Dennis Lordon WS 470, where Bradfield is named.

30 David Fitzpatrick, ‘The Spectre of Ethnic Cleansing in Revolutionary Ireland’, Parnell Lecture, Magdalene College Cambridge, 11 January 2013, lecture recording in author’s possession. The lecture series at which Fitzpatrick spoke (and sang) was named after nineteenth century Irish Parliamentary Party leader Charles Stuart Parnell, a Protestant.
Ronan Fanning, in his introduction to *Fatal Path* (2013), acknowledged that ‘revisionist’ histories of Ireland were written in reaction to the conflict in Northern Ireland, and that ‘the British and Irish political establishments sought to control the presentation of history of 1912-22 in order to buttress their own authority....’. In 2000 Fanning controlled the presentation of a Troubles-related 2 October 1969 letter to Whitehall from British Ambassador to Dublin, Andrew Gilchrist. Fanning came across the letter, released under the 30-year-rule in the British PRO, while examining documents for the *Sunday Independent*. Ambassador Gilchrist’s letter detailed a discussion with *Irish Times* Managing Director, Major T.B. McDowell, ‘one of five (Protestant) owners’, who reportedly described his editor Douglas Gageby, … as a very fine journalist, an excellent man, but on Northern questions a renegade or white nigger.

In other words, the Protestant republican Gageby was considered a caste traitor. For whatever reason, other reporters present in Kew did not see this letter, part of a file on McDowell’s ‘intelligence’ activity on behalf of the British government after the onset of the Troubles in 1968-69. It is surprising, since the reporters noted other documents in the series, including a November letter that referred back to the infamous unreported 2 October ‘white nigger’ letter. That letter, in particular, revealed important Protestant nationalist and unionist differences within the *Irish Times*, which involved
also McDowell’s ‘friends on the [newspaper’s] board’. Fanning’s decision not to report the sectarian-racist remark was revealed online in 2004. In 2008 he explained, ‘he did not think it was particularly newsworthy’. It was ‘historical gossip’ Fanning withheld from the historical record.\(^{31}\)

In explanation of the emergence of the academic control culture acknowledged by Fanning, in 1973 F.S.L. Lyons explained that Irish historians were expected to

\[
\ldots \text{rather feverishly examine their consciences (or those of their colleagues) to see whether they have by their writing, given undue prominence to the concept of revolutionary militancy.}\(^{32}\)
\]

The policeman in historians’ heads monitored student output also. University College Dublin Modern English Professor Declan Kiberd observed that in UCD during the mid-1980s,

\[
\ldots \text{one of the professors of history held up a copy of the front of the } \text{Irish Times} \text{ featuring a picture of a young man who had just been sent [to prison] for I.R.A. activity, and said, “I am proud to say I failed his paper”. A complete breach of academic protocol, quite apart from the ideological agenda which lay behind his actions.}\(^{33}\)
\]

Under the guise of ‘striving for objectivity’, in 1973 the then Education Minister Richard Burke sought to prevent the formation of unacceptable opinions in schools. A proponent of the exercise, Kenneth Milne, observed in 1979 that the ‘present disturbed condition of Northern society brought new urgency to the need to look to history teaching’. Historians with alternative ideas were ‘literally playing with fire’. In his enthusiasm, Milne misinterpreted Lyons:

\[
\text{People who would scarcely appreciate the relevance to their own lives of … the misgivings expressed by Dr. Lyons[,] have been quick to see (even to recognise within themselves) elements of prejudice that too easily find recognition, first in the slogan, then in the gun.}\]


\(^{32}\) McDowell’s ‘friends on the board’ possibly included the Walker brothers, Ralph and Phillip, whose activities are discussed in chapters Eleven and Thirteen.

A passage that mentioned (appropriately) ‘brainwashing’, then referred to ‘thinking people’ who ‘looked to the schools for a remedy’ so that history teaching could be assigned ‘a moral role’. This exercise in southern introspection was supposed, somewhat paradoxically, to induce objective output. It led eventually to discovery of ‘prejudice’ that was not there, in Peter Hart’s *The IRA and its Enemies*. It was an articulation of how, in Gramsci’s words, ‘the apparatus of political and cultural hegemony of the ruling class’ was re-engineered.  

5.4 ‘Queen’s School’  

There was, of course, also a northern dimension. Professor Henry Patterson of the University of Ulster has referred to ‘revisionism’ within Irish historiography as ‘an attempt to purge it of political partisanship in the service of a nationalist or unionist project’. This purging is not so clear in Patterson’s previously discussed contradictory application of the term ‘ethnic cleansing’ to IRA activity, while endorsing unionist ‘emotional truth[s]’ (see Chapter Four, pages 87-9). Such views were often presented as a progressive reaction to backward-looking narrow nationalism. Patterson and Queen’s University Belfast academic Paul Bew adopted during the 1970s a nominally Marxist Althusserian methodology that was jettisoned after the 1989 Berlin Wall collapse. They were then members of the left-sounding (though increasingly and incongruously unionist leaning) Republican Clubs in Northern Ireland (known as Official Sinn Féin in the south, associated with the Official IRA), which split with the ultimately more successful ‘Provisional’ republicans in 1970. These official republicans pinned responsibility for small scale,
inefficient, Irish capitalism on uniquely lazy Irish Catholic capitalists. Socio-economic factors were discarded in favour of ethno-religious prejudice, incorporating some conceits of proponents of the Protestant work ethic. The critique became gradually indistinguishable from unionism. Adherents of the (in Thomas Hennessey’s formulation) ‘Queen’s school’, broadly followed this approach.

When the historian Joost Augusteijn lectured in Queen’s University’s History Department during the 1990s, he felt ‘a desire or demand from other historians’ that his published research ‘make a moral judgement about the past’. He cited in particular Paul Bew’s criticism that he, Augusteijn, did not adjudicate on whether Sinn Féin’s victory in the 1918 general election created ‘a mandate for the killing of local detectives’. The implication was that Augusteijn should have concluded it did not.

Bew introduced this motif also in criticism of David Fitzpatrick in 2004 for not treating the October 1920 IRA killing in Granard, Co Longford, of RIC District Inspector Kelleher in the ‘sordid civil war’ mode promoted by Peter Hart’s Kilmichael Ambush analysis. This was on the basis that the dead inspector was a son of the coroner who had autopsied Auxiliary bodies after the Kilmichael Ambush. Bew suggested simultaneously that Peter Hart’s critics were ‘offended’ because they uphold ‘the nationalist version of the Irish past’ and that ‘great pressures in Irish public life’ make ‘for a sanitised version’. Hart was ‘to be praised for resisting them so bravely, at whatever price’.

Queen’s school atmospherics are a corrective to the pressures, it seems. The university was found in 1989 and 1993 by Northern Ireland’s Fair Employment Agency to have discriminated against Roman Catholics. Subsequently, the history and

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38 Sinn Féin the Workers Party, 1978, p15. See also Chapter Ten, page 239.

39 See discussion on this point in Swann, 2006, pp387-8, 390-1, 393-95, 398. A Sinn Féin the Workers’ Party publication, *The Irish Industrial Revolution*, preface by Eamon Smullen, put this view publicly in 1977. According to former Dun Laoghaire, Dublin, Workers’ Party councillor, Colm Breathnach, such views and publications were foisted on the party by an unaccountable intellectual elite led by Eoghan Harris, and tolerated by the party leadership for opportunistic reasons (email, 1, 8, May 2009).

40 Hennessey, 2007, pix.


42 Bew has 1921.

politics departments of the university recruited some southern Irish academics with a Roman Catholic background. Academics from a local nationalist background appear thin on the ground in ‘Queen’s School’, though they comprise a majority within the student body.⁴⁴

A Bew-like propensity for moral judgements about the past is apparent also in former Queen’s academic Richard English’s criticism of Augusteijn for making the wrong sort of judgement. Augusteijn’s supposed error was alleged agreement with IRA officer Ernie O’Malley’s ‘rejection of constitutional nationalist politics’. In his mistaken interpretation of Augusteijn’s non-judgemental description of republican radicalisation, English incorporated, as an alternative approach, a tendentious juxtaposition with the Irish Parliamentary Party’s supposed ‘fundamental honesty’ (citing ‘recent detailed scholarship’, by Paul Bew). He compared also Parliamentary Party leader John Redmond’s supposed rejection of bigotry, with alleged modern republican ‘celebration of narrowness and chauvinism’.⁴⁵

English’s values here, as with Bew’s, are consequent upon having decided views in a divided society. This was once admitted more openly. Roy Foster observed in 1983, post the successful emergence of Sinn Féin into politics after the 1980–81 hunger strikes,

> As revisionists, Irish scholars have gone so far as to dismiss most of the canon of Irish history as conceived by the generation of 1916. However, mid-twentieth-century revisionism can itself be seen as part of the

⁴⁴ See Cathal Smyth’s detailed 1994 critique of QUB’s ‘fair employment crisis’, at www.academia.edu/6764527/, accessed 15 Feb 2015. See also discussion in Miller, 1998, pp28-33, of systematic unionist and pro-British bias in Queen’s and in the University of Ulster. In 2014, the author asked Queen’s if there was a continuing imbalance in the proportion of locally-recruited Roman Catholics in tenured positions in the History and Politics departments. The university’s equality officer responded (email, 27 Mar 2014), ‘It is not possible for me to release any information to you in relation to any of our schools.’ Carole Dennis, Advice and Compliance Officer in the Equality Commission (successor to the Fair Employment Commission), responded to a subsequent enquiry by asserting, ‘Regulations do not differentiate between Roman Catholics who are from Northern Ireland and Roman Catholics who are from outside Northern Ireland’ (emails, 27 Mar, 3 Apr). The regulations actually state, ““Roman Catholic” means belonging to the Roman Catholic community in Northern Ireland’, Fair Employment (Monitoring) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999, http://www. legislation.gov.uk/nisr/1999/148/made, accessed, 8 Apr 2014. Ironically, in 1990 Eileen Lavery of the Fair Employment agency undermined this very same excuse for discrimination, from QUB. She wrote (Independent, Lon., 6 Jan 1990), that the purpose of the regulations was ‘to ascertain the relative degree of opportunity which is offered to the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities in Northern Ireland’.

pattern whereby the study of Irish history reacts in a Pavlovian way to the dictates of politics; and the whole process can only be elucidated by considering the roots of the Irish discovery of their past, and the resulting interpretations of that past, on both sides of St George's Channel. It must also involve, at the conclusion, some consideration of very recent history, trenching upon politics. In so doing, this paper exposes itself to most of the criticisms it levels at history’s treatment of the Irish question; and thus becomes part of the process.

This acute observation was in an article that opened with,

‘History is more backward in Ireland than in any other country’, wrote J. R. Green’s Anglo-Irish widow fiercely in 1912.46

The unnamed enthusiastic historian defined in relation to her husband was Alice Stopford Green, a Protestant supportive of Sinn Féin during the War of Independence. Her equally Protestant niece, Dr Dorothy Stopford, acted in a medical capacity on behalf of the IRA in West Cork.47

Official concern with regard to dissemination of information on Northern Ireland instigated a ‘control culture’ in the South of Ireland. Control over academia and the composition and popular understandings of Irish history was only one of several interlocking ‘fronts’ in a ‘culture war’ for the hearts and minds of southern Irish people—and also of opinion in Irish-America and elsewhere in the Irish diaspora.48 Indeed, it was no coincidence that during the 1970s the ideological and legal architecture of this control culture was perfected and systematised by someone who had been a leading public servant, an Irish historian and an academic activist, a member of the Irish parliament and also an Irish government minister, namely Conor Cruise O’Brien.

O’Brien noted the significance of Hart’s War of Independence research in September 1997. He endorsed Hart’s previously discussed 1996 essay, in Unionism in Modern Ireland, that accused republicans of engaging in ethnic cleansing. O’Brien cleverly guilt-tripped impressionable liberal Catholics or post-Catholics who,

... have either forgotten or never realised what happened to the Protestants … when the new State was set up in 1922. That story is succinctly told in an essay by Peter Hart ‘The Protestant Experience of Revolution in Southern Ireland’.49

The previously discussed Kevin Myers was already in tune with these views. They

46 1983, pp169, 170
47 See A.K. Wordsworth WS 1242: Mary Walsh WS 556; Ó Broin, 1985. See also, Dorothy Stopford discussion, Chapter Three, page 64, note 20.
48 See Meehan, Miller, 2011.
were joined in this endeavour by another enthusiast, journalist Eoghan Harris who first noted ‘Peter Hart’s … grim tale of republican atrocity’ on 15 November 1998 in the *Sunday Times* (‘Eire’ edition).  

Ironically, in his earlier 1973-77 ministerial capacity O’Brien had undermined the RTE careers of both broadcasters, a subject discussed in more detail in Chapter Ten. While considerably at odds with views they promoted during the early 1970s, Myers and Harris’s newspaper columns during and after the 1990s vigorously and persistently promoted new right-wing perspectives and Hart’s research.

The significance of O’Brien’s pioneering approach during the 1970s was noted and endorsed in Kenneth Milne’s previously mentioned 1979 commentary on Irish history teaching. It framed a process that anticipated Hart’s history and thus made its claims appear plausible. It created a hegemonic system of thought, within which Harris and Myers supported uncritically Hart’s perspective.

To O’Brien’s very important contribution to this process of widespread opinion formation that had such a profound impact on conceptions of Irish history and of Irish society, we therefore now turn. O’Brien will be treated in the context of a previously cited (in Chapter One) observation by C Wright Mills that ‘the intersections of biography and history within society’ allow us to ‘grasp what is going on in the world’.

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51 Milne, 1979, p20.
Section

Two

Conor Cruise O’Brien and the Southern Irish Crisis

Níall Meehan Chapters 6-10
Introduction

The border that partitioned the six counties of Northern Ireland from the remaining 26 in the Irish Free State in 1922, had ‘no prior legislative, judicial or executive significance’. In order to avoid ‘imposing…a [united Ireland] rejected by a quarter of its population’, Britain ‘created and defended’ Northern Ireland, that was ‘rejected by one third of its population’. The Northern Ireland state institutionalised sectarian subjugation of Irish nationalists. The border imparted also a Roman Catholic character to the southern state that emerged from civil war in 1923.

Partition remained a southern Irish sore point. After admission to the United Nations (UN) in December 1955, the newly-declared (in 1948) Republic of Ireland opposed partition proposals from colonial powers in retreat. In 1958, forty-one year old Irish delegate Conor Cruise O’Brien called a British plan to partition Cyprus a,

… frustration of the aspirations of the majority of the Cypriot people… [I]t inflates the [Turkish-Cypriot] minority’s sense of what is due to it and makes it less willing to play its proper part as a minority.

The utterance invited comparison with the partition of Ireland between the nationalist majority and pro-British unionist minority. In particular, ‘The island of Cyprus is a geographical unit. Its unity should be kept inviolate.’ O’Brien suggested,

… that Turkish-Cypriots who did not wish to live under a government dominated by the Greek majority might migrate and be compensated.

O’Brien, ‘told the United Nations… that his country would support the Greek resolution urging independence for the island as a whole’ and received ‘a burst of applause from the public gallery’. He spoke in favour as well of Algerian independence from France and recognition of its rebel government. Unless Algeria ‘was free to choose independence then she was not free at all’, said O’Brien. The French minority did not figure much in O’Brien’s calculations, as ‘a self-admitted ‘fanatic’ on the issue of Algeria’.

In addition, O’Brien stated that Palestinian ‘refugees [from Israel] are the victims of a wrong’ and that Ireland ‘did not participate in the U.N. decisions which created the refugees’. He introduced the UN Special Political Committee’s denunciation of Apartheid in South Africa in November 1957.

Australia, Belgium, Britain, France and Portugal

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1 O’Leary, 1983, p123.
voted against, because the resolution interfered with South Africa’s ‘domestic jurisdiction’. In December O’Brien referred to southern Ireland’s ‘moral authority which she deserves from her history’ and,

… certain marked and enduring characteristics [that] arise from the fact that Ireland is a profoundly Christian country, is an independent nation, a republican nation, and a country that is both European and a former object of colonisation.

After European Economic Community (EEC) entry in 1973, however, Irish rhetoric shifted. Portrayal of the Irish as white Europeans began to eclipse their depiction as objects of European, British, colonisation.

The colonial basis of Irish experience was gradually eroded within political and also historiographical discourse. Where conceded, colonialism in Irish history was pushed backwards. In 1992 Joseph Ruane noted that academic accounts of,

… colonialism simply stopped with the advent of the nineteenth-century, without explicit discussion or justification.

Terence McDonough observed in 2005 that the nineteenth-century,

… has been constructed as a firebreak to the consideration of Twentieth-Century Ireland in colonial or post-colonial terms.

Within Irish historiography there was,

… a pervasive anxiety not to give historical aid and comfort to the Provisional IRA.

If nineteenth-century Ireland cannot be seen in colonial terms then neither can Northern Ireland in the later twentieth century.

Irish Catholics were said to be alienated from Britain for sectarian rather than colonial reasons and, more pertinently, post 1972, from Northern Ireland’s ‘Ulster’ Protestants. It was also a factor that was migrating backwards and further southwards. There was a tendency to assert sectarian continuity in reverse. As a result, historians generally became reluctant to conceptualise the 1919-21 War of Independence as a confrontation with colonial rule or to see sectarianism as a colonial imposition. What happened earlier came to be seen within a reverse teleology, in the context of what apparently transpired later. It is the political basis for what has been termed Irish revisionist

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7 See extended discussion in Miller, 1998; also, O’Leary, 2014.

8 McDonough, 2005, p1; Ruane, 1992, in ibid.. For a discussion of the origins of Ireland’s colonial status, Gibney, 2008, pp172–182.
historiography and was the basis for Peter Hart’s methodology. Objectively determined socio-economic and political events and causes were relegated, in favour of pinpointing subjective prejudice.

In a state presenting itself as under threat from the Provisional IRA’s 1970-1994 armed campaign in Northern Ireland, southern Irish historians identified with the institutions supporting their existence. They attempted, wrote John Regan, to ‘reconcile the state’s violent and revolutionary origins with its 1970-90s counter-insurgency against militant republicanism’. As Cormac Ó Gráda put it, ‘Irish historians are a rather conservative bunch’.\(^9\) They began to provide an institutional bulwark against alternative viewpoints. In addition, broadcasting censorship and repression created a political climate conducive to, as Fanning put it, ‘control of the presentation of history’ by ‘the British and Irish political establishments’.\(^10\)

This revision of the state’s raison d’être was initially systematised by the main subject of this section of the thesis, former Irish UN delegate, Conor Cruise O’Brien. He went on to serve in the Irish Dáil and Seanad (Senate) from 1969-79. To accomplish this task in the 1970s he obscured his earlier positions, while claiming intellectual continuity. He supported censorship and repression in a manner remarkably at odds with (often overlooked\(^11\)) left-wing anti-imperialist observations during the 1960s. Though electorally unpopular by 1977, his intellectual and ministerial legacy remained politically significant. It sustained in particular the use of censorship and self-censorship against Irish republicans in Radio Telefís Éireann (RTÉ), long after O’Brien’s departure from office.

The following section of the thesis will therefore examine Conor Cruise O’Brien’s personal and political transition, which mirrored that of the southern Irish state, in which discarding the Irish state’s anti-imperialist political inheritance was portrayed as a critique of Catholic nationalism.

Chapter Six examines O’Brien’s formation as an anti-imperialist Irish civil servant. Pursuit of these anti-imperialist values destroyed his public service career while seconded to the United Nations (UN). Afterwards, O’Brien applied those values as an academic activist during the 1960s.

O’Brien’s sharp transition toward reaction after election to the Dáil in 1969, in response to the IRA campaign in Northern Ireland, is then evaluated in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight looks at

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\(^9\) Regan, 2007, p197; Ó Gráda in Campbell, 2005, p293.
O’Brien’s disputes within his own party and with Labour’s Northern Ireland sister party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), his alliance with right wing political forces, together with increasing support for state violence and repression. Chapter Nine explores O’Brien coming full circle, identifying certain liberals as IRA ‘fellow travellers’, his alliance with unionism and with a 1968 ‘hate merchant’, the Rev’d Ian Paisley. Chapter Ten, finally, critiques the outworking of O’Brien’s efforts in an institution over which he had ministerial control, the Irish state broadcaster, RTÉ.

In his political and intellectual peregrinations post 1970, O’Brien developed the influential idea that Irish nationalism was essentially Catholic, tended toward authoritarianism and was anti-Protestant. This was also the liberal intellectual conceit within Irish historiography that promoted Peter Hart’s research in 1998 and afterwards. For that reason, O’Brien’s contribution to Irish historiography, politics and media merits examination in detail. He encapsulated in his approach the transition from one to another form of overarching ideology within the southern Irish state, in order to maintain the hegemony of, as Fanning put it, the ‘political establishments’.
CHAPTER SIX Liberal Anti Partitionist, Anti Imperialist

[A] liberal, incurably, was what I was. Whatever I might argue, I was... profoundly attached to liberal concepts of freedom - freedom of speech and of the press, academic freedom, independent judgement and independent judges…


After his death in December 2008, Conor Cruise O’Brien, who was born in 1917, was asserted to have been the ‘pre-eminent Irish Intellectual of his generation’, ‘the most important public man of letters Ireland witnessed since W.B. Yeats died in 1939’ and ‘probably the most pugnacious Irish intellectual since George Bernard Shaw’. Bryan Fanning reported conducting a ‘straw poll’ among 30 social scientists in 2008 that asked who had been ‘the pre-eminent Irish public intellectual’? Reportedly, ‘Conor Cruise O’Brien’s name always came the fore’. ¹

O’Brien was in truth a complex creature of his milieu and therefore interesting as a bellwether of official Irish attitudes.

The one-time UN delegate revised his anti-colonial self during the 1970s. He was a civil servant in the early to mid 1950s with responsibility for anti-partition propaganda; in the 1960s a ‘new left’ academic anti-imperialist. The spectacular conclusion to his 1956-61 UN interlude brought O’Brien to world attention. After election to the Irish parliament in June 1969, especially after appointment as Minister for Posts and Telegraphs from 1973-77, the ‘liberal’ O’Brien advocated censorship and supported repression. He ceased supporting a revolt against the Northern Ireland state and became increasingly pro-unionist. After losing his Dáil seat in 1977, O’Brien was elected by Trinity College Dublin graduates to the subsidiary upper house, the Seanad. In 1978 he was appointed Editor in Chief of the London Observer newspaper and resigned from the Seanad in 1979. He left the Observer in 1981 and devoted himself to commentary and analysis.² In 1985 O’Brien agreed with unionist opposition to the Anglo Irish Agreement. In 1996 he turned his back on his political heritage by joining the UK Unionist Party. He campaigned unsuccessfully for a ‘No’ vote in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement referendum. It resulted in a mandatory power-sharing government O’Brien also opposed.

O’Brien imposed a sectarian prism on Irish nationalism in order to justify his increasing distance from it. Anti-British activism became sectarian atavism in O’Brien’s influential outlook. He defined Irish political actors as constituted positively by a Protestant unionist heritage or negatively by a Catholic nationalist version. The quest was on to discover, as O’Brien put it, ‘Catholic nationalism with the lid off’. This helped to stimulate a ‘value-free’ history animated by a bias that has difficulty recognising itself as such.

Understanding the depth of O’Brien’s political inheritance and experience enables an understanding of how he was in a position to stamp his personality on Irish politics. Essentially, O’Brien was a discarded member of an emergent political elite that lost its way during the early years of the 20th century. In 1972 he wrote,

My grandmother [the wife of Irish Parliamentary Party MP David Sheehy] intended, consciously I believe, to preside over the birth of a new ruling class: those who would run the country when Home Rule was won. Irish Home Rule within the UK was the central demand of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) at Westminster. After enactment in 1912 it was fatally undermined during 1912-14 by threatened civil war from Ulster Unionists, the British Conservative Party and some British Army officers (who staged the March 1914 ‘Curragh Mutiny’). The First World War, participation in which the IPP supported, officially delayed Home Rule. The 1916 Rising and Sinn Féin’s 1918 election victory, aided by a failed British attempt to impose conscription, consigned Home Rule to the dustbin. Discarded also was the IPP, and with it O’Brien’s grandfather. Another relative serving in the British Army, O’Brien’s uncle Tom Kettle MP, was killed in action in France in September 1916.

In 1972 O’Brien appeared to preserve ironic distance from his grandmother’s observation. In 1998, in Memoir, My Life and Themes, he became temperamentally at one with these displaced aspirant rulers. He wrote of popular ‘revulsion’ after the 1916 Rising as

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3 First articulated in O’Brien’s States of Ireland, 1972, explicitly in Ancestral Voices, 1995.
4 1995, p37.
5 O’Brien, 1974, p62. See Regan, 1999, pp244-5, for an account of how the University College Dublin (UCD) elite in waiting were thrown off course by the 1916 Rising and War of Independence, only to be reintegrated by post-civil war Cumann na nGaedheal minister Kevin O’Higgins during the 1920s.
6 See Stopford Green, 1918; Dangerfield, 1983.
primarily against the British, but it also told against the Irish Parliamentary Party, with consequences that directly affected my family and its standing in the community.  

After independence in 1922, ‘we were out in the cold, superseded by a new republican elite’.  

However, there was yet another side of the family. O’Brien observed, ‘I feel an overwhelming sense of pathos as I look back at the world of my parents, and of Frank and Hanna [Sheehy-Skeffington], and Tom and Mary [Kettle], in the bliss of that false dawn’. O’Brien was referring to his mother’s sisters and their husbands, his aunts and uncles. The pacifist, socialist, and women’s suffrage supporter, Francis (Frank) Sheehy-Skeffington, was executed during the April 1916 uprising on the orders of British officer Captain J.C. Bowen Colthurst, (later charged with Skeffington’s murder and declared guilty but insane). Tom Kettle was then killed in action. After the Rising and execution of his brother-in-law, Kettle went to his death disillusioned: ‘I shall be remembered, if I am remembered at all, as a bloody British officer’.  

Though the British killed one uncle, the Germans another, O’Brien eventually blamed Irish republicans for the absence of an opportunity to lead. He focused in particular on his aunt, Frank’s widow Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington. She was a feminist and republican socialist who campaigned for votes for women, plus employment and other rights. She ‘was part of the new Ireland in a sense that the rest of our family were not’, thought O’Brien. In fact, Hanna was detached from the new state, in 1927 stepping down from the leadership of the Fianna Fáil party over taking the obligatory parliamentary oath to the British monarch. She resigned over restrictions on women working in Fianna Fáil’s 1934 Conditions of Employment Act. She campaigned with other feminists against Fianna Fáil leader Eamon de Valera’s 1937 Constitution, which ‘did not grant women fully equal rights in every field’. Sheehy-Skeffington advocated ‘an all-Ireland workers’ republic on the lines of [James] Connolly’s teaching’. Her ‘last public act’ was in support of a

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8 O’Brien, 1998, p19. However, O’Brien omitted to point out that David Sheehy was declared bankrupt over gambling debts in 1914 and did not stand for election in 1918, Whelan, 2009, p11. 
10 O’Brien, 1995, p53. Mary Kettle was Tom’s widow. 
1946 teachers’ strike. This tension between the revolutionary and reformist wings of Irish nationalism played itself out first in O’Brien’s family and, then, in his career.

O’Brien eventually derided his aunt’s agnosticism, feminism and socialism as secondary to her republicanism, about which he had not much good to say: ‘the demon of nationalism... had her in its grip’. This was in connection with Hanna in 1926 protesting against Sean O’Casey’s 1916 themed play, The Plough and the Stars, and then humiliating its author in public debate. He also appeared to blame ‘the terrible Hanna’ for the break-up of his first serious relationship and of his first marriage. For O’Brien, the historical was often personal. Opposition from ‘conservative Catholic/Nationalist’ family members to marriage between O’Brien’s Catholic mother (Hanna’s sister) and his agnostic, formerly Catholic, father ‘hinged on my own right to existence’.

O’Brien’s father died on 25 December 1927 when Conor was ten. He was thereafter raised by his mother Kathleen in some degree of penury. She declined the opportunity to allow his adoption by a Protestant relative, Lord Monteagle, something of a sore point as she was portrayed also as depriving him of the kind attentions of his Protestant neighbours. However, Kathleen carried out

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14 ‘Obituary, Mrs. H. Sheehy-Skeffington’, IT, 22 April 1946; Whelan, 2009, p11. A subsequent 27 April ‘Irishman’s Diary’ piece on her death noted O’Brien as ‘one of the shining lights of the Department of External Affairs and a distinguished graduate of Dublin University’. Feminist republicans, like the Protestant variety, present conceptual difficulties for theorists of Catholic nationalism. Thus Richard Dunphy, 1999, p554, posited that ‘It is well known that many of the most intractable and incorrigible of republican fundamentalists in the middle decades of this [20th] century were women – often intensely conservative and Catholic women’. To deal with the seeming Sheehy-Skeffington anomaly, Dunphy observed:

A radical feminist analysis of the subordinate position of these women within the ‘motherhood and martyrdom’ ethos of republican ideology would be interesting, and would raise questions about the extent to which Sheehy-Skeffington’s feminist politics was compromised by her failure to make a decisive break with the patriarchal ideology of extreme nationalism.

In other words, the unwritten analysis would arrive, evidence notwithstanding, at the author’s pre-selected viewpoint, the radical feminist analyst playing a subordinate role in his academic imagination.


16 1998, pp79-80, 86-88. An IT appreciation of ‘Mrs F Cruise O’Brien’, 19 Feb 1938, concluded, ‘She is survived by her only child, Conor, who is reading a brilliant course in Trinity College.’

17 O’Brien, 1972, p82. In 1983 Irish society was transfixed by an abortion referendum debate on the right to life of the ‘unborn’ (see Chapter Eleven, pages 258-298). No one, pace O’Brien, thought to consider the plight of the pre-conceived.

18 Akenson, 1994a, p77; O’Brien, 1998, pp36-37. O’Brien’s distraught mother was deemed by her son to have abandoned him for some hours on the day his father died, ibid., pp41-2. Had it had
her husband’s wish to send Conor to a Protestant school, against church opposition, and that of Mary Kettle (Tom’s widow), but supported by the ‘agnostic, anticlerical… [and] now republican,’ Hanna. According to O’Brien, Hanna had put her own son, Owen Sheehy-Skeffington, through Protestant education because the Catholic Church had excommunicated anti-Treaty republicans during the Civil War. O’Brien followed cousin Owen to Trinity College Dublin, that may have been more socially liberal than University College Dublin, but was also conservatively unionist and imperial. Following Owen’s lead, O’Brien sat during renditions of ‘God Save the King’ and toasts to the British Monarch. It was a mild re-enactment of a tradition inherited from their fathers and grandfather. On 27 October 1906 the London *Times* had reported a renewal of the previous year’s ‘disgraceful scenes’ at the Royal University of Ireland:

The Chancellor’s address was much interrupted with cries of ‘Sinn Féin’ and ‘God Save Ireland’ and with the sound of tin whistles… At the close of the proceedings the organ played the National Anthem [*God Save the King*]. This was a signal for an outburst of dissent from a small group in the gallery. They tried to drown the organ with a chorus of *God Save Ireland* and lighted matches were thrown on the platform… In the meantime a number of persons who had failed to gain admission had organised a demonstration outside the buildings. Mr [David] Sheehy M.P. [O’Brien’s grandfather], and a body of young men who represented themselves to be students of the Roman Catholic University College arrived in a brake and proceeded to address a large crowd which soon gathered around them. A young man named Cruise O’Brien [O’Brien’s father] proposed the following resolution: - ‘That inasmuch as the rendering of the English National Anthem is not an essential portion of academic functions in English Universities, the Senate’s persistence in retaining it, in the face of repeated protest, as an item in the programme of the conferring of degrees in the Royal University of Ireland can only be regarded as a deliberate insult to that large body of graduates and undergraduates to whom this air is offensive on national grounds…’ Remarks in support were made by Mr [Francis Sheehy] Skeffington [O’Brien’s uncle], a graduate of the University, and Mr Sheehy M.P..

not been for a ‘mercy mission’ by Hanna and Owen, ‘I believe I would have been psychologically impaired for life’, ibid.. O’Brien did not forget and it appears to have coloured his view of his Catholic mother, perhaps of all mothers. I discuss later (on pages 198-200) a letter relevant to this point from O’Brien to the journalist Mary Holland in 1979.

22 These incidents were referred to also by a participant, Patrick J. Little, WS 1769. The Royal University was (like the University of London) an awarding body that granted degrees to Dublin’s Catholic-nun University College, which O’Brien and Skeffington attended. Both institutions were superseded after passage of the 1908 Universities Act. It inaugurated the non-denominational
O’Brien emerged into adulthood with frustrated social and personal ambitions, whose promise of psychological security was snatched away by the vicissitudes of political and biological frailty. Like his country and because of it, O’Brien’s was a case of arrested development. While a TCD undergraduate, O’Brien observed of his aunt in his private journal, ‘She is a howling bitch’ and ‘I dislike most of my family most of the time’. This underlying antagonism became intertwined with antipathy toward Catholicism and things with which he associated Catholicism within the confines of the 26 County state. O’Brien became, like his father, agnostic. He later reported, ‘I found Catholicism in Ireland quite distasteful’, giving this opinion as a basis for his first book, *Maria Cross* (1952), a study of mainly non-Irish Catholic writers. The emergence of his political personality eventually limited his perception of the National Question in Ireland as primarily a Catholic-Protestant contest.

### 6.1 Partition Propaganda

Having joined the Irish civil service in 1944, O’Brien became head of a new Information Section in the Department of External Affairs in 1949, where he dutifully pursued a major policy initiative under Minister Sean MacBride, producing anti-partition propaganda. In 1950 O’Brien was appointed Managing Director of the publicly owned Irish News Agency. He also gained increasing prominence as a commentator and critic, initially (due to civil service anonymity rules) as ‘Donat O’Donnell’.

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National University of Ireland, comprising University Colleges Cork and Galway (formerly Queen’s colleges) and the new University College Dublin. Queen’s College Belfast became, separately, Queen’s University. For his protest O’Brien was ‘rusticated’ by University College president, Father William Delaney (referred to in turn by O’Brien senior as ‘a decaying old Whig’), McCartney, 1999, pp17, 23-4, 26-7.

23 In Akenson, 1994a, p93. Akenson suggested that ‘Conor displaced a lot of his pain by transforming it into dissatisfaction with the rest of his family’, ibid.

24 Kreisler (video), 2000.


27 See bibliography and publications list in Akenson 1994b.
Frank Gallagher, Government Information Bureau head in the 1940s, disseminated anti-partition information alongside O’Brien. A propaganda veteran of the War of Independence, supporter of Éamon de Valera and first editor of The Irish Press, Gallagher published The Indivisible Island in 1957. The book detailed sectarian discrimination against Northern Ireland nationalists. That year O’Brien, now part of Ireland’s UN delegation, responded to a letter from delegation head Frederick Boland arguing for concentration on a ‘particular aspect of six county discrimination’ rather than on partition itself. O’Brien suggested allocation of local authority housing, and that the state should ‘abandon anti-partition propaganda in all its forms’. This tactical suggestion later became an immutable principle that O’Brien transformed eventually into support for the border. If O’Brien developed in time a jaundiced attitude toward northern nationalist politics, Unionist Party Home Secretary Bill Lowry, a relative by marriage, made a favourable impression. This was despite Lowry suggesting during World War Two that a place of worship for US Roman Catholic servicemen could afterwards be ‘fumigated’.

In 1966, during a radical anti-imperialist phase, O’Brien observed that the anti-partition campaign was propaganda to be appreciated at home and devoid of practical effect abroad. The Irish state had tabled resolutions on partition at the Council of Europe where, according to O’Brien, ‘one could be sure no one there would pay any attention’. It was ‘safe’. Entry to the UN ‘created an embarrassing opportunity of really bringing Ireland’s case to world attention’. But this would run the risk of attracting support from ‘communist countries [and] a number of anti-colonialist countries’. It would alienate ‘the Church’, whereas the British ‘would be seriously annoyed, not just amused as in Strasbourg’. ‘The Americans’ would be ‘much more annoyed’, caught between alienating Irish American voters or Britain, their main ally. As a result,

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28 See Gallagher’s, 1953, account of this work.
31 O’Brien claimed (1966, p10) origination of C. Northcote Parkinson’s observation that ‘Propaganda begins, and ends, at home’. The historical antecedents for seeking international approval for all-Ireland independence were not good. An Irish delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1918, basing itself on US President Woodrow Wilson’s 14 points guaranteeing the right of national self-determination, was rebuffed. The Irish were obliged to fight for independence. See, on this point, Murphy, 2008, p207.
On entering the United Nations [the Irish] had to put up or shut up, so they shut up. The anti-partition movement was dropped, at first tacitly, later explicitly, by [Taoiseach, Seán] Lemass.\(^{32}\)

However, Ireland’s ‘three quarters representatives’ (as O’Brien then put it), had adopted an independent position from 1957-60 on seating the then excluded People’s Republic of China. But the state abandoned this policy with ‘the rest of the independent line’ from 1961 onwards:

Ireland now became a safe Western vote: that is to say a vote on which rulers of the advanced, capitalist countries could count, in all important questions.\(^{33}\)

The demand for all-Ireland political independence became marginalised therefore, alongside, observed O’Brien in 1966, any lingering hope that Ireland,

… might have something distinct and useful to say in relation to revolution in the under-developed world, and in the attitude of the advanced world towards that revolution.\(^{34}\)

As the Irish state began to abandon the quest for capitalist economic independence in the late 1950s, it became increasingly dependent on outside investment. Taoiseach Sean Lemass suggested ‘a more moderate’ (pro-France) approach on the issue of Algerian independence, in the context of an application to join the European Economic Community (EEC). It would be a mistake, he noted, to alienate European countries ‘with which we have friendly relations, and with which we trade’.\(^{35}\)

As an anti-colonial and quasi-revolutionary argument, anti-partitionism was out of kilter with dominant economic and political interests.

6.2 A liberal abroad

The United States (US) appeared to champion the anti-colonial revolution during the late 1950s. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles explained, after the US had reined in British and French independence of action during their ill-fated 1956 Suez invasion,

For many years the US has been walking a tightrope between the effort to maintain our old and valued relations with our British and French allies, on the one hand, and on the other try to assure ourselves of the friendship and understanding of the newly independent countries who have escaped from colonialism…. Unless we assert and maintain this leadership, all these newly independent countries will turn from us to the USSR [Union of Soviet Socialist Republics].\(^{36}\)

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\(^{33}\) Ibid..


\(^{35}\) Gillissen, 2008, p162.

\(^{36}\) In Smith, 2004, p113.
By 1962, however, Assistant Secretary of State Harlan Cleveland was relieved to note that ‘a lot of the delegates [now] regard [the colonial issue] as a bore’. Colonial subjugation was replaced, however, by concerns about economic control and political subversion by western interests, by neo-colonialism. US anti-communist policy was implicated in the exploitation of what was then termed the ‘Third World’ and later were described as ‘developing countries’.

This transition is the context within which O’Brien’s public service career ended. He was seconded to UN service from June to December 1961. O’Brien enjoyed notoriety as High Commissioner of Katanga in the former Belgian Congo, and in opposing an attempted breakaway by the mineral rich ‘Belgian puppet state’. Previously, in November 1960, Irish troops on their first UN mission in the Congo suffered fatalities in a clash with Katangan Baluba tribesmen. O’Brien’s appointment was preceded also by the (reportedly MI6-arranged) beating to death by pro-western secessionists in January 1961 of anti-imperialist former Congolese Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba. The beating was carried out under the gaze of UN forces, ordered not to intervene by Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld.  

The breakaway province was led by ‘the solemn black defender of white capitalism in middle Africa’, Moise Tshombe, who signalled his break from the central Congo government in July. O’Brien’s every official counter-move was documented. It did not go well. In compliance with a UN Security Council resolution, O’Brien launched a military offensive on 28 August, supplemented on 13 September, to prevent attacks on the UN compound in Katanga, to arrest members of the secessionist regime, and to subdue remaining white mercenary and Belgian involvement. A Time magazine piece began,

‘This operation bears no comparison to anything else in United Nations history,’ said the U.N.’s senior officer in Katanga[,] Conor Cruise O’Brien... [S]cattered bands of blue-helmeted troops - Indian, Swedish, Irish - were engaged in a battle

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to the death with … the troops of Katanga President Moise Tshombe, some of them Baluba warriors smeared with warpaint, led by Europeans and backed by jet fighters.  

Hammarskjöld’s death in a suspicious plane crash in the region on 18 September 1961 undermined O’Brien’s assertion that he was acting on the UN chief’s orders. His opposition to French, British and white Rhodesian support for the Katanga secession was worldwide news. This led to apprehension at home. The inevitable denouement was evident from the trail of *Irish Times* headlines following O’Brien’s progress. He was a double-barrelled ‘Cruise O’Brien’ in *Irish Times* headlines when in the ascendant, but was relegated to ‘O’Brien’ as he encountered political difficulties. O’Brien was depicted as the UN’s ‘stripe shirted Castro’ and was, according to the British Foreign Office, a ‘wild anti-colonial boy’.

O’Brien’s only substantive supporter was Irish commander of UN forces General Sean McKeown. He observed that what O’Brien ‘said about Rhodesia, South Africa, Belgium and Britain and certain others is perfectly true’, and confirmed that O’Brien was ‘acting on instructions’. There were unforeseen domestic political consequences. In August 1960, Taoiseach Sean Lemass was ‘careful to emphasise Irish sympathy with NATO’. However, ‘then two things happened.’ The deaths of Irish UN peacekeepers in Katanga in November focused attention on the area, that was reinforced by O’Brien’s appointment in mid 1961. After his dismissal the popular verdict was that O’Brien’s Katanga mandate was ‘sabotaged by NATO powers’. Western interests appeared to be attempting to retain control through partition. Consequently, anti-imperialist sentiment and popular support for Irish neutrality increased.

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46 In notes 40, 45.
After an ignominious recall to Ireland and the prospect of bureaucratic oblivion, O’Brien resigned, ‘in order to recover my freedom of speech and action’.\(^{50}\) He broke a diplomatic taboo by publishing ‘My Case’ on 10 December 1961 in the *New York Times* and London *Observer*. O’Brien began, ‘My resignation from the United Nations and from the Irish Foreign Service is a result of British Government policy’.\(^{51}\) O’Brien referred to ‘the elements… supporting Katanga’ as ‘British millionaires of the Beaverbrook type’. He named in this regard British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and white Rhodesian counterpart Roy Welensky.\(^{52}\)

O’Brien wrote *To Katanga and Back* in 1962. The book constituted a critique of an emergent neo-colonialism, and of effective US control of the UN. The Katanga episode revealed the UN’s limitations when it clashed with western political and economic interests. US anti-colonial policy was subsumed within its ‘Cold War’ against communism. The brutal execution of the Vietnam War, in which the US took over from the ousted French in 1956, led to a crisis of US ideological hegemony during the 1960s, to which O’Brien contributed.

*To Katanga and Back* was also in tune with the arrival of the ‘New Left’. The movement was generally independent of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, while sustaining a critique of US imperialism and of European social democracy. It was popular among increasingly left leaning university students during the 1960s. The issues that animated the movement were racism, particularly in the US, but also in Apartheid South Africa, defence of the fledging Cuban revolution against US attack, and mass popular mobilisation against US intervention in Vietnam.\(^{53}\) O’Brien was swept along by and generally supported this current. It was a 10-year period that established anti-imperialist credentials he dissipated during the 1970s.

In 1961 Ghanaian President and Chancellor of its university, Kwame Nkrumah, invited O’Brien to become Vice-Chancellor, a position he occupied from 1962-65. O’Brien and Nkrumah

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\(^{51}\) Conor Cruise O’Brien, ‘My Case’, *Observer*, 10 Dec 1962. Akenson’s O’Brien anthology, 1994b, pp52-8, reproduced only a second, 17 December, O’Brien piece. He stated (1994a, p189) that ‘My Case’ was ‘too crude, to Manichean, too self pitying to be convincing’. Why could not the reader judge? O’Brien reported separately that he was ‘not anti-British and that … he had many friends there who were supporting him in his stand on Katanga’, Hella Pick, ‘M. Adoula expected to address UN, Dr. O’Brien back in the fray’, *Guardian*, 5 Dec 1961.

\(^{52}\) ‘Dr. O’Brien speaks of his private life’, *Times* (Lon.), 5 Dec 1961. Here, O’Brien was also reported as asserting, ‘after Ireland there was no country he loved more than Britain’.
became increasingly disillusioned, each with the other. According to O’Brien, Nkrumah opposed his Vice-Chancellor’s liberal defence of academic freedoms.54

6.3 Opposing US Imperialism

O’Brien’s 1960s commentary focussed on how US power was used to manipulate intellectual inquiry and understanding. In 1963 he noted the extent to which ‘the political side’ of ten year old Encounter magazine, edited by Melvin J. Lasky,

… was consistently designed to support the policy of the United States Government… Great vigilance is shown about repression in the communist world; apathy and inconsequence largely prevail where the oppression is non-communist or anti-communist. This qualification needs to be qualified. Silence about oppression has been, if possible, total where the oppressors were believed to identify with interests of the United States. Thus the sufferings of the Cubans under Batista evoked no comment at the time from the organ of these lovers of liberty, well informed though they undoubtedly are… The negro problem – that is, the problem of the oppression of negroes in large areas of the United States today – was consistently played down until recently, when the news made it impossible to play it down in the old way.55

O’Brien further criticised Encounter in a 19 May 1966 New York University speech, during which he discussed New York Times revelations of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) financing and other official controls on the magazine. Encounter responded with an attack on O’Brien in June and then threatened legal action against the London New Statesman if they published O’Brien’s reply. The threat worked. With his path to publication blocked, O’Brien sued Encounter in Dublin, explaining, ‘I had some reason to fear that members of a British jury might be prejudiced against me’.56 He won hands down in 1967, after Ramparts magazine in the US and subsequent reporting disclosed ‘the whole ramifications of the CIA politico-cultural operation’. Encounter was funded by the CIA through the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

O’Brien then observed that in Encounter,

… writers of the first rank, who had no interest at all in serving the power structure, were induced to do so unwittingly… [W]riters of high achievement and complete integrity were led unconsciously to validate through their collaboration, the more purposeful activities of lesser writers, who were in turn engaged in a sustained and

54 O’Brien’s recollection of a conversation with Nkrumah introduces this chapter.
55 O’Brien, 1965c, p219 (also in 1967a, p60).
56 O’Brien, 1967a, p62
consistent political activity in the interest - and as it now appears at the expense – of
the power structure in Washington.57

In Ireland in the 1970s broadcasters not wishing to serve the power structure were disciplined for
breaking censorship rules O’Brien enforced. Others, determined to remain employed in recession-
hit Ireland, arguably also ‘engaged in a sustained and consistent political activity in the interest’ of
the Irish state. As the Minister for Posts & Telegraphs O’Brien perfected compliance based on the
threat of being fired, demoted or sidelined. Many ceased to notice, as O’Brien had of Encounter,
that ‘this forum was not quite an open forum, that its political acoustics were a little odd’.58

Encounter in the 1950s and 1960s, and (as we shall see in Chapter Ten) RTÉ from the mid 1970s
were objects of public policy. O’Brien became, in turn and in time, transformed from a critic of the
misuse of power into an abuser of power against his critics.

From 1965-74 O’Brien was Albert Schweitzer Professor of Humanities at New York
University. He published on the subservience of intellectuals to the status quo, and against US
involvement in Vietnam. He was the first writer cited by Noam Chomsky in American Power and
the New Mandarins (1969), for a 1967 essay in which O’Brien asserted that ‘counter revolutionary
subordination’ of intellectuals by the state in western society was a threat to ‘scholarly integrity’.
He was the last cited in David Horowitz’s widely read left-wing critique of Cold War US foreign
policy, From Yalta to Vietnam (1967).59

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Horowitz moved rapidly rightwards during the 1980s, though, unlike O’Brien, he acknowledged
the fact. Fanning, 2015, p189, asserted that O’Brien ‘gave the impression that he was further to the
left than he actually was’ O’Brien’s was not merely an impression. Fanning did not examine (or,
occasionally, reference adequately, p197) O’Brien’s 1960s left-leaning commentary and actions,
O’Brien’s liberal left-wing reputation emerged briefly in 1975. A short-lived Berlin production of
O’Brien’s play, Murderous Angels, was received positively on Radio Free Berlin, due to
‘O’Brien’s offer of hospitality to Rudi Dutschke and his family’. After being shot in the head by a
German anti-communist in Berlin, Dutschke recuperated with the O’Briens from January to
March 1969. Dutschke had lost his memory and the power of speech. He described himself as a
‘professional revolutionary’ and was accused by the German government of being part of a left-
wing ‘revolutionary group’ controlling the German student organisation, Students for a
Democratic Society. Dutschke received initial medical treatment in Britain, but was threatened
with deportation. He then moved secretly to Ireland and stayed with O’Brien, on foot of a request
from Observer journalist Neal Ascherson, before re-entering Britain. In 1970 the British
government expelled Dutschke on grounds of national security. Prior to expulsion, O’Brien
In 1968 O’Brien joined prominent US intellectuals in the protesting police brutality directed at the Black Panther Party, which asserted a constitutional right to carry arms for self-defence. His name appeared alongside Noam Chomsky, Paul Sweezy, Betty Shebazz (wife of Malcolm X), Norman Mailer, Susan Sontag, I.F. Stone, Gloria Steinem, Jessica Mitford, Benjamin Spock, and others. He condemned ‘the most recent example of continuous harassment and intimidation on the part of the Oakland [California] police’, ‘the murder’ of 17-year-old Bobby James Hutton ‘and the wounding of Eldridge Cleaver’. Cleaver and others ‘imprisoned … were victims of persecution’.60

O’Brien also defended the ‘Chicago 8’ who were arrested on conspiracy charges after a police riot outside the August 1968 Democratic Party convention. The use of an ‘anti-riot’ statute against the protesters, equating ‘organised political protest with organised violence’, was potentially, ‘the foundation for a police state’.61

During the 1960s O’Brien seemed a radical liberal, the most celebrated and newsworthy internationally known Irish intellectual. He was front-page news in the Irish Times in 1967, after an arrest in New York at a Vietnam War protest (alongside noted child-development expert, Dr. Benjamin Spock, report, left). O’Brien’s wife Máire was arrested also and observed that the police

declared that he was prepared again, if asked, to take in Dutschke, as he was not prohibited by the Irish Department of Justice. Dutschke’s appeal against expulsion was turned down in January 1971. O’Brien’s wife, Máire Mac an tSaoi, suggested immediately that Dutschke might be barred by the Irish authorities. A second Irish visit did not materialise and the Dutschke-O’Brien connection slipped beneath the headlines. See, ‘German students riot after shooting’, IT, 12 April 1968; C.I. Sulzberger, ‘Proudhon, Bakunin and Ho are among the students’ heroes’, IT, 17 May 1968; ‘No major threat from left’, IT, 26 July 1968; ‘French turn back Rudi Dutschke’, IT, 1 Apr 1969; Neal Ascherson, ‘The ordeal of Rudi Dutschke’, Observer (Lon); 20 Sep 1970; ‘Dutschke case hears of political links’, IT, 12 Dec 1970; ‘Cruise O’Brien ready to put up Dutschke’, IT, 1 Jan 1971, ‘Panel turns down appeal by Dutschke’, IT, 9 Jan 1971; “‘Unlikely to be allowed come here”’, IT, 9 Jan 1971; ‘Dutschke leaves’, IT, 20 Feb 1971; ‘Cruise O’Brien play arousing great interest in Berlin’, IT, 6 Jan 1975; Neal Ascherson, ‘Conor Cruise O’Brien, the irascible angel’, 22 Dec 2008, at www.opendemocracy.net/article/email/conor-cruise-obrien-the-irascible-angel (accessed, 21 Apr 2015).

60 ‘Violence in Oakland’, NYRB, v10, n9, 9 May 1968.

‘kicked Conor around quite a bit’. In 1974, a short few years after voicing opposition to a possible police state and after being himself kicked by a policeman, O’Brien became, as we shall see, a secret champion of ‘kicking the shit’ out of police suspects in Ireland. He was Minister for Posts & Telegraphs when the most prominent outcome of a regime of police beatings came to public notice. They resulted in southern Ireland’s most notable miscarriage of justice, no explicit trace of which can be found in O’Brien’s writings.

In 1968 O’Brien supported the anti Vietnam War presidential platform of Democratic Party senator, Eugene McCarthy. This was a major aspect of O’Brien’s public persona as he launched his Irish political career in Belfast in late October 1968, that coincided with the eruption of the Northern Ireland ‘Troubles’.

6.4 Chapter Conclusion

Conor Cruise O’Brien’s left anti-imperialist transition from an Irish to a World stage during the 1960s, via his UN debacle, in which he acted in the tradition of executed 1916 leader Roger Casement, contained a coherent political logic. The Irish conflict had foreshadowed escalating and successful post World War Two demands for democracy and independence from subjugated nations, for liberation of the majority in South Africa and in Rhodesia, and for African-American equality. O’Brien adapted to this major current in world politics.

During the 1970s, however, he adapted again, this time to the new needs of the modernising Irish political elite. O’Brien retreated from support for anti-imperialism in Ireland initially and then around the world. He became, while still appearing to be on the left, an increasingly conservative critic of Irish nationalism and republicanism, that became for him sectarian formations.

However, his political direction during the 1970s contradicted his 1960s stance and also first Northern Ireland impressions. The next chapter examines and critiques this abrupt transition in the context of a changing balance of socio-economic forces within Irish society. It required a shift in the ruling ideas in which Irish nationalism became a subversive concept. This crisis became O’Brien’s opportunity to effect a change of direction.

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62 ‘Cruise-O’Brien and Spock arrested, anti-war protest in New York’, IT, 6 Dec 1967. See also, ‘Cruise-O’Brien is unable to walk’, IT, 7 Dec 1967, and ‘Cruise-O’Brien in Court’, ‘Cruise-O’Brien acquitted’, IT, 5, 19 Mar 1968. O’Brien, who had again become double-barrelled in the Irish Times, believed his kick was particularly severe because the policeman was Irish–American.

63 Dunne, Kerrigan, 1984; Joyce, Murtagh, 1985.


66 See on Casement’s exposure of colonial atrocities, Mitchell, 2014. This point was a feature also of left-leaning historiography. See Giovanni Costigan, 1968, pp65-9, on links between the Irish independence campaign and subsequent anti-colonial struggles from India to Vietnam.
CHAPTER SEVEN Northern Revolution and Southern Reaction

This chapter will examine O’Brien’s northern and southern impressions in 1968-69, together with his subsequent rightwards transition. He sympathetically engaged with the northern nationalist revolt on his return to Ireland in 1969-70, but disentangled himself by 1972. O’Brien abandoned, largely by ignoring them, earlier views that had been the basis of his anti-imperialist reputation.

On 12 October 1968 O’Brien spoke in Queen’s University Belfast. This event marked his effective return to Irish politics. It was one week after a banned 5 October Civil Rights march in Derry, at which participants were batoned by an unprovoked Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). The event was seen by an outraged British and international television audience. It is commonly acknowledged as the beginning of the ‘Troubles’. One bloodied participant, then West Belfast Republican Labour MP Gerry Fitt, later remarked: ‘the RTÉ film of police violence on that day marked the beginning of the end of unionism in Northern Ireland’.¹

7.1 The North

The Queen’s meeting was barred to the media because, according to O’Brien, the university bowed to protests from a Protestant fundamentalist preacher (and ‘hate merchant’), the Reverend Ian Paisley. O’Brien sidestepped this censorship by holding a press conference (report, left), at which he, … described Northern Ireland as a ‘sub-state’ like Dixie which was under the control of Washington, whereas in the North the power lay in London. Civil Disobedience, he said, would only be successful if the Catholic population were prepared to run considerable risks and accept sacrifices in a disciplined way in order to improve their collective condition. Northern Ireland was in fact a sub-system inside a sub-system, as Great Britain was in many ways within the orbit of Washington, and ultimate power resided there.²


²
O’Brien cited factors militating against success for the civil rights campaign. Among them,

... the fact that Orangemen[3] had never been beaten and therefore their resistance to change would be all the stronger. Nor was it likely that all of them would restrict themselves to non-violence. Dr. O’Brien said the Orangemen resembled the Afrikaners of South Africa in their qualities and their limitations, both of which were considerable.4

In 1972 O’Brien noted,

... some Protestant unionists favour the cause of the whites of Southern Africa and the white backlash generally: the [Paisleyite] Protestant Telegraph carried communiqués from [Prime Minister] Ian Smith’s Rhodesian front and members of his [sic] movement denounced the boycott by the Irish trade unions of the South African Rugby Team on its visit to Ireland at the beginning of 1970.5

O’Brien’s comparison of unionists with Afrikaners, white Rhodesians and with US white segregationists stated what appeared obvious.6 The US civil rights movement hymn, We Shall Overcome, was adopted by its Northern Ireland counterpart. From an early stage nationalists saw US parallels:

Women protesting about the allocation of housing in Dungannon in 1963 carried placards with slogans such as ‘Racial Discrimination in Alabama hits Dungannon’.7

Unionist sympathy during the 1960s for their ‘kith and kin’ in white-minority ruled South Africa and Rhodesia seemed also to clarify differences. In 1963 the South African Prime Minister

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2 James Kelly, ‘Derry issue could go to UN’, SI, 13 Oct 1968 (see report, page 144). ‘Queen’s criticised by Cruise O’Brien’, IT, 14 Oct 1968. On a previous occasion, another historian was banned from delivering a lecture, on ‘Ireland’, on that occasion by the Students’ Union. The speaker, Frank Pakenham, brother of Lord Longford, whose family had founded two Queen’s scholarships, said,

This monstrous interference with the right of free speech justifies up to the hilt all the accusations of Fascist tendencies that I have made against the partitionist forces in the six Counties. I hope that this latest manoeuvre will destroy the humbug connected with the claim that the maintenance of partition is necessary for the preservation in Northern Ireland of free British institutions. Totalitarianism has been carried to such a pitch that people are not likely to tolerate it much longer.

As this censorship occurred in March 1939, intolerance persevered, ‘Nationalist speaker spurned by Queen’s’ students union’, Irish News, 13 Mar 1939, republished 13 Mar 2008.

3 Members of the Protestant supremacist Orange Order, then a constituent part of the governing Ulster Unionist Party. See Meehan, 2010a.

4 ‘Queen’s criticised by Cruise O’Brien’, IT, 14 Oct 1968


6 See also Browne, 2014, p265.

7 This particular housing protest in Dungannon led to the formation of the Campaign for Social Justice, a forerunner of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Associations (NICRA), in 1964. Dooley, 1998, p30. See also Harris, 2003, Savage, 2015, pp52-3.
commended Northern Ireland’s draconian Special Powers Act. Stormont Minister for Home Affairs William Craig openly supported the racist minority. He defended discrimination against ‘educationally and socially inferior’ Catholic lawyers and also observed, ‘It is well known that in countries where there is a Catholic majority there is a lower standard of democracy’. An economic advisor to the Northern Ireland government, Professor Thomas Wilson, observed in 1955 that Catholics were made to feel inferior because ‘they often were inferior’. Such openly-expressed prejudice reflected widespread unionist views and actions. Roman Catholicism was a sign, not merely of inferiority, but of congenital disloyalty. So much so, in 1959-60 the permanently governing Ulster Unionist Party debated and reaffirmed its ban on Roman Catholics joining the party. In November 1968 BBC Northern Ireland broadcast a programme, Winds of Change, on proposed reforms in Northern Ireland, echoing the title of a 1960 speech by British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan on demands from colonial subjects for independence.

In attempting to explain the nature of the problem, Liam de Paor asserted in 1971,

> In Northern Ireland Catholics are Blacks who happen to have white skins. This is not a truth. It is an oversimplification and too facile an analogy. But it is a better oversimplification than that which sees the struggle and conflict in Northern Ireland in terms of religion…. The Northern Ireland problem is a colonial problem, and the ‘racial’ distinction (and it is actually imagined as racial) between the colonists and the natives is expressed in terms of religion.

O’Brien famously opposed the previously mentioned all-white South African rugby team’s Irish tour in 1969. He supported trade union attempts to boycott reporting their match with Ireland. As part of his later shift to the right, in 1986 O’Brien broke the Anti-Apartheid Movement’s academic

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8 Coogan, 2004, p303; ‘Northern Ireland is a police state says Fitt’, ‘Craig’s brick hit no target’, *IT*, 5 Apr, 4 Jun 1966. Lee 1989, p418 (Craig apologised later for his lawyers remark); ‘Path to unity’, *IT*, 17 Dec 1968.


boycott of South Africa with, ‘I am off to Cape Town accompanied by my black son’. Cape students opposing O’Brien carried a banner supporting the banned United Democratic Front on one side and the IRA on the other. He had regenerated an, at that stage unappreciated, link between opposition to British rule and to Apartheid. O’Brien developed by 1994 a sympathetic view of the architects of Apartheid:

> It probably doesn’t help to treat [white Afrikaners] as morally inferior to ourselves. We are morally superior to them only if we can be certain that we, *if placed in their predicament*, would act better than they do.

O’Brien’s new found sympathy for white racists in 1986 was accompanied by identification with the state of Israel, and with Zionists whom he appeared, haltingly, to compare with Northern Ireland unionists. He rejected out of hand comparisons between the Irish famine of 1845-47 and the Nazi holocaust of the Jews. Palestinians expelled from their homeland in 1947 were no longer, as O’Brien had argued in 1958, ‘victims of a wrong’. Instead, now the victims were wrong.

Back in November 1969, however, O’Brien observed in the *New York Review of Books* (NYRB), that the use of,

> British troops to protect Catholics in Derry and Belfast resembled [US President Eisenhower’s] decision in 1956 to send federal troops to Little Rock [Arkansas].

O’Brien hoped it was ‘the beginning of the end of the institutionalised caste system’ which included ‘an armed force of sectarian fanatics’. He noted,

> … the smaller of the […] communities has been oppressed by the larger, and has now served notice of its determination to refuse to continue to be oppressed.

However, O’Brien opposed ‘American support’ for Irish reunification. It confirmed, Protestant suspicions of an international conspiracy to place them under Catholic domination (or Communist domination, which militant Protestants take to be much the same thing).


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14 Akenson, 1994a, p474 (origin. emph.).


17 Ibid., p195.
democratic rights exposed the sectarian basis of partition. Official violence provoked a violent nationalist response, which, at the time, O’Brien endorsed.

Speaking to the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee in New York on 12 December 1969, O’Brien said Catholics were ‘the blacks in Northern Ireland’:

The Civil Rights Movement began as a strictly non-violent one, civil rights workers were pelted with rocks, thrown in jail, beaten by the police, without resistance or retaliation....
In October 1968 in Queen’s University O’Brien counselled non-violent tactics. Not now:

“No bombs, no rights” read a local headline. There is no doubt that the young people of the civil rights movement with backing from older people achieved first through non-violent symbolic protest, and then through the use of a degree of violence, far more than their elders had achieved in two generations of argument and minority voting… [T]he cost was high and not yet paid in full… In this case violence did indeed assure a hearing for moderation, which in the absence of violence had gone unheard for nearly fifty years.

O’Brien also reported,

Civil rights people and the people in the Catholic ghetto, in Derry itself, used force to break-up the traditional [Apprentice Boys\textsuperscript{18}] procession of their oppressors – which signifies the oppression of the Catholics - and successfully defended their ghetto against the police by use of petrol bombs. In Belfast armed defenders of Protestant supremacy started shooting Catholics and burning their homes.\textsuperscript{19}

O’Brien’s remarks here were consistent with views expressed in a December 1967 discussion with Hannah Arendt, Robert Lowell and Noam Chomsky on, ‘The Legitimacy of Violence as a Political Act?’ O’Brien referred to, ‘the terror used by the [Vietnamese] National Liberation Front, and by other revolutionary movements’. He continued,

I think there is a distinction between the use of terror by oppressed peoples against the oppressors and their servants, in comparison with the use of terror by their oppressors in the interests of further oppression. I think there is a qualitative distinction there which we have the right to make.\textsuperscript{20}

It was clear where he and Irish unionists then stood, on different sides.

O’Brien thought it necessary to ‘keep up the pressure’ on Northern Ireland’s rhetorically reformist Prime Minister Terence O’Neill, ‘to keep up his intentions’, so as to counteract ‘hate merchants like Paisley’. However, he was largely indifferent to O’Neill’s fate, even if ‘replaced by

\textsuperscript{18} A constituent part of the Orange Order.
\textsuperscript{19} In Akenson, ed., 1994b, pp201-202.
a more right-wing unionist’, because ‘it often turned out that a strong man with a reputation for toughness was more able to make concessions than a reputed liberal’. 21

O’Brien termed the Unionist Party the ‘political arm’ of the Orange Order, in which ‘the denial of rights to Catholics is an essential – indeed the essential – part of its character’. O’Brien criticised the London Observer’s editorial policy of support for O’Neill and a policy of ‘gradualism’. O’Neill’s call-up of the ‘armed Orangemen’ of the paramilitary B-Special RUC reserve was, noted O’Brien, ‘more instructive… than… the studied moderation of his language’ (see report, page 148). To ‘proceed slowly’,

... implies a corollary, the greater the resistance, the slower the pace. This is an encouragement to the Paisleyites in and out of uniform to increase their provocations. Those who are repressed will respond - and are responding - in kind, and the more gradual the process the more long-drawn out and bloody it will be. 22

It turned out as he then predicted.

These were the type of comments, when uttered by others, O’Brien would shortly criticise as ‘verbal violence’ leading to ‘civil war’. In 2007, 1968’s ‘hate merchant’, Paisley became the ‘strong man… able to make concessions’ by agreeing to share power with O’Brien’s bête noir, Sinn Féin. O’Brien opposed this outcome and indeed earlier in 2007 predicted confidently that it would not happen. 23 His anti-republicanism and diminished political acuity developed in tandem. Immersion in southern parliamentary politics, and adaptation to the ideological influences that experience encouraged, appears to have been a major contributory factor.

7.2 The South

Southern Ireland experienced profound socio-economic change during the 1960s. Economic protectionism from the 1930s to the 1960s had been combined with artistic (especially literary) censorship. Rhetorical anti-imperialism was contained by capitalist economic nationalism, wedded to limitations on cultural expression. A dynamic of opposition to the culture of the imperialist metropolis was transformed into protection from it, from activity to passivity and censorship. 24 In an economy governed by a familial power structure on the land and in small business, patriarchal conservatism served as the bulwark of a patriarchal religion that controlled the path to and from

23 ‘Paisley’s decision won’t be any surprise to me’, II, 24 Mar 2007, see also pages 202-3.
life through baptism, education, hospitals, family doctors, and funerals. Economic policy produced, by the early 1960s, protected Irish industries ‘engaged in the manufacture of reproductions of British and continental lines’ with ‘a higher cost content and lower rate of efficiency’. 25

It was a 30-year way of life that seemed like forever to those who grated against its edges. Those were shaped by Fianna Fáil leader Eamon de Valera, depicted in 1932 by his more conservative opponents as a communist (or, at least, a Kerensky). 26 After Fianna Fáil ran out of radical steam, he was seen as the archetypal Irish Catholic conservative politician, almost permanently in office, out of touch and, by the 1960s, out of date. It was from this era that the concept of Irish ‘narrow nationalism’ emerged. A broader base for Irish narrowness was sought by later Taoiseach, Fine Gael’s Garret Fitzgerald, who argued in 1963 that EEC membership would, … help to soften our dependence on Britain, to widen our horizons beyond the world of Anglo-America, and to link us more closely to the Christian heritage of Europe. 27

Protectionism was abandoned as southern Ireland sought investment from multinational corporations and expressed a wish to join the EEC, composed of former colonial powers.

There were signs too that the Roman Catholic Church faced new internal and external challenges. 28 In a Labour Party new member’s speech in December 1968, O’Brien articulated the relationship between Catholicism, conservatism, and alleged communism. O’Brien’s evaluation was, like his first northern impressions, even-handed, even materialist. Prior to the 1960s, Irish public life was so dominated by conservative forces, what was loosely called the Church – that is the reactionary utterances of some politically minded Bishops – that the Labour Party had to live in electoral fear of the impact of the word ‘communism’ being used against it…. But in fact great changes have been occurring in recent years, not only in the social structure certainly, but in the social psychology of the Irish people. 29

O’Brien put the influence of the church, which he said ‘has often been exaggerated, especially by outside observers’, in its socio-economic context. Church influence had been ‘real, extensive and generally favourable to the social and economic status quo’. However, ‘anti-clericalism to appease

26 Coogan, 2004, p197.
27 ‘The Common Market – what now? Two views on the future, by Dr. David Thornley and Garret Fitzgerald’, IT, 2 Feb 1963. See also Chapter One discussion, pages 8-12.
29 ‘O’Brien to speak on why he joined Party’; ‘O’Brien addresses party meeting’, ‘1969 seen as turning point in political history’, ‘Corish outlines Labour’s rebirth’, ‘Big attendance at meeting,’ IT, 18, 20 Dec 1968. The 600-seat ITGWU Liberty Hall auditorium was ‘almost full’.
[Ian] Paisley … would be futile as well as ignominious’. He observed also at that time that the then Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, ‘widely deemed to be a bigot’, was ‘much less to be feared and probated than the sophisticated modern bigotry of an Enoch Powell’ (then a racist British Conservative MP, later becoming an Ulster Unionist MP). The Irish were said to be ‘resistant to racism’ due to ‘religious influences and … Wolfe Tone republicanism’. O’Brien pointed out, ‘conservative laymen exploited the Church in defence of their own positions.’ That was ‘an element in the notorious case of the rejection of [the 1948-51 Minister for Health] Noel Browne’s Mother and Child Health Scheme’ in 1951. O’Brien astutely noted the tendency of those abandoning secular reform to ‘shake their heads’ and then ‘sigh, the influence of the Church was so strong’.

He observed,

In practice other matters besides the influence of the Church were involved…. [I]t was in conformity with a prevailing, though unstated assumption of the ruling middle classes, the assumption that a crude form of instruction stressing unquestioning obedience, was best suited to the children of the working classes.

Here, O’Brien began to slip. The ‘middle classes’ did not rule, otherwise they would have been, simply, the ruling class. The upper professional classes, in particular doctors, supported

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30 ‘O’Brien to speak…’ op. cit.
33 ‘O’Brien to speak…’, op. cit. Something of an icon on the Irish Left, Browne suffered politically at the hands of a conservative medical establishment and of the Catholic hierarchy. He attempted unsuccessfully to legislate for free medical care and advice to Irish mothers as Minister for Health in an ill-fated 1948-51 coalition government. While portrayed as a pivotal clash between church and state, it was instigated and pursued by Irish doctors. They were determined to prevent an equivalent of the British National Health Service (NHS) inaugurated in 1946 by Aneurin Bevan. The anti-communist Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, was happy to oppose it too. Browne resigned and the government collapsed amidst extensive proclamations of Catholic piety, including from Browne (see Haddick Flynn, 2008). After the Coalition parties had abased themselves, Eamon de Valera said as leader of the opposition, ‘We have heard enough’, marched his TDs out of the Dáil and into the country where they won the ensuing General Election. Browne briefly joined Fianna Fáil and then formed his own party in 1958, the National Progressive Democrats, which merged with Labour in 1963. Browne left Labour in 1977 in opposition to coalition and helped form the Socialist Labour Party (SLP). The SLP broke up in the early 1980s, partly due to Browne defying party policy in support of protesting H Block-Armagh republican prisoners. See John Horgan, 2000, and Browne’s account, 1986. Also, Edward Thornley’s (2008) criticism of Browne’s treatment of brother David, a long-time Browne supporter. See further discussion in Chapter Eleven, pages 283-4.
conservative controls within Irish society and had thwarted Browne’s free maternity scheme for women and children. They wanted a managed modernisation that left well-established inequalities undisturbed (many disproportionately enjoyed by some southern Protestants\textsuperscript{35}). Save for this radical interlude, O’Brien provided these forces with a ideological pathway in years to come that preserved the status quo during a period of considerable instability.

O’Brien’s 1968 speech considered ‘one major change… the attainment in practice of a much wider freedom of speech’. Of particular significance was the advent of television, which,

… despite the efforts of the authorities to muffle its impact and confine its scope, has provided a much more free, and much more influential, channel for discussion….\textsuperscript{36}

O’Brien referred to the young being affected by the impact of television’s,

… instantaneous communication with what happens in Colombia or Nanterre [respectively, US and French universities], or in the ghettos of Harlem or of Derry. They became aware of ‘alternatives to unquestioning obedience’. He compared young Labour recruits with, ‘those young men in the republican movement in the early years of the century’. They were ‘men and women of essentially the same type’.\textsuperscript{37} O’Brien saw the shift from Redmond’s Irish Parliamentary Party to Sinn Féin in 1918 and from Cosgrave to de Valera in 1932 as part of a dynamic: ‘decisive shifts [that] have always been to the left’. It was now Labour’s turn to have greatness thrust upon it.

As in the Observer in January 1969, O’Brien dismissed the apparent victory of Northern Ireland Prime Minster Terence O’Neil over his ‘right wing’. The undemocratic

… status quo remains essentially intact… Before real change is secured there will be other more difficult political battles. The repercussions of those are likely to affect political life, not only in the storm-centre itself but here in the twenty-six counties, as well as in Britain.

In such circumstances, an anti-partition strategy was ‘obsolete’ since elites North and South were helping each other by ‘uttering the appropriate shibboleth’. Fianna Fáil and Ulster Unionists spoke the same ‘basic language of the social and economic status quo’. O’Brien suggested that agitation against the two states separately would create conditions for unity, a covert rather than overt anti-partition strategy.

\textsuperscript{34} ‘O’Brien addresses party meeting’, \textit{JT}, 20 Dec 1968.
\textsuperscript{35} See discussion in Chapter Eleven.
\textsuperscript{36} ‘O’Brien addresses…’, op. cit..
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
On the international stage O’Brien criticised Ireland as a satellite of an ‘Anglo-American or Americo-English system’. The British Labour Party had become ‘unconsciously saturated with imperialist ideology’ due to the legacy of Empire. He noted the ‘sorry sight of a Labour government condoning an imperialist war in Vietnam, because it needs the money’. Irish Labour was not ‘contaminated by imperialist notions’, but it failed to take foreign policy seriously. Instead, Ireland ‘puts on its stamps the portrait of the great enemy of imperialism [1916 leader] James Connolly’, but betrayed what he stood for. In January 1969 O’Brien pledged that a future Irish Labour government would close its embassy in Caetano’s clerico-fascist Portugal and instead would open one in Castro’s socialist Cuba. He outlined, Labour’s programme in three words…. ‘Socialism, Independence, Unity’. Without Socialism there could be no freedom and without both there could be no United Ireland.

So impressed were veteran and iconic republican socialists, Peadar O’Donnell and George Gilmore (from a Protestant background), they publicly supported O’Brien in the 1969 general election (letter, left). O’Brien’s auspicious 1968 beginning was reported on an Irish Times front page with a photograph depicting him alongside a large map of Ireland. Inside, the entire speech was carried, occupying most of page four, that contained also an article on ‘Labour’s rebirth’. An extensive editorial comment, ‘The New Recruit’, noted,

A new voice is heard in Irish Politics… As a thinker, as a planner, as an exponent of Labour policy, Dr. O’Brien will shine.

He did, but Labour, increasingly, did not, or not as well as it expected in the June 1969 election with a slogan, ‘The 70s will be Socialist’. Still in third place, Labour received its highest-ever popular vote, and in Dublin the same percentage, 29.5%, as second placed Fine Gael. Its Dáil representation increased there from five to twelve. David Thornley was the first Labour TD to top the poll in a Dublin constituency, while in Ballyfermot two were elected in one constituency for the first time. Outside Dublin, however, seats were lost, four overall. This was due to a vote-

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38 ‘Foreign policy plan reviewed’, IT, 27 Jan 1969.
wasting multi-candidate per constituency strategy, plus electoral boundary manipulation by the previous, successfully returned, Fianna Fáil administration.\textsuperscript{40}

An objective long-term view might have seen that Labour was on an upward trajectory in a country undergoing significant urbanisation, in which the political weight of the working class was increasing. Left-wing Labour politics should have become increasingly attractive in Irish society. However, for the party short was the only term. The parliamentary party became fixated on negotiating junior-party participation in government. The election outcome was portrayed as a failure.

7.3 ‘Dismal Poltroon’

Labour began to downplay its left-wing achievements and to yearn for old right-wing ways. In December 1970 Labour regressed to coalition mode in a special delegate conference vote of 396 to 204. Labour leader Brendan Corish broke a promise made in 1969 to retire to the backbenches if Labour agreed to enter coalition.\textsuperscript{41} An alleged threat to democracy, after Fianna Fáil ministers Charles Haughey and Neil Blaney were sacked in May 1970 for attempting to import arms for defence of northern nationalists, was one excuse for the volte-face. O’Brien placed inordinate emphasis on the culpability of Taoiseach Jack Lynch, for turning blind eye toward his ministers’ activities. Possibly, one of the reasons why O’Brien suspected that Lynch knew but did nothing is because O’Brien himself knew of attempts by these very ministers to raise arms for northern nationalists. O’Brien had turned a blind eye at a time when he appeared, like most southerners, to be at least vaguely sympathetic to such activities.\textsuperscript{42}

O’Brien created a political smokescreen by expressing increasing apprehensions regarding Fianna Fáil and Jack Lynch, its leader, referring darkly to the prospect of coup d’état and, hence, of a ‘Greece of the colonels’ regime type in Ireland. He related these developments to an increase in violence in Northern Ireland in June, responsibility for which O’Brien placed on the Provisional

\textsuperscript{40} Puirséil, 2007, pp269-70. (Yseult) Thornley, 2008, p12.
IRA. For the Labour Party, which entered government as a junior party with Fine Gael in 1973, the 1970s turned sour rather than socialist. The left-wing and liberal constituency in Irish politics was dissipated. Labour’s incoherent adaptation to the Northern Ireland crisis was implicated. Liberalism came to be associated with anything not associated with republicanism, not associated with Fianna Fáil and therefore also not capable of attracting the bulk of the working class who voted for Fianna Fáil. O’Brien was to play a leading role in this process.

By 1972, as part of his political recalibration, O’Brien felt obliged to shake off observations in a 1966 essay ‘The Embers of Easter’. He observed then,

The Labour Party in this three-quarters-of-a-nation has been dominated for years by dismal poltroons. In States of Ireland (1972) O’Brien footnoted (without specifying them); ‘there are things in this article… with which I am no longer in sympathy’. The essay’s availability, particularly in a 1968 Irish Times book on the 1916 Rising, made it politically embarrassing. Fianna Fáil made political capital of the ‘poltroon’ comment in the Dáil (11, 16 December 1969; 11 March, 3 November, 17 December 1970). It therefore required, unlike other abandoned commentary, repudiation. O’Brien’s 1966 essay was predicated on Russian Revolutionary V.I. Lenin’s observation that in 1916 the Irish ‘rose prematurely, when the European revolt of the Proletarian had not yet matured’. O’Brien speculated optimistically on ‘a blow against capitalist imperialism’ had Lenin’s wishes materialised. The article originated themes repeated in O’Brien’s 1968 new member’s speech. For instance, the Northern Ireland Labour Party (NILP) was,


\[\text{\footnotesize 45 O’Brien, 1968a; 1972, p247, n9.}\]
… a respectable offshoot of the respectable British Labour Party whose leaders, like the respectable leaders in Connolly’s own time, are prepared to support imperialist wars provided they are allowed to call them by some other name.\textsuperscript{46}

*States of Ireland* enabled O’Brien to reposition himself. It was a combination of family lore, autobiography, travelogue, politics and history that, as one review put it, made for ‘a bit of a mess’ where, ‘the mess, so to speak, is the message’.\textsuperscript{47} Out of it came O’Brien’s new emphasis on religious rather than material factors within Irish politics. For instance, O’Brien now asserted that Fianna Fáil’s attack on the Labour Party’s left-wing programme in 1969 as ‘communist’ was to ‘show that your opponent is a bad Catholic’. He was ‘the reddest and the most exotic specimen’ of the ‘communist intellectuals’ who had ‘infiltrated’ Labour.\textsuperscript{48} However, the Fianna Fáil ‘anti-Catholic’ whispering campaign had no effect since ‘[O’Brien] was elected easily’, second after Finance Minister Charles J Haughey in a four-seat constituency.\textsuperscript{49} Not bad for ‘a new recruit to the modern Labour Party’ in December 1968, chosen as a candidate in January.\textsuperscript{50} O’Brien admitted, ‘the anti-communist element in the campaign didn’t cut much ice in Dublin where Labour did quite well’.\textsuperscript{51} O’Brien claimed, additionally, that his election to the Irish parliament in 1969 was a sign that the Irish people welcomed him to their collective bosom, despite his agnosticism, divorce, Catholic Church annulment, courtship in Katanga and subsequent marriage to the poet Máire Mhac an tSaoi.\textsuperscript{52} There is no evidence that Irish people generally were negatively exercised on the marital, religious and romantic permutations of the perennially and publicly introspective Dr. O’Brien. He was tapping into already existing popular pluralist sentiments, but started giving the appearance of confronting a Catholic nationalist monolith. He was beginning simultaneously to assert a need to placate another monolith, that of Protestant unionism.

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{46} O’Brien 1966, pp3, 11.
    \item \textsuperscript{47} ‘The irresponsibility of Unionism’, *TLS*, 10 Nov 1972.
    \item \textsuperscript{48} O’Brien, 1972, pp180-81.
    \item \textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p182. Haughey received 11,677 votes, O’Brien, 7,591, Browne, Farrell, 1981, p135.
    \item \textsuperscript{50} O’Brien announced, *IP*, 25 Jan 1969.
        I am going back to Ireland and shall be a candidate in the next general election, nominated by the Irish Labour Party, founded by James Connolly, one of the great socialist thinkers of the present century.
    \item \textsuperscript{51} O’Brien, 1972, p182; see also O’Brien, 1998, pp319-21.
    \item \textsuperscript{52} Daughter of former right-wing Fianna Fáil Tánaiste (deputy prime minister), Seán McEntee. She arrived in Katanga during hostilities O’Brien initiated. For example, ‘O’Brien says he will marry Miss McEntee’, *IT*, 5 Dec 1961; also, Hella Pick, ‘M. Adoula expected to address UN, Dr. O’Brien back in the fray’, *Guardian*, 5 Dec 1961, which reported O’Brien attacking the British ‘gutter press’. See Chapter Eleven, page 284, on McEntee’s opposition to children’s allowances.
\end{itemize}
A left-wing platform was the most politically viable means of articulating arguments for pluralism. However, by 1972 O’Brien became fixated, as here, on identifying religious obstacles to progress. O’Brien explained that his wife, his Catholic witness, heard a priest in Kerry explain at Mass that ‘socialism is a heresy of communism. Socialists are a Protestant variety of communists’. O’Brien thought this insight explained why there would be ‘not many votes for Labour in Dingle’ County Kerry and, by inference, elsewhere. The conservative views of Catholic priests may or may not be influential. But if so, their power was one a left-wing party must inevitably confront. Instead, as O’Brien perceptively pointed out in 1966 and 1968, such views were often simply bemoaned by Labour poltroons, a tradition he now modernised. These self-imposed limitations on his intellectual and political outlook, briefly transcended in December 1968, inaugurated O’Brien’s transition to the right.

O’Brien’s mid to late 1960s observations contradicted his newfound religious framework that became deep rooted as he began to articulate pro-unionist views. Partly, this was because the considerable difficulties encountered in ending partition overwhelmed a critique of its embedded dysfunctional nature. In 1969 O’Brien acknowledged how civil rights demands exposed deficiencies in the 1921 Partition settlement. However, he criticised a statement from Taoiseach Jack Lynch, which asserted that ‘Partition is the first and foremost root cause’. Lynch continued,

Gerrymandering, discrimination in jobs and housing, suppression of free speech and the right of peaceful protest […] could not be continued without the political and the huge financial support received by Britain.

O’Brien construed this approach as an expression of ‘the unspoken collusion of the ruling groups’ north and south. The problem was ‘not of partition in the abstract’, he observed, but the way the border was drawn’; within which ‘unionists carved out the largest area which would yield an absolutely secure unionist majority … [on the basis that] Protestant = Unionist’. This was followed by ‘gerrymander [and] religious discrimination’ in ‘jobs and housing’.

Opposition to these effects, in the absence of agitation on partition per se, was, said O’Brien, ‘politically the most explosive which the Stormont government has yet to face’: ‘The ‘Stormont Government is right’, noted O’Brien, ‘in fearing the subversive possibilities of this movement’,

54 ‘Partition to blame, Lynch claims’, IT, Oct 9 1968. Lynch’s statements were made in an attempt to placate Nationalist Party leader, Eddie McAteer, according to Justin O’Brien, 2000, p24.
which possibilities, in turn, O’Brien then supported. He failed to comprehend, however, that if ordinary democratic reform was subversive, it called into question the legitimacy of the state that resisted the reforms and physically oppressed those supporting progressive change. Partition was in fact a practical problem, rather than a mythical or ‘abstract’ question.

In 1962 O’Brien had suggested that opposition to partition fuelled redundant Irish nationalist passions. He later again observed in 1966, four years prior to the onset of the Troubles, All this pseudo activity had a practical, and somewhat sinister, function. It enabled the state to punish, with good conscience, the young men in the Irish Republican Army. Partition must be ended certainly but there was a right and a wrong way to end partition. The wrong way was by raiding barracks in Ulster. The right way was by sending bundles of booklets to Bootle.

Abandoning anti-partitionism (even in this ineffective form) was, as O’Brien then admitted, a ‘betrayal’ of Ireland’s ‘revolutionary tradition – the tradition of [executed 1916 leaders Patrick] Pearse and [James] Connolly’. But it merely set out to right something else: to end the violence of partition and the British occupation of Ireland.

Different roads to the cemetery

OBSERVER 6 February 1972, on Bloody Sunday, troops ‘deliberately shot... 13 unarmed men’. O’Brien calls, temporarily, for British troop withdrawal

that was ‘just wrong, as a picture hung in a certain way is wrong, causing vague but persistent feelings of perplexity and dissatisfaction’. At that time O’Brien did not see beyond these limitations, of ‘partition in the abstract’. When resistance to reform produced the IRA campaign against partition in 1971-72, O’Brien began to identify opposition to partition as anti-democratic, in a sectarian ‘ethnocracy’ where normal democratic give-and-take was designed to fail. O’Brien began lecturing northern nationalists on a requirement to prioritise democratic and not national rights, or rather not to recognise the latter as democratic. He sought to separate south from north and to distance radical ideas in exile from his gradual embrace of reactionary ones at home. Eventually, O’Brien saw support for democratic rights as IRA-linked subversion.

This change in outlook can be seen in O’Brien’s attitude to Derry’s ‘Bloody Sunday’, 30 January 1972. O’Brien noted one week afterwards that British Army Paratroopers ‘deliberately shot dead 13 unarmed men’ on a civil rights march (another died later of wounds). Because he believed the south was also in revolt, O’Brien momentarily supported British troop withdrawal. Once that prospect retreated he reverted and also began revising his view of Bloody Sunday. In 1985, ‘British troops fired on rioters’. In 1997 this morphed into an assertion that ‘the “civil rights Sunday” Independent 23 March 1997, dead were Sinn Féin / IRA activists

SUNDAY Independent 23 March 1997, dead were Sinn Féin / IRA activists

civilians” were Sinn Féin activists operating for the IRA’ (reports, pages 159-60).59 O’Brien’s initial wobble indicated a desire not to again find himself on the losing side of an argument, as had transpired with familial support for the Irish Parliamentary Party, Free State victory in the 1922-23 Civil War, and then his own UN debacle. Once he became convinced that republican public sentiment could be contained and perhaps eroded, he consolidated his emerging anti-republican resolve and abandoned thoughts of ‘troops out’.

In 1968-69 O’Brien had warned that ‘an Irish Sharpeville’ carried out by unionist forces ‘was not out of the question’.60 However, by 1972 and like the British Army, O’Brien did not wish to offend unionists, irrespective of how offensive they or British forces were toward nationalists. His rhetoric became more apocalyptic. He predicted after Bloody Sunday,

[T]here is nothing but the prospect of civil war and nothing but the almost as bleak prospect of the prevention of sectarian massacre by the British Army, seeing conditions in which the army is increasingly rejected by both communities’.61 Avoidance of unionist rejection became a regular theme of O’Brien’s analysis, in case unionists acted violently if discommoded.62 This self-denying ordinance was directed at those criticising unionist and British government misrule. Praise traversing the border from the south was, however, acceptable. It was to lead eventually to an elective affinity between O’Brien and those unionists he earlier compared with racists in the USA and in South Africa.63

O’Brien suggested in 1969 also that there was in Dublin ‘thinly disguised impatience, irritation and even contempt’ directed at northern ‘Catholics (alias in certain contexts the nationalists)’:

There is nothing quite so odious as an ‘oppressed co-religionist’ whom it would be inconvenient to try to help. Southern Catholic politicians who are not themselves noted for liberalism, like to blame Northern Catholics, in private, for their bigotry. They brought it seems, their troubles on themselves: if they live in ghettos this is due to their ghetto mentality.

The observation was not new. O’Brien noted a Dublin government view in 1961 that northern Catholics had ‘brought... most of their troubles on themselves, it was now up to them to come to terms with reality’.64 They did. But the reality with which northern nationalists came to terms was driven, as O’Brien initially acknowledged, by active, no longer passive ‘Dublin-oriented’,

63 ‘Reconciliation rather than unity, op. cit.. See also O’Brien, 1972, pp65-66.
64 O’Brien, 1972, p142.

There are grounds for suspecting that views of the northern minority, which O’Brien ascribed to others, were in fact, at least partially, his own. In 1993 an IRA bomb in Warrington, England, killed two children. O’Brien justified what he considered minimal public outrage afterwards when, Protestant paramilitaries murdered six Catholics (only one of whom was a known member of the IRA) in a place called Castlerock in Northern Ireland … I said it was as if a great unspoken message was hovering in the air, addressed to the Catholics in Northern Ireland: ‘Ye brought it on yourselves’.\footnote{Conor Cruise O’Brien, ‘A New Ireland?’, \textit{NYRB}, v40, n16, 7 Oct 1993. In fact four were killed at Castlerock and two in Belfast, all by the unionist UFF (a UDA cover name), http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ sutton/chron/1993.html (accessed 31 Mar 2015). See response, Patrick Farrelly, ‘Smears, Slander and McCarthyism,’ \textit{Irish Voice} (NY), 5 Oct 1993. Also, Roy Greenslade media critique, ‘Damien Walsh Memorial Lecture’, 4 Aug 1998, at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/media/greenslade.htm (accessed 29 Jul 2014). Walsh was one of those shot by the UFF.}

O’Brien now echoed terminology he had appeared previously to criticise. The Dublin elite’s ‘thiny disguised impatience, irritation and even contempt’ in 1961 and 1969 had become, if it was not already, O’Brien’s view.\footnote{At that time O’Brien characterised Dublin government complaints about RUC ‘complicity with Protestant paramilitaries’ as ‘ignorant meddling … in security affairs in Northern Ireland’, that caused unionist violence, ‘Intern them’, \textit{II}, 27 Mar 1993. O’Brien appeared to prefer ‘complicity’. In fact, the Castlerock and other UDA killings, including of eight men in a pub in Greysteel, Co Derry, in October, were themselves alleged to have been a product of official ‘complicity’, or ‘collusion’, David McKittrick, ‘Was this loyalist murderer in the police’s pay?’, \textit{Independent} (Lon), 18 Feb 2006. See also, Relatives for Justice, 1995.}

O’Brien no longer supported undermining the status quo on the island as a whole, in fact quite the opposite. He was adapting to a pre-Troubles preference in Dublin for dealing directly with Unionist power, not nationalist powerlessness. Dublin began noticeably to ignore nationalist
grievances after a path-breaking 1965 meeting between Fianna Fáil Taoiseach Seán Lemass and NI Prime Minster Terence O’Neill.\textsuperscript{70} O’Brien’s political trajectory was in line now with this practice.

O’Brien’s 1972 request to nationalists to accede to their own repression begs a question: why no more interrogation of the unionist tradition’s penchant for discrimination? Why violent and reactionary methods by unionists in defence of maintaining allegedly minimal ‘disabilities’? O’Brien described (or rather experienced) one example, after an Apprentice Boys march in a field in Derry on 12 August 1970. While observing unionist MPs and Free Presbyterian ministers make speeches, O’Brien and his brother in law, Seamus MacEntee, suffered three waves of physical attack:

One eyewitness, Mr. Kevin Myers…, heard some men saying they were going ‘to get O’Brien.’ They went towards him and Dr. O’Brien fell to the ground… About ten men went after him and he was again punched and, as he then tried to leave the park, a crowd of about 40 pursued him and caught him. He was knocked to the ground and kicked on the head, in the mouth and on the body. Apprentice Boy viewers [sic, stewards, NM] intervened and Dr. O’Brien was helped away… The Labour TD received two cracked ribs and had several teeth loosened and a lip split.

A Danish camera crew and a youth were attacked also.\textsuperscript{71} O’Brien’s treatment exposed unionism’s violent nature. Unlike the northern minority, O’Brien could return south after his beating. In his emerging outlook the unionist ‘predicament’, like that of white South Africans, required sympathetic understanding. O’Brien became inclined to stabilise partition by supporting unionists he thought could not be beaten, who beat him.

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\textsuperscript{71} Denis Kennedy, ‘TD beaten up at rally of Apprentice Boys’; ‘Beating up for Cruise O’Brien at rally’, \textit{IT}, 13 Aug 1970; In the \textit{Irish Independent}, 30 December 2008, Myers added this on his ‘first meeting’ with O’Brien, ‘Readers of my memoir Watching the Door will note that I make no mention of this episode; that’s simply because I had forgotten it. O’Brien ignored Myers in his re-telling, 1972, pp223-8. A similar event, also in Derry, occurred at July 12\textsuperscript{th} celebrations, during a speech at which the City of Derry Orange Order Chaplain warned that EEC membership ‘posed the twin evil … of Roman Catholicism … and communism’. Reporter Nell McCafferty was menacingly accused of being a ‘press spy’. Orangemen ‘threatened and kicked the leg’ of another journalist who came to her aid. Remarkably, also present were Anne and Eoghan Harris who ‘went to the police for help’ that was ‘refused’, Nell McCafferty, ‘No welcome for press at Co. Derry ceremony’, \textit{IT}, 13 Jul 1971. In 1997 Eoghan Harris, as a by then committed O’Brien supporter, gave the Orange Order advice on how to improve its image, Eoghan Harris, ‘McAleese cannot build bridges to unionists’, \textit{IT}, 28 Oct 1997 (see page 15). It is equally remarkable that in 1987 O’Brien forced an admission on a live radio programme from McCafferty, from Derry and now a leading feminist, that she supported the IRA. She was then banned by RTÉ, using O’Brien’s censorship legislation, Purcell, 1991, pp51, 52. See page 205.
A pre-Troubles echo of O’Brien’s later stance is in a 1956 observation that ‘between the wars’ southern Ireland, Spain and Poland, were ‘time lagging countries in the liberal tradition’, Catholicism linked them. However, ‘Ulstermen have argued that the really modern part of Ireland is confined to the Lagan Valley’ surrounding Belfast. If Ireland’s Catholics lagged in time behind the ‘industrially advanced’ countries, its Protestant ‘industrial workers of Belfast’ were in some ways more ‘advanced’ and ‘modern’ than the mainly jobless or under-employed Catholic workers in their midst, and those labouring down south. Protestant workers, who ensured that Catholics were preserved in a subordinate position, were not addressed in relation to any known liberal tradition. O’Brien failed to note then that this industrial modernity was combined with a reactionary politics that pre-dated the industrial revolution. The theoretical insights animating Max Weber’s 1905 Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism became prejudices practically applied in Northern Ireland. Catholic Ulstermen (and women), were modern in their politics, in demanding equality, but were also economically retarded in being denied work. They were mainly nationalist in their belief that in a United Ireland they would escape subordination.

7.4 Chapter Conclusion

During the 1970s, O’Brien became increasingly anti-nationalist and more so than anti-Catholic. He was later to write that the ascendancy of the Catholic Church and of Irish nationalism were not merely correlative but mutually causative, a point advanced repeatedly in States of Ireland. It became O’Brien’s goal to entwine ‘distaste’ for Catholicism with opposition to Irish republicanism. This construction made O’Brien seem liberal in an increasingly secular and dependently industrialising southern society.

O’Brien’s 1972 commentary was part of his retreat from earlier convictions and masked a move rightwards. Opposition to partition in Ireland in 1951, in Cyprus in 1958 and the Congo in 1961 was transformed, during the 1970s, gradually into support for the sectarian enclave of Northern Ireland. In the name of opposition to a Catholic reaction associated with Irish republicanism, O’Brien began to embrace the Protestant and unionist kind, while continuing to espouse liberal reform of southern Irish society. In this context, he separated out and opposed the anti-sectarian tradition in Irish republicanism to Irish republicanism. Irish Republicanism became transformed within O’Brien’s rhetoric into the repository of an outmoded and fanatical Catholic nationalism. However, as he changed sides, O’Brien began increasingly to emulate the behaviour of conservative and even reactionary forces he had previously opposed, the subject of the chapters following.

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73 ‘The shaping of modern Ireland: 2’, IT, 21 Apr 1956; O’Brien (ed.) 1960, pp19, 20; also 1965, p129. O’Brien was evidently attached to this point. Akenson, 1994a, p537, n146, pointed out that a good deal of O’Brien’s prodigious output was repetition.
74 1998, p156, relating a conversation with Noel Browne.
CHAPTER EIGHT Marginalising the Middle of the Political Spectrum

Violence in Northern Ireland, portrayed as the sole responsibility of the IRA, was implicated in the creation of a feeling of southern disaffection from republican ideals. However, IRA violence also served as a convenient scapegoat and catalyst for a policy direction change desired by the comfortably well-off, even when, as we shall see, others were responsible. It was as if, for O’Brien, ‘he was only interested in the North when it created problems down South’.¹ This is indicated by the fact that O’Brien’s main target was not the IRA.² Non-violent left-wing nationalists bore the brunt of O’Brien’s opposition, because of their allegedly insufficient opposition to the IRA. In the US during the 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy and others conducted ‘Reds under the beds’ investigations of alleged communist ‘fellow travellers’. The hunt was on in Ireland for, in O’Brien’s phrase, IRA ‘sneaking regarders’.³ In a context in which anti-communism was discredited, thanks in part to O’Brien’s efforts during the 1960s, those opposing the northern state by force of arms were portrayed as incipient if not actual fascists.⁴ In this way O’Brien helped to squeeze from the middle of the political spectrum those sympathetic to the plight of the nationalist minority in Northern Ireland.

O’Brien’s initial targets, as discussed in this chapter, were within Labour itself and Labour’s new Northern Ireland sister party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).⁵ After becoming a minister in 1973 O’Brien targeted then Senator (later President) Mary Robinson, as well as print journalists, and, most of all, RTÉ broadcasters over whom he had ministerial responsibility (the subject of chapters nine and ten). Loyalist/British violence, that O’Brien largely ignored, created a political atmosphere conducive to a repression O’Brien opposed initially, but

¹ Whelan, 2009, p149.
² Or, at least, not the Provisional IRA that gradually eclipsed the ostensibly more left-wing ‘Official’ version. O’Brien debated the President of ‘Official’ Sinn Féin in October 1971, O’Brien 1972, pp308-15. He exposed the organisation’s failure to reconcile a role in defending the Catholic population against sectarian attack with its unrealistic wish to reform the northern state by transcending the sectarian divide and uniting its working class. The organisation’s latter course lead to ceasefire in 1972, abandonment of anti-imperialist politics and (effectively) of Northern Ireland, while retaining the IRA as an ultra secret component. It collapsed in February 1992, Hanley, Millar, 2009, pp546-601. Sections of the organisation gradually adopted a dislike of Irish republicanism not much different from O’Brien’s, the best-known example being Eoghan Harris.
⁵ See O’Brien, 1998, pp332, 336, 338-340, for his view of Fianna Fáil, and a truncated account of difficulties with Labour and the SDLP.
later supported. As we shall see in chapter ten, O’Brien also at first opposed censorship, but then embraced it as a vehicle that became his institutional legacy.

In October 1972 O’Brien’s utterances caused ‘internal dissension’ within Labour and antagonised the SDLP. Seamus Deane noted that in September 1972 a prominent representative of this ‘elective “Catholic” party… O’Brien supports against the IRA’, asserted that the SDLP’s

… experience with the Labour Party (in the Republic) has been made difficult by the presence of C.C. O’Brien as Labour spokesman on Northern Affairs. I am dismayed by the attitude of the party; had Northern Ireland been a matter of more urgency for them they would have got rid of O’Brien. Consequently, at that time Labour TD David Thornley attempted unsuccessfully to remove O’Brien as Labour’s foreign affairs spokesperson. Being perhaps aware of emerging internal opposition, O’Brien had earlier declared his ‘removal as … spokesman on the North … an objective of Sinn Féin/IRA policy’, as therefore an act of subversion.

Thornley had also joined Labour and was elected in 1969. A TCD historian and well-known RTÉ broadcaster, Thornley was criticised in O’Brien’s memoir for failing to support repression. He was expelled from the parliamentary party in 1976 for participating in a Sinn Féin 1916 commemoration banned by a cabinet containing O’Brien. O’Brien’s agnosticism, one time marriage to a northern Protestant and subsequent marital complications, seemed to him evidence enough of liberal bona fides. He gave the impression that he was a walking talking personification of a more liberal and pluralist society. In contrast, Thornley was a supporter of the left-wing Noel Browne throughout most of the 1950s. He chaired a debate at which Browne spoke in 1954 on the ‘dilemma of liberalism’. He celebrated liberalising trends within Irish society in 1964 (including the secularising of Irish sociological enquiry), and in 1965 called for legalising contraception. He also opposed the constitutional divorce ban. In 1969 Thornley deplored the Archbishop of Dublin’s ‘ban on Catholics attending Trinity’. He remarked that the Catholic Church was ‘a notorious buttress of the status quo’. He supported, ‘the possibility of a truly democratic pluralistic

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7 In Seamus Deane, ‘Who Began the Killing?’, *NYRB*, v21, n9, 30 May 1974.
society in this 26 County community’. In matters of practical reform of Irish society’s conservative facets, O’Brien was not as conspicuous, apart from rationalising a parliamentary fiasco that failed to legalise contraception in 1974. If Thornley earned his reputation, O’Brien lived on his.

In October 1972 the parliamentary Labour Party was ‘split down the middle over Dr. O’Brien’. A procedural motion at a subsequent meeting concerning support for SDLP policy on Irish unity, that would have brought differences into the open, ‘was defeated very narrowly and Dr. O’Brien survived’. Consequently, SDLP Stormont MP Ivan Cooper, from a Protestant background, accused the Labour Party of engaging in a ‘face-saving charade’. The SDLP and Labour ‘cannot continue maintaining a special relationship’, he observed.

In October, also, O’Brien clashed sharply with later SDLP leader John Hume, who had observed that O’Brien’s newly-published States of Ireland was ‘a more subtle and effective defence of unionism than any that has come from any unionist quarter’. O’Brien countered that Hume’s was a ‘serious and unjust charge... I have never been a unionist and John Hume knows that’. By 1998 O’Brien admitted that Hume’s ‘was quite a perceptive diagnosis’, though he

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11 Thornley, 1965. Also publ., Studies, Spring 1964 and IT, 1-3 Jun 1964. ‘Letters to the Editor’, IT, 14 Dec 1965; ‘Mixed Marriages Service proposed, debaters set out to define Christianity’, IT, 28 Oct 1969. Thornley (Yseult), 2008, p11. Puirséil, 2007, p267, noted that ‘notoriously’ Thornley was ‘a devout Catholic’. She cited an Irish Times article about Thornley ‘leading a most precious blood procession through Cabra’, a north Dublin working class suburb, during the 1969 election. The article by Backbencher (John Healy), ‘What’s going to happen?’, IT, 14 Jun 1969, consisted of general election stories. It contained this on ‘politicians on parade’ at, ‘the Deaf and Dumb Institute, Navan Road, better-class Cabra’:

Good will abounds, Smiles and worried frowns. Unspoken question: ‘Where the hell is Thornley?’ Finally the penny drops: from across the green belt comes the sound and a hymn from the Most Precious Blood Procession. Lower-class Cabra, ‘Nearer My God to thee’. The Westland Row tenor? Slowly - too slowly – four chastened politicians slink to the west....

Healy’s anecdote about politicians attracting voters does not bear Puirséil’s subsequent interpretation. The ‘Most Precious Blood’ is the somewhat ornate name of a church in mainly working class Cabra West. It is possible that Thornley received his ‘devout’ image from opponents who considered republican politics complete only if associated with Catholic labels.


Hume charged that O’Brien misrepresented an SDLP demand for a British declaration that,

… it would be in the best interests of both these islands if we became united on terms acceptable to all the people of Ireland, North and South.

O’Brien stated that Irish unity ‘such as that sought by the SDLP would stick in his throat’. It would push, ‘toward the terrible nothing of anarchy and civil war’. O’Brien was paraphrasing Hume’s observation after Bloody Sunday that nationalists now favoured a ‘United Ireland or Nothing’. O’Brien observed, ‘even to suggest unity is to destroy hopes for peace’.\footnote{Donal Musgrave, ‘Concord, not unity, the key’, \textit{IT}, 16 Oct 1972.} Hume responded that ‘so called’ ‘unionist fears’ on which O’Brien focused ‘never had justification’. ‘The price of these fears had been very high’, causing southern Civil War and ‘50 years of injustice’. As a consequence, ‘now there were 600 people dead in the North’.\footnote{‘Hume denies breach with Labour Party’, \textit{IT}, 16 Oct 1972.}

Paddy Devlin, recently departed from the soon to be extinct NILP, and on the left of the SDLP, noted in an open letter to Labour leader Brendan Corish that ‘criticism had been made of our statement in public [by O’Brien] while the Irish Labour Party were planning a meeting to discuss the contents’. The SDLP was also aggrieved at O’Brien’s representative presence at the October 1972 British Labour Party conference alongside the NILP.\footnote{Devlin, 1993, pp187-188. Dick Walsh, Michael McInerney, ‘Devlin admits SDLP split with Labour’, \textit{IT}, 2 Oct 1972. Puirséil observed that after the meeting ‘the two parties managed to return to speaking terms, if nothing more’, 2008, p299. Devlin noted support from David Thornley and opposition, in addition to O’Brien, from subsequent Labour leader Frank Cluskey.} This confused the possibility of a sympathetic hearing for SDLP policy. At a hastily arranged Labour-SDLP meeting Devlin reported, ‘we were on our feet shouting and gesticulating at one another’. Echoing Ivan Cooper, Devlin concluded that relations between the two parties ‘could never be the same’.\footnote{Dick Walsh, Michael McInerney, ‘Devlin admits SDLP split with Labour’, \textit{IT}, 2 Oct 1972. ‘Hume denies breach with Labour Party’, \textit{IT}, 16 Oct 1972. Concern was voiced also at the comments of Labour TD Noel Browne for delivering, ‘what... was tantamount to a unionist view on Northern Ireland’.}
Douglas Gageby, the last Protestant (and only openly republican\textsuperscript{18}) editor of the \textit{Irish Times}, agreed with Hume’s critical response to O’Brien’s charge, ‘that to mention unity is dangerous’. Gageby suggested that ‘Dr. O’Brien’s prognostications of incipient civil war are hardly compatible with his declared intentions’.\textsuperscript{19} Gageby went on to declare as ‘unfair and invalid’, O’Brien’s suggestion that a worsening of Labour-SDLP relations, … would be saying to the Protestants that there is no room in Catholic Ireland for a dissenting voice or for anyone who urges that any form of Protestant opinion should be taken into consideration.

On that, it was suggested that O’Brien ‘pushes his case too far’. The paper asked if O’Brien was ‘claiming that he alone is standing up for the Protestant community in the North’. In seeing Protestantism and unionism as synonymous, O’Brien now encouraged intertwining religion and identity, rather than challenge it. It became a curious feature of O’Brien’s nomenclature to see his ‘non-Catholic’ self as an ersatz but emblematic Northern Protestant in the south. As an agnostic, he claimed disassociation from the feelings of ‘the Catholics’, because he was not one, but could somehow, though not one either, intuit Protestant feelings.\textsuperscript{20}

Gageby also detected that O’Brien, … did not dwell on the effects on the anti-unionist minority in the North if the battle in which he is engaged should spread further. The effect might be to throw more and more people into the arms of the men [sic] of violence. As he succeeded in marginalising the nationalist middle, O’Brien helped to populate the increasingly disaffected extreme. Gageby’s was an interesting point, considering the cycle of violence that finally ended after Sinn Féin’s Gerry Adams and the SDLP’s John Hume began serious talking during the late 1980s. For nearly two decades, the main thrust of policy had been not to talk with, but also to actively censor, those whose violence did not have state sanction. That policy, promoted by O’Brien and others, was a failure.

The controversy caused Labour leader Brendan Corish to declare, 

\begin{quote}
There could be no greater travesty of our position than to suggest that I, or any of my colleagues was in the slightest degree opposed to Irish unity.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{18} 1956-61 Editor Alec Newman, who followed the legendary Bertie Smylie, was a republican anti-imperialist also, but this was not as widely known, Brown, 2014, p217.
\textsuperscript{19} ‘Unity and disunity’, (editorial), \textit{IT}, 16 Oct 1972.
\textsuperscript{21} ‘Corish claims policy being distorted’, \textit{IT}, 14 Oct 1972.
Corish asserted that O’Brien also wished for Irish unity, but ‘in such a way that there will not be violence or alienation of the two communities’. Since no party called for an Irish unity encumbered with violence and alienation, and since the current arrangement had both, the statement was fatuous. It was also untrue as a description of O’Brien’s emerging though, at that stage, denied opposition to Irish unity.

O’Brien responded to a self-invented charge ‘that I am against the very idea of unity’. He committed himself to ‘reconciliation between Irishmen’, which he said was Labour’s ‘precondition’ for ‘socialism and unity in Ireland’. ‘Every utterance of mine’, said O’Brien, ‘was aimed at the achievement of that necessary precondition’. He criticised anyone who argued for a United Ireland without his precondition. This stance became the Irish Labour Party’s version of the Fianna Fáil policy of unity through prevarication, in which (in Labour’s case) socialism now also required unanimity.

O’Brien was Labour’s fraternal delegate at the November 1972 SDLP annual conference. The latter passed a motion that O’Brien should be denied a right of address and Paddy Devlin refused to sit on the conference platform until O’Brien vacated it. O’Brien achieved a sound bite, however, by interjecting to support SDLP objections to Dublin’s attempt ‘to muzzle RTÉ’. The muzzled and soon to be southern Minister for Posts and Telegraphs was making a point. It was one he could no longer make when, in 1973, he became the ministerial muzzler (the subject of Chapter Ten).

8.1 Civil War Rhetoric

After surviving his Labour and SDLP difficulties, O’Brien used his ministerial platform to target others he disapproved of on the Left. In the New York Review of Books in 1974 O’Brien as minister criticised MP Bernadette Devlin and a novel set in Belfast by New York journalist Jimmy Breslin. In reply, the poet and critic Seamus Deane stated that it was a lie to proclaim, ‘the British Army’s role in the North is, fundamentally, to protect the Catholic population’:

Who protects the Catholics from the massive campaign of Protestant assassination gangs (accounting now for over 220 deaths of the 1,000 O’Brien snidely attributes to the IRA)? The British Army has killed scores of innocent Catholics in various areas… [W]hat about the ‘Catholic killed’? That largest single group among the 1,000 dead… have been created by the “protection” afforded to them by the British Army.  

O’Brien agreed that unionist killing started in 1966 and that, ‘elements’ of the ‘largely Protestant’ ‘old RUC’ and the ‘entirely Protestant’ B Specials attacked Catholics. However, he asserted that the British Army’s deployment in August 1969 initiated a process of reform. In those circumstances, ‘Responsibility for the return of violence… rests squarely with the Provisional IRA’, which broke up ‘fraternisation’ with British forces. He conceded, however, that the ‘Catholic population became strongly antagonistic’ because, ‘elements of the Army… behaved brutally and on occasions killed indiscriminately (as on Bloody Sunday in Derry)’. Somehow, ‘this was one of the [IRA’s] intended results’. He continued,

Another result of the [IRA] campaign was to inflame Protestant opinion... Thus the extent and intensity of Protestant antagonism towards Catholics is far greater now than it was in August, 1969...  

Uncomfortable facts and previous utterances complicated O’Brien’s attempt to blame the IRA. For example, in August 1969 O’Brien observed,

The numbers of the IRA have been exaggerated beyond all measure. It is very small with very little effective power and it would be wise to cast aside any ideas of it being a real major force capable of doing anything...  

The Provisional and Official IRAs grew later, but organically in response to state violence, for instance the provisional group in Belfast from ‘fewer than a hundred in May-June to nearly 800 by December’ 1970. Unionist sectarianism, mobilised to prevent minimal democratic reform, existed independently of resistance within the nationalist population, but grew to cope with it, which resistance itself developed as a result of assaults on nationalist areas. The British Army and locally-recruited unionist forces further antagonised the minority community by incorporating pro-state paramilitary representatives to subdue that disaffection. Unionist paramilitaries were

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26 ‘Who Began the Killing?’, NYRB, v21, n9, 30 May 1974.
27 ‘Few Trotskyites in North Says O’Brien’, ‘IRA has units in the North’, ‘C.R. describes statement as red herring’, IT, Aug 20 1969. The IRA was so devoid of presence that O’Brien was asked about ‘Trotskyites’ inhabiting journalists’ imaginations.
permitted to kill Catholics under a rescindable and deniable license, and also as directed by British Military Intelligence and RUC Special Branch.29

O’Brien’s previous analysis, similar to Seamus Deane’s in 1974, became an ignored history, which he censored. Appropriately, therefore, O’Brien also obscured his previous opposition to censorship. He claimed that as minister now responsible for broadcasting, he ‘propose[d] to remove… in new legislation’ the ‘arbitrary and hence… objectionable power’ of ‘the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs to issue directions to the Broadcasting Authority as to what it may not broadcast’. As outlined in Chapter Ten, not only did O’Brien retain the existing censorship directive, his new legislation retained the ‘objectionable’ power to do so.

Therefore, Seamus Deane’s assertion that O’Brien ‘exercis[ed] a severe censorship through radio and television, and a slightly more subtle one through the Government Information Bureau’ was not, as O’Brien responded, ‘false’.30

O’Brien was again revising his recent past. His rhetoric began also to exhibit elements of politically calculated hysteria:

Some academics, on both sides of the fence, have contributed to raising the level of verbal violence, thereby increasing the momentum towards Civil

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30 ‘Who Began the Killing?’, NYRB, v21, n9, 30 May 1974.
War. Mr. Deane’s letter is an average specimen of this kind. O’Brien’s ‘enemy-within’ motif deemed academics he positioned on the nationalist side of the fence as proponents of not merely violence but of all-out war. All the while, O’Brien surreptitiously positioned himself on the opposite side, with those who might initiate the putative war.

As a result, former foes became friends and vice versa. *Encounter* editor Melvin J. Lasky, exposed as a CIA functionary by O’Brien during the 1960s, wrote soon afterwards in the *Irish Times*,

I have been following Dr. O’Brien’s new and substantially revised ideology with the greatest of satisfaction… it does seem to me that he now stands with us.

Playwright John Arden regarded O’Brien so highly in 1965, ‘I dedicated a play to him’. In 1977 Arden condemned the ousted Coalition’s ‘appalling record on civil liberties, prison conditions and police malpractice’. He criticised an,

… insidious smear campaign put out by the Coalition and subscribed to by Dr. Cruise O’Brien, whereby all demands for reform … were presented as aiding and abetting of ‘subversive terrorism’.

Arden noted O’Brien’s responsibility for broadcasting censorship and ‘endeavours to extend his influence upon the press and thence into a far wider field of literature and art’ (letters, page 172).

The ideas O’Brien expressed had influence because they were in tune with needs haltingly articulated within the status quo. In December 1969, the then Fianna Fáil Minister for External Affairs, Patrick Hillery, suggested that ‘in teaching history in schools, emphasis should be given

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31 ‘Who Began the Killing?’, *NYRB*, v21, n9, 30 May 1974.


to the positive aspects, rather than the aspects that tend to be divisive’. 34 This ‘divisive’ understanding within Irish civil society could be, in O’Brien’s memorable Orwellian phrase, ‘untaught’. 35 He was ideally suited for this purpose as poacher turned gamekeeper, who began exercising himself on the subject of ‘school histories’ and the teachers responsible for ‘inculcat[ing]’ positive connections between ‘the words, lives and actions of the men of 1916 and the IRA in Northern Ireland’ (headline, above). 36 He referred to the education system as,

… a peculiar system of Catholic education which arose from the relationship between the clergy and an intellectually depressed and educationally deprived laity.

He went on, ‘some of our schools were turning out little I.R.A. men [and] some of the members of these organisations were teachers’. Parents, teachers and/or ‘something he had heard or read’ ‘planted a bomb in his mind’ before ‘a young man’ did so for the IRA. O’Brien speculated on whether ‘the seeds’ of an Official IRA bomb at the British Parachute Regiment HQ in Aldershot in response to Bloody Sunday, were ‘sown in some Irish schoolroom?’ These observations, linking Catholic education with republican violence, were endorsed with ‘hear hear’ by future Fine Gael Taoiseach Garret Fitzgerald. 37

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34 In Clifford, 2006, p15. See also, Clifford, 2005.
35 Conor Cruise O’Brien, ‘Eradicating the Tragic Heroic Mode’, IT, 22 Aug 1975. It is interesting to note that O’Brien later speculated that an anti-Catholic George Orwell might have mistakenly thought ‘Donat O’Donnell’ (O’Brien’s 1940s pen name in The Bell magazine) writing on Catholic novelists, a Catholic writer. Presuming that Orwell discovered O’Donnell’s true identity, O’Brien wrote (‘Orwell’s dim view of Irish’, SI, 20 Jul 2003),

This came home to me with a sense of personal shock when I read [Orwell’s novel] 1984. As you may recall the villain of that novel, a monster of duplicity and a mass murderer, is called – O’Brien.

37 ‘Some pupils are little I.R.A. men – O’Brien’, ‘Teacher appointment system challenged’, IT, 24 Feb 1972. At the time, in Hibernia (‘Personally Speaking’, 3 Mar 1972), Anne Harris criticised O’Brien’s ‘skin-crawlingly smug’ views and observed, ‘Personally I fail to see why, in a colonial country like Ireland, teachers should not sow the seeds of Aldershot’, though she was ‘depressed’ that the Official IRA bomb killed ‘five waitresses’ (plus a Roman Catholic army chaplain and a gardener). However, Harris was ‘also sickened by the hypocrisy of the establishment reaction’ and
The comments were driven by awareness of profound interrelated changes in the education system and workforce detailed in Chapter One. It became the task of the state to educate the population according to the changing needs of Irish capital, to engineer the consent of the governed in favour of a bright European future and against a seemingly darker Irish past remerging in Northern Ireland. As Gramsci pointed out, the role of the state is to ‘elevate the great mass of the population to a given cultural and moral level, a level or standard which corresponds to the needs of the dominant classes’. Consequently, a combination of public and private ‘initiatives and activities tend toward the same end, which constitute the apparatus of political and cultural hegemony of the ruling class’. O’Brien, with his urbane, academic, and apparently modern outlook, spoke the language of the expanded, more widely educated, Irish middle class (Fintan O’Toole’s ‘young, highly educated population’, see page 5). His task was to inform and also to alarm this group, so as to herd their collective mentality in the interests of the state.

8.2 A Liberal at Home with the Littlejohns

Besides pinpointing history teaching as encouragement of IRA violence, O’Brien feared that southern rhetoric generally might provoke cross-border northern unionist violence. A policy of Irish unity would foster, he asserted, ‘a massive and perhaps uncontrollable escalation’. In other words, fear of death was used to discourage discussion accused of provoking violence. Paddy Devlin responded that this approach was ‘an invitation to extreme loyalists to hold an open season on Catholics’, to crush nationalist aspirations since nationalists could not generate as much violence as a unionist community presented as more uninhibited in that regard. Devlin suggested that this southern commentary was part of a ‘deliberate effort […] to reduce interest in issues affecting the North’. Denis Donoghue argued perceptively that O’Brien’s ‘prophecy is yet another way of making discourse afraid of itself’.

But, what if the prophecy became reality? That may have been a thought that occurred also to British Military Intelligence, which was accused of facilitating violent atrocities in the Republic during the 1970s. Antipathy toward militant republicanism might be managed to produce outcomes favourable to British security policy. The southern population became recipients of

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38 In Anderson, 1976, pp31, 32.
British violence by proxy, and of consequent restrictions on civil liberties. Ostensibly, restrictions were designed to curb republican violence that allegedly upset unionists who, in response, killed uninvolved citizens North and South. Repressive legislation enacted in December 1972, that O’Brien opposed but later supported, bears examination in that context.

Two English bank robbers, brothers Keith and Kenneth Littlejohn, were contracted to work for MI6 in 1971. They were directed initially to infiltrate the Official IRA. Kenneth revealed their role after being charged with what was then the Republic’s largest bank robbery on 12 October 1972, netting £67,000. The brothers were arrested in England one week later on foot of Garda evidence. The first inkling that something extraordinary was happening was when extradition proceedings in London were held in camera. This occurred after Kenneth Littlejohn claimed to be a British agent and attempted unsuccessfully to call British government officials as witnesses. This information did not appear in British newspapers. During a period including extradition, conviction, escape and recapture, Littlejohn recounted his MI6 activities.

The Littlejohns received 15 and 20-year sentences on 3 August 1973. Kenneth escaped from prison on 11 March 1974. He gave interviews while on the run and spoke also after recapture. He admitted to petrol-bombing two Garda stations in Louth and Castlebellingham. Littlejohn had associated with disaffected republicans, some expelled due to allegations of involvement in unauthorised robberies. He ‘talked to [his MI6 handler Douglas] Smythe about this and we thought we might set up another IRA splinter group’. Littlejohn reported that at first Smythe, ‘wasn’t concerned about the Provisional IRA, but he was about the O[fficial] IRA’, as ‘they were influenced by Moscow’.

However, the Provisional IRA loomed larger as their campaign developed. The Irish government began to

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42 Dillon, 1990, p102.
view them similarly. On 1 October 1972, Gardaí closed Provisional Sinn Féin’s Dublin offices. The purpose of Littlejohn’s illegal activities was to ‘encourage the Irish government to pass legislation against illegal organisations’. Littlejohn claimed his task was to stop the Lynch government ‘doing nothing about the Provos’.

It was thought that we could push it through by creating trouble in the South, which would be laid at the door of the IRA. It was felt the bank robbery would help to shove it through. And in fact this proved to be the case’.44

The ‘it’ to which Littlejohn referred was an amendment to the Offences Against the State Act passed in early December 1972.

The British secretly admitted their role to the Irish government in early January 1973, prior to the Littlejohns’ extradition. It was agreed officially that Kenneth had met with a British cabinet minister in 1971, after which he was ‘put in contact with the proper authorities’. This was ‘at a time when the extension of the conflict to the South had to be presented as a real threat’, according to Irish Times journalists Dick Walsh and Denis Coghlan. They went on to note unexplained and unclaimed bank robberies on either side of the border, that seemed like IRA actions but were not. It was intended that, ‘the government would be forced to take action against the IRA’:

If that were so the plan succeeded. After these incidents, and a riot in Dundalk, which republicans disclaimed, the Minister for Justice, Mr O’Malley, began to draft his amendment to the Offences Against the State Act.45

44 ‘Littlejohn wants his case to go before Strasbourg court’, IT, 28 Mar 1974
On 2 October 1972, the Irish Times reported that O’Malley was preparing new legislation that would give a more precise definition of membership of an unlawful organisation.

Irish state papers on the Littlejohn episode released in 2004 consisted of ‘little more than newspaper extracts’. However, related information surfaced in British archives. These indicated concern over the arrest in Dublin of an Englishman, MI6 operative John Wyman, together with Patrick Crinion from the Garda C3 security division.

Crinion was Private Secretary to the Head of the Special Branch, John P Fleming. He was tasked with compiling dossiers that Fleming used to form an opinion as to whether someone was an IRA member. After the passage of O’Malley’s legislation, such opinions could form the sole basis for an IRA membership conviction.

Crinion was arrested delivering information to Wyman on 19 December 1972. He was charged under the Official Secrets Act with having ‘communicated official information to John Wyman’ and Wyman with receiving it.

This edition published a prominent page one photograph of Wyman. Captain James Kelly, a former Irish Army Intelligence Officer who was acquitted on charges of importing arms illegally in 1970, suggested (1999, pp24-5) that Wyman’s agent, Crinion, was under suspicion in 1969-70 by the Director of Military Intelligence, Colonel Michael Hefferon. Hefferon was concerned that a presumed British agent posing as an arms dealer, a Captain Markham-Randal, could be so well acquainted with security details about members of the Irish government and their attitude to the North, which could not and should not have been communicated to the British. He suspected that Crinion, ‘the most trusted and best informed in Garda intelligence circles’, was passing information, but ‘had nothing concrete to

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45 Dick Walsh, Denis Coghlan, ‘20 year Jail Sentence, but who was in the Doc?’, IT, 6 Aug 1973.
46 Alison Healy, ‘Many State files are never released to public’, IT, 2 Jan 2004.
48 ‘Pair on Secrets Act charges seek bail’, IT, 22 Dec 1972. This edition published a prominent page one photograph of Wyman. Captain James Kelly, a former Irish Army Intelligence Officer who was acquitted on charges of importing arms illegally in 1970, suggested (1999, pp24-5) that Wyman’s agent, Crinion, was under suspicion in 1969-70 by the Director of Military Intelligence, Colonel Michael Hefferon. Hefferon was concerned that a presumed British agent posing as an arms dealer, a Captain Markham-Randal, could be so well acquainted with security details about members of the Irish government and their attitude to the North, which could not and should not have been communicated to the British. He suspected that Crinion, ‘the most trusted and best informed in Garda intelligence circles’, was passing information, but ‘had nothing concrete to
The Irish government adopted a curiously deferential tone with the British in January 1973, as expressed by Irish Ambassador to the UK, Donal O’Sullivan. Robert Armstrong, then Private Secretary to British Prime Minister Edward Heath, noted,

… two points which were for your [Heath’s] eyes only - (1) For public relations reasons his (O’Sullivan’s) government would have to oppose bail (for Wyman); but the strength with which they would do so was another matter. (2) You had expressed concern about the effects of a long sentence. He had the impression that this was unlikely; indeed he said there might be no sentences at all.49

The British were unsuccessful in a request to the Irish authorities to hold all court proceedings in camera and also, failing that, to attend those aspects that were in camera.50 However, charges that on conviction would have resulted in Crinion and Wyman serving up to seven years fell. The Attorney General refused on security grounds to supply the non-jury Special Criminal Court with the evidence on which the charges were based. It was surprising, since that ‘evidence had been in camera’. The three-person court refused to proceed with more serious charges on that basis. On 27 February 1973, Wyman and Crinion were each sentenced to three months on lesser charges. They were ‘immediately released’, due to having already served time on remand (report, page 179).51

Desmond O’Malley, who was Justice Minister from 1970-73, explained the light sentencing to a 2005 Dáil Committee examining events surrounding bombings in Dublin in 1972 and 1973. O’Malley defended signing the order preventing the disclosure of documents in the Crinion-Wyman case. He admitted,

… one of the consequences… was that Crinion and Wyman were not convicted of more serious charges. I was probably aware of this at the time but on balance had formed the view that it was in the public interest to protect the sources of the Gardaí.52

O’Malley may actually have been concerned to minimise public knowledge of illegal British activity that possibly included the bombings on 26 November and 1 December 1972.53 The December bombing killed two CIE bus drivers and injured over 100. It also collapsed Fine Gael opposition in the Dáil to the emergency legislation Littlejohn claimed as his handwork (report, back up his suspicion’. Kelly also suggested that intelligence about a meeting he had convened with northern nationalists in 1969 was reported back and embellished through garda sources, including Crinion, to the Department of Justice.

52 Martin Wall, ‘Troops at Dáil had orders to shoot - O’Malley’, IT, 2 Feb 2005.
page 179). Prior to the explosions, defeat for O’Malley’s proposal, followed by a general election, appeared imminent (see contrasting Irish Independent front pages, before and after, page 178).

John Kelly, a Belfast republican who was acquitted at the 1970 arms trial, claimed to have seen Wyman ‘very obviously looking at the crowd and assessing the reaction to the [1 December 1972 Dublin] bombing’. Kelly reported, ‘I thought initially that he was (Garda) Special Branch but they didn’t acknowledge him’. Kelly said he recognised Wyman from a subsequently published photograph. One appeared in the Irish Times on 22 December 1972. Kelly had occasion to take a particular interest in Wyman as both were remanded to prison from the non-jury Special Criminal Court on 6 February 1973, Kelly on IRA charges (reports, page 177).

When they searched Wyman’s hotel room, Gardaí found a reference to ‘car bombs’. He admitted they referred to ‘explosions in Dublin’, though added, ‘We are as interested in finding out who did this as you are’. Wyman and Crinion were ‘believed to have left the country’ one day before the return of the Littlejohns, whose tale was yet to be told. They were portrayed, in comparison to Wyman and Crinion, as ‘dispensable pawns’. The wider knowledge of the English pair was certainly limited, except in one crucial respect. They were connected with Wyman. Kenneth Littlejohn reported ‘Douglas Smythe’ to be also his handler John Wyman, and of directing his endeavours to rob banks and engage in violent activities. Littlejohn met Smythe/Wyman after Littlejohn’s officially acknowledged meeting in 1971 with British Under Secretary for Defence, Geoffrey Johnson-Smyth, in the home of Secretary of State for Defence Lord Carrington. The unknown, at that stage, Littlejohns were in custody when the bombs went off. However, Wyman and another Littlejohn handler named as ‘Oliver’, plus whomever else they may have directed, were not. It appears the Irish government did not wish to pursue Wyman’s link with British agents whose violent actions facilitated the passage of its repressive legislation. In opposition in August 1973 Jack Lynch denied being informed as Taoiseach by the British in January of their Littlejohn connection, a statement he was forced to retract. He claimed he ‘forgot’. While at the time O’Brien exposed Lynch’s memory lapse, in his later memoir and

54 Contrast ‘Lynch could topple’ with ‘Terror bombers kill two in Dublin’ and ‘Bill expected to be law tonight’, II, 1, 2 Dec 1972.


various histories he forgot about Littlejohn and Wyman/Smythe’s activities. This was part of a
pattern.

8.3 Dublin Monaghan Bombings 1974

Bombings in Dublin and Monaghan on 17 May 1974 killed 34 people. They were the single
largest incident to cause loss of life during the Troubles. In his Memoir O’Brien mentioned the
legislation the December 1972 bombings facilitated, whose passing he opposed then and
retrospectively supported, but without mentioning the bombs themselves. The 1972 and also the
1974 bombings were similarly, remarkably, also missing from commentary in O’Brien’s Ireland,
A Concise History (1985), on Northern Ireland’s Sunningdale power-sharing agreement.60 The
bombings were instrumental in a crisis leading to that agreement’s collapse on 28 May.

Unionist opposition that was parliamentary, paramilitary, industrial and on the streets, utilising
bombs and guns, defeated the SDLP and rump-Unionist Party power-sharing administration. The
Agreement was an attempt to put nationalists and unionists jointly in government, while
internment was in force, and while the unionist population’s sectarian socio-economic dominance
was, in the main, unaltered.61 The Ulster Workers’ Council’s (UWC) strike shut down essential
services, with the aid of Ulster Defence Association (UDA) intimidation, Ulster Volunteer Force
(UVF) violence, and a combination of passivity and support from security forces.62

After the bombings and the collapse of Sunningdale, the Irish government was determined to
blame the IRA for a ‘massive sectarian backlash’ that felled the power-sharing experiment. In fact,
‘fear of the Republic moved the strikers more than fear of republicanism’.63 In 2003 Justice Henry
Baron, in the conclusion to his Report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry into the Dublin
and Monaghan Bombings, found:

60 Neither did O’Brien mention them in his review of Robert Fisk’s (1976) book on
Sunningdale’s collapse, ‘Momentous 15 days’, Times (Lon), 3 Apr 1976. 1973-77 Minister for
Foreign Affairs Garret Fitzgerald’s 2010 biography was equally silent, in chapters entitled
‘Sunningdale’ and ‘Northern Ireland, 1974-77’, pp 244-57, 258-76.
62 As related in detailed testimony of former RUC Special Patrol Group officer, John Weir, 3
the IRA’, ST, 7 March 1999
63 Bishop, Mallie, 1992, p268. Dick Walsh, ‘Cosgrave blames fall on Provisionals’, IT, 29 May
1974.
The bombings were a reaction to the Sunningdale Agreement – in particular to the prospect of a greater role for the Irish government in the administration of Northern Ireland.64

During late 1974 and 1975 the IRA was in talks with the British government, leading to a short and then a longer ceasefire. However, other elements of the British state were colluding, both directly and through RUC Special Branch, in unionist paramilitary sectarian violence. A claim of British involvement in the bombings came initially from an unusual source, the UDA. They disputed descriptions of loyalist strikers as ‘thugs and bully boys’, on the basis that the British Army’s elite SAS regiment was involved in sectarian killings and, also, the Dublin Monaghan bombings (27 May Irish Independent report, left).

The tone of the Irish government response was encapsulated in a broadcast by Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave on the evening of the carnage. He said,

Everyone who has practiced violence, preached violence, or condoned violence must bear a share of responsibility for today’s outrages.65

Justice minister Patrick Cooney reported to Cabinet within an hour of the explosions that the bomb cars ‘were hijacked in Belfast’. However, he specifically targeted a ‘cult of violence’ that would not end until,

… the public was prepared to see it completely removed from this society and to hand over to the authorities anyone who not only engaged in violence but condoned it.

Cooney visited Monaghan and demanded that, ‘the public must stop giving “the slightest iota of support” to men of violence, no matter who they represented’. The Attorney General, Declan Costello, remarked that since the bomb cars were obtained in loyalist areas in Northern Ireland a ‘theory’ of unionist paramilitary responsibility ‘can be held at the present time’. He was less anodyne in asserting, ‘the IRA bear a very heavy burden of responsibility’.

Another Minister, James Tully, reportedly warned, ‘He did not wish to raise a scare, but he would not be surprised if “we are going to have this kind of thing throughout the country”’. That

was neither reassuring nor accurate. The Cosgrave broadcast and justice minister’s demand was followed up with ‘country-wide raids on the homes of republicans’, including that of Sinn Féin President Ruairí Ó Brádaigh. It was a case of, if not guilt, then raiding by association, possibly wasting resources that might otherwise have been used searching for the actual bombers. One alternative position, from the Revolutionary Marxist Group, appeared:

    The cynical and hypocritical efforts of Cosgrave to whip up feeling against republicans and socialists must be firmly opposed. The parties to the Sunningdale Agreement have insisted that only the Provisional terrorists stand in the path of a peaceful solution. The Dublin and Monaghan bombings show that this is not the case. The real enemies of peace are British Imperialism and its unionist clients. By collaboration with the oppressive and corrupt forces, the Irish government also share responsibility for the recent bloody events.

This analysis was not entertained in government. According to James Downey,

    Ministers in Dublin believe they can identify a number of ‘positive’ elements in the situation... [T]hey are convinced that the effect of the Dublin massacres on the public is one of support for (not to say gratitude to) the security forces, and revulsion from all extremist organisations, of which the most important is of course the Provisional IRA.

Dick Walsh, also in the *Irish Times*, noted that O’Brien and Cooney had met political correspondents, where these views were expressed. O’Brien appeared three weeks later on a British television panel with representatives of the ‘extremist’ paramilitary UDA. The UDA also reported taking part later in ‘secret informal discussions in Leinster House with Mr Cosgrave’ plus ministers O’Brien and Cooney.  

    James Downey’s report, on a meeting between Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Garret Fitzgerald and British Ambassador Sir Arthur Galsworthy, reinforced an official view that the bombings served a higher purpose. Ministers had ‘visibly kept their nerve’ about the ‘horrors of Friday... [that] are reckoned less significant politically than [the Sunningdale Agreement crisis] in Belfast’. Ambassador Galsworthy reported back with satisfaction, ‘it would be… a psychological mistake for us to rub this point in... the Irish have taken the point’:

    It is only now that the South has experienced violence that they are reacting in the way that the North has sought for so long.  

This point, on the efficacy of violence, repeated 1972 British Embassy comments on passage of the Offences Against the State Act. It was reported then that violence, for which the

confirmed (2003a, p61) that she later identified from photographs a UVF member, David Alexander Mulholland, as having been in Dublin immediately prior to the explosions.

  66 Robert Fisk, ‘Where does Dublin stand after the failure of power sharing?’, ‘Learning to live with the segregated dead’, *Times* (Lon), 7 Jun, 7 Oct 1974;

Littlejohns had subsequently been found responsible, culminated in ‘two bombs on 1 December [that] clinched the matter’. 68

In 1974 public ‘revulsion’ was useful in pushing through legislation permitting prosecution in Dublin for offenses carried out in Northern Ireland. Finding the actual culprits was however, as Judge Barron reported, a secondary matter. The police investigation came to nothing and the massacre disappeared from headlines. On 28 May 1974 the power-sharing arrangement collapsed. A British Yorkshire Television documentary in 1993 named some of the alleged Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) bombers thought responsible. 69 The programme pursued a theory that the bombers were actively assisted by covert British forces.

Eventually, relatives of those who died concluded that they and their rights had been neglected. They formed Justice for the Forgotten and demanded a public enquiry. 70 They were successful, to a point. The government held a private enquiry under Judge Henry Barron that concluded in 2003. Though hampered by British refusal to cooperate, the enquiry collated much useful information and found:

The Government of the day showed little interest in the bombings. When information was given to them suggesting the British authorities had intelligence naming the bombers, this was not followed up.

The government was told of the detention of some of the alleged bombers at a meeting with British counterparts in September 1974. 71 Barron observed,

Notwithstanding the information supplied in the course of these meetings, there appears to have been no follow through by any of those who became aware of it. Nothing was apparently raised at the meeting. Names were not sought, nor the evidence which justified the internment, nor the allegation that they had been responsible for the Dublin bombing… Any follow-up [at another meeting in November] was limited to complaints by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that those involved had been released from internment.

The information appears to have been leaked in 1974 to the pseudonymous Sunday Independent columnist, Wigmore, who wrote on 8 December,

The Brits know it, the RUC too are convinced. Even [Prime Minister] Harold Wilson has the names. But no action has been taken. In fact, the loyalist killers who planted the bombs in Dublin and Monaghan last May had been detained for short periods in Long Kesh - and amazingly released.

Wigmore’s angle was,

The man who planned, executed and coordinated the slaughter... came to Dublin to talk to Republican leaders [and] danced his heart away in a centre city disco, ate of the best and after a five day spree agreed that there was no place on this island like Dublin night-life.

This was probably Dublin government spin, eager still to associate the IRA in however spurious a manner with the bombings. The following week, Wigmore acknowledged:

Did the Republican element a dis-service last week by saying that some of them had met the Protestant bombers of Dublin after the May blasts. I must admit that I was wrong. There is no denial that they had met the loyalist killers. In fact they met twice; once in Cavan and later in Dublin. Both meetings took place in February - before the Dublin and Monaghan atrocities.

Wigmore then went on to observe that one of the alleged bombers and talkers, Jim Hanna, ‘was later executed in an internecine skirmish’. 72

According to former British Army information officer and psychological warfare operative, Colin Wallace, the UVF bombers, under the control of British Military intelligence, were opposed to UVF personnel like Hanna engaged earlier in talks. The well-informed Sunday Times journalist Robert Fisk suggested on 14 October 1974 that,

The Dublin bombings were apparently carried out to show other members of the UVF that, left-wing though it might have become, this did not imply any deals with republicans. 73

Wallace observed in a 1975 memo,

It would appear that loyalist paramilitaries and [Intelligence, Special Branch] members have formed some sort of pseudo gangs in an attempt to fight a war of attrition by getting paramilitaries on both sides to kill each other and, at the same time prevent any future political initiative such as Sunningdale.

In addition,

There is good evidence the Dublin bombings... were a reprisal for the Irish government’s role in bringing about the [power sharing] Executive... some of those involved, the Youngs, the Jacksons, Mulholland, Hanna, Kerr and McConnell were working closely with [Special Branch] and [Intelligence] at that time. 74

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72 The ‘Wigmore’ column was often associated with Vincent Browne. He stated, (email to author, 29 May 2009): ‘it might have been me that wrote the [15 December] item under the heading “Dublin bombings” but I don’t believe I wrote the [8 December] item headed “No action on killers”. [T]he whole style of the column suggests to me that it was written by [the late] Michael Hand, who either then or shortly afterwards was editor of the newspaper’.

73 In Barron, 2003, p217.

74 In Barron 2003, p172; see also Michael Browne, ‘Death Squad Dossier’, Irish Mail on Sunday, 10 Dec 2006. Wallace was concerned also that the intelligence services he was working for were out of control, turning a blind eye to child abuse by some unionist paramilitaries in order to blackmail the perpetrators into giving information, making up and spreading allegations of kidnap and murder against a prominent unionist politician, and allowing unionist paramilitaries to engage wholesale in sectarian and anti-republican violence. See Foot, 1989, and Robert Fisk, ‘British Clamp on N.I. propaganda, Army ‘black campaign’ against suspects ended’, IT, 25 Mar
Wallace stated that his intelligence team was instructed to cease giving media briefings on bombings suspects and observed that a ‘notable feature’ was the apparent lack of interest by authorities on both sides of the border. He suggested that British inaction was due to apprehension that if those suspected were charged, they might reveal ‘connections with the intelligence community’. Wallace did not speculate on southern inaction.\(^75\)

8.4 Chapter Conclusion

Like his colleagues after the May 1974 bombings, O’Brien used unionist violence to score propaganda points against Irish republicans. Censorship enforced by O’Brien on RTÉ (to be examined in Chapter Ten) had the effect that it did not notice and therefore report when the Irish government’s security services scaled down searching for the Dublin and Monaghan bombers, whose actions O’Brien later ignored. Inaction on the bombers in 1972 and in 1974, plus subsequent coercion of republicans based on public reaction to the bombings, helped to stabilise a new consensus within the elite. The possibly British inspired violence enabled a re-definition of the relationship between Ireland and Britain and between contending political forces in Ireland.

A year after the 1974 bombings O’Brien delivered a lecture on the relationship between art and politics. He discussed the fate of executed 1916 leaders and W.B. Yeats’s later poetic question about his play, *The Countess Cathleen*: ‘Did that play of mine send out certain men the English shot’. O’Brien answered affirmatively, but disapprovingly, ‘The probable answer is Yes, it did’.\(^76\)

Perhaps, instead of this literal aesthetic interpretation, O’Brien might have considered whether his utterances unwittingly had sent a British-unionist bomb or two in 1972 and in 1974. It is not a thought his imagination is recorded as entertaining. The importance of defeating the IRA and in undermining a policy of Irish unity transcended other considerations. Soon after Sunningdale’s collapse and the Dublin-Monaghan bombings, O’Brien argued that an Irish unity policy promoted loyalist violence and therefore should be abandoned. As a consequence, said O’Brien, he no longer actively pursued the goal of a United Ireland.\(^77\)

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1975. For an account of tensions between RUC Special Branch and CID, over these illegal practices, Brown, 2006.


\(^76\) ‘Politics and the poet’, *IT*, 21-22 Aug 1975. Whelan pointed out that in 1967 O’Brien’s more nuanced view was that the play ‘could not have had this effect, if it had not touched a stock response’. By 1989, however, O’Brien abandoned all equivocation and asserted ‘I believe, not only that it clearly did, but that it is still sending them out’, Whelan, 2009, p113.

CHAPTER NINE A Liberal at Sea

[O’Brien] pulls from his files letters to [Editor Tim Pat] Coogan’s Irish Press…

“With this kind of language”, O’Brien says grimly, you induce young people to join
the IRA, putting youths at the disposal of men who may order them to kill or maim.
Would he use the law to jail the letter writers? No, but he hints that he might use it
against ‘the paper that gave them space.


As a self-proclaimed liberal, what did O’Brien liberalise?

Though he argued that the South needed to become less sectarian and more pluralist in its
outlook and laws, O’Brien was incapable of moving such observations beyond platitudes.

In 1973, in the McGee case, the Irish Supreme Court declared unconstitutional part of a 1935
law outlawing contraception. Married couples could now import contraceptives privately, but they
still could not be bought or sold. The judgement made an ass of the law. Political reform appeared
imperative and was a key democratic rights issue.

In 1974 Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave surprised colleagues when he voted against a government
bill to allow the sale of contraceptives under licence, to married people only. Cosgrave alongside
six Fine Gael acolytes, including the education minister, ensured defeat. O’Brien rationalised this
‘free vote’ fiasco by explaining that the Taoiseach had betrayed no trust by betraying no signal of
his intentions. Cosgrave ‘had not let anyone down’, thought O’Brien.1 Alternatively, David
Thornley termed the Taoiseach an irresponsible ‘idiot’, while his constituency association called
on Labour to collapse the coalition.2

It was the second time in two years the Fine Gael leader had stood out against his party.3 In
December 1972 Cosgrave announced his personal determination to vote for repressive legislation.
As noted in Chapter Eight, two bombs persuaded party colleagues to join him. Dick Walsh in the
Irish Times suggested that the Taoiseach’s contraception vote, ‘contributed to the intransigence
and suspicion of Loyalists’. More likely it contributed to satisfaction that North-South differences
could be defined in religious terms. As Unionist Party spokesman John Laird put it, ‘if they wish

3 Cosgrave also sided with Fianna Fáil in 1968, when the latter attempted unsuccessfully to abolish the proportional representation voting system by referendum, (Ciara) Meehan, 2013b, pp83-4.
to have a backward society where contraception is not allowed that really is not my affair’. If it satisfied unionists the debacle dismayed the SDLP, which was concerned ‘that the Republic would be seen in both the eyes of unionists and of the world as a backward country’.4

If O’Brien saw his actions on the North as liberal, such was not the view of the Taoiseach to whom O’Brien gave ‘unwavering loyalty’. Cosgrave’s determination in 1972 to support repressive legislation impressed O’Brien sufficiently to make him change his own view later. O’Brien seemed to regard Cosgrave, like Ian Paisley, as a ‘strong man’. Cosgrave portrayed his attitudes to illegal violence and sexual conduct as part of a continuum. In 1976 he proclaimed a need to strengthen,

... public institutions, of which RTÉ is a part... to withstand attacks from any quarters. These attacks range from all-out assaults on the state to the insidious attacks of those promoting a permissive approach to life.5

In April 1976 the EEC Commission refused a Labour and Fine Gael coalition request for a derogation from a requirement to introduce equal pay for equal work. A substantial public revolt by Irish women impressed the European Commission rather more than did the Irish government’s plea on behalf of itself and its employers. On this equal pay episode O’Brien’s Memoir is silent. Women in the political sphere did not receive positive attention from him. It was a pivotal event for southern Irish EEC membership, since joining alongside Britain one year previously.6

The contraception failure and equal pay dispute supported a view generally that liberal reform was not integral to southern Irish politics (and that most politicians were poltroons). It seemed to require outside imposition. It therefore undermined the notion of Irish sovereignty as a vehicle for progress among liberal-minded Irish people. However, these controversies energised the women’s


5 O’Brien, 1998, pp343, 346, 347. ‘Taoiseach presents radio, television awards’, ‘Taoiseach criticises media’s attitude to armed conspiracy’, IT, 1 Mar 1976. The theme of the ‘strong man’ featured also in O’Brien’s view of Terence O’Neill’s deficiency in that regard. In an article on the poet W.B. Yeats and fascism (‘Yeats and Fascism: What Rough Beast’, New Statesman, 26 Feb 1965, in Akenson, ed., 1994b, p77), Eamon De Valera was cast in the role of a ‘strong man’ attractive to the fascist-leaning Yeats. He was also a role model for O’Brien, as was UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold. When Katanga went pear-shaped in September 1961 O’Brien observed, ‘I felt then somewhat as a son feels if he is under the displeasure, for reasons unknown and inexplicable to him, of a revered father’, ‘My Case’, Observer, 10 Dec 1961.

movement that emerged as 'the only radical force in the stagnant pool of Irish life', as the lights went out (or rather were forcibly put out) on other democratic rights issues.7

Women’s rights agitation was a central feature of Irish social and political transformation in the 1970s, but was not one of O’Brien’s themes. He lectured then Senator (later President) Mary Robinson in October 1974 on what he believed should be a liberal’s proper role. She had attempted to legalise contraception in the Senate before and after defeat of the government’s more restrictive measure.8 While affecting to support Robinson’s liberalism in this respect, she was, he said, a ‘confused’ liberal, for sharing public space at a meeting with a republican in opposition to internment in Northern Ireland (report, left). O’Brien accused her also of being complicit in support of killing judges there.9 He defined a liberal’s first duty as defence of the democratic state. Robinson in turn accused O’Brien of an ‘attempt at censorship’ and abuse of his ministerial position.

Robinson wondered whether she would have to self-censor or ‘watch’ herself, and asserted that people ‘were now afraid to speak out on issues that needed to be publicly discussed’.10 Two years later, Robinson confronted the marginalisation of voices speaking out in defence of basic liberties. She noted, in an echo of O’Brien’s 1967 criticism of counter-revolutionary subordination,

A simple condemnation of the IRA does not require particular courage today.... [It] is less easy to both condemn the IRA and other groups who resort to violence (including the use of institutionalised violence) and to express deep concern.

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7 See Speed, 1992; also, Finlay, 1990, pp29-30, Mary Robinson comment in Foster, 2008, p42.
for the protection of civil liberties and for the curtailment of government power at this time. Emergency legislation itself can be subversive if it overreaches and may lead to actual abuse or belief that it will be abused.\textsuperscript{11}

In a speech at a dinner for journalists, after criticising Robinson, O’Brien prefigured a threat in 1976 to imprison members of the press. He toasted ‘restrictions on the freedom of the Press which may become necessary to preserve our democratic institutions’. O’Brien reportedly called his audience ‘Provo [Provisional IRA] stooges’ and Dick Walsh of the \textit{Irish Times} a ‘provo mouthpiece’.\textsuperscript{12} Consequently, Walsh summed up O’Brien’s view as, ‘Are you in favour of my view of democracy or are you a member, a supporter or stooge of the Provisional IRA’ (report, page 190).\textsuperscript{13} Ironically, Walsh was one of those supporters of ‘Official’ republicanism who later obscured his earlier opposition to O’Brien, and O’Brien’s toward him. In 1999 Walsh observed,

\begin{quote}
O’Brien was… ahead of the public. He’d identified ambivalent attitudes to violence among southern nationalists generally but especially among those engaged in politics and journalism. And he refused to hear, never mind accept, excuses.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

An \textit{Irish Times} letter writer observed in 1974, ‘one did not hear of Dr. O’Brien publicly criticising Mr Cosgrave for his [contraception] vote’. She concluded, ‘can we take it then, that there are two sets of rules, one for Government liberals, the other for independent liberals’. Another observed,

\begin{quote}
The notion of Dr. O’Brien controlling what we see and hear, and the Hierarchy what we do in the bedroom should at least set some people thinking.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

O’Brien articulated a different sort of thinking, a feeling that Irish nationalism and Catholicism were associated ineradicably with Irish poverty, of both thought and material circumstances.\textsuperscript{16}

These assumptions were transferred to the conflict in Northern Ireland, which became emblematic

\textsuperscript{11} ‘Emergency legislation’, \textit{IT}, 7 Sep 1976.,

\textsuperscript{12} In Conor Cruise O’Brien and the Media, Belfast Bulletin, n9, Spring 1981, Donald Akenson’s biography, Conor, also alludes to this incident, 1994, p 546, n46. O’Brien’s phraseology was reminiscent of, ‘It became necessary to destroy the town to save it’, attributed to a US major during the Vietnam War, ‘Major describes move’, \textit{NYT}, 8 Feb 1968.


\textsuperscript{14} Walsh referred to O’Brien and the official republican movement, which he supported, as adopting a two-nations theory, the latter ‘in modified form’, ‘An influential critic of his times’, \textit{Times Change}, Autumn-Winter, 1999. \textit{Irish Times} colleague, James Downey, 2009, pp102-3, was ‘amazed’ when ‘speakers at [Walsh’s] funeral praised what they called his dedication to parliamentary democracy’.

of failures in Irish adaption to modernity, and not of British failure in its first and also possibly final colonial outpost. Arguments for a more liberal and pluralist Irish society in the 1970s were led by independent voices and social forces in civil society, who challenged social, political and legal institutions. O’Brien attempted to represent this movement in 1976. He argued at a Humanist Association conference in Northern Ireland that the ‘setback to… non-sectarianism’ represented by the contraception vote was outweighed by the fact that it was ‘debated’. A predictably futile debate with a Catholic bishop ensued, that might have been better directed at Liam Cosgrave.¹⁷

Later, in April 1976, the government banned the annual Sinn Féin commemoration of the 1916 Rebellion. This unprecedented decision was followed by a threat to ‘organisers, stewards, speakers, and others directly involved’ that not only might they be liable to a term of imprisonment, but that,

… if found guilty by the Special Criminal Court, [they] would forfeit any government or local authority job, and would be disqualified from holding any pension paid out of public funds…

This stated openly what was already unofficial policy. In 1975, Irish language enthusiast Ita Ní Chionnaith joined the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP). She observed, ‘I had managed to secure civil service jobs on four occasions’, but was not appointed. ‘I later found out that the civil service wrote to the Special Branch asking if I should be employed. The reply was that I shouldn’t’.¹⁸

RTÉ Director General Oliver Maloney cancelled Irish language programme Féach’s coverage of the march.¹⁹ In the event, over 10,000 turned up. David Thornley appeared on the platform alongside Nora Connolly O’Brien, daughter of executed 1916 leader and Labour Party founder, James Connolly. Both were prosecuted and fined. Thornley


¹⁸ In Faoi Lámha an Stáit. See also, Dunne and Kerrigan, 1984.

said, ‘The government had no right to ban the parade at all’. He was acting out of ‘concern for civil liberties and freedom of speech’, and also ‘from motives formed by libertarian and socialist principles’ (report, page 192). A Unionist Party spokesperson applauded the measure that ‘was the sort the British government should have taken in the North years ago’.

On 21 July 1976 in Dublin, the IRA assassinated the British Ambassador, Christopher Ewart Biggs near his residence in Carrickmines, Dublin. In September O’Brien supported more emergency legislation permitting 7-day detention, which appeared to threaten media freedoms. Published words, construed as inducing someone to join or support the IRA, might result on conviction in ten years imprisonment:

Any person, who by implication, directly or through another person, or by advertisement, propaganda or other means, incites or invites another person (or other persons generally) to join an unlawful organisation or to take part in, support or assist its activities shall be guilty of an offence.

The precise meaning was outlined in an interview O’Brien gave to Bernard [Bud] Nossiter of The Washington Post. O’Brien told Nossiter that he now regretted his December 1972 opposition to emergency legislation. Nossiter reported that O’Brien ‘pulls from his files letters to [Editor Tim Pat] Coogan’s Irish Press’:

They denounce contributions to a memorial fund for the murdered ambassador as an insult to the patriots who died for Irish freedom. ‘With this kind of language’, O’Brien says grimly, ‘you induce young people to join the IRA, putting youths at the disposal of men who may order them to kill or maim’. Would he use the law to jail the letter writers? No, but he hints that he might use it against ‘the paper that gave them space’.

O’Brien acknowledges that the measure could punish music teachers who lead classes in IRA ballads or even history teachers who glorify the Irish revolutionary heroes.

After the O’Brien interview Nossiter paid a visit to Coogan, who recalled later in the Irish Voice (17 October 1992):

Bud showed up in my office unexpectedly. He told me I had better watch out. … Bud, coming from the paper that broke Watergate, was naturally stunned at the thought of prosecuting people for exercising the elementary democratic right of

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writing to a newspaper. But it turned out that it was not the letter writers whom it was planned to hit, but me, the editor.

Nossiter reported Coogan’s concern with regard to the proposed legislation,

I’m certain we’d be intimidated... I’d either hold back an expose of mistreatment of IRA men in our jails or understand I would have to join them.

After reporting Nossiter’s Washington Post piece, Coogan republished it plus the offending letters (reports, above, left). Though the Attorney General confirmed he would ‘charge the editor’, O’Brien claimed that the section posed no threat, since newspapers would be ‘too afraid to publish anything that might be interpreted as breaching the section’. Negative public reaction, enhanced by international attention, forced the government to amend the legislation, by deleting from ‘who’ to ‘incites’.

The overall effect was to reinforce an atmosphere of repression enacted in defence of the state by means of destroying its civic culture. This emerging feature of Irish society was reinforced at the highest level later that month.

On 26 September 1976 President Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh had, as a function of his office, referred the legislation to the Supreme Court to test its constitutionality. In October, in a speech to Irish Army
Officers, the Minister for Defence, Paddy Donegan, said it was ‘amazing when the President sent the… Bill to the Supreme Court’, and then described Ó Dálaigh, the Irish Army’s Commander-in-Chief, as a ‘thundering disgrace’. After these ‘outrageous’ remarks, the apologetic Minister did not resign and the Taoiseach did not sack him. Instead, the President resigned on 22 October.\(^{25}\)

Donegan’s outburst reflected government frustration over disruption of its agenda and also lack of regard for constitutional proprieties. Fianna Fáil referred to Fine Gael as ‘a slightly constitutional party’.\(^{26}\) It was a third shock from within to the system that year. As society was liberalising in its attitude to sexual morality, the state was shifting the plane of coercive regulation to civil liberties and the North.

9.1 The Heavy Gang

If O’Brien justified legal restrictions on civil liberties he also secretly supported illegal methods.

In 1976 a member of the Garda Technical Bureau, Eamon Ó Fiacháin, gave evidence in court of hearing a suspect screaming in pain in a garda station. ‘I remarked [to a colleague] that it was a terrible thing’. Other Gardaí testified that no brutality had taken place, leading the court to suggest that Ó Fiacháín may have misheard the loud noises. The case was not prominently reported. Ó Fiacháín expanded on the circumstances after retirement. He noted that one of the suspects brought to him had swelling on his face, especially around his eyes, and that he was ‘quite terrified’. O Fiachain reported that he and some detectives encountered a Chief Superintendent (CS) on his way in to the station. The CS asked how questioning had gone during the night. A detective answered ‘they are singing like canaries’, to which the CS reportedly responded, ‘that’s great, we won’t need the Heavy Gang in the morning’.\(^{27}\)

The Heavy Gang’s activities were investigated in the *Irish Times* in February 1977.\(^{28}\) Justice Minister Patrick Cooney was previously scathing of what he construed as calculated mischievous attacks. They,

\[
...\text{emanated from people on the subversive side, and their fellow travellers... Such allegations were a well known ploy used by terrorists to throw mud at the security forces.}\]


\(^{26}\) ‘Presidential door shuts on Donegan apology,’ *IT*, 20 Oct 1976. Fianna Fáil’s Sean Lemass originally used the ‘slightly constitutional’ phrase in 1927 to describe his own party.


In fact the criticisms were not all from ‘the subversive side’. The former Head of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI), Derek Nally, claimed he met Cooney alongside serving officers to voice concerns. Nally was reported as stating,

When it was discussed among senior AGSI representatives it was decided that there was no point in going to ‘the top person within the force’, a reference to the former Garda Commissioner, Mr Ned Garvey. ‘That person was aware of it as well’, said Mr Nally. Mr Garvey had ’definitively condoned’ the beatings and ‘turned a blind eye’ to goings on, he said.30

O’Brien knew that these allegations were true.

He revealed in his 1998 Memoir that his Garda ministerial escort informed him in 1974 of attempts to obtain information from a suspect about kidnappers of Tiede Herrema, a Dutch industrialist. Reportedly, they ‘beat the shit out of him’. O’Brien noted,

I refrained from telling this story to [Cabinet colleagues] Garret [Fitzgerald] and Justin [Keating], because I thought it might worry them. It didn’t worry me.31

He did not state if he mentioned it to others. Curiously, this significant admission was not regarded as newsworthy at the time of publication in 1998, apart from in the Irish edition of The Sunday Times, and some years later in Hot Press music magazine. It was not mentioned in John Horgan’s mildly critical or Roy Foster’s celebratory review of O’Brien’s Memoir.32

The revelation received attention in a 2001 Irish language television programme on Osgur Breathnach, who (after two trials in the juryless Special Criminal Court) was convicted in December 1978 with Nicky Kelly and Brian McNally of robbing a mail train near Sallins, Kildare, in 1974. False confessions had been beaten out of them. In May 1980, the Court of Criminal Appeal ruled Breathnach and McNally’s confessions inadmissible and quashed their convictions. Kelly absconded before sentencing, but later gave himself up. Kelly was then jailed as his appeal was out-of-time. He was released due to public pressure in 1984 and received a Presidential exoneration in 1992.33

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29 ‘Cooney scorns complaints, refuses inquiry machinery’, IT, 6 Sep 1976.
In an interview on the Osgur Breathnach television documentary, O’Brien remarked of the police beating reported to him:

I later told Garret [Fitzgerald] that I had had this information and [that] I hadn’t told him [earlier] because he would have used it against the policeman, who in my opinion had done the right if unorthodox thing and had saved the life of [Herrema] a completely innocent man.

The publicised beating of Breathnach, Kelly, and McNally, convicted for something of which they were innocent, did not interest O’Brien.\textsuperscript{34}

Derek Dunne and Gene Kerrigan wrote on the beating in 1984, fourteen years before O’Brien’s revelation. They reported, ‘two detectives from Dublin, it is said, came down and “did a job” on the suspect’ in the Herrema case:

The two detectives who allegedly did this were Gardaí who have also been named by several sources as two of the originators of an informal and unofficial grouping which had come into being in the force, a group known as the Heavy Gang.\textsuperscript{35}

Kerrigan and Dunne asserted that there was no government ‘green light’ for police brutality, but O’Brien’s behaviour was implicit state sanction. As noted, the AGSI considered that Commissioner Garvey was aware of and approved the beatings. O’Brien did not address the extension of these methods into an administrative practice when publicised in 1976-77, or subsequently.

Justin Keating, O’Brien’s uninformed former cabinet and Labour colleague, commented later on the Dublin Monaghan bombings report by Judge Barron,

I think there is a progression which runs from our response to the Dublin/Monaghan bombings, to the beating the shit out of suspects in Garda custody, and to the ‘heavy gang’.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34} O’Brien, \textit{Faoi Lámha an Stáit}, TG4, 2001.
\textsuperscript{35} Dunne, Kerrigan, 1984, p97.
\textsuperscript{36} Justin Keating, ‘Muddled thinking on terrorism’, \textit{IT}, 5 Jan 2004. Dunne, Kerrigan, 1984, pp95-97, 99. Many years later the Morris Tribunal found that Gardaí in Donegal framed a night Club owner for a murder he did not commit, of convicting another of having drugs on his premises that Gardaí planted, and of ‘discovering’ IRA explosives that the Gardaí manufactured and planted. Morris found that the Gardaí had lost their character as a disciplined force. See Morris Tribunal findings at www.morristribunal.ie (accessed 16 Dec 2014). See also, McGarry, 2006 and Michael Farrell, ‘Dark days before justice’, \textit{IT}, 6 Jan 2007, for the suggestion that these practices had their origin in the 1970s. In his account of this period, \textit{Irish Times} journalist Patsy McGarry (2006) suggested that later problems of police corruption in Ireland stem from this period in the 1970s.
During the 1977 election campaign O'Brien attempted to make state security and his old arms trial adversary, Charles Haughey, who was reappointed to the Fianna Fáil front bench in 1975, the central issues. It was a failure since the authors of repression lost heavily and three ministers, Cooney, Keating and O’Brien, their seats. As the succeeding Fianna Fáil government did not repeal measures enacted by the coalition, however, an apparatus of repression remained in place.

9.2 The Mother’s Fault

In O’Brien’s view the case for Irish unity was emotional, powerful, and dangerous. It was the basis of his support for broadcasting censorship:

… the impact of the spoken word and image was not just a matter of reason, it was a matter of emotion. You cannot refute the play of emotions by intellectual counter arguments.

The IRA were, he asserted,

…. insulated against democratic repudiation by the whole elitist [19th Century] Fenian tradition. They are insulated against failure by [1916 leader Patrick] Pearse’s interpretation of history.

O’Brien referred to himself in 1978 as one of the ‘ideological revisionists [who] had set out to challenge attitudes... over the past 10 years’, but not republicans’ attitudes. He was, he argued, confronting an ‘irrational force... beyond the reach of argument’. He referred to it later as ‘a sub-culture, which is, in every sense, a pathological element in our life’. O’Brien thought Irish republicans supremely manipulative and continued, ‘one should not under-estimate the capacity of those infected to transmit the infection to the next generation’. It is a view that was close to, but did not quite match, fascist concepts of Judaism as a bacillus within western civic culture. An explanation for an act of censorship, while Observer Editor-in-Chief, indicated that O’Brien viewed republicanism, like the Jewish faith, as carried on by matrilineal descent.

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In 1978 O’Brien pulped ‘more than half a million copies’ of an Observer magazine supplement, so as to alter an article by Ireland correspondent Mary Holland. The piece was entitled, ‘Mary from Derry and 10 Years of Trouble’. In a subsequent letter O’Brien informed Holland,

It is a serious weakness in your coverage of Irish affairs that you are a very poor judge of Irish Catholics. That gifted and talkative community includes some of the most expert conmen and conwomen in the world and in this case I believe you have been conned [see 1979 Irish Press report, below].

Holland’s article featured the formerly non-political Mary Nellis, two of whose sons were imprisoned for IRA activities. O’Brien objected to the depiction of ‘a good woman, hostile to violence’, part of a ‘family [who] have been and continue to be victims of the events of the past ten years’. O’Brien continued,

Since Irish republicanism - especially the killing strain of it - has a very high propensity to run in families, and since the mother is most often the carrier, I incline to the view that a mother whose sons behave in this way has had something to do with what they believe and how they behave.

O’Brien stands by Catholic ‘conmen’ remark

Irish Press 30 November 1979, O’Brien asserts that ‘Catholic conmen’ are IRA ‘fellow travellers’ in media and in the SDLP


42 Coogan, 1995, p318, wondered whether, ‘Bloody Sunday and the entire history of Derry might also have had something to do with the Nellis’s beliefs’. In his Enemy of the Empire (2007), Éamon Maguire, an IRA technician post 1968, observed that his mother passed on to him a sense of duty and morality. A possibly complicating factor in this case for O’Brien’s Catholic-nationalist mother fixation (had he the opportunity to consider it), was that Maguire’s mother was a Protestant.
O’Brien attempted to sack Holland from the Observer, for which she had written since 1964. The attempt was initially unsuccessful due to protests from Holland’s colleagues. O’Brien saw to it that she would be allowed to contribute only on his terms. In 1979 O’Brien asked Holland, ‘to cover the Pope’s visit to Ireland, confident that she would write a critical and caustic piece’:

She in turn was prepared to write that sort of article, but on condition that the paper carried her other articles as well, including those critical of British rule. When O’Brien made clear that the only articles he wanted on Ireland were those in line with his own politics, Mary Holland felt there was no course open to her but to resign.  

Holland returned to the Observer after O’Brien’s tenure ended in March 1981.  

O’Brien was attempting to pursue in England the censorship he pioneered in Ireland (and which previously as minister he had asked the BBC to replicate). Besides viewing republicanism as a disease carried in the main by mothers, O’Brien’s saw Irish Catholicism as politically enduring and defining of Irish nationalist personality. In 1968 O’Brien acknowledged the imposition by the state, and secular social forces, of conservative social policy through the agency of the Catholic Church. After that, he largely ignored the role of the state. He ended up confusing Catholicism and conservatism. The latter he eventually embraced. O’Brien’s views on republicanism as a sectarian infection created ideological space for those later published by Peter Hart.

9.3 O’Brien, Paisley, ‘good friends’

O’Brien’s eventual support for the union with Britain was enabled partly by explaining away unionist sectarianism. In his Memoir O’Brien traced a ‘difficulty’ faced by Bill Lowry, related to O’Brien’s first wife by marriage, as Unionist Minister of Home Affairs during the Second World War. Lowry was tasked with finding a place of worship for US Roman Catholic servicemen stationed there. The only suitable large building was a disused Orange Order hall, a prospect occasioning sectarian discontent. Lowry diffused it by stating that once the servicemen departed, ‘we can have the place fumigated’. He was forced to apologise to Bishop Farren of Derry, the ecclesiastical representative of US Army Catholic chaplains. O’Brien characterised Lowry’s response to the Orangemen as ‘in its context…. not a bigoted remark, but a genial and humorous

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43 ‘Conor Cruise O’Brien and the Media, the decline of an Irish liberal’, Workers Research Unit, Belfast Bulletin No. 9, Spring 1981. See Martin Wainwright, ‘Guardian Diary’, Guardian (Lon.), 27 Nov 1979, in which O’Brien’s edging out of the paper’s East Africa and Scotland correspondents, David Martin and Brian Wilson, was linked to Holland’s departure.

44 This episode is mentioned also in ‘Cruising in turbulent waters’, by Michael Ross, Sunday Times, 8 Nov 1998; see also O’Brien’s brief account, 1998, p373 and account in Liz Curtis, 1984, pp193-4. ‘For the first time, the situation was fully explained’, IT, 9 Jun 2004.

rebuke to bigotry’. He wrote, ‘I dined... more than once [at] Bill’s house and I liked him a lot, he was not a bigot’.  

Lowry was relatively less bigoted than his predecessor, Dawson Bates. G.C. Duggan, who was Comptroller and Auditor-General in Northern Ireland from 1945-49, reported in 1967,

When it is remembered that the first Minister [of Home Affairs], Sir Dawson Bates, held that post for 22 years and had such a prejudice against Catholics that he made it clear to his Permanent Secretary that he did not want his most juvenile clerk, or typist, if a Papist, assigned for duty to his Ministry, what could one expect when it came to filling posts in the Judiciary, Clerkships of the Crown and Peace and Crown Solicitors?

The historian J.H. Whyte observed:

As the years passed, evidence emerged of Orange Order surveillance of Catholic civil servants and even civil servants married to Catholics. Consequently, their numbers ‘in the higher ranks of the N[orthern] I[reland] C[ivil] S[ervice] dropped consistently through the late 20s and early 30s’. A Catholic gardener at Stormont was dismissed at one point, ‘following Orange Order pressure’, ‘despite a good army record and a reference from no less than the Prince of Wales’. Loyalty was not the issue. Though adequately loyal, civil servant Patrick Shea was pegged at the rank of Principal Officer during the 1950s. He was informed eventually by his Permanent Secretary, ‘because you are a Roman Catholic you may never get any further promotion’. This is unsurprising since, as previously noted, the governing Ulster Unionist Party banned Roman Catholics from membership.

After the onset of the Troubles, Shea was promoted and enjoyed a brief prominence. No longer a pariah, his elevation became a façade that obscured discrimination. Discrimination in the private and public sectors had a purpose. It prevented Catholics from becoming a majority.

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48 Bew, Gibbon, Patterson, presented nuggets from the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, such as this as on the gardener, as endnotes, 1979, p97, n12. Shea, 1981, p177.

Because of the higher Catholic birth rate, 51% of school-going children in the 1960s were Catholics. Yet the proportion of Catholics in the overall population was remarkably stable at 34.4% in 1911 and 34.9% in 1961. However, it was estimated that between 1937-61, Catholics constituted nearly two thirds (60%) of emigrants. Barritt and Carter observed in 1962,

Emigration is just about sufficient to drain off the excess births in the Catholic community, and keep the population of Protestants and Catholics almost stable; they are in fact very close to the levels at which they stood at the foundation of the state forty years ago. Thus the difference in economic opportunity is a regulator maintaining the status quo.

O’Brien was familiar with this feature of Northern Ireland society, but chose increasingly to ignore it, or to characterise a concession to bigotry as a ‘rebuke’ to it.

The bilateral 1985 Anglo Irish Agreement, that gave the Irish government a consultative status on Northern Ireland, was opposed by O’Brien, as was the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA). Of the 1994 IRA ceasefire and peace process that led to the 1998 agreement he said,

If things continue the way they have been going, freedom of expression amongst us will die for lack of exercise, as a result of an insidious and demoralising so-called Peace Process.

Censorship directed primarily against Sinn Féin was lifted in the south in January, in the UK in November 1994. O’Brien was against ending censorship, despite the IRA ceasefire and his, in the circumstances idiosyncratic, concern for freedom of expression.

The Northern Irish Protestants, toward whom O’Brien developed politically affectionate feelings, were as imaginary a construct as the Catholics O’Brien thought of in negative terms. One beneficiary of O’Brien’s changed outlook was Ian Paisley who O’Brien considered in 1968 a ‘hate merchant’. In 1980 O’Brien observed, ‘the rise of Mr Paisley is indeed lamentable to all who value good relations between the two communities in Ireland’. However, he blamed the IRA, the SDLP, Fianna Fáil, Irish American politicians, the Irish Times, and other newspapers in the Republic for attempting to ‘shove’ unionists into a United Ireland through the ‘bomb and the bullet’ or ‘propaganda’. Consequently, concluded O’Brien, the Irish Times, ‘like Frankenstein, ha[s] done much to create this phenomenon’.

Joint opposition to the 1985 Anglo Irish Agreement led to a meeting of minds. O’Brien observed in 2007,

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52 Michael Foley, ‘O’Brien blames violence on IRA’, IT, 10 Jul 1995. See Ruane, Todd, 2014, on the significance of the GFA.
53 A point made originally in the TLS review of O’Brien’s States of Ireland, 10 Nov 1972.
I have known Paisley now for about 50 years, during the first phase of which I was opposed to him and he to me. But for the past 20 years, we have been good friends and still are. I am quite sure he is not going to do a deal with the British and Irish Governments, despite their copious hints to the contrary... When Paisley finally announces his decision against them, the two governments will have to shut up about the North...

The ‘hints’ it turns out were correct and a deal was done with Sinn Féin that year. The new Northern Ireland First Minister, Ian Paisley, O’Brien’s latter-day friend, appeared on publicly friendly terms instead with Deputy First Minister, Sinn Féin’s Martin McGuinness. This would have seemed an unlikely outcome to O’Brien, who wrote in May 1998 (sub-heading, below left),

I am glad to be an ally of Paisley’s in the defence of the Union… I should be ashamed to be associated with the political representatives of the IRA, as our Taoiseach and other leading Irish politicians are. I should be ashamed to be associated with the political representatives of loyalist paramilitaries, as [the Unionist Party leader] David Trimble and his remaining friends are. But Ian Paisley has no present paramilitary ties.

O’Brien’s painstaking drift toward Paisley’s politics, that contradicted the erstwhile anti-sectarian logic of his critique of Irish nationalism, was vitiated by Paisley’s abrupt ‘strong man’ move in an opposite direction.

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9.4 Chapter Conclusion

O’Brien viewed repressive legislation as ‘needed to relax the ‘siege mentality’ of some Northern Protestants’. His consistent refrain was that unionists required constant reassurance, so that they would feel less violent. Persecuting their opponents was the route chosen in pursuit of this goal.

It was not successful. Claud Cockburn noted in 1972,

Those such as Dr. O’Brien and many others who pin faith and hope on the moderates, have to admit that the nerves of those unhappy people are far from in good shape. For years they have been under the protection of the British Army, the RUC, the UDR, the UVF, the UDA, the Tartan Gangs, and an unlisted number of skilled assassins. Yet they cannot it seems feel easy in their minds unless and until they are assured that the Irish Labour Party intends them no harm.

As O’Brien accurately predicted in January 1969, before he engaged in strategic forgetting and revised himself, ‘those who are repressed will respond – and are responding – in kind’. By intellectual slight of hand oppressor then became oppressed, its violence, with the imprimatur of the state, justified. O’Brien became the champion of arguments he had opposed. The arguments gained strength through repressive authority and censorship. Prior to his gaining executive office, O’Brien’s views, while increasingly in tune with the socio-economic needs of the southern elite, competed with others. Once censorship was combined with repression, his arguments gained currency. In carrying out his task, compliance was enforced. Afterwards, it was forthcoming because there were those who responded positively to a negative reinforcement that was intellectual, occupational and physical. O’Brien’s orientation was in tune with a change of economic direction that required political acquiescence in order to impart to the change a self-sustaining impetus. As Gramsci explained, ‘The state is the instrument for adjusting civil society to the economic structure’. The battle takes place within society’s superstructure, its civil society, at the level of ideology and of ‘cultural organisation’.

In his consciously applied role of defender of the state, O’Brien was prepared to permit a critique of Irish society within circumscribed limits. Criticism of Irish Catholicism was acceptable if it delivered a simplified stereotype of Catholics as having a ‘tribal’ or sectarian opposition to Protestants and to Britain. That case could be compromised if feminists like Mary Holland or others with left-wing or liberal ideas in the Labour Party or elsewhere, were allowed to contribute to a critique of British rule or to portray sympathetically its mainly Catholic victims.

O’Brien’s attempts to censor Holland in the Observer newspaper, like his 1974 attacks on Mary Robinson, Seamus Deane, and others, is the key to O’Brien’s using his power to attempt to marginalise republican, feminist and socialist voices. In 1987 O’Brien caused Irish feminist Nell McCafferty to be banned from appearing on Irish radio and television, under broadcasting censorship provisions O’Brien had perfected between 1973-77. Live on air O’Brien pressed McCafferty on whether she supported the IRA, knowing the result when he achieved his object as she answered yes (see page 163, note 71).

It was also a calculated attempt to cut these individuals off from those they might otherwise influence. Many of those O’Brien targeted remained steadfast in their views, though some, due to the considerable pressure, did not. The respective fates of Kevin Myers and Eoghan Harris (encountered also in chapters one and five), whose RTÉ careers were shunted off course by censorship and by O’Brien, exemplify this phenomenon.

RTÉ was a public political and cultural institution over which O’Brien had ministerial authority, where his influence lasted long beyond his official tenure. A case study following, explaining what happened, encapsulates the interrelationship between O’Brien’s ideas, the imperatives of the status quo, and the effects on a formally free institution.
CHAPTER TEN Obeying and Disobeying Orders

Imposing an effective censorship regime in southern Ireland took time and effort, in an exercise that succeeded in diminishing awareness of nationalist experience in, and public capacity to question policy on, Northern Ireland. As censorship became embedded, the silence it engendered eventually became also ignorance of its existence and effects. It was the basis for a process of ideological re-engineering of Irish sensibilities, initially undertaken by the 1973-77 Labour-Fine Gael government.

Overt censorship is considered unwise as a method of controlling public sentiment. Its absence bolsters the impression of fairness, enhances democratic legitimacy and encourages social integration. In short, censorship potentially undermines the consensual basis of governmental hegemony. Yet, the British government imposed censorship affecting broadcast coverage of the Northern Ireland conflict from 1988-94. Censorship of Irish broadcasting was more severe and long-lasting than was the case in the UK, on whose territory the conflict was conducted. Mary Holland commented in 1981 on an extensive and debilitating pre-existing British system of broadcasting self-censorship: ‘for every programme that gets banned, there are about twenty that don’t get made’. For Ireland’s public service broadcaster RTÉ, such was the completeness of the censorship regime perfected by Conor Cruise O’Brien during the 1970s, the programmes were seldom if ever proposed in the first place. In Britain an occasional victory, or even a hard fought defeat, might engage critical attention. In southern Ireland, censorship came closer to achieving its aim, a silence atrophying critical and intellectual engagement. To adopt Gramsci’s theoretical framework, RTÉ’s silence strengthened the Irish state in its ‘attempt… to ensure that force will appear to be based on the consent of the majority expressed by so-called organs of public opinion’.

Britain’s greater worldwide role, the status of the BBC as an independent public service broadcaster, and Britain’s responsibility for the conflict, meant that six years of British censorship generated more attention than twenty-three of the Irish version. Irish censorship

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1 See Curran, 1990.
2 In Curtis, 1984, p188. See also, The British Media and Ireland, Truth: the first casualty (pamphlet), Campaign for Free Speech on Ireland, 1979.
4 Gramsci, 1971, p80.
5 A point made by Shaw, 2005, p118.
had more enduring effects. This was, it is argued, due to its longevity, greater severity in application and a role in creating a privileged discursive space for transforming southern Irish nationalist ideology. This chapter will outline how, despite opposition within, RTÉ was subdued and then itself extended the censorship regime. It will explain how Conor Cruise O’Brien’s intervention enabled this outcome.

From approximately 1976 onwards; RTÉ avoided discussing the specific implications of censorship. For example, a 1984 RTÉ published study (edited by media sociologists), examined ‘21 years of Irish television’ but ‘managed to ignore Northern Ireland and the Section 31 [censorship] directives completely’. In 1991, similarly, RTÉ’s then director of television programmes, Bob Collins, ignored Section 31 and its effects when he addressed RTÉ’s coverage of the conflict at a Cultural Traditions Group symposium at the University of Ulster. This silence about silence was part of a wider pattern.6 The Media chapter in Share and Tovey’s A Sociology of Ireland (2000) also ignored Section 31. An indexed entry on ‘censorship’ displayed one reference, to the ‘Catholic Church’.7 These absences indicated how sections of the intelligentsia avoided a critical understanding of the effects of the Northern Ireland conflict. This exercise was an outworking of a phenomenon noted by Steven Lukes concerning ‘the power to mislead’ that combined willing and unwilling compliance with domination, in which social actors ‘consent to power and resent the mode of its exercise’.8 The achievement of this effect in RTÉ, which will now be outlined, advertised the bruising consequences of challenging the parameters of official discourse.

10.1 1971-72 Order Imposed, Authority Dismissed

In May 1970 Fianna Fáil Taoiseach Jack Lynch sacked his ministers for Finance and Agriculture, Charles Haughey and Neil Blaney, after details of secret attempts to supply arms to northern nationalists were leaked to the opposition.9 These dramatic events, plus unsuccessful prosecutions of the former ministers and alleged associates, indicated a crisis of hegemony. The government became determined to re-take control of civil society. In time, repression and censorship formed a major part of their response.

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6 Horgan, 2001, p123, referring to McLoone and MacMahon (eds.), 1984. Collins in McLoone, ed. 1991, pp71-6. When a seminar participant reminded Collins of Section 31, he said he was against it (but clearly not sufficiently to mention the subject unprompted).


8 Lukes, 2005, pp149, 150.

9 (Justin) O’Brien, 2000, p119.
After months of skirmishing, on 1 October 1971 the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs (P&T), Gerard Collins, issued a Ministerial Order under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act (1960) to the state appointed RTÉ Authority. The provision permitted the minister to ban ‘any matter or matter of a particular class’. Collins obliged RTÉ to,

… refrain from broadcasting... matter that could be calculated to promote the aims or activities of any organisation which engages in, promotes, encourages or advocates the attaining of any particular objective by violent means.

The instruction arose from RTÉ interviews with Official and Provisional IRA leaders three days earlier. Having issued his all-encompassing yet vague Order, the Minister refused clarification, claiming RTÉ, ‘would have no difficulty in understanding what was meant’. RTÉ stated that it rejected the basis for the Order but promised it would ‘endeavour to provide’ balanced coverage.

Confusion turned to crisis on 19 November 1972. Kevin O’Kelly of Radio Éireann’s This Week reported an interview, not itself broadcast, with Provisional IRA leader Seán Mac Stiofáin. The government afterwards dismissed the RTÉ Authority for failure to adequately discipline broadcasters. Mac Stiofáin was then charged with IRA membership. O’Kelly refused in court to identify Mac Stiofáin’s voice on the un-broadcast audio tape and was sentenced to three months for contempt. RTÉ Journalists downed tools for two days while print journalists stopped for one. O’Kelly was freed after a hastily arranged Supreme Court appeal reduced incarceration to an anonymously paid fine.

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10 Equivalent to BBC Board of Governors.
suggested in 1976, the directive ‘clearly diminished the permissible scope of journalistic
d judgement in RTÉ’. It was to diminish further.

The Fine Gael and Labour opposition parties united in opposing a government action that
caus ed considerable public disquiet. Literary and cinema censorship was relaxed during the
1960 s in a society looking forward to more individual and group freedoms and less church
domination of civil society. As O’Brien noted in December 1968, Irish television was part
of this liberalising influence. Many Broadcasters regarded themselves as radical
modernisers, who were pushing the boundaries of professional autonomy against official
opposition. Censorship was considered a step backwards. Conor Cruise O’Brien’s initially
strenuous opposition to the imposition of censorship mirrored previously discussed
opposition to repression in Northern and Southern Ireland. It also masked O’Brien’s retreat
from those positions.

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14 1976, p469 Also, ‘New curb on RTÉ coverage of IRA, ‘Guidelines’ to editorial staff”,
IT, 22 Dec 1972.
15 For an impression of liberalising events and attitudes, Gray, 1966; Stapleton, 1974,
similar views on Irish television in 1968, see page 153.
O’Brien’s political drift towards unionism, as detailed in Chapter Eight, caused him political difficulties in October 1972. In compensation he was to the fore in November opposing broadcasting censorship. O’Brien observed,

‘Good communicators tend… to have a higher proportion of what are described as republicans among them… If you are going to try to purge the republicans… then I think you become engaged in a hunt for unpopular opinions … in which such people [a]re hunted for their opinions… You will drive out the brains and inspiration together with the opinions you are aiming at… [Y]ou think there may be a tumour and you apply massive radiation and destroy the patient.

He remarked also, ‘I am not now and never have been in favour of censorship of the Press and the media’. Yet, O’Brien would later administer the radiotherapy to broadcasters, at least ‘25 per cent’ of whom in 1972 (he ‘guess[ed]’) were republicans.17

O’Brien’s speech was followed some days later by 25-year-old RTÉ reporter Kevin

Myers resigning in protest. He returned as a freelance reporter eight months later, on the basis that O’Brien was a new ‘more open’ minister. RTÉ management then banned Myers. In protest, the NUJ cited the new minister’s previous words in opposition (reports page 210). O’Brien and RTÉ ignored the protests and Myers was forced to seek alternative employment. Many years later Myers supported O’Brien’s views. In 2006 he asserted that he ‘better underst[ood] the position of the government’ that derailed his career.\textsuperscript{18}

O’Brien legislated for authoritarian ambiguity in RTÉ in 1976, after three years in office.\textsuperscript{19} He engineered a situation where ideas similar to those he previously espoused were censored. Broadcasters defended in 1972 were ‘hunted for their opinions’. O’Brien’s about-turn was partially effected by recreating it in others. Myers, and the soon to be discussed RTÉ producer Eoghan Harris, were originally sympathetic to left wing ‘Official’ republican analysis and were victims of political censorship. They re-emerged years later as prominent supporters of revisionist Irish historiography, in particular of Peter Hart, of Conor Cruise O’Brien, and also as adherents of the US inspired neo-con project.\textsuperscript{20} The control exercised over their working lives by being sidelined within, or refused re-employment by, RTÉ, and the role RTÉ was forced to play by Conor Cruise O’Brien and successors, helped to transform them and the Irish political climate.\textsuperscript{21} Other members and supporters of Official Sinn Féin (Sinn Féin the Workers’ Party from 1976, The Workers’ Party from 1982) within RTÉ began adopting a neo-unionist stance and attempted to police Northern Ireland content. This sublimation of apparent radicalism into modes of behaviour acceptable and in relation to Northern Ireland, useful to, or at least tolerated by, the state was conditioned by the imposition of legal, that is enforced, censorship.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{19} ‘Broadcasting ban on I.R.A. publicity to continue’, \textit{IT}, 26 Apr 1974; Conor Cruise O’Brien, ‘Blacking out the IRA; ban to bar terrorists from access to broadcasting’, \textit{Times} (Lon), 19 Oct 1988.
\textsuperscript{20} However, Myers protested in 2001 at lack of US appreciation of his efforts on its behalf, and criticised diplomats for calling him ‘Myles’ when he took up his first US Embassy invitation. He observed, nevertheless, ‘We live within the American imperium, the most benign empire in world history’, ‘Irishman’s Diary’, \textit{IT}, 18 Oct 2001. For Harris’s subsequent similar opinions, see British Council Ireland, 2005.
\textsuperscript{21} On Myers’ attitudes and support for Peter Hart, pages 110-12; for Harris, pages 122-3.
\textsuperscript{22} See Hanley and Millar, 2009, and also Swann, 2006, pp387-8, 390-1, 393-95, 398; on the political evolution of Official Republican Movement. See Mac Manáis, 2004, Chapter Fifteen; Purcell in Miller, & Rolston, eds., 1997.
O’Brien’s interventions in particular transformed RTÉ’s Northern Ireland coverage from a public to a state service. He consolidated and considerably extended measures first put in place by Fianna Fáil, as will be demonstrated below.

10.2 1974-76 Self-Censorship Established

Changes in RTÉ resulted as much from experience as from legislation, beginning with the Authority sacking in 1972. During O’Brien’s 1973-77 tenure as Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, RTÉ was brought even more forcibly into line. According to T.P. Hardiman, RTÉ’s Director General from 1968-75, O’Brien directly pressurised programme executives. O’Brien was possibly aware that former RTÉ Authority chairperson (and War of Independence veteran), C.S. Andrews, ‘generally rebuffed… protests [about the presence of Sinn Féin spokespeople]… and shielded his journalists’ from ministerial interference that began and ended with the Authority chairperson.’

In 1975, by way of contrast, RTÉ’s Head of News reportedly informed journalist Derek Davis that O’Brien had telephoned to demand that Davis be sacked. Davis’ misdemeanour was in reporting official discussion on a possible sentencing concession to then under-siege maverick republican kidnappers of Tiede Herrema, a Limerick-based Dutch industrialist. This was part of a pattern established soon after O’Brien became minister.

In 1973 O’Brien called unannounced on Hardiman as RTÉ Director General. He insisted that television current affairs producer Eoghan Harris be dismissed. A supporter of Official Sinn Féin, Harris campaigned openly against European Economic Community (EEC) entry in 1973. It did not represent, he remarked in his then anti-imperialist mode, a ‘divorce from Britain’ but was, ‘abduction consequent upon rape’. Harris observed, ‘the colonial symptoms of our relationship with Britain’ included,

… the protection of the ruling class of six of our counties, who used a local and especially vicious form of social control called religious bigotry.

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25 Hardiman, op. cit.. The point was first made in Village magazine (Sep 2009) in an article on Hanley and Miller, 2009. Hardiman suggested that my text should have stated that O’Brien visited Hardiman unannounced, that O’Brien insisted (not ‘asked’) that Harris be sacked, that Hardiman rejected O’Brien’s demand, something I implied instead of stating explicitly (email to author, 2 Sep, 2009). These corrections are reflected here.
O’Brien’s demand was rejected. Hardiman told the minister he should, if he felt so strongly, behave like predecessors and speak to the RTÉ Authority chairperson. O’Brien declined and instead struck later from a different direction. At the October 1974 Labour Party conference O’Brien, ‘blamed the Provisional IRA and other militant groups for the continuation of internment [without trial]’ in Northern Ireland and said the IRA ‘benefited’ in propaganda terms ‘from its continuation’. Therefore, highlighting the effects of internment was IRA propaganda, a candidate for censorship. The Monday morning following O’Brien arrived at RTÉ and required senior management to watch with him a recently broadcast programme on internment produced by Harris and others. He announced afterwards that if ‘IRA propagandists’ were not in a physical occupation of RTÉ they had ‘attained a spiritual occupation’. The programme included interviews with internees who suffered sensory deprivation interrogation techniques but it did not transgress Section 31 rules.

In the programme one internee, Paddy Shivers, … described how he had remained hooded and standing for four days with his ‘boiler suit’ filling up with his own excrement. Others described how they had visions and two were convinced they were dead.

The previous Fianna Fáil government cited this treatment in pursuit of torture allegations against the British government at the European Court of Human Rights. In 1978, the Court found that internees had suffered ‘inhuman and degrading treatment’. O’Brien had accused RTÉ of, in effect, subversively reinforcing the state’s case.


27 Hardiman, op. cit.


As a result of O’Brien’s intervention, RTÉ management penalised the programme makers, in particular Eoghan Harris as producer. He was removed from current affairs programming. ‘One of the most ominous effects’ was, as the Irish Times suggested,

…the fact that the RTÉ management... which in the past has normally backed its broadcasters... has semi-publicly admonished them... This fact has caused concern and a fear that tougher action is being taken by the management under pressure from its superiors.

That may have been because, noted the Irish Press’s usually well-informed television critic:

The [RTÉ] Authority has been asserting itself in areas of management which previous authorities left to the administrative and executive employees of RTÉ. It has insisted on being represented on interview boards for example, and its tentacles have reached down deeper and deeper into the day-by-day decision-making and programme-making areas of the organisation.

Eoghan Harris observed in 1988 that subsequently he had been ‘marginalised and put into ridiculous, rubbishy programmes’. However, Harris claimed simultaneously but obscurely that manic depression caused his 1974 downfall. By that stage Harris agreed with the former minister and was attempting to do to others what O’Brien had done to him. He observed in 1994 that for the previous 25 years O’Brien was ‘almost always correct’, including, presumably, in 1973 and 1974.33

After O’Brien’s 1974 intervention in particular, fear of the consequences of stepping out of line descended, a fear subsequent ministers sustained (see examples one and two).

Example One: convincing ‘the right people’

On 22 December 1982, Gavin Duffy on Radio Leinster planned a programme to include Democratic Unionist MP Ian Paisley, British Labour MP Ken Livingstone, plus Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison from Sinn Féin. As Radio Leinster was one of a number of illegal ‘pirate’ radio stations, Section 31 Orders did not apply. However, a hand-delivered ministerial letter advised the station not to commit a ‘criminal offence’ by broadcasting the programme. It was pulled and Duffy was sacked. The owners explained, ‘This severe action had to be taken to convince the Minister and “the right people”… this will enhance our chances of getting a license and that’s the bottom line.’34


Example Two: RTÉ journalist sacked

On 15 March 1988, an ‘angry’ Fianna Fail Communications Minister, Ray Burke, ‘demanded a full explanation’ of how RTÉ broadcast the voice of Sinn Féin’s Martin McGuinness. Some days earlier, a squad from the British Army’s elite SAS regiment shot dead three unarmed IRA members in Gibraltar. The bodies of the three were airlifted to Dublin and transported by road between the Republic and Northern Ireland. Morning Ireland reporter Jenny McGeever recorded border negotiations with the RUC on placing an Irish Tricolour flag, beret, and gloves on the coffins. An unidentified voice, McGuinness’s, was heard stating, ‘It’s acceptable to us and it seems to be acceptable to them’. 35

Following ministerial intervention, the broadcast was unacceptable to RTÉ. McGeever was dismissed. She received support from the NUJ Irish Council but not from RTÉ colleagues. NUJ deputy Irish head Jim Eadie commented,

Jenny McGeever acted as a journalist should… I would expect her other colleagues to offer her their full support and if necessary to take industrial action to protect her job. This is not a legal matter, it is a press freedom matter.

The RTÉ NUJ branch was required to hold a ballot for industrial action. However, because a meeting of the branch decided ‘they would not oppose the journalist’s suspension on a point of principle,’ McGeever retained legal advice. The Broadcasters then suspended their ballot. 36

RTÉ’s and the Minister’s actions re-imposed discipline on the workforce. The Gibraltar story had a wider impact in that British broadcasters questioned their government’s account of the shootings. In both countries right-wing newspapers supported government demands for censorship. In particular, This Week on Thames Television suffered sustained criticism after broadcasting evidence that the unarmed IRA members were shot down in a ‘frenzied’ execution. James Curran suggested that this discrepancy between privately and publicly regulated media turned liberal free press theory on its head, ‘State linked watchdogs can bark, while private watchdogs sleep’. Awareness of this fact may have prompted the imposition of British government broadcast censorship later in 1988. 37

10.3 O’Brien’s New Order, Authoritarian ‘Ambiguity’

O’Brien’s long-anticipated amendment to the Broadcasting Act was passed during 1976. He also appointed Sheila Conroy to chair a new RTÉ Authority that year. An Authority


member since 1973 (also appointed by O’Brien), Conroy had found 1968-75 Director General T.P. Hardiman’s ‘very correct’ conduct ‘frustrating’. She complained that he ‘spent half his time keeping the Authority off the backs of the programme makers’. She noted O’Brien’s, ‘desire to avoid defiance… which might lead to a repeat of the 1972 scenario’. Therefore, ‘I had to be more alert to any attempt to break the [Section 31] ban’.\(^{38}\) New Director General Oliver Maloney observed that Conroy, ‘stamped on boardroom politics quite firmly’. O’Brien observed, ‘to [Conroy’s] credit there was no crisis’.\(^{39}\) This combination of O’Brien’s personal interventions, legislation, and internal leadership, enabled an erosion of RTÉ’s autonomy.

O’Brien’s new Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act permitted a Minister to, ‘by order direct the [RTÉ] Authority to refrain from broadcasting… matter’ that would, in the minister’s opinion, ‘be likely to promote, or incite to, crime or would tend to undermine the authority of the State’. His new Section 18 of the Act similarly prohibited, as a matter of course, broadcast ‘matter that would be likely to promote, or incite to, crime or would tend to undermine the authority of the State’. O’Brien argued that he had liberalised Section 31 and wrote later that, ‘much of Section 31’ was ‘repealed, in legislation introduced by me’. A contemporary headline reproduced with this article correctly contradicted O’Brien’s assertions with, ‘Wider power to stop subversive broadcasts’.\(^{40}\) Analysis of the detail indicates the manner in which O’Brien extended censorship.

O’Brien transformed his former opposition to censorship into opposition to ‘ambiguity’ (see Irish Independent report, page 217). He now opposed the 1971 Fianna Fáil censorship order’s lack of clarity and the ‘brutal replacement’ of the Authority in 1972.\(^{41}\) Why his new form of words, particularly the phrase, ‘tend to undermine the authority of the state’? Originally the phrase proposed was ‘lead to disorder’. However, when this was criticised in 1975, O’Brien happily accepted a ‘suggestion’ from O’Brien’s party colleague, Senator Brendan Halligan, containing the new formulation (report, page 217).\(^{42}\)

On 31 March 1976 in the Dáil O’Brien rejected an opposition Fianna Fáil amendment to delete ‘tend to’ before ‘undermine the authority of the state’. He ‘fully’ admitted that it was,

\(^{38}\) Herron, 1993, p92-3.

\(^{39}\) Herron, 1993, p81-92, passim.

\(^{40}\) ‘Why I stand by Section 31’, II, 3 Jan 1987.

\(^{41}\) ‘Opposition lead in condemning sacking of RTÉ Authority’, IT, 29 Nov 1972.

… more liberal and my own wording is more restrictive… The basic reason why I leaned to the more restrictive, that which gives the [RTÉ] Authority power to curb broadcasters in certain conditions, is that… it can occur from time to time that a broadcaster… may have a desire essentially to make propaganda… [T]he Authority… need to have a provision which is worded reasonably widely... The wording of the statute … therefore … contains some ambiguity’.

O’Brien was then questioned about a provision permitting RTÉ to articulate views on broadcasting policy, and whether this meant that a future Authority a government might propose again to dismiss could express its view on that. O’Brien said,

I shall have that looked at again and if it is felt that there is ambiguity there I shall see to it that it is removed… because it would be highly undesirable to have a debate of that kind.43

O’Brien had added his own version of ‘ambiguity’ so as to make broadcasting legislation ‘more restrictive’ and intended to remove it for the same purpose elsewhere, in order to

ensure censorship in both cases.\textsuperscript{44} O’Brien had further limited the Authority’s and thereby also broadcasters’ room for manoeuvre.

In any case, prior to O’Brien’s new provision coming into force in January 1977, in October 1976, O’Brien used the old legislation to issue an additional Section 31 Order instructing RTÉ to,

… refrain from broadcasting… interviews or reports of interviews with the spokesman for:

(a) the Irish Republican Army (Provisional or Official),
(b) organisations classified as unlawful in Northern Ireland,
(c) Provisional Sinn Féin.

O’Brien stated that ‘clarification’ was necessary, since ‘the existing framework’ permitted an interview with Provisional Sinn Féin’s Seán Ó Brádaigh during the 1976 Sinn Féin Ard Fheis (annual conference).\textsuperscript{45} Ó Brádaigh was last interviewed in 1975 on RTÉ television’s Féach (‘Look’) for the same event. He referred to a ‘ration of five minutes per year’ and ‘could not recollect other Sinn Féin spokespersons allowed on air’.\textsuperscript{46} In other words, the vague 1971 Fianna Fáil Order O’Brien criticised as too censorious was in 1976 too liberal. O’Brien appeared in turn to have ignored a 1975 RTÉ interview with Sinn Féin President Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, who called for release of the kidnapped industrialist Tiede Herrema.\textsuperscript{47}

Consequently, RTÉ journalists ‘warned the public not to expect full and honest news and current affairs coverage’. Significantly, they referred to ‘serious difficulties arising over ambiguities’ by asking,

\textsuperscript{44} ‘Debate on broadcast Bill continues’, \textit{IT}, 1 Apr 1976; ‘House silent on move to silence press’, Denis Coghlan, \textit{IT}, 1 Apr 1976.


\textsuperscript{47} ‘Ó Brádaigh calls for Herrema’s release’, \textit{IP}, 27 Oct 1975. In un-sourced commentary Horgan, 2001, pp121-2, stated that O’Brien issued a new Order in 1974. Akenson, 1994a, p418, may have been the source of the mistake. In 1974 O’Brien in fact reiterated that after taking office he approved of RTÉ’s censorship guidelines and, furthermore, that ‘RTÉ has never consulted him, nor does he wish them to consult him, about the implementation of the guidelines in individual cases’, ‘O’Brien declines to comment on reporting of court cases’, \textit{IT}, 28 June 1974. O’Brien was content then to allow RTÉ to censor a statement in court by Dr Rose Dugdale. He was discontented in 1976 by RTÉ’s more liberal application of its rules by interviewing Ó Brádaigh, while ignoring the 1975 interview.
When is a Provisional Sinn Féin member ‘a spokesman’? Inevitably many people affected by the directive will play safe by steering clear of all news relating to republican organisations. 48 That, indeed, is what transpired. In time it was simply assumed that ‘Sinn Féin member[s]’ were prohibited. 49 O’Brien’s ban on spokespersons for named organisations inserted a further ambiguity that gradually ensnared RTÉ in a determination to exclude republicans from civil society.

The new Order’s ban on ‘reports of interviews’, made a repeat of Kevin O’Kelly’s 1972 report impossible, though O’Brien supported O’Kelly then. It was also a significant difference from post-1988 UK censorship rules, where broadcasters could overdub Sinn Féin interviewees with actor’s voices. This made UK viewers aware that news was censored. RTÉ viewers were not so aware when censorship was applied because, in the absence of it being visually obvious, they were not told. This made censorship effective. Gradually, RTÉ preferred it that way.

Organisations the UK government deemed ‘unlawful’ were also censored. This did not include the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association (UDA) that killed Catholics because, said O’Brien, ‘access by the UDA did not present the threat that broadcasting by the Provisionals represented’. In May 1974, then UDA press officer Sammy Smyth said of the Dublin and Monaghan bombings,

I am very happy about the bombings in Dublin. There is a war with the Free State [Republic of Ireland] and now we are laughing at them. 50 Three weeks after the bombings O’Brien appeared on Britain’s Thames Television with UDA representatives, Andy Tyrie and Glen Barr, who explained to him that only those who ‘served Ulster and the Queen’ could govern Northern Ireland. 51 O’Brien did not view these

51 Robert Fisk, ‘Where does Dublin stand after the failure of power sharing?’, Times (Lon), 7 Jun 1974.
paramilitary opponents of his opponents as worthy of censorship, however many Irish citizens they killed.\textsuperscript{52}

On 19 January 1977 O’Brien incorporated the October 1976 ‘clarification’ into his new annually issued Section 31 Orders. In 1982 Sinn Féin party election broadcasts were banned by then minister Patrick Cooney. The 1988 British ban allowed these, alongside lifting censorship during pre-election periods. Sinn Féin challenged the new 1982 Order and succeeded in the High Court, but this ruling was reversed in the Supreme Court.\textsuperscript{53}

Arguably, the original Section 31 Order (like the later UK version) facilitated some wriggle room. In a history of the Irish media, Christopher Morash suggested that O’Brien, ‘set out to ensure there would be no further ambiguity’, but O’Brien in fact swapped the possibility of liberal for authoritarian ambiguity. Now, the RTÉ Authority was no longer in a position to disagree with the government in the exercise of its statutory duty to ensure fairness and impartiality. It could avoid dismissal by having its hands more firmly tied. Despite his claims, O’Brien had extended Section 31. He was undermining an essential pre-requisite of the public sphere.\textsuperscript{54} It was part of his political legacy.

\textbf{10.4 Bedding in Self-Censorship}

If Féach’s output in 1975 and 1976 had served to demonstrate RTÉ’s independence, in 1977 it indicated subservience. Féach planned again to cover the Sinn Féin Árd Fheis. Fresh conditions were imposed: no interviews or sound of speeches, the report in a 40-minute programme to be four minutes and thirty seconds or less. On the day of broadcast, Director General Oliver Maloney ordered the report dropped, though it did not contravene O’Brien’s new Section 31 directive. This occurred after Fianna Fáil’s return to office in June 1977.\textsuperscript{55}

A Section 31 ‘mentality’ was setting in. It had serious consequences, not least of which was a new reluctance to address the effects of censorship. In a 1976 speech on ‘The powers and standards of the press’, Maloney remained silent on the Broadcasting censorship law amended that year, while criticising print media for reporting RTÉ censorship. A former RTÉ Head of Information later observed, ‘Journalists working in RTÉ… seem to believe

\textsuperscript{52} See Dillon, Lehane, on UDA killings and a perception of nationalists as ‘slimy excreta’, 1973, pp265-8.


\textsuperscript{54} Morash, 2009, 191. See Curran, 1991, on democracy, the media, and the public sphere.

\textsuperscript{55} Tom McGurk, ‘The silent years, the growth of censorship in RTÉ’, \textit{Sunday Tribune}, 11 Jan 1983.
that, Section 31 restrictions apart, there is very little censorship in broadcasting in Ireland.”

It is true that, censorship apart, there was very little censorship. However, an inability to be aware of Section 31’s significance would not inspire confidence in an ability to contest, or even recognise, it elsewhere.

RTÉ reporter Tom McGurk reported that in March 1977 new guidelines arising from O’Brien’s Order were issued. At a meeting with RTÉ staff in Belfast the Head of News, Wesley Boyd,

… informed the journalists that staff were now obliged to ascertain in advance whether someone they wished to interview was a member of any of the named organisations prohibited by the Order.

McGurk referred to the instruction as, in the circumstances, ‘dangerous’ and ‘way beyond journalistic ethics.’ It was a recipe for institutional paralysis, in particular circumvention of the previously noted difficulty of defining a spokesperson, by simply banning from the airwaves all members of Sinn Féin in particular. This approach was an important early indicator of an attempt to exclude Sinn Féin members from participation in civil society. It was all the more effective because it was imposed within a profession whose ethics abjure arbitrary denials of free speech.

10.5 Beating Irish Broadcasters, Emergence of Silence

After O’Brien’s October 1974 intervention, soon to retire Director General T.P. Hardiman warned that ‘follow up treatment of news… had been inhibited by the requirements of RTÉ’s interpretation of the directive’ and that ‘self censorship among broadcasters was evident’. He suggested that basic news coverage was at that stage unaffected. That was to change after Hardiman’s April 1975 retirement.

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56 ‘Press, RTÉ have obligation to lift standards – Maloney’, _IT_, 29 Jul 1976. Feeney, 1984, p61. Maloney’s and Feeney’s remarks were echoed by the previously mentioned (on page 207) RTÉ executive Bob Collins, who, when prompted in 1991 after ignoring Section 31 in a symposium address, said that ‘apart … from … Section 31’, RTÉ aimed to give adequate representation to all minorities and communities, in McLoone, ed., 1991, p94.

55 ‘Silent Years’, op. cit., emph. added.

58 ‘North: RTÉ chief hits at directive’, _II_, 9 Dec 1974. However, during 1974 there were disputes: in January in radio current affairs, when presenter Tom McGurk walked out live on air over RTÉ banning, at the last moment, an interview with a sister of imprisoned IRA hunger strikers, Marion and Dolores Price; and in June in news, when a speech from the dock by Dr Rose Dugdale was censored: ‘Union raps RTÉ on interview cut’, _II_, 10 Jan 1974; ‘Dr. Rose, the woman behind the rebel, RTÉ storm as she gets nine years’, _II_, 26 Jun 1974; ‘O’ Brien declines to comment on reporting of court cases’, ‘Compromise in RTÉ reporting row’, _IT_, 28, 29, Jun 1974 (see also page 218, note 47).
Irish Times Deputy Editor, Donal Foley, noted in March 1977,

RTÉ gets curioser and curioser. No mention of allegations of garda brutality in The Irish Times on their morning news bulletins.

He also observed that the daily RTÉ radio *It says in the Papers* segment omitted,

... all mention of the main, top of the page story, across six columns of The Irish Times (March 1st) on Garda [fingerprinting] irregularities.\(^{59}\)

These included Gardaí misidentifying suspects’ fingerprints ‘over a period of several years’, and also fingerprints of suspects being ‘lifted’ from one crime scene to another. It was big news, affecting investigations into the 1976 IRA assassination of the British Ambassador. The news was perhaps too big for RTÉ operating under O’Brien’s supervision.\(^{60}\)

A subsequent NUJ seminar on ‘Censorship and Press Freedom’ heard RTÉ journalist Eddie Barrett declare that newspaper reports of Garda brutality ‘were censored’ by RTÉ due to ‘apathy, combined with and possibly born of fear’ (report left). In June 1977 RTÉ journalists compiled a report for the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) detailing ‘growing evidence of unnecessary interference’, due to Section 31. In such circumstances, they asserted, objective journalism questioning British or Irish security policy was not possible. A newly-compliant RTÉ management referred to ‘unsubstantiated allegations’ from their own journalists reporting occupational experiences.\(^{61}\)

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\(^{59}\) Donal Foley, ‘Saturday Column’, *IT*, 5 Mar 1977;

\(^{60}\) Don Buckley, Joe Joyce, ‘Wrong fingerprint circulated as assassin’s’, ‘Gardaí said to have falsified evidence’, *IT*, 1, 2 Mar 1977; ‘Senior fingerprint officer moved’, *IT*, 26 Jun 1978.

RTÉ’s Tom McGurk asserted that journalists and editors found it increasingly politic ‘to involve themselves in self-censorship’ because,

Section 31 was the law of the land and RTÉ now found it convenient to cover up its serious shortcomings on northern reportage by hiding behind this fact.62

O’Brien’s assertion to RTÉ management in 1974, that the IRA had engaged in a ‘spiritual occupation’, was reported in the Irish Times on 29 March 1979. The same page carried allegations by prison doctors of systematic police beating of suspects in Northern Ireland interrogation centres. The following day the newspaper published other doctors’ protests at RUC harassment of those making the allegations. RTÉ failed to broadcast details of this story in its possession two years earlier.63

In June 1977 McGurk researched the allegations of RUC beatings. Jack Hassard, a member of the Northern Ireland Police Authority, assisted him. McGurk obtained substantial evidence in Belfast, including photographs of injuries provided by a police surgeon who agreed to be interviewed. ‘Permission to mount a special programme’ was sought from Controller of Programmes, Muiris MacConghail. The latter had moved from RTÉ to become Government Information Service Head in 1973, where MacConghail and O’Brien were ‘close associate[s]’ and ‘became close friends’. He returned to RTÉ in 1975, initially as an assistant to the new Director General, Oliver Maloney. MacConghail reportedly turned down the programme proposal and indicated instead that he would mention it to ‘our BBC colleagues at our next meeting’. McGurk thought it ‘amazing’ that RTÉ ‘should want to surrender [the story] to the BBC’, in effect to kill it.64

Peter Taylor of Thames TV in Britain also researched the story. As British self-censorship was a matter of considerable debate, a comparison of broadcast treatment in Britain and Ireland is instructive.65 On 27 October 1977 Taylor broadcast a programme on the allegations. One week later, ‘Amnesty International became involved’. Britain’s


Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) came under initial pressure to censor the programme, but refused. In June 1978, however, the IBA banned a programme on a leaked Amnesty International report supportive of the allegations. With NUJ agreement the broadcasting technicians’ union blanked TV screens for the programme’s normal duration. The following day parts were seen on BBC’s *Nationwide*, due to Jeremy Isaacs, *Thames* programme controller, giving them the programme tapes. In June 1978, the British government set up an enquiry resulting in the Bennett Report that confirmed systemic police brutality. In 1979 police surgeon Dr Robert Irwin revealed to Mary Holland on ITV’s *Weekend World* what a colleague told Tom McGurk in 1977. In 1980 Peter Taylor published *Beating the Terrorists?*. Had an RTÉ production been allowed in 1977, McGurk might perhaps have written it. When McGurk made a documentary later on a Northern Ireland-related miscarriage of justice he opted for a British broadcaster.  

Whereas British self-censorship was contested publicly, statutory censorship in southern Ireland facilitated the emergence of a regime of silently operated self-censorship. RTÉ was thorough also in areas unrelated to the Northern Ireland story. This stance ensured compliance with government policy to exclude Sinn Féin members from representation and arguably from participation in southern society. A refusal to recognise a distinction between Sinn Féin members, who were not banned, and spokespersons, who were, was one significant basis for ensuring this regime (see examples Three to Eight).

**Example Three: ‘suspect’ pregnancy**

In 1982, school teacher Eileen Flynn was sacked. She had become pregnant with her common law partner, whose previous marriage had ended. Divorce was then unconstitutional. The dismissal and a subsequent failed 1985 High Court challenge was a major news story in a state where abortion also became unconstitutional in 1983. Betty Purcell, a producer on and an originator of, RTÉ Radio One’s *Women Today* programme, attempted to persuade Flynn to tell her story. However, ‘there was a complication as far as RTÉ was concerned’. Flynn’s partner was a member of Sinn Féin. Purcell was instructed to ask Flynn whether she was too:

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67 Flynn v. Power, IEHC 1; [1985], IR 648 (8th March, 1985), No. D5310 of 1985, High Court. While this seemed to be the position after a 1983 referendum, the Supreme Court later ruled in the ‘X’ case that a teenager who had been raped and threatened suicide was permitted an abortion. Further discussed in Chapter Twelve.
She was not inclined to do the interview, but I was convincing her, I felt. I took a deep breath and asked the question. There was a silence, and then she said: ‘Look, I think I’d rather not talk on radio’. That was that.

Flynn was not a Sinn Féin member. This story in southern Ireland’s conversation with itself on matters of personal morality was denied the radio audience. Simultaneously, a researcher on RTÉ TV’s Today Tonight, Fintan Cronin, was informed by programme producers that Flynn was ‘suspect’. RTÉ was fixated on its misconceptions about Flynn’s pregnancy. Perhaps also, because of her partner’s (and her assumed) political affiliations, Flynn did not fit the accepted stereotype of victim of an illiberal Catholicism. When Flynn died prematurely in 2008 an RTÉ Radio item marking her place in Irish history ignored RTÉ’s role.

### Example Four: trade unionist banned

Sinn Féin Vice President Philip Flynn was elected General Secretary of the Local Government and Public Services Union (LGPSU) in May 1984, against orchestrated government opposition. RTÉ refused to interview this leader of the state’s largest public service trade union. The then Labour-Fine Gael government had instituted a prohibition on ministers meeting groups containing Sinn Féin members, including Flynn, and elected representatives. The ban was in response to Sinn Féin’s successful electoral interventions during and after the 1980-81 H-Block hunger strikes. Labour Party Tánaiste (deputy prime minister) Dick Spring said,

> I will not be receiving any deputations that contain people who belong to any political party which supports violence. Neither will I be replying to any representations from members of such parties.

Though Flynn stepped down from his Sinn Féin post in November 1984 the RTÉ and government ban continued. In 1987 an incoming Fianna Fáil administration ended the meetings ban, but RTÉ did not change its rule. However, Flynn obtained a letter from Taoiseach Charles Haughey stating,

> The Taoiseach understands from the Minister for Communications that RTÉ do not now regard Section 31 of the [Broadcasting] Act as applying to you.

The LGPSU subsequently noted that Flynn,

> … appeared on television on a number of occasions... He was not required, nor did he, give any assurance in relation to his politics or political affiliations.

RTÉ was encouraged by government to end its censorship of Flynn, but refused to apply the relaxation generally. In other words, RTÉ exercised its autonomy in favour of censorship.

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69 Eugene McEldowney, ‘Sinn Féin man elected to lead union’, *IT*, 19 May 1984;


73 See also LGPSU history account, Maguire, 1998, pp253, 256, 263.
Example Five: resignation from Anti-Apartheid Movement

Later in 1984, Fine Gael Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald attempted to further marginalise Sinn Féin. He resigned from the Anti Apartheid Movement because Sinn Féin member Dr Seán Marlowe (who RTÉ refused to interview) was elected to its executive and because a proposal to prevent affiliation from a Sinn Féin youth group failed. FitzGerald’s supporters wanted the movement to institute political apartheid against Sinn Féin. FitzGerald’s concerns were expressed during a dispute in which workers in a Dublin city centre supermarket refused to handle South African produce. Apartheid was simultaneously highlighted internationally when South African Bishop Desmond Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. FitzGerald’s ‘worries’ about an ‘SF link’ were then reported. An Irish Times letter writer enquired if FitzGerald considered renouncing Irish citizenship, ‘after all, most members of Sinn Féin are Irish citizens’. 74

Due to its self-censorship policy RTÉ did not interview Marlowe. To do so, as with Eileen Flynn, would have upset ideological parameters censorship held in place. In 1972 FitzGerald supported RTÉ’s right to interview the IRA’s Chief of Staff, on the basis of ‘the maintenance of freedom of speech’. In his later Conor Cruise O’Brien obituary in December 2008, FitzGerald asserted that he had consistently supported Section 31. This indicates an erosion of political memory. The 2012 release of state papers revealed that in 1981, during the H Block hunger strikes, FitzGerald as Taoiseach wrote to his Posts & Telegraphs Minister, Patrick Cooney, that Section 31 was ‘increasingly indefensible’ and should be lifted for a year. The minister refused. FitzGerald, who died in 2011, never articulated this view publicly and eventually seemingly forgot he had it. 75

Example Six: BCC not free

The statutory Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCC) was asked to rule on the member-spokesperson issue in 1987. A caller to RTÉ radio’s Liveline programme, identifying himself as a Sinn Féin member, was cut off from discussing a book on wild flora entitled Wild and Free. A listener, Marcus Free, complained to the BCC. The BCC concluded that the Liveline caller’s observation on air that Sinn Féin members were banned, ‘invited the presenter to terminate the discussion, which she did’. The complaint was then dismissed. The Commission did not rule on their simultaneous finding that the caller ‘got agreement from the presenter’, Marian Finucane, who stated, ‘that is correct’. This articulation of RTÉ policy was the point at issue. The failure to adjudicate indicated how the state’s administrative elite was reluctant to make an objective determination where a decision might grant free speech rights, however inconsequential, to Sinn Féin members. It was a reluctance replicated in a 1993 High Court finding that RTÉ’s banning an advertisement for a book of short stories by Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams was not a matter for court adjudication. 76


Example Seven: ‘kill statement’

On 23 March 1988 RTÉ broadcaster Gay Byrne hosted Lydia Comiskey, Vice President of Navan Trades’ Council, on his morning radio programme. She spoke about the effect on her husband’s emigration to find work. It transpired afterwards that Comiskey was a Joint National Treasurer of Sinn Féin. The party had not been mentioned. Significantly, the RTÉ Radio One Controller of Programmes, Brian Mac Aonghusa, declared that the programme had not breached the Section 31 Order. However, his superiors issued a press release stating, ‘please kill statement from Controller of Programmes Radio One’. RTÉ then itself claimed a breach of the Order where none occurred. The episode in fact signalled a significant breach in RTÉ management’s silence about its self-censorship practices (see subsequent Irish Times letter, below).

Example Eight: self-censoring the talks

The author conducted a study of RTÉ news from 13 September to 1 October 1993. Fortuitously, a story broke on 12 September concerning talks between SDLP leader John Hume and Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams. It was the lead news item for most of the two-week research period. The study found that RTÉ did not once inform the audience that they were unable to interview a person from one half of ‘the Hume-Adams talks’. On the day the story broke, however, an RTÉ newsreader apologised that the station could not interview the other half, John Hume, who was in the United States. The talks led eventually to the 1994 IRA ceasefire and to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. Sinn Féin’s peace strategy discussion was largely ignored by RTÉ, partly because RTÉ’s security, not political, correspondent reported briefly on the annual Sinn Féin Ard Fheis (conference). On those rare occasions the audience was informed of Section 31 ‘broadcasting restrictions’.

IRISH Times 19 April 1988 see Example Seven above

77 Lydia Comiskey, ‘Section 31’, IT, 25 Mar 1988; ‘Ignorance of the law at RTÉ’, Seán MacConnell, IT, 26 Mar 1988; see also, Niall Meehan, ‘Section 31’, IT, 19 Apr 1988. Mac Aonghusa issued his statement after the author rang RTÉ and helpfully explained the law. Admittedly, RTÉ senior management may not have considered this input helpful.

78 The study (Meehan, 1993b) was entitled, (Self) Censoring the Talks: How Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act affected RTÉ’s Coverage of John Hume - Gerry Adams Talks; see also, Mary Holland, ‘Decoding Higgins on Section 31’, IT, 14 Oct 1993.
10.6 Censoring Censorship

The author was involved in a January 1987 public opinion survey testing attitudes to Section 31. It indicated public opposition to banning spokespersons for organisations who also happened to be Sinn Féin members. The campaign against Section 31 began to focus on RTÉ’s application of censorship rules. That year, Head of News Wesley Boyd informed the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) that he wished to stick ‘by the letter’ of Section 31 in order to show,

… how stupid it is, showing up that we cannot even interview a Sinn Féin member on rose growing or wine.

In fact the ‘letter’ of the law permitted a Sinn Féin member who was not a spokesperson to broadcast. Boyd wished to err on the side of censorship, while also claiming that increasing censorship undermined it. This contradiction was questioned at the time.

A flaw in this approach was a failure to apply a second tier of RTÉ’s strategy, ensuring that Section 31 was further reinforced. Boyd was pressed on when RTÉ informed the audience that censorship was being applied. He responded,

We do this when appropriate… but it’s impractical to mention this every time, and there can be other reasons why we restrict coverage; time, news value.

An exchange of correspondence between Sinn Féin General Secretary Tom Hartley and RTÉ Director General Vincent Finn in 1987 elicited from the latter that RTÉ was,

… [not] required to advise its audience on a daily or similar frequency basis… [of] the existence of an Order which has been essentially in existence for over 15 years. Any reference is an editorial on-the-spot matter.

These undefined criteria seldom interfered with the silent application of censorship provisions (see Example Eight, page 227). At that time, reports in South African of anti-Apartheid protests were preceded by a statement that they were compiled under South Africa’s censorship restrictions. Not so with regard to Irish censorship rules. Essentially, RTÉ censored the fact that it was censored. An audience ignorant of its ignorance is a successfully censored audience.

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82 Finn (27 Jan 1987), Hartley (13 Jan 1987), letters in author’s possession.
10.7 Guidelines

RTÉ produced Section 31 staff guidelines that may be compared with the BBC’s ‘Advice to Editors’, on British broadcasting restrictions introduced in 1988. British censorship was not as severe as the Irish version. It banned ‘direct speech’, which permitted reports of interviews and therefore audio voice-overs in which actors lip-synced Sinn Féin interviewees (badly, usually). Unlike in the Republic of Ireland, censorship was suspended at election time. On the statutory reference to banning Sinn Féin spokespersons, however, the British censorship provision was almost identical to Section 31.

The BBC guidelines were discursive and explanatory. They made a direct reference to a distinction between members and spokespersons for Sinn Féin. Significantly, Sinn Féin members,

… cannot be held to represent their organisation in all their daily activities. Some will be regarded as private.

Furthermore,

The Chairman of Strabane council, who is Sinn Féin, can appear in programmes to represent the council. He can speak about council business, decisions made, problems faced, so long as he does not proclaim Sinn Féin. It is accepted that such people are not always representing their organisation even when speaking about their public duties.

RTÉ had attempted its own liberal interpretation prior to the October 1972 sacking of its controlling Authority. In March 1972 Director General Tom Hardiman informed broadcasters that Sinn Féin statements and IRA activities, legal or illegal, could be reported, but without interviews with, or broadcast statements from, IRA representatives. The decision, however,

… would not be published or written down … because a written decision would be binding on RTÉ, and could be used against them if at some later stage it was desired to change the policy.

This stance was abandoned after the Authority was sacked. RTÉ’s remaining autonomy was eroded by Conor Cruise O’Brien’s ministerial and legislative interventions from 1973-77. Had British censorship continued over a longer period, as in RTÉ, perhaps the BBC might also have been ‘tamed’ to the same extent. An important distinction, however, was in the relative position of the broadcasters. The worldwide projection of the liberal ethos of the

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85 ‘Advice’, op. cit.
British state and of the BBC as a free institution exposed it to attention in a way never experienced by RTÉ. This was demonstrated when the US government, despite British opposition, overturned a 20-year ban and granted Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams a visa to visit New York in February 1994. Opposition turned to discomfort when the US media focussed on censorship. It ‘directly contributed to the American celebration of Mr. Adams… the man the Brits are trying to gag’.

The US broadcaster CNN estimated that this factor increased audience ratings for a Larry King Live interview with Adams. Interest grew further when CNN’s satellite signal was down-linked in the UK and then uplinked for transmission elsewhere, bringing it under British broadcasting rules. The interview became available a day late in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, with a US actor speaking Adams’ words (see report, below). This became a worldwide, not merely a US and British, story. British censorship, unlike the Irish version, was difficult to hide.

In contrast to the BBC version, RTÉ’s guidelines simply ignored the membership-spokesperson issue. RTÉ’s document repeated the Ministerial Order, gave minimal instruction on the use of mute film, the reporting of statements from censored organisations, and

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CNN joins battle to end Sinn Fein ban

Pressure is mounting on the government to lift the ban on broadcasting interviews with Sinn Fein, following the enormous publicity gained by the political party’s president Gerry Adams during his 48-hour visit to the US. Broadcasters in the UK hit out at the ban after satellite news channel CNN International was forced to air a dubbed version of its hour-long interview in Europe and North Africa 12 hours after the programme went out live to the Americas and Asia. ‘Restrictions on free speech in London have ended up affecting the rest of the world,’ said CNN London bureau chief David Feingold. He described the ban as ‘among the most restrictive we have faced.’ With the Irish government lifting its version of the ban earlier this year, the government missed a golden opportunity to lift the ban, said ITN chief executive David Gordon.

He is confident the ban will be lifted sooner rather than later. The events of the last few days are pressure enough,’ he said. ‘Britain has been made to look a laughing stock.’

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89 That is not to say that British censorship left coverage otherwise unaffected. David Miller noted that inquiries from broadcasters to the Sinn Féin Falls Road Press Office fell from 417 to 110 four months before and four after the ban, with BBC inquiries dropping from 160 to 45. A process of minimising public awareness of the fact of censorship was also under way, David Miller, ‘News becoming measured by interests, not accuracy’, IT, 18 Oct 1988. See also, Niall Meehan, ‘Censorship and the BBC’, Guardian (Lon), 5 Oct 1992 on banning Bernadette McAliskey for explaining, not justifying, the IRA’s armed campaign. An episode of the science fiction series, Star Trek, was banned also, because it referred to the achievement of a United Ireland, while a song about the innocence of the unjustly imprisoned Birmingham Six was also prohibited, Savage, 2015, p262.

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BROADCAST 14 February 1994 British censorship was main story during Adams’ US visit

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informed RTÉ personnel to refer-up all proposed contact with, or treatment of, censored organisations to the ‘Divisional Head concerned’, who was then required to consult RTÉ’s Director General. No autonomy was left to individual reporters, researchers and producers.90 This rigidly expressed document, designed ostensibly to protect RTÉ, created legal difficulties.

Repeal Section 31 campaigners began to raise the member-spokesperson issue.91 Sinn Féin then announced that those asked about their membership by RTÉ representatives would thwart RTÉ self-censorship by denying it. A spokesperson said, ‘It’s not our problem – it’s RTÉ’s problem’.92 They occasioned panic when detected. As a result, in March 1988 after discussion of the Gibraltar shootings on RTÉ television’s *Questions & Answers* (*Q&A*), audience tickets were cancelled for forthcoming editions. Applicants would in future, said RTÉ, be ‘more positively vetted’, though by what method was never explained. RTÉ decided also to record the previously live programme. Significantly, then *Q&A* producer Peter Feeney admitted that Sinn Féin members were banned due to,

… the interpretation RTÉ puts on Section 31, which is that no person who is a member of Sinn Féin may participate in the programme.93

RTÉ’s Director General Vincent Finn encouraged staff to be ‘even more’ ‘vigilant’ against what he termed ‘a concerted campaign to infiltrate [RTÉ programmes]’. This stance was predicated on ‘RTÉ’s responsibility to observe the law’.94 In fact, RTÉ was breaking it.

### 10.8 Courts Find Against RTÉ

A Dublin Sinn Féin member, Larry O’Toole, wrote on the subject of Section 31 to then RTÉ Head of News, Joe Mulholland, on 30 October 1990. He informed Mulholland that the BBC had recently conducted an uncensored interview with Gerry Adams MP on employment discrimination affecting Adams’ West-Belfast constituency. There was no reason, O’Toole suggested, why RTÉ could not adopt a similar approach. O’Toole asked also why he was censored as a spokesperson for striking workers. Mulholland clarified over the course of three letters that RTÉ banned O’Toole because of his Sinn Féin membership.

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92 ‘Sinn Féin’s new approach to Section 31’, *Sunday Tribune*, 3 Sep 1987; Anne Cadwallader, ‘SF will lie to flout ban’, *IP*, 2 Feb 1988; ‘SF says members will lie to beat ban’, *IT*, 3 Feb 1988.
Mulholland referred later publicly to lip-synced British voiceovers of Adams as ‘farcical and ridiculous’. O’Toole responded,

Maybe it is. But not quite as farcical and ridiculous as the total banning of Adams, no matter what he might say, which Mr Mulholland claimed was the position in RTÉ. 95

On 31 July 1992, Justice Rory O’Hanlon ruled in the High Court against RTÉ’s Section 31 interpretation, as expressed in Mulholland’s replies to Larry O’Toole. O’Toole, on the executive of the bakers’ trade union, was censored by RTÉ in 1990 as spokesperson for striking workers at the Gateaux Factory in Finglas, north Dublin. The Ministerial Order directing that RTÉ ban spokespersons for Sinn Féin did not, on the face of it, include O’Toole’s participation in a strike at a cake factory. 96 However, RTÉ believed, … they were entitled to impose a blanket ban on any broadcast material emanating from any known member of Sinn Féin, regardless of whether it contained a topic totally removed from the political objectives of Sinn Féin and was made without any disclosure of the fact that the person speaking was a member of Sinn Féin, and without any reference to Sinn Féin or any of its political objectives. 97

Within two weeks of the judgement, eighteen of the state’s twenty-one privately owned local radio stations, subject to the same censorship rules, broadcast interviews with O’Toole. 98 RTÉ refused the opportunity and appealed the ruling, in effect to be censored (see report, left). RTÉ distributed a ‘Staff Information Bulletin’ internally, dated 7 August 1992, justifying its


97 The High Court, between Laurence O’Toole, Applicant, and Radio Telefís Éireann, Respondent, Judgement delivered by O’Hanlon J. the 18th day of December 1992. 1991 No. 123 J.R.

stance. This was revealed when O’Toole obtained an Order instructing a reluctant RTÉ to obey the High Court’s ruling:

The [RTÉ] bulletin said that Mr Justice O’Hanlon seemed not to have referred to a Supreme Court view of Sinn Féin or its policies. Neither had the judge appeared to address the ‘clear justification underlying RTÉ’s current position on, and interpretation of, Section 31 orders’. This bulletin said the Supreme Court in a 1982 judgment [Lynch V Cooney] held that any broadcast, whatever the immediate effect of it, by a Sinn Féin member could itself amount to the advancement of the Sinn Féin cause. RTÉ was committed to obeying the law. The Supreme Court declared that law finally and conclusively.99

As RTÉ believed the 1992 High Court judgement contained ‘inconsistencies’ that ignored the 1982 Supreme Court judgement, RTÉ decided to ignore the High Court.

RTÉ’s behaviour caused surprise. The NUJ referred to the RTÉ decision to appeal as ‘extraordinary’. The International Federation of Journalists called it an ‘outrage’, while the US Newspaper Guild commented,

We are astonished that RTÉ, instead of welcoming this liberal interpretation of an abhorrent censorship statute, is asking the Irish Supreme Court for a greater restriction of its free-speech rights.

The decision,

… appalled many staff and unsettled some senior executives. What was RTÉ, which had always opposed Section 31, now doing appealing a decision which at least liberalised the Ministerial Order?100

What RTÉ was doing was stated in its notice of appeal. RTÉ argued that as a Sinn Féin Member O’Toole was personally committed to support for the IRA, and therefore to,

… dismantling by violent and unlawful means the organs of the state… Sinn Féin was committed to social and economic agitation… and to infiltration of other organisations to win support and sympathy for the Republican Movement.

O’Toole, therefore,

… as an admitted member of Sinn Féin, was personally committed to a policy of agitation round social issues to advance the objectives of the provisional IRA.

Specifically, O’Toole’s,

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If I had an ulterior motive it was the practical and immediate one of trying to save my own job. I worked there.

He asked if RTÉ considered attempting to ‘save your own job’ subversive (see 9 September 1992 Irish Times letter, above). O’Toole observed that RTÉ’s justification was reminiscent of Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy’s ‘reds-under-the-beds’ approach in the US during the 1950s.

RTÉ lost its appeal to be censored in March 1993.

After the Supreme Court decision, O’Toole became the first Sinn Féin member interviewed with RTÉ’s permission since 1976. He was interviewed for radio, but RTÉ’s legal affairs correspondent, Kieron Wood, was instructed not to conduct one for television. Joe Mulholland claimed that the ruling ‘still created difficulties for the station’. Eoin Ronayne, chairperson of the NUJ Broadcasting Branch, disagreed: ‘journalists welcomed the decision and saw no difficulty in implementing it’.

New guidelines appeared six months after the decision. RTÉ management sought the narrowest possible interpretation of the O’Toole judgment, the attitude that caused RTÉ

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103 Maol Muire Tynan, Michael Foley, ‘Cabinet to get AG’s report on implications of Section 31 ruling’, IT, 31 Mar 1993.
difficulty in the first place. Reportedly,

Mr Mulholland told journalists… that the ban extended to any Sinn Féin
spokesperson speaking on any subject on which Sinn Féin might have a view or
policy. What this means is unclear, but could it mean that the agricultural
 correpondent could not interview a Sinn Féin member about farming matters,
because his party has a policy on agriculture?\(^\text{104}\)

In addition, if O’Toole was the first knowingly interviewed, he was also the last Sinn Féin
member banned prior to censorship ending. RTÉ and Britain’s Channel Four jointly
broadcast a programme on censorship on 15 January 1994. Channel Four wished to
interview O'Toole on his courtroom victory but RTÉ vetoed the suggestion. O'Toole had
been selected as a candidate in European elections five months hence, ‘which automatically
[made] him a spokesman for Sinn Féin, according to... RTÉ’. The Channel Four producers,

… considered that… Mr O’Toole would not be regarded as a spokesman, but as
speaking in a personal capacity about his High Court challenge and his views on
broadcasting restrictions.\(^\text{105}\)

This was precisely the point at issue in O’Toole’s legal challenge. RTÉ was re-censoring
itself four days before censorship ended in a programme on censorship. Its ‘culture of
censorship’ was embedded.\(^\text{106}\)

10.9 The ‘Spirit’ of the Law

After the O’Toole judgement O’Brien charged that RTÉ management extended the scope of
Section 31 in order to discredit it. But, since RTÉ restricted awareness of their policy, how
were the public to know? O’Brien and Wesley Boyd differed on who was at fault. Boyd
suggested that O’Brien approved RTÉ’s internal Section 31 guidelines, giving the
impression that O’Brien approved the RTÉ membership ban.\(^\text{107}\) However, as noted, RTÉ’s
guidelines ignored this issue.

O’Brien had previously spoken on the subject in 1981 in a manner that, while raising the
member-spokesperson issue, confused the situation.

In the middle of that politically-transformative year RTÉ banned Owen Carron MP. He
won the Fermanagh South Tyrone Westminster parliamentary seat after IRA prisoner
Bobby Sands MP died on hunger strike. Carron had earlier been Sands’ election agent
during the May 1981 by-election that Sands won. Carron then stood as a prisoner’s
representative in a by-election after Sands’ death, as (during the interim) the British
government banned prisoners from standing. Carron had been interviewed by RTÉ as

\(^{104}\) Michael Foley, ‘Section 31 issue still left up in the air’, \textit{IT}, 2 Oct 1993.
\(^{105}\) Michael Foley, ‘Section 31 challenger is banned again’, \textit{IT}, 14 Jan 1994
\(^{106}\) Larry O’Toole, ‘Right To Reply’, \textit{IT}, 29 Jan 1994
\(^{107}\) ‘This Week’, RTÉ Radio One, 2 Aug 1992.
Sands’ representative. However, he was banned when he was named as spokesperson for republican prisoners standing in the first of two southern general elections that year.\textsuperscript{108}

As the hunger strike story was international, censorship was reported too, resulting in some RTÉ journalists becoming exercised on the subject. The London \textit{Times} mistakenly noted what it termed RTÉ’s ‘literal’ interpretation of the Ministerial Order. It reported that RTÉ ‘were assured by its author that they could interview Mr Carron without falling foul of the law.’ O’Brien reportedly stated,

\begin{quote}
The Order banned interviews with spokesperson, not members, of certain organisations; Mr Carron had not stood for election on behalf of Provisional Sinn Féin.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

However, on inspection, O’Brien obscured and confused more than he clarified. He told the \textit{Irish Times},

\begin{quote}
If I were Minister and asked for my opinion, I would have said that RTÉ could have broadcast one interview with Mr Carron because of its news value. However, I would not be in favour of several interviews with Mr Carron which would have given him a platform to promote the views of Provisional Sinn Féin.\textsuperscript{110}
\end{quote}

Either Carron was a spokesperson for Sinn Féin or he was not. If not, as O’Brien seemed initially to suggest, Carron was eligible for interview every time he had ‘news value’. O’Brien’s view implied that the law did indeed have a meaning beyond its literal interpretation. This seemed also to be RTÉ’s view. A spokesperson said RTÉ ‘had an obligation to obey the law and the spirit of the law’. This became clearer still when in 1984 a strike resulted from RTÉ banning Martin Galvin of the US based Irish republican organisation, Noraid. He had been excluded from Northern Ireland but his organisation was not excluded from Irish television under Section 31. As producer Betty Purcell (whose request to interview Galvin precipitated the dispute) put it, Galvin was ‘banned under the spirit of Section 31’. Galvin’s exclusion from Northern Ireland was the basis of his news value and of RTÉ’s paralysis.\textsuperscript{111} A journalist might be legally compell\textsuperscript{ed}, on pain of dismissal, to operate a censorship provision. However, its ‘spirit’ is something a broadcaster might attempt to undermine, so as to adhere to a semblance of professional practice.

In 1981 the NUJ raised the ‘controversial and indeed embarrassing ban’ with the Government. An RTÉ NUJ spokesperson said RTÉ could not be blamed for ‘playing safe’.

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\textsuperscript{109} Christopher Thomas, ‘Haughey presses the Carron line’, \textit{Times} (Lon), 2 Sep 1981.

\textsuperscript{110} Michael O’Regan, ‘RTÉ ‘could have talked to Carron’’, \textit{IT}, 28 Aug 1981

One claim of support consisted of ‘a letter from the Taoiseach, Dr FitzGerald, indicating that he has an open mind on the issue’. The NUJ broadcasters asked for a ‘one year suspension... to prove that RTÉ journalists could act responsibly’. They expressed concern that Section 31 made them appear a ‘laughing stock’, in comparison to their peers. It was reported,

On the day of [Owen Carron’s] election, BBC and ITV broadcast lengthy interviews with the new MP. RTÉ reporters had to stand aside. The interviews were seen in Dublin and other areas of the Republic which receive BBC and ITV.

The predicament did not deflect then Post and Telegraphs minister Patrick Cooney, who ignored the NUJ request to lift Section 31 for a year, which FitzGerald supported when he passed it on privately (revealed in 2011, discussed in Example Five, page 226).112

A combination of professional and public humiliation may have spurred some broadcasters into joining others and into being seen to do something against censorship. However, it also indicated a desire not to draw attention to their embarrassment in the absence of stories that made its effects public knowledge (another reason, perhaps, for not informing the audience of Section 31 restrictions). Events, particularly if they affected British media or attracted international attention, provided a basis for opposition during the 1980s. After a strike in 1985 an RTÉ reporter observed, ‘It would never have happened if we weren’t shamed into it by the BBC’.113 A BBC strike occurred in August 1985 after its Board of Governors banned a Real Lives documentary that profiled Sinn Féin’s Martin McGuinness.114 The BBC action may have engendered a sense of solidarity and common purpose for Irish broadcasters. In these circumstance RTÉ management’s and ministerial room for coercive reaction may have been limited. It was claimed in RTÉ that in the absence of external stimulus,

Most [broadcasters] felt they could get on with the job unrestricted in the reporting of what was happening in the North, even without the spoken words of the IRA and Sinn Féin.

This rationalisation was accompanied by acceptance of self-censorship that was merely

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114 McGuinness is (currently) Northern Ireland’s Deputy First Minister. Lisa O’Carroll, ‘The truth behind Real Lives, Newly-released documents reveal the secrecy, political pressure and damaging splits over the BBC’s decision to screen a pioneering documentary about Northern Ireland’, *Guardian*, 12 Dec 2005. See also, Savage 2015, pp251-59.
'theoretical… since no one admitted to having engaged’ in it. However, successful Sinn Féin electoral interventions in the 1980s meant that RTÉ’s self-censorship practice received increasing attention. The incongruity of RTÉ interviewing election losers to Sinn Féin winners was immediately obvious to the audience. Many in RTÉ were prepared in such circumstances to confront self-censorship and the ministerial Order itself. However, a politicised minority supported the censorship regime and attacked those who opposed it. It was a coercive and corrosive environment.

10.10 Official Republicans in RTÉ

One of the reasons why censorship was effective in RTÉ is because, alongside a cautiously conservative RTÉ management, some broadcasters were politicised into supporting it, in practice. Some of those who did the politicising were originally republican victims of censorship, but became its champions as they adopted a version of Conor Cruise O’Brien’s critique of Irish nationalism. Former RTÉ Head of Information Peter Feeney observed,

> We were brought up with a very simplistic view: a view of ‘us and them’. These ideas began to be challenged in the 1970s, partly by the intellectual arguments of, for example, Conor Cruise O’Brien. Censorship was given a left-wing veneer. A short description of the political evolution of the group responsible is required.

The ‘Official IRA’, supported by ‘Official Sinn Féin’ (renamed Sinn Féin the Workers’ Party in 1976, then The Workers’ Party in 1982), declared in *The IRA in the 1970s*, published in January 1970, that, henceforth, its focus would be on ‘pseudo nationalist Catholic/capitalist philosophy’. While retaining much of its apocalyptic rhetoric, this stance eventually resulted in adaptation to social reform in which Irish conservatism and Irish society was seen as the product of a ‘Catholic bourgeoisie’. They were ‘the most avaricious and lazy ruling class’ in Europe who, uniquely, refused to industrialise the south of Ireland. A strategy of infiltration of the state gradually substituted for the desire to overthrow it, and led in turn to occupational affinity with the institutions its members organised within. It was a superficially modern view attractive to critics of declining Roman Catholic influence in Irish society.

A negative view of Provisional Sinn Féin was promoted by The Workers’ Party as they migrated with increasing confidence toward ‘class politics’ and largely theoretical opposition to US imperialism, away from civil rights demands and pinpointing British
responsibility. It was to lead to alliances on Northern Ireland between the political right in Irish politics and an ostensibly revolutionary left organisation that retained an armed organisation, the Official IRA, or ‘Group B’ as it was known internally. The Workers’ Party was tolerated because its outlook on Northern Ireland was in tune with the main thrust of state policy. It was one way to get ahead while sounding radical. It managed to attract a significant coterie of support. In ideological terms it was as though the followers of two Joes, McCarthy and Stalin, had engaged in a temporary marriage of convenience within RTÉ. There were too many contradictions for it to last.

To a certain extent the dispute was personal. Provisional and Official Sinn Féin had split in 1970. The ‘Provos’ were implicated in defeat of the Officials carefully worked out plan to, in stages, reform Northern Ireland. It was a case of the plan and reality going out of sync. Denying a voice to Sinn Féin, and to those feeling the effects of British counter-insurgency policy, might help reality get back in line with the programme. RTÉ programmes followed suit. Reports of violence against the nationalist minority in the North were minimised. The IRA campaign was depicted as a war against Protestants, maximised and personalised, with intense emotionally-charged interviews with their victims’ relatives. The Officials, while advancing in the south, though receding steadily in the North, envisaged replacing the southern Irish Labour Party and northern SDLP. These parties became exercised about perceptions of negative coverage affecting them. So also did Fianna Fáil. The latter was in turn depicted by the Workers’ Party as having helped create the Provisional IRA.

Workers’ Party discourse began to appear ‘British’. A document on proposed new Westminster parliamentary seats welcomed ‘a democratic and natural step in bringing

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122 See SFWP 7 – The Slanting of a Programme’, *Magill*, May 1982. Similarly, see Savage, 2015, p259, on a BBC focus on IRA rather than loyalist violence during the 1981 hunger-strikes, with pressure there coming from the RUC.
Northern Ireland into line with the rest [sic] of Great Britain’. It referred also to ‘Londonderry’ instead of nationalist nomenclature for the city of Derry.124

In 1981 Olivia O’Leary commented in the Irish Times on cumanns (branches) of the Workers’ Party named Ned Stapleton and William Thompson. These were said to comprise many non-public members in media and semi-state organisations, including RTÉ. Former RTÉ Authority chairperson Farrell Corcoran asserted that the Ned Stapleton Cumann operated through the producer grade of the Workers’ Union of Ireland (WUI). John Horgan referred to ‘both groupings’, Official and Provisional, having ‘their adherents within the station’ after 1970. If so the Provisionals were remarkable for either their organisational invisibility and/or inactivity. No evidence has emerged of Provisional activity of the type pursued by the Worker’s Party. Horgan is, however, correct to refer to reflected tensions from the 1970 Sinn Féin split within RTÉ. However, differences became broader than a binary opposition between the two Sinn Féins. Most opposition to Workers’ Party activity in RTÉ was devoid of party political connotation.125

Workers’ Party supporter Eoghan Harris wrote obliquely about this period by referring to meeting old comrades in August 2007 and their discussion of ‘our main common interest: giving a hard time to Sinn Féin’:

Like me, most of the greying group… are former members of the Industrial Section of the Workers’ Party. By 1972, having helped pull Official Sinn Féin away from the armed struggle, these cadres became the most formidable foes the Provisionals faced in the trade union movement, preventing them from winning the battle for the minds and hearts of the organised Irish working class.126

This incongruous commentary from a neo-liberal convert, on a poor election result for the Labour Party, named some co-thinkers, but not the bulk of those engaged in a ‘common interest’ in RTÉ. A 1986 Workers’ Party letter to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union sought funds for, ‘a Marxist film-making enterprise [Iskra Productions] which commands this party’s full support’ and included the names of prominent party supporters in RTÉ, including Iskra’s proprietors, Gerry Gregg and Eoghan Harris.127

After 1982 the Party’s influence declined in RTÉ due to Sinn Féin entering electoral politics, and it split irrevocably in 1992 due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, its

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124 Olivia O’Leary, ‘Fighting the past’, IT, 24 Jun 1981. Northern Ireland is not part of Great Britain; it is officially part of the UK, which comprises the separate entities, ‘Great Britain’ and ‘Northern Ireland’.


ideological anchor. It was a formidable organisation for its time that combined authoritarian methods with a censorship regime under which it flourished. How it manifested itself in practice is indicated in the experience of one former RTÉ journalist.

10.11 Mary McAleese and RTÉ

A biography of former Irish President Mary McAleese was published while she was in office (in Irish in 2003, in English in 2004) and was written with her co-operation. The author, Ray Mac Manáis, cited McAleese’s private diaries. His Chapter Fifteen, ‘It was the worst of times’, detailed a culture of (in James Downey’s phrase) ‘bullying and intimidation’ within RTÉ. As Peter Feeney put it, ‘the escalation of the Troubles polarised opinion… and this reached a peak with the hunger strikes in 1980 and 1981’.128

McAleese was employed on the flagship RTÉ television current affairs programme, Today Tonight, during this period. The 1980-81 republican hunger strikers’ campaign for political status resulted in the death of 10 hunger strikers and a re-evaluation of British and Irish policy toward the conflict. Sinn Féin support grew steadily, now increasingly measured through the ballot box, and it re-invigorated the IRA’s campaign. It appeared as though a policy of coercion and marginalisation, in place since the collapse of the Sunningdale power-sharing experiment in May 1974, had alienated the vast bulk of the northern nationalist population. RTÉ current affairs, instead of objectively reporting the sea change, attempted to ignore it.

Today Tonight did not plan to send a camera crew to cover what became the worldwide news story of H Block hunger striker Bobby Sands’ victory in the May 1981 Fermanagh South Tyrone parliamentary by-election. The reason: an assumption that Sands would lose, badly. McAleese was reportedly shouted down with ‘menacing anger’ when she observed beforehand that Sands would probably win and that a special programme should be prepared. When Sands eventually died, McAleese suggested that a camera crew be on hand to cover what was likely to be a large and politically significant funeral. She was reportedly informed that there would be more cameras than mourners. Furthermore, television cameras might ‘give some recognition and encouragement to the Provisional IRA’. It is generally agreed that over 100,000 attended the funeral, leading McAleese to enquire after the missing 100,000 cameras.129

In the McAleese biography, Today Tonight researcher Fintan Cronin recounted how, for background on the hunger strikes, he was directed by superiors to speak to Workers’ Party and UDA representatives, bitter political enemies of the protesting prisoners.130 McAleese noted that on 30 April 1981 she was directed to interview a unionist paramilitary

spokesperson, Glen Barr. She believed he was covered by the Section 31 ban. McAleese was instructed, under protest, to interview him alongside a campaigner for the protesting republican prisoners, Bernadette (Devlin) McAliskey. McAliskey was then recovering from being shot seven times, alongside her equally badly wounded husband, in the presence of their children. The attack occurred at their home in County Tyrone on 16 January 1981. It was one of a number of, to that point, successful assassination attempts on leaders of the H Block-Armagh campaign, carried out by the UDA (using its Ulster Freedom Fighters, UFF, cover name). This violence was state-sponsored against a political movement that faced physical elimination in addition to censorship in both Ireland and Britain.\footnote{See McKay, 2008, p95; Savage, 2015, pp232, 239. See Dillon, 1990, pp289-308, for an account of officially directed attacks on leaders of the H Block Armagh campaign, which claimed the lives in 1980 of the Protestant leader of the Irish Independence Party, John Turnley, and Queen’s University history lecturer, Miriam Daley. See also on claimed SAS connections of Turnley’s killer, Anne Cadwallader, ‘McGimpsey sure to set ‘muddled’ commission to rights’, \textit{Ireland on Sunday}, 26 Nov 2001.}

During the live interview Barr referred to the UDA as ‘we’. McAleese then cut him off. Joe Mulholland replied afterwards to a protest from McAleese. He justified interviewing this ‘voice of the urban loyalists’ and stated, ‘at no time did I seek clearance from Andy Tyrie’, commander of the UDA, for the interview.\footnote{Mac Manáis, 2004, pp188, 189.} McAleese had not asked Mulholland if he had as that thought had not occurred to her. A 1990 \textit{Irish Times} profile of Mulholland reported that he ‘would have seen the way forward’ in Northern Ireland as through a ‘progressive section of the Protestant working class, represented by people like Glen Barr (of the UDA)’. The article noted that Mulholland’s,

\begin{quote}
... attitude to the Northern Protestant working class, his rejection of the shibboleths of crude nationalism and his revulsion at the military campaign of the IRA predisposed him to accepting the policies of the Workers’ Party.

Although he never joined the party, he became identified with the “Stickie” [Workers’ Party] camp in RTÉ in the late 1970s.\footnote{Carol Coulter, ‘A Controversial and innovative director of news at RTÉ’, \textit{IT}, 9 Apr 1990. See also Hanley, Millar, 2009, pp373-4.}
\end{quote}

No such negative sentiments appear, in public, to have animated similar attitudes toward the UDA’s campaign of sectarian killings and state assisted assassinations.\footnote{See Foot, 1990, on official persecution of vindicated military intelligence whistle-blower, Colin Wallace. See also Johnston Browne, 2005, for an insider’s account of RUC Special Branch and British Military Intelligence control and direction of unionist paramilitary organisations. See also, Cadwallader, 2013, on collusion with one loyalist gang leading to the deaths of 120 people between 1972 and 1976.} Its spokespersons were granted latitude denied to republicans. Broadcasters were subject to dismissal or to severe sanction in RTÉ when republicans were inadvertently broadcast (see Example Two, page 215). In contrast, this 1981 breach was ignored. It involved a supporter of unionist...
paramilitarism, deemed by O’Brien in 1976 as not posing a threat to the state, as distinct from those the UDA targeted, like McAliskey.

The treatment of McAliskey was one example of RTÉ behaviour that, alongside censorship and repression, embittered Irish political culture. The decision to interview McAliskey with a unionist paramilitary spokesperson was politically calculated. The prisoners’ campaign was not in dispute with the UDA. It was with the British government, while it was also building support throughout Ireland. A British or Irish political representative would have been the appropriate counterpoint to McAliskey, rather than the representative of an organisation that had attempted to kill her some weeks previously.

Matters came to a head during a large staff meeting in 1981. A reporter who had interviewed radical Belfast priest Father Des Wilson was called a ‘fucking Provo’. McAleese immediately asked if any member of RTÉ management was ‘willing to say that calling a colleague an “effing Provo” is highly libellous and is creating a hostile working environment’. Reportedly, she received no reply.\(^{135}\)

McAleese commented:

A professional journalist was treated shamefully at that meeting. He was a victim of bigotry. The bigotry in RTÉ was an extraordinary phenomenon. It was different from bigotry in the North. Bigots in RTÉ were the most righteous self-styled liberals.\(^{136}\)

Ordinary journalistic instincts were usurped, distorted and undermined. The specific purpose appears to have been to sway the public mind against the H Block campaign. A broader RTÉ aim was to deny the southern audience knowledge of its activities. A 13 July 1981 RTÉ memo reaffirmed existing policy. It was forbidden to broadcast details of forthcoming events organised by the National H Block Armagh Campaign, a directive that did not apply to other political campaigns (see report, page 244).\(^{137}\)

\(^{135}\) Mac Manáis, 2004, p189.


McAleese was depicted by those criticising her as a traditional, that is ‘Catholic’, nationalist rather than as a reporter seeking objective coverage. As Andy Pollak in the *Irish Times* put it,

Mary McAleese, never one to shy away from a fight, argued forcefully that one had to see the IRA as a product of its environment, rather than condemn it out of hand. Not surprisingly, the Stickie [Workers’ Party] opposition saw her as an unreconstituted, hardline nationalist.¹³⁸

McAleese argued that RTÉ was incapable of objective reporting of Northern Ireland. Under the censorship regime objectivity became a subversive concept, a condition later endorsed by Eoghan Harris. McAleese noted in her diary,

H Block coverage is biased at worst, misguided at best. Discussion tends to be unsatisfactory for the decision and the editorial line have already been stipulated and decreed... Too many wear the blinkers of half-thought-out prejudices wrapped up in the voices of knowledgeable authority.¹³⁹

RTÉ current affairs had been remade in the image of Conor Cruise O’Brien. It was an ideological police force, an adjunct to the repressive apparatus of the state.

In a 2005 defence of how *Today Tonight* functioned, reporter Gerry Gregg referred to Friday afternoon ‘pitching session[s]’ that appear to have been run as mini public meetings. They were ‘invariably lengthy. They were often passionate. Very occasionally, they were unpleasant’.¹⁴⁰

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¹³⁸ Andy Pollak, ‘The media pundits behind the Nally campaign’, *IT*, Oct 16, 1997. Workers’ Party Supporters were known colloquially as ‘Stickies’ and the ‘Sticks’.


10.12 The Resurrection of Eoghan Harris

During the post-1974 period after ejection from current affairs programming Eoghan Harris was ‘set to work on relatively harmless, relatively insignificant “magazine” type programmes’. This was akin to internal exile within RTÉ. He was reported in 1987 as having become ‘a more marginal force from the late 1970s’.\(^{141}\) During this period Harris and fellow producer Gerry Gregg embarked on an ideological journey in which they became supporters of Conor Cruise O’Brien’s views. In 1987 Harris and Gregg’s Iskra Productions produced a sympathetic documentary on O’Brien, entitled *Taking Sides*.\(^{142}\) In his 1994 book, *Ancestral Voices*, O’Brien reciprocated and thanked Harris and Gregg ‘for increasing my knowledge of Ireland and for the pleasure of their company’.

Harris had re-emerged in public in 1985 with a ‘play for Protestants’ he ‘hope[d] is not “fiction”’. *Souper Sullivan* (aka, *The Apostasy of Arthur Sullivan*) ran in the Abbey Theatre during the Dublin Theatre Festival. The play concerned itself with the 1845-48 Great Irish Famine. It pre-figured themes explored later by Peter Hart in his War of Independence research. A summary description explained the plot,

> When faced with starvation and certain death, Irish Catholics are faced with a terrible choice: convert to Protestantism or starve.\(^{143}\)

O’Brien observed supportively in the *Times Literary Supplement*, ‘This remarkable play is truly revolutionary, in relation to the traditions of Catholic Ireland’.\(^{144}\) It was also revisionary of O’Brien’s previously non-religion centred view of the famine, which he expressed in the *Guardian* newspaper on 16 November 1962:


> … accused of trying to proselytise through drama; if only he had written a real drama to sustain the accusation… it sprawls and ambles around its many subjects and ends up… grey and shapeless and unfocused’, ‘Souper Sullivan’ new Abbey pay for Theatre Festival’, *IT*, 27 Sep 1985.

The play did not do well, Fergus Linehan, ‘Backdrop’, *IT*, 19 Oct 1985. Harris reported himself ‘angry’ with critics who ‘had tried to kill off the play for a variety of their own motives’. They were ‘seriously out of touch with its politics,’ David Nowlan, ‘Author drops critics in the soup’, *IT*, 1 Oct 1985.

Historians have tended to treat [the] traditional [Irish] view as unduly bitter and extreme. It is difficult, however, to read [Cecil Woodham Smith’s] The Great Hunger without coming to the conclusion that the traditional view, in its broad outlines, is right.

In 1983 Joel Mokyr estimated that from a population of over eight million in 1840, well in excess of one million starved to death between 1845-52. Another million emigrated. Population numbers continued to decline until 1960. Mokyr’s highly regarded Why Ireland Starved concluded, ‘When the chips were down in the frightful summer of 1847, the British [government] simply abandoned the Irish and let them perish’. This was because, ‘Ireland was not considered to be part of the British community’. Mokyr’s research findings were not in accord with Eoghan Harris’s imagination.

A West Cork Catholic priest, the Reverend Christy Walsh, questioned the Harris play’s factual basis. In Souper Sullivan it was asserted that during the Famine, Protestant clergy kept famished Catholic peasantry alive in west Cork. Their priest, Laurence O’Sullivan, allegedly abandoned his flock. This Harris claim was disputed after investigation of contemporary sources. These indicated that Sullivan had in fact opposed the hero of the Harris play, Church of Ireland Rector William Fisher, who was accused of distributing famine relief on a sectarian basis. Fr. Thomas Barret, who worked with O’Sullivan, explained in the English Catholic paper, The Tablet (19 June, 3 July 1847) why Catholic clergy were excluded from Fisher’s relief Committee. Fisher informed Barret, that,

Had English contributors known that a Popish priest sat on the same seat as himself, sooner would they have cast it away than give a single shilling to relieve those whose religion he himself had sworn to be idolatrous, etc., and which he, in common with English contributors, believed to be the sole cause of blight, disease, death, etc.

Walsh’s account suggested that the energetic and ‘indefatigable’ O’Sullivan left the area for nine days at most in order to independently raise funds in Cork and was then ‘confined by fever for two months’ in early 1847. Ten Catholic priests in Cork reportedly died from this illness during the Famine.

Fisher spent charity donations on building a Protestant church. He explained that money raised for famine relief gave rise to the supposed ‘difficulty of giving relief without injuring the recipients’. A biblical solution offered itself: ‘If any man will not work, neither let him eat’. From this principle Fisher gained converts:

The Kilmoe Relief Committee, nominated by Lord Bandon, demanded strictest observance – especially to not giving any relief except in return for work.

Reverend Fisher observed,

146 In Hickey, 2002, p236.
147 Reverend Christy Walsh, ‘Souper Sullivan’: playing around with history; Eoghan Harris, ‘Catholicism means never having to say you’re sorry’, IT, 30 Oct 1985.
During the famine scarcely any persons perished in the hamlets near the church, who were made to work for what they got; whilst in other portions of this district, where a larger amount of alms were bestowed, gratuitously given, many died.\textsuperscript{148}

Unfortunately, as Hickey explained,

The majority was exhausted… Because the starving and dying were unable to work they did not qualify for relief according to the original terms of the relief committee, so the priest wanted to organise another way helping them.\textsuperscript{149}

Fisher, on the other hand, bought land containing ‘his new church, rectory and schools’ in 1851 through a private Protestant appeal. It warned of dire consequences for the previously ‘Romanist’ inhabitants if ‘an enemy became the purchaser’. He was then able to set and extract rents and tithes as landlord from his new tenants and thus endow his church. Hickey’s study observed,

Evidently land is a matter which must not be excluded from souperism. Perhaps the sixteenth-century Reformation principle, \textit{cuius regio eius religio}, ‘whoever owns the territory determines the religion’ had a certain subtle validity in the ‘Second Reformation’ also, especially when the rex or ruler was rector who desired to make or keep converts.\textsuperscript{150}

This West Cork conflict was part of a wider religious rift driven by a phenomenon known as the Protestant Crusade, or the Second Reformation, which began in Britain after the Napoleonic War and spread to Ireland. Some Anglicans pursued an aggressive evangelical Protestantism that sought to gain adherents in the more volatile cauldron of Irish politics. It expressed British Protestant might and rectitude, as compared to Roman Catholic error and superstition.\textsuperscript{151}

In Ireland its effects from 1820 to the 1850s effectively discredited political Protestantism, particularly after Catholic Emancipation in 1829 and before Anglican disestablishment in 1871. Mass Catholic conversion was the goal, effected by evangelical missions using education as part of the proselytising ministry. It was funded largely from private English donations that were driven by reports of conversion success. Those funding the evangelical effort, the Irish Society of London, saw the Famine period as one of fortuitous opportunity. A member explained, ‘The famine… has softened the hearts of the Irish people generally – humbled and broken them’. It freed the people ‘from the chains by which they were bound in slavery to the priest’. The Irish Society’s task was ‘to rend the tottering walls of Romanism. Rush in to the breach and plant the standards of the Gospel on the ruins’. The Anglican curate of Ballycotton wrote a pamphlet, \textit{The Blessing of the Blight}.\textsuperscript{152} In 1848 the Irish Society’s London branch noted further positive effects:

\textsuperscript{148} Fisher in Hickey, 2002, p236.
\textsuperscript{149} Walsh, \textit{IT}, op. cit.. Hickey, 2002, p237.
\textsuperscript{150} Hickey, 2002, pp249, 250, 251.
\textsuperscript{152} Hickey, 2002, p240.
[The famine] left the heart and mind of the remnant of Irishmen open for the reception of the Truth, proffered to them by Protestant England [during] the remarkable and encouraging crisis.

According to Hickey, ‘the Protestant missionary movement had vast resources’ and used food as a proselytising instrument.\footnote{Gordon McCoy, ‘A history of Protestant Irish Speakers’, http://www.ultach.dsl.pipex.com/resources/, (accessed 8 Feb 2009); Hickey, 2002, p253.}

These efforts provoked the Roman Catholic Church’s Second Counter Reformation. It led also to the non denominational 1832 National School system that the Anglican church establishment opposed. Their alternative Church Education Society underwent a significant increase in numbers during the famine and a more spectacular decline afterwards. In the West Cork area, 1,046 were on school rolls in 1845, rising to 2,076 and 2,123 in 1846-47. By 1852 numbers fell back to 841. The Reverend Fisher’s school in Altar suffered the greatest decline, from 289 in 1847 to 64 in 1852.\footnote{Hickey, 2002, pp252, 253.}

The evangelical controversy led to a sharp division of opinion within the Church of Ireland. A constituency emerged that supported Catholic Emancipation and the National School system, and actively opposed the evangelical crusade. O’Brien supported the Harris play, that supported the Reverend Fisher, who promoted the crusade. Two of Conor Cruise O’Brien’s 19th Century ancestors, Sir Thomas Spring Rice, later Lord Monteagle, and a leader of the 1848 Young Ireland rebellion, William Smith O’Brien, were part of the Church of Ireland opposition to the Protestant Crusade, of the significant Protestant constituency that supported Irish Home Rule and, in the case of later family members, the republican side during the 1919-21 period.\footnote{See Ridden, 2007. See also, S.B. ‘The Honourable Mary Spring-Rice’, in Limerick’s Fighting Story 1916-23, [1948] 2009.}

The Harris play landed itself in the midst of this historic controversy. It promoted sectarian excess as part of a socialist and non-sectarian vision for Ireland. As later with Peter Hart’s The IRA and its Enemies (1998), the actual sequence was turned on its head. It was a first attempt to harness contemporary criticism of Roman Catholicism to a polemical political purpose, via a historical reconfiguration of Protestant experience.\footnote{It was a controversy entered into in 1995 by the then Rector of Altar Church, Toormore, Goleen, the church built by Rev’d Fisher. The Rev’d N. N. Cummins rejected an assertion by Kevin Myers of a ‘sinister’ atmosphere surrounding the church, and by Harris that ‘Roman Catholic pressure’ had forced a name change from Teampúl na mBocht (church of the poor). He rejected as ‘utterly false’ Harris’s allegation that Cummin’s critical comments, including on the re-staging of Harris’s play, were ‘written against [Cummin’s] own real wishes’. He concluded on a ‘deeper issue’: ‘In Eoghan Harris’s brave new Ireland there seems to be a place for everyone who agrees with him, but none for divergent opinions, constructive criticism or even rational debate’. This fell short of ‘the noble...
This was the beginning of a conceptual concordance between Harris and Conor Cruise O’Brien. O’Brien praised the play within a negative review of Richard Kearney’s edited collection, *The Irish Mind*. Subsequently, still at that stage in quasi-Marxist mode, Harris attacked Kearney in the *Irish Times* as ‘a product of the Cork bourgeoisie’ who ‘is a traitor to his class’ because he ‘embrace[d] the reactionary politics of the Cork petit-bourgeoisie’. Kearney’s ‘cursory condemnation of the Provisional IRA’ was ‘too brief, too cosmetic’, while an attack by Kearney on the ‘working class’ novelist and short story writer, Frank O’Connor in 1985 ‘would make a cat laugh’. Kearney’s reply observed that ‘gut anti-nationalism is quite as blind as gut nationalism’, but was bewildered by the O’Connor claim. Harris cleared up the confusion by revealing he meant Sean Ó Faoláin. He decided unilaterally to ‘conclude this correspondence’ by observing ‘there can be no such thing as an Irish mind, only Irish minds’. Kearney said this created ‘a bizarre, if somewhat comic distortion’, in that Harris’s remark paraphrased Kearney’s ‘central opening claim’.

Agreement with O’Brien deepened when Harris proclaimed support in 1987 for the measure that was instrumental in his 1974 RTÉ demise.

In 1987 Harris revealed support for Section 31 in a limited-circulation typewritten document intended to influence RTÉ producers, *Television and Terrorism*. Citing British social theorist Stuart Hall, Harris critiqued norms of objectivity and impartiality he said favoured the Sinn Féin position. In the ensuing controversy, O’Brien again supported Harris.

This was part of Harris’s transition to the political right, after exposure of Workers’ Party activity in 1982 and the subsequent loss of its RTÉ trade union base. This exposure had repercussions. In August 1982, Joe Mulholland denied that Gerry Gregg was the republican ideal to cherish all the people of the nation equally’, ‘Altar church’, *IT*, 18 Jul, 4 Aug 1995. See Myers, Harris, 12, 27 Jul 1995.

157 Eoghan Harris, Richard Kearney, *Richard Kearney’s Ireland*, *IT*, 6, 9, 21, 28 Jan 1988. Others joined in, 11, 15, 18, 27 Jan, the latter a spirited defence of Harris in his otherwise inimitable style by a John Bowen from Cork, who referred to ‘hush puppies’ and ‘war on Protestant farm workers’. He criticised Kearney for opposing ‘the Official IRA (deceased)’. Harris rounded off earlier *Souper Sullivan* correspondence declaring, ‘publication of a large work by Irene Whelan of the Department of Irish Studies in Queens University… may clear up some of the [historical] problems’. Harris clarified later he meant Irene Phelan (*IT*, 22, 25 Oct 1985). Whelan’s research (1995, 2005), like Mokyr’s earlier, did not support Harris’s imaginative view.


transferred out of *Today Tonight* to children’s programmes for political reasons. In 1986 RTÉ broadcast a documentary on the officially non-existent Official IRA. Mulholland defended the programme, ‘alleging Workers’ Party-Official IRA links [that] was seen as a public severance of [Mulholland’s] association’ with the party. He was accused of doing so in order to enhance his RTÉ career, a motivation Mulholland, ‘a candidate for a number of senior executive positions in RTÉ’, vociferously denied. Thereafter, organised Workers’ Party activity declined, though RTÉ management’s pre-existing self-censorship regime persevered.

## 10.13 Censoring the ‘Not So Well Educated’

As noted, O’Brien claimed after the O’Toole judgement that RTÉ was trying to ‘discredit Section 31 by making it look more unreasonable than it is’. In 1992 he was presented with an opportunity to challenge RTÉ’s stance. He chose instead to support it. That year RTÉ and the Independent Radio and Television Commission (IRTC, which regulated privately owned broadcasters) banned an advertisement for a book of short stories, *The Street*, by Sinn Féin President, Gerry Adams. In addition RTÉ banned an Adams advertising voiceover. The publisher, Brandon Books, bought advertising space on the basis of the O’Toole High Court judgement and in light of a statement from Head of News Wesley Boyd that RTÉ could now interview Adams as a short-story writer. This was before RTÉ appealed to be censored.

Brandon’s Steve McDonagh challenged the RTÉ and IRTC ban in the High Court. O’Brien gave evidence on behalf of the IRTC. He was asked what in particular transgressed censorship rules. O’Brien replied, ‘I have in mind the opening words, “This is Gerry Adams speaking”’. O’Brien asserted that Gerry Adams, a writer of fiction, could not be separated from his Sinn Féin presidency. He also stated that some of the stories were supportive of the IRA. A counter affidavit from UCD Professor of English Declan Kiberd said of well-known Irish literary figures,

> Some of the writings of Brendan Behan, Peadar O’Donnell and Mairtin Ó Cadhain, all of whom were members of Sinn Féin when they wrote certain works, could be far more easily interpreted as an incitement to support Sinn Féin than the stories in Mr Adams's book.

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161 WP protest at programme due on RTÉ tonight’, ‘McGiolla says programme was smear attempt’, *IT*, 5, 7 Mar 1986; Woodworth, 2008, p49.
Reviews in the *Times, Times Literary Supplement*, and *Sunday Times*, also asserted, in the words of the latter, that Adams’ stories were ‘in no way didactic, nor do they seek to preach’. They were, ‘well written and authentic in form and tone’. O’Brien responded,

The fact is that many people in the journalistic world have at least a sneaking sympathy, not only for Sinn Féin, but the IRA and this applies to writers in Britain as well as here... I think some of these reviewers are in that category. The reviewers had not previously (or subsequently) been noted for such sympathies. O’Brien was asked why he did not seek to ban these. He explained that it was a question of the social composition of the audience. The radio audience included,

… people who are poor and who are not so well educated. That is... less educated people who on the whole are more likely to be impressed than more educated people. Newspaper readers did not then concern him, unlike in 1974 and 1976. Those who were ‘less educated’ had not been adequately tutored in how to respond to the sound of Gerry Adams to the same extent as had the intelligentsia. This is perhaps why O’Brien, whose ministerial tenure witnessed their disappearance from RTÉ, attempted also in 1976 to outlaw popular republican ballads. The security of the state was potentially imperilled because of the opinions of poor people. Arguably, therefore, and in an echo of arguments against ‘immorality’ and for literary censorship in previous decades, the poor should be prevented from encountering the sound of a voice recommending a freely available book. Adams was banned despite the non-political capacity in which he uttered his remarks.

On 16 July 1993, the High Court decided that since a decision required judgement based on Gerry Adams’ ‘persona’,

... [his] image and the projection of same... it must be asked whether the exercise of such a judgement by the Broadcasting Authority is reviewable by the Courts. On the facts of the case... I do not see it is proper for the Court to interfere.

It was a judicial washing of hands, reminiscent of the 1987 Broadcasting Complaints Commission non-decision, discussed earlier (in Example Six, page 226). RTÉ and the IRTC colluded in refusing to exercise discretion in favour of freedom of speech.

RTÉ and the IRTC’s decision closed down another avenue of expression, in this case literary. It linked a previous era of Irish artistic censorship with the new political kind. It indicated how southern Irish systems of social control had been secularised, modernised. O’Brien’s comments implied that the mainly middle class broadcasters required an instructed conscience, instructed by what happened to broadcasters who fell foul of

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166 McDonagh, 1999, pp148, 152.
169 In McDonagh, 1999, p155.
censorship regulations. The intellectual elite, which had emerged from control by institutionalised religious ideology in southern Ireland, was to be controlled by statute.

The then Minister for Communications (currently Irish President), Michael D. Higgins, lifted the censorship ban on 19 January 1994, seven months prior to the August 1994 IRA ceasefire, as part of confidence-building measures. A censorship mindset was still in place, as indicated by RTÉ’s final act of self-censorship of Larry O’Toole on 15 January 1994 (discussed, page 235). Former RTÉ Authority Chairperson Farrell Corcoran reported that some in RTÉ resented Sinn Féin’s (and thereby their own) ‘new found freedom’.  

Initially, RTÉ stated: ‘there would be no live interview at least for some months’. This approach petered out earlier than originally intended after new independent broadcasters interviewed Sinn Féin representatives. Dublin’s Classic Hits 98FM broadcast part of an interview with Adams at the instant the Order elapsed at 12 midnight on 19 January, and advertised it. Their reporter, Conor Lenihan, later a Fianna Fáil Minister, treated it as a news story. Meanwhile Prime Time on RTÉ, the successor of Today Tonight, was denied permission to interview Adams on 20 January. The committee making the decision included Joe Mulholland, who described RTÉ’s new guidelines as ‘very liberal’. After internal acrimony, stemming from a perception that RTÉ had humiliated itself, station managers relented to the extent of permitting recorded interviews only. This caused sometimes-fractious encounters on ostensibly live radio programmes that scrambled to record interviews during advertising and news breaks. Sinn Féin interviewees pointed to the restrictions, leading anxious RTÉ interviewers to point to time constraints, leading to Sinn Féin intimations that RTÉ had only itself to blame. To paraphrase O’Brien, they brought it on themselves.  

10.14 Chapter Conclusion

Was Conor Cruise O’Brien responsible for RTÉ’s years of self-censorship and managerial paranoia? His post 1977 legacy was influential in producing a mind-set in RTÉ management that failed to see a distinction between a person speaking on behalf of Sinn Féin and Larry O’Toole, a trade unionist who happened to be in Sinn Féin. To borrow O’Brien’s terminology he may not have been in ‘actual physical occupation’ of RTÉ after 1977. However, he can be said to have spiritually occupied the mindset of RTÉ’s management tier. O’Brien’s amending legislation intentionally and consciously narrowed the path of liberal ambiguity for RTÉ in its interpretation of its Section 31 responsibilities.

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He shut down editorial freedom through introducing authoritarian ambiguity into broadcasting legislation and his ministerial self into the station when he saw fit.

O’Brien created the basis for a regime of self-censorship. It continued after O’Brien’s departure because censorship, which predated O’Brien, served the state’s interest and was perceived to be essential.

The atmosphere was augmented during the 1970s by the emergence of RTÉ managerial compliance and a minority of the workforce promoting self-censorship and an admitted policy of ‘demonising’ republicans. Farrell Corcoran referred to perennial worry in the Authority and sections of the workforce about ‘how to handle Sinn Féin’. He related it to ‘revisionism’ and ‘complex layers of self-censorship’ embedded with the Workers’ Party grouping acting as an ‘unofficial staff watch-dog group’. RTÉ’s anti-Sinn Féin pro-censorship group were tolerated up to 1986 because they reinforced the ‘spirit’ of Section 31 within RTÉ. By way of contrast RTÉ illegally barred Larry O’Toole, whose employment in a cake factory was considered part of an IRA plot. This long and gruelling process illustrates Lukes’ third, ideological, dimension of power. Within this scenario social actors consent to activity opposed to their own and to their professional self-interest, in this case broadcasters becoming indifferent to and even supporting censorship.

RTÉ did not conduct critical investigations into key aspects of the Northern Ireland story because it was too preoccupied in policing that story. Over 3,000 people died in the course of the Troubles. There is no evidence that policies of censorship and exclusion that accompanied official responses to the crisis played any role in diminishing violence. It can be argued that the alienation and marginalisation these policies produced increased activist support for or toleration of violence. Censorship succeeded, instead, in distorting the public’s understanding of events, people and political processes in Northern Ireland. It diffused pressure to successfully resolve the conflict.

RTÉ’s ‘self-righteous liberals’, as McAleese termed them, were heirs to the pursuit of the chimera of Catholic capitalism, instead of the real thing or British misconduct in Northern Ireland. It led also to Eoghan Harris’s imaginary heroic and then persecuted Protestants during the Irish Famine and War of Independence. Harris’s later transition to supporter of Conor Cruise O’Brien and then to determined champion of Peter Hart’s

173 Shaw, 2005, p117.
174 See Farrell, 1986, pp22, 26, on this point.
analysis was logical. He reported that two books that ‘never go back to my shelves’ were ‘Conor Cruise O’Brien’s *States of Ireland* [and] Peter Hart’s *The IRA and its Enemies*’.\(^{175}\)

O’Brien stamped his formidable personality on southern Ireland during the 1970s. He promoted a critique attractive to social democratic and secular conservative forces that emerged during the period of southern Ireland’s transition from a closed to an open capitalist economy. State-supported social regulation and artistic, especially literary, censorship of sexual activity was superseded during the 1970s through the use of political censorship. Systems of social control were, in effect, modernised. In a state without a nation, Irish nationalism became a suspect ideology that was deliberately associated with an increasingly discredited and out of touch Catholicism. It was labelled ‘Catholic nationalism’ that O’Brien sought to discover ‘with the lid off’.\(^{176}\) In the context of the relative success of this project, historical research produced by Peter Hart’s *The IRA and its Enemies* in 1998, that inscribed a deadly IRA sectarianism within southern state formation, became a logical end point. It was proof, anticipated by those who eventually agreed with O’Brien.

The following final section of the thesis examines the hidden history of Protestant life in ‘Catholic nationalist’ southern Ireland. It will explain how obscuring this experience helped also to elevate Catholic responsibility for perceived inadequacies over and above that of the state. It was the latter in fact that facilitated sectarian and repressive control of Irish people, both Catholic and Protestant. The failure of social science and of historical understanding of this phenomenon contributed also to the intellectual environment in which Peter Hart’s research was treated uncritically. The recasting of the state’s governing ideology within a liberal democratic framework, which claimed to be inclusive, excluded complicating factors undermining its pretensions. The extent of this hegemonic paradigm is indicated in the manner in which both Protestant economic power and Protestant social marginalisation was excluded from view. Within this ideological context, Hart, O’Brien, Harris and Myers were interested in persecuted Protestants only if Catholics, more particularly Catholic nationalists, were cast in the role of persecutors. Following on from presenting actual Protestant experience in the 1919 to 1922 period, we will now examine its actual outworking within the independent Irish state up to the present.

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\(^{175}\) Eoghan Harris, ‘When the state gets down and dirty’, *Sunday Times*, 22 Apr 2001.

\(^{176}\) O’Brien, 1995, p37.
Section

Three

‘Protestants Were Left as Orphans’*

Níall Meehan Chapters 11-13

Introduction

After the 1922-23 Civil War the new Free State administration relied upon and then consolidated right wing social forces in the attempt to ensure survival. The most significant was the Roman Catholic Church, which had become institutionally robust during the final phase of British rule. Having failed to rule successfully through a Protestant elite, the British government attempted to cultivate Catholicism in the mid to late 19th Century. While this too was a political failure, it facilitated Catholic organisation, which, combined with Protestantism in retreat, ensured a century of triumphant growth. From a position of being outlawed to that of incorporation under imperial rule, 26-County independence proved a further stepping-stone for a Roman Catholicism that was increasingly considered ‘Irish’. It offered solutions to social problems affecting Catholics, the vast majority in the south.

Religion invested southern Irish society with a sense of meaning, supportive of and helping to mould the status quo. The overarching ideology of the state was contested and limited by the provisions of the Treaty. In the absence of an agreed republican orientation, a conservative Roman Catholic ethos emerged and substituted. Institutions inherited from pre-independence skirmishing between Protestant and Roman Catholic charitable organisations created the core welfare, youth detention, health and education services in the south. Autonomous religious bodies exercised significant control, therefore, over people’s daily lives.

Conservative institutions and their representatives became, during the 1940s, a formidable bulwark against the development of a universal health and welfare system, an important object of the exercise. Was the state that emerged from this process conservative because of Catholicism, or was the latter the most significant of a number of ideological and material influences? Tensions caused by perceptions of excessive control began observably to undermine Roman Catholic dominance during the 1960s. However, a fixation on Catholicism per se allowed the important role of the state and

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1 See Regan, 2001.
2 Inglis, 1998, pp13, 98.
3 White (2010), discusses the temporal fusion of religious and national freedom, which enabled a ‘Catholic and Irish’ (p7) identification. See also discussion of its erosion, Inglis, 2004, p19.
4 Luddy, 1995, discusses these battles in the context of women’s involvement. Raftery and O'Sullivan, in their influential explanation of the emergence of the industrial school system (2001), underplay Protestant involvement.
5 Considine, Dukelow, 2009, pp253-55; Kelly, 1999. See also Earner-Byrne, pp130-144.
the social and economic forces it represented to escape attention.

The emergent dominance of the Roman Catholic Church and its more recent erosion were considered central to the suppression and then advent of a more secular and pluralist polity. Indeed, in *Luck and the Irish*, published in 2008, Roy Foster entitled an essay, ‘How the Catholics became Protestants’. His articulation of a revisionist motif linked southern Irish authoritarianism to a nexus of Catholicism and nationalism; and its demise to the emergence of, or a return to, an implicitly liberal Protestant sensibility. In Foster’s ‘widest sense’, Protestantism was considered to be part of a subterranean strain of liberalism. If that is so, examining what Protestant organisations did should supply evidence of a submerged liberal ethic, repressed by this presumed alliance between nationalist ideology and the Catholic Church.

As part of a critique of portraying ‘Catholic nationalism’ as the dominant form of Irish separatist ideology, this thesis will suggest as an alternative to Foster’s view that the state was engaged in a marriage of socio-economic and ideological convenience. As will be demonstrated, the state made use of Catholic conservatism in the interest of an elite in which Protestants played a disproportionate role. Though lines were sometimes blurred, Irish nationalism and Catholicism remained distinct, unlike Protestant unionism in Northern Ireland. Resistance to sectarianism encouraged also opposition within civil society to Catholic Church socio-political influence. Within their own communities, as will be argued, Protestant churches behaved in much the same way as their Roman Catholic counterpart, albeit on a smaller scale. They were said to have kept their heads down. The reasons why so are not sufficiently understood. This thesis section will attempt to explain the phenomenon by:

a) examining in Chapter Eleven the largely unexplored phenomenon of Protestant socio-economic influence in southern society;

b) detailing in Chapter Twelve how Protestant evangelical attempts to colonise Irish religious identity during the 19th century provoked a Roman Catholic Church reaction;

c) explaining and critiquing in Chapter Thirteen the largely ignored phenomenon of marginalisation within Protestant communities

Chapter Thirteen concludes with observations on effects of the ‘Catholic nationalism’ thesis; particularly the manner in which it has tended to ignore Protestant churches and institutions that maintained rather than challenge conservative features of southern Irish society.

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6 Foster, 2007, p37, who based his observations on Inglis, 1998, pp204-6. Another commentator, Fintan O’Toole, 1997, p17, conceived also of ‘an ambivalent kind of mass conversion to Protestantism’, in which ‘the right of individual conscience - is now accepted by the great majority of Irish Catholics’.
CHAPTER ELEVEN Preferring Protestants

In the widest sense the transformation of attitudes to authority, which found its way into the mainstream of [Irish] politics with surprising speed, suggests a reassertion of attitudes in some areas of life in the Republic that are - with a lower case p at least - protestant.


The problems of the unmarried mothers had been explained comprehensively by Mr. Michael Viney in the Irish Times, although the articles had dealt primarily with the Roman Catholic population.

Mrs K.F. Glover, SRN, Matron, 42nd annual meeting of the Bethany Home, Irish Times, 29 April 1965.1

If Protestants did not complain much in southern Ireland, it is because the setup, however irritating, was, in a comparative economic sense, advantageous. Protestants carried into the new Irish state ‘inherited advantage[s]’ from British rule. Though less than 4% of the southern population, Protestants continued to punch above their demographic weight. According to Tony Farmar, ‘The Protestant business class still dominated the financial institutions, many of the largest businesses, and the clubs’. Fianna Fáil inspired protectionist economic policies pursued from the 1930s to the 1960s perpetuated this dominance.2 Part two of a six-part 1965 Irish Times series by Michael Viney on southern Irish Protestants began,

“For Heavens sake,” said a Protestant accountant, “don’t make us out to be whingers, we’ve nothing to whinge about.” As a working citizen the Protestant of the Republic of Ireland has little to complain of. Among the poor, he [sic] is unlikely to be poorer for being Protestant. Among the wealthy, he is likely to be wealthier for it. And outside the small-farm areas, his status is likely to be comfortably middle class.

Viney pointed out that 65 in every 1,000 Protestants in the workforce were directors, managers and company secretaries. A further 83 were in professional and technical occupations. The Catholic figure was nine and 43

1 Viney’s seven articles on the subject were published in 1964 as No Birthright, a Study of the Irish Unmarried Mother & Her Child (The “Irish Times” Articles). I discuss the Bethany Home and Viney’s failure to mention it on pages 269-70.

respectively. A 1968 analysis of social mobility in Dublin found,

Analysis by religious adherence shows a significant difference between the status composition of the Catholic and non-Catholic sections of the Dublin community: two-thirds of Catholic men are to be found in the three lowest status categories; but three-quarters of the non-Catholics are in the four upper, or nonmanual, categories. The proportion of non-Catholics in the highest category of social status is four times that of Catholics. In the lowest status category the proportion of Catholics is double that of non-Catholics.

In 1972 and 1973, 25% of senior executives in banking and industry, respectively, were Protestants. Between 1926 and 1991 the proportion of the Protestant population within the three highest socio-economic occupational groups rose from 32.5 to 39.5%, twice the Roman Catholic proportion on both occasions. In the 1991 Census, though constituting 4.4% of the non-agricultural labour force, Protestants still constituted 6.6% of proprietors, 9.5% of managers and 8.6% of the professions, excluding nursing. Former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald pointed out, ‘in many professions Protestant over-representation is on a far larger scale’, including medicine, senior levels of government, journalism, architecture, acting, music, insurance and professional and business services. In agriculture Protestants were over represented in ‘ownership of all farms down to the 50 acre level’, owning 17.6% of farms over 200 acres.

As Brian Inglis, from a southern Protestant background, remarked in 1962,

Protestantism might no longer hold political power ..., but it was still firmly in control of many businesses. Several had remained so Protestant dominated that no Catholic could hope for promotion to the ranks of senior executives – let alone become a director.

FSL Lyons noted in 1967,

In the retail trade in Dublin, … especially among the general stores, the grocers and the hardware merchants, as builders providers, as the owners of chains of cafes and restaurants, as hoteliers and caterers, in the management of banks and insurance companies, as well as in much larger enterprises such as Jacob’s, Jameson’s, Guinness’ and other breweries in various parts of the country, [Protestants] continued to prosper…

Martin Maguire also named some ‘firms recognised as Protestant enterprises’:

The Royal Bank of Ireland, the Hibernian and the Munster and Leinster were the Protestant Banks, and Brooks Thomas, Henshawes, Hills and Dockrells dominated hardware (a particularly Protestant sector).

To which may be added Heiton’s (Heiton McFerran from 1967) that become the largest

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4 Hutchinson, 1969, p31 (also, see pp6-7).
7 Lyons, 1967, p94.
8 Maguire, 2002, p293. The Munster & Leinster, Provincial and Royal Banks later amalgamated to form Allied Irish Banks (AIB).
builder’s providers in 1968. Farmar listed other substantial concerns, Eason’s (bookshop), Bewley’s (cafes), Findlater’s (grocery), and Pim’s (department store).\(^9\) Dean Victor Griffin of St Patrick’s Cathedral added Switzers and Brown Thomas department stores to a list including also Arnott’s.\(^10\) In 1997 the southern unionist historian R. B. McDowell remarked that,

… the success of Protestants in professional and business life… demonstrates that the majority in the Irish Free State set a high value on tolerance or refused to allow denominationalism to affect to their own detriment their behaviour in practical life.\(^11\)

Former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald observed similarly in 2003,

The advantages thus enjoyed by Protestants… [have] never been publicly challenged, so far as I am aware they have never even been publicly adverted to.

Such a challenge ‘would – rightly – be seen as intolerably bigoted’, thought FitzGerald.\(^12\)

That was not how it seemed to printing and packaging magnate Michael Smurfit, the most successful Irish capitalist to emerge from the ending of economic protectionism in the 1960s. Smurfit survived partly because his sector was naturally protected from foreign competition due to low value to weight ratios. He confronted instead domestic rivals, and unusual difficulties while on the takeover trail in the 1960s. Smurfit and his contemporary, Tony (later ‘Sir Anthony’) O’Reilly acted as ‘corporate raiders’ who ‘shook the foundations of the gentlemanly business world’ ‘after the shake-up of the Irish economy by [civil servant] T.K. Whitaker and [Taoiseach] Sean Lemass in 1958/59’. Part of the ‘shake-up’ involved repeal of Lemass’s 1930s Control of Manufacturers Acts that had promoted ‘a long period of calm stolid trading’. A requirement of Lemass’s legislation that firms be in beneficial Irish ownership suited the ensconced Protestant business class, as did application of the edict to new Irish subsidiaries of British firms, set up to get around tariff restrictions. Who better to staff such firms at executive level than those with an existing and extensive track record in Irish business? It was win-win.\(^13\)

Smurfit observed that agreed deals to buy two Protestant-owned businesses were reneged upon in favour of smaller offers from other Protestant companies. His was inferior Catholic cash. However, Smurfit successfully took over the Hely Group in 1970, then the second-largest Irish traded company. After secretly buying shares he

\(^9\) Farmar, 1996, pp34, pp118-119
\(^10\) Griffin, 1993, p54. The exception was Clery’s Department Store, once owned by Roman Catholic William Martin Murphy, owner also of the Irish Independent, founder of the Employer’s Federation and their leader during the 1913 lockout. He was elected President of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, 1912-13, MacMahon, 2012, pp169-70.
\(^11\) McDowell, 1997, p166.
\(^12\) FitzGerald, 2003, p151.
struck when the group suffered a financial setback. Smurfit felt an especially unwelcome intruder on encountering the firm’s written rule that ‘no Catholic should be a director of the Hely Group’.\textsuperscript{14} Frank Lowe, formerly \textit{Irish Times} Chairman (1945-59), became Chairman of Hely’s in 1951. Another Hely’s director, George Hetherington, was also an owner and director of the \textit{Irish Times}. So too was Philip Walker. Yet another Hely’s director was Philip’s brother Ralph, \textit{Irish Times} Chairman from 1959-74. Ralph also played a role in the later discussed (in Chapter Thirteen) Protestant evangelical Bethany Home though Hayes & Sons, the Walker family’s legal firm that represents the Irish Times.\textsuperscript{15}

Smurfit observed,

This was at a time when the majority of Irish businesses were run by Protestants. In many large companies, Catholics would be employed, but they could never make it into management, no matter how good they were at their job ... In the 1950s and 1960s, there were many companies that Smurfit couldn’t sell boxes to, just because we were Catholic and they were Protestant. Up until the 1970s 5\% of the population of [southern] Ireland controlled a huge percentage of the wealth. That control extended in some way to the professions... that was the way that it was and it was generally accepted.\textsuperscript{16}

Smurfit’s attitudes were, to a degree, inherited. His father Jefferson, an English immigrant, was ‘black-balled’ from an exclusively Protestant Dublin golf club, but not for the sufficient reason of being Roman Catholic. It was because, ‘it was assumed that anyone with an unfamiliar name, a big nose and successful business must be a Jew’.\textsuperscript{17}

According to Brian Inglis in 1989, sectarian exclusion in Jameson’s extended to a family member, Patrick, whose father Francis Jameson had married a Catholic. Without naming names, Inglis referred to the same episode in 1962:

No secret was made by [Jameson] directors in private of “the thin edge of the wedge” argument against bringing in a Catholic into an executive position.\textsuperscript{18} Clearly, nepotism had limits. Was this practice emanating from the boardroom of this and other companies, using FitzGerald’s terminology, ‘intolerably bigoted’? Whatever about perceptions, it was generally unchallenged, even during the ‘highly nationalistic period’ of the 1920s and 1930s, when Northern Ireland Catholics were subject to violent attacks and permanently expelled from employment.\textsuperscript{19}

One exception to this observation bears examination. From 21-24 July 1935 there

\textsuperscript{14} Smurfit, 2014, pp79, 81.
\textsuperscript{16} Smurfit, 2014, pp79, 80.
\textsuperscript{17} Jefferson Smurfit in Farmar, 2010, p133.
\textsuperscript{18} Inglis, 1989, pp62, 70; 1962, pp160-1.
\textsuperscript{19} Characterisation of the period by Bowen, 1983, p101.
was a sectarian reaction to renewed outbreaks of physical attacks on Catholics in Northern Ireland. In Belfast, 2,000 were put out of their homes. Taking their lead from agriculture minister Sir Basil Brooke (later NI Prime Minister, Lord Brookborough) and other unionist leaders, loyalist workers determined they would not work alongside Catholics. Consequently 400 men, from a workforce of 8,000, were violently expelled from Belfast shipyards, while 100 (of 400) women were excluded from Belfast’s Jennymount Mill. This was the worst outbreak of violence in Belfast between 1922 and 1969. In an apparently spontaneous response in Limerick, Protestant-owned shops were subject to late night attacks. A church in Kilmallock, county Limerick, was burned and church windows were broken. An attempt was made to burn a Methodist church in Roscommon, while a Masonic Hall was attacked in Clones, Monaghan. Shots were fired at the homes of two Protestant residents of Thurles, Tipperary. Similar incidents took place in other parts of the Free State, including Dunmanway, West Cork, where ‘Remember 21’ and ‘Watch Belfast’ was painted on the street. Dockers in Limerick, Sligo, Waterford, and Galway refused to unload goods from Belfast ships. A strike by dockworkers in Galway developed into a march around the city calling unsuccessfully for Protestant workers to be dismissed. These events received extensive publicity, on the basis, reported the *Irish Times*, that they were ‘so rare in the South’ as to ‘give rise to the gravest anxiety’. The newspaper also observed,

The South is too familiar with political disturbance, but not, during the last two hundred years, with bigotry. The Protestant minority has lived – up to the present at any rate – in peace and friendliness with its neighbours, and although many Protestants suffered during the “troubles,” it was not for their faith but for their political views. Since the Free State was established, indeed this minority – so small and so scattered that it would have been at the mercy of anybody that had been evilly disposed towards it – has acknowledged freely the tolerance which has been shown. The events of the last few days, therefore, are almost incomprehensible.

This brief burst of activity, in which protests against sectarianism became in some places sectarian reaction, met with immediate and forthright denunciation from all shades of the political and religious spectrum.20

In contrast, Protestant church leaders in Northern Ireland met the Minister for Home Affairs, Dawson Bates, an acknowledged bigot who barred ‘papists’ from his ministry.

The delegation was led by the Church of Ireland Bishop of Down and Connor, Dr. Frederick MacNeice, and included the Grand Chaplain of the Orange Order (whose ‘ignorant bigotry’ and ‘attitude to the Roman Catholic religion is disgusting’ noted the *Irish Times*). MacNeice reported afterwards, ‘not much can be done’, apart from ‘better supervision of side streets… [H]e recommended that groups of persons should not be allowed to congregate on the streets’. In a sermon in St Anne’s Cathedral, construed as an ‘appeal to the Orange Order’, MacNeice studiously avoided ‘measur[ing] out praise to one side or blame to another, nor did he wish to say that one side was guilty and the other was guiltless’. MacNeice and other Protestant church leaders did attempt to persuade shipyard workers to tolerate Catholics. A short leaflet they distributed to the loyalists included, ‘Christ[’s] message to you […] “Love your enemies, pray for those that despitefully use you”’. The appeal was unsuccessful. One Catholic shipyard worker, of 12 attempting a return to work, ‘was caught by a crowd on Queen’s Road, and received such a severe mauling that he had to be removed to hospital’. Catholic women workers who returned to Jennymount required a police escort to and from their homes. Two who became separated from the group, … were set upon and received a large number of blows and had their clothes torn before [a] Police Sergeant Brehney could rescue them. In doing so he received a bad cut over his eye, but managed to get them into a “cage” car which took them to their home.

The Catholic workers’ tools were stolen from their workplace and they endured continual sectarian taunting. Unsurprisingly, southern Protestants reported that nothing of the sort transpired in their daily interactions. The southern sectarian reaction fizzled out under a barrage of criticism almost as soon as it began. MacNeice and northern Protestant clergy reportedly were ‘delighted’ when Northern Ireland gradually returned to its normal state of government through discrimination and intolerance. Their superficially even-handed approach, were it attempted in the South, would have been considered unacceptable and in fact sectarian.21

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As Inglis put it in 1962, even though ‘there seemed to be all the material [necessary] for a campaign against Protestant domination of industry’ in the south, it did not emerge.\textsuperscript{22} Irish nationalism that is sometimes right-wing was not generally anti-Protestant. Had it been more socialist this widespread form of inequality might have been challenged. In purely trade union terms religious discrimination at management level was not the most pressing practical concern, particularly before the advent of private sector white-collar unionisation during the 1960s. Pay rates and conditions of work were.\textsuperscript{23} Capitalists generally talk the language of profit and loss, hard cash, and self-interest, the mechanism Smurfit used when he took advantage of Hely’s difficulties. He did not necessarily object to 5% owning most of the state’s wealth (estimated at nearly two thirds in 1986\textsuperscript{24}), merely that sectarian considerations should not determine composition.

Protestants at different points along the socio-economic scale had interests to protect little different from Roman Catholic comparators. More at the higher end, however, interacted in their own particular manner with inequalities produced by sectarian ownership patterns, plus sectarian health, education and welfare provision. Catholic inspired laws banning divorce and contraception were offset by generally higher standards of living. Economic inequality cancelled out social inequity. It is a reason why conservative economic and religious leadership within Protestant communities cautioned about not protesting too much. A 1971 Minority Rights Group investigation reported of southern Protestants that, ‘they seem as content as can reasonably be expected’. In May 1972 100 leading southern Protestants felt moved to point out in a statement to NI co-religionists that instead of suffering discrimination, they,

\dots hold positions of importance and trust at least in proportion to their

\textsuperscript{22} Inglis, 1962, p60. He also remarked, ‘The astonishing thing is not that a few [right-wing Catholic] organisations… existed, but that they wielded such little influence’.

\textsuperscript{23} However, see later discussion on the relationship between the breakdown of rigid sectarian and class distinctions in the Guinness Brewery, Dublin. It is remarkable, nevertheless, that Rouse and Duncan’s extensive history of the Irish Bank Officials Association, state it to be a story of ‘gender and class’, 2012, p3, but not at any stage about religious favouritism, a subject studiously avoided over 294 pages.

\textsuperscript{24} By Peillon, 1986, p98.
fraction of the population…
The phrase ‘at least’ was exceptionally coy. So too was,

Various sensitive issues which find continuing publicity are for most men far short of crucial, are in practice far less than representative, and are in prospect adjustable by stages.

Official Sinn Féin’s Dick Spicer contended that the mainly affluent signatories did not protest the illegality of contraception and divorce (the ‘sensitive issues’) because they ‘d[id] not wish to see their positions of wealth and power challenged’. His assertion that the situation was oppressive in particular of the Protestant working class was, though, missing the point. The so-called ‘sensitive issues’ became an issue for the working class as a whole and for women (as distinct from ‘most men’) in particular. The state and the Catholic Church found themselves contesting, not Protestant claims, but ever-larger sections of the whole community.\textsuperscript{25}

Sectarian difference was transcended, but was also largely unexplored. For example, the remarkable fact of Protestant ‘positions of wealth and power’ was unremarkable to Spicer. Questioning relative Protestant privilege, and the sectarianism on which it was based, would have been seen, \textit{pace} FitzGerald, as itself intolerant. The inhibition was part of a more general apprehension about discussing differences in Catholic and Protestant social experiences, an example of which we now examine.

\textbf{11.1 Protestant Games and Social Separation}

In 2012 during Olympic Games coverage RTÉ sports commentator, the late Bill O’Herlihy, observed late one evening,

Do you know something, when I was a young fella’ growing up, badminton was considered a Protestant game, in a sense it was played by Protestants mainly, but it has exploded completely now. It’s a completely different game now isn’t it?\textsuperscript{26}

This loaded question was delivered to a surprised Badminton Federation representative after Irish player Chloe Magee’s first round win over her Egyptian opponent. It ‘provoked fury on social media sites’, was the subject of an unsuccessful complaint, and

\textsuperscript{25} Jackson, 1971, p17. ‘Protestants join in statement on role in the Republic’, ‘Class division shown on issues says S.F. speaker’, \textit{IT}, 18 May 1972. Spicer was, as he stated, from a southern Protestant family.

\textsuperscript{26} In, Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, Broadcasting Complaint Decisions, October 2012, p34.
became a significant news story. Magee, herself a Protestant, said the remark was ‘stupid’ since religion was not a basis for her participation.27

As one headline put it, O’Herlihy committed a ‘gaffe’.28 The immediately negative reaction was an illustration of southern Irish social psychology, illustrating discomfort addressing the specifics of Roman Catholic and Protestant differences. A fear of reviving slights and animosities, leavened by historical and journalistic commentary presenting Protestants as victims of Irish nationalism, gave rise to the impression that discussion was itself sectarian. The episode revealed an absence of acceptable discourse, within which social, economic and cultural differences, leavened by the vicissitudes of Irish history and politics, may comfortably be explored. Without it, these issues of what Roman Catholics and Protestants did differently in their daily lives, and why, tend to remain shrouded in embarrassed silences, punctuated by bursts of indignation when the subject is brought up, sending it back to the obscurity from which it emerged. If anything, the reaction to O’Herlihy indicated unresolved tensions demonstrating the extent of insecurities and inhibitions surrounding the subject. It is a reason, also, why Peter Hart’s allegations during the 1990s of attacks on Protestants

during the War of Independence confronted a largely uninformed and apprehensive audience.

As a result, a sports commentator who, though from a Roman Catholic background was married to a Protestant, became an object of outrage. However, O’Herlihy’s recollection was, as will now be demonstrated, historically accurate (see *Irish Times* examples, page 266).

How did an inoffensive game come to be weighed down with sectarian baggage? It was the consequence of a strategy initiated within the Church of Ireland to separate in particular Protestant and Roman Catholic young people. Up to the 1960s the small Protestant community was becoming a smaller southern minority. ‘Mixed’ marriages under the now defunct 1908 Roman Catholic *Ne Temere* decree meant in practice that children had to be raised as Roman Catholics, resulting in a perception that such unions meant denominational suicide. This rationalised social separation and sectarian practices. In consequence, Protestant clergy and parents shunned association between theirs and Catholic teenagers. One time superintendants of the Church of Ireland’s Irish Church Missions, ‘to the Roman Catholics’ (ICM), Reverends T.C. Hammond and W.L.M. Giff, termed transgressors as, respectively, ‘betrayers[s] of an age-long heritage [who] must forever feel ashamed’, who were engaged in ‘treason against your church [leading to] shipwreck of your own conscience’. The ICM wished to convert, not marry, Roman Catholics.

Máire Roycroft, a Church of Ireland teacher, referred to ‘the isolation the Church of Ireland imposed on itself, which was nevertheless understandable’. In a discussion of

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29 Lee, 1985, pp15-16. However, Martin Maguire, ‘Protestant population decline’. *IT*, 22 Sep 2014, observed, The de-industrialisation of Ireland [during the 19th Century] led to economic decline, leading in turn to a fall in immigration of Protestant persons from Great Britain, along with accelerating out-migration of Irish Protestants. However, also very significant was the social force of marriage, especially the marriage pattern of Irish Protestant women marrying British military grooms on an Irish tour of duty. I found that fully one-third of Protestant brides married British military grooms. The loss of young marriageable females to British soldiers was much more significant than the notorious *Ne Temere* decree in depleting Protestant society.

Maguire based his observation on his 1993 research.


southern unionists, the historian F.S.L. Lyons referred to Protestants ‘withdrawing into a kind of ghetto’, and of himself, ‘as one who grew up in this rather stifling atmosphere’.

It encouraged separatists on both sides and it especially encouraged Protestants to experience life through secluded church institutions.

The southern Protestant community developed its own relatively well-resourced and increasingly state-supported parallel organisations. Sectarian provision in education, health and welfare was encouraged, in which the largest confessional organisation, the Roman Catholic Church, was dominant. It helped to sustain a separately supportive, occasionally fractious, conservative social structure in southern Ireland. For every conservative Catholic organisation or practice, there was probably a Protestant equivalent, but the latter phenomenon is not generally understood.

State policy, Protestant churches, and employment practices encouraged separation. Tight integration into confessional organisations also made economic sense. The Roman Catholic Church, that did not want Catholic young people associating much, if at all, with Protestants, accommodated this approach. It suited both Christian denominations, institutionally.

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33 Maguire, 1995, 2012. See also Maguire, 2002, p292, who lists 38 organisations within the relatively affluent Clontarf parish and 16 in ‘St George’s, a poor inner city parish’ in the 1930s.
Similar activities were separated by a wall of ignorance and of silence, creating separated communities of feeling and outlook that Bill O’Herlihy breached momentarily. An inadvertent result was to hide, and to thereby exclude from general understanding, marginalisation of Protestant unmarried mothers and of child abuse in Protestant ethos institutions. During the 1960s Michael Viney in the *Irish Times* wrote influential articles on social issues that the newspaper reprinted as pamphlets. His pioneering 1964 six-part series on unmarried mothers concentrated on Catholics but referred briefly to the Church of Ireland making use of two unnamed ‘confidential’ mother and baby homes (extract, above left). They were the Church of Ireland Magdalen Asylum and the Bethany Home. Confidential use of the homes by unmarried mothers was not an obvious reason for keeping the names of the institutions confidential. Unsurprisingly, Bethany Home Matron, Kathleen Glover, observed in 1965 that Viney’s series ‘dealt primarily with the Roman Catholic population’ (report, above right). The trend continued in Viney’s previously noted 1965 six-part series on southern Protestants that made no mention of homes for unmarried mothers or of detention and welfare institutions. His further groundbreaking 1966 eight-part series, ‘The Young Offenders’ (27-9 April, 2-6 May), though it said a lot about Catholics, also ignored Protestants (whose experience will be examined later).

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Viney’s articles had a profound impact. His *No Birthright* text, on single parents, ‘became’, as Viney noted, ‘a text for sociology students in UCD’ who had been limited to ‘a syllabus set by papal encyclicals’. He asserted later that the articles brought ‘Catholic affairs and institutions into the *Irish Times*’. In other words unmarried motherhood was considered a ‘Catholic affair’ in ‘Catholic … institutions’. After largely disappearing from view, the Bethany Home came back to public notice in 2010, due to the discovery of 219 unmarked graves of Bethany Home children in Dublin’s Mount Jerome cemetery. A 2013 *Irish Times* collection of the late Mary Raftery’s journalism, who pioneered investigation of abuse in Roman Catholic institutions, contained a single reference to unnamed ‘Church of Ireland mother and baby homes’, but only to indicate that ‘poorer’ Roman Catholic women could go there to spend ‘nine months working off their keep’. Nothing on Protestant women’s experience, rich or poor. Possibly, an absence of media attention facilitated undetected abuse within Protestant institutions.

In the south, besides Protestant schools and hospitals (and ‘Protestant firms’), at a more informal level were Protestant-only employment and marriage bureaus, dances and sporting activities. Martin Maguire’s essay on the Church of Ireland ‘culture of community’ in Dublin cited advice to young people to make friends exclusively amongst ‘our people and within the church community’, so as to avoid the ‘lower standard’ of Roman Catholic marriage. On 1 November 1941 in the *Irish Times*, Rev’d A. Hobson of the Church of Ireland in Innishannon, Co Cork, assuaged intimations of complacency. The Free State’s larger towns and cities contained, he observed,

… hardly a tennis club in the summer time, or a hockey or badminton, or a table tennis club in the winter, or a reading room or a concert, or a lecture or even a dance, which is not run in the closest possible connection with the local parish church.

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39 The author discovered the Graves, Meehan, 2010b, c. Since increased to 223.
40 Raftery, 2013, p95. See discussion on the Westbank Orphanage in Chapter Thirteen. See also, from former residents, Colm Begley, Sydney Herdman, Victor Stevenson, Helen Fitzpatrick, ‘Inquiry into ‘exploitation’ of orphans’, *IT*, 17 May 2012.
In 1965 the Dean of Ardfert required young Protestants to be gathered together from afar (in the absence of local Catholics) for social occasions so as to ‘reduce the risk of inbreeding’. Where relationships failed to emerge from these interchanges, Mrs Brewster’s Dublin Marriage Society was on hand to offer ‘opportunities for Protestant professional and business men’ to meet ‘C. of I. ladies, county background’ (Irish Times, 2 February, 4 March 1953). Mrs Brewster catered also for others, but emphasised ‘separate R.C. and Protestant departments’ or simply ‘religious safeguards’ (4 March 1953, 30 March 1954; 1954, 1971 examples, page 273).

Badminton was advertised openly as a Protestant activity, unlike soccer that was both popular and proletarian (‘foreign’ was the adjective sometimes attached). South Dublin-based clubs advertised in the Irish Times for Protestants in Dun Laoghaire, Ranelagh, Daltry and Dublin City, or ‘southside’. On 4 October 1966 a ‘Protestant lady’ announced her availability to a ‘badminton club playing Wednesdays and Fridays’. The absence of ‘northside’ references, where some working class Protestants lived around Drumcondra, gave the activity in addition a middle class connotation. The last traced, on 15 September 1972, stated prominently on the back page, ‘Badminton City Club (Protestant)’. The absence of ‘northside’ references, where some working class Protestants lived around Drumcondra, gave the activity in addition a middle class connotation. The last traced, on 15 September 1972, stated prominently on the back page, ‘Badminton City Club (Protestant)’.

ASHAMED

Sir—The Dean of Cork and other pre-Catholics have stated that they are ashamed of the label “Protestant” because of what extremism of non-Catholic denominations have done in Northern Ireland.

One honours them for their Christian consciences but one could go further and feel ashamed of the label (as I do) because of petty bigotry in the Republic—such as an incident not one miles from O’Connell street. Where a non-Protestant was refused admission to a Church of Ireland badminton club on no better reason than that he (who would give the shirt off his back to any needy soul) was a Roman Catholic. Yours, etc. 

MARGARET JOHNSTONE, 49 North Avenue, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin.

ASHAMED

Sir—Mrs (or Miss) Margaret Johnstone must be very naïve (Charles Grey-Stack). She writes of a Roman Catholic being refused admission to a Church of Ireland badminton club near Dublin as a shameful thing.

I agree. The same applies not only in Dublin but in similar clubs in Cork, Waterford and Limerick and so on. This good lady, however, cannot see the issue in that she makes no effort to examine why such a thing should be the case. The answer is very simple. As long as the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland continues to follow the No Tenebrae decree, thus long will the Church of Ireland do all it can to keep its young people to themselves, and exclude as much as possible contact with the young people of the Church which, until Divine Providence persuades it, otherwise seeks to bring up every child of a “mixed marriage” as a Roman Catholic.

Of course it is a shameful thing—but it is not of our doing—Yours, etc. 

ARTHUR GRAINGER, (Rector, retired).

Sunday’s Well, Cork.

ASHAMED TO BE TERMED PROTESTANT SAYS DEAN

THE VERY REV. F. K. JOHNSTON, Dean of Cork, at a service at St. Fin Barre’s Cathedral, Cork, yesterday, said: “When it happened in Little Rock or Cyprus or Los Angeles we were shocked and puzzled as to how men could do such things to each other. We recoiled from the racism and bitterness that erupted so violently in listing, burning and death. We condemned it. Today we stand condemned. Part of our country is torn and lacerated. Blind hatred runs deep. If this were solely a personal issue it would be bad enough, but it has emerged as a religious issue between Catholic and Protestant.”

Dean Johnston said the word protestant had an honourable history. “It emerged as men sought the truth about God. It was not a protest against anything, but a protest for the things that men believed were true. Today, one is ashamed to be termed a Protestant, and we repudiate the so-called Protestant spirit that deliberately sets out to suppress and intimidate. That allows and encourages ghettos within cities and victimises men and women because of their religious or political convictions.

NO GHETTOS

“We have known no such ghettos in the South. No man has been prevented from voting in any election because of his position or belief. After nearly half-a-century of rule by successive Roman Catholic Governments, there has been no unrest, no feeling of victimisation or any unjust treatment of the minority in the Republic. We have been fairly and honourably treated as first class citizens and have been happily integrated into the community.”

He said that in the past 50 years of Unionist Protestant Government in Northern Ireland they had provided the present electorate.

ONLY ONE QUESTION

The Dean further stated: “We are compelled to approach the present situation as Christians, and to approach the question as Christians is to eliminate all personal feelings and attitudes. It is not a question of how I feel about it, or what you think ought to be done. There is only one question for the Christian: What is the mind of Christ?”

The Dean said that in this situation there was a tremendous wariness to the Church. “Have they deliberately withheld the revealing forces of the holy spirit of God, and so fostered sectarian bitterness? Have theologians been as a result of the Church?”


42 In an appropriately headlined Irish Times article by the Dean, Charles Grey-Stack, ‘Protestant Attitudes 3, Backwoodsmen’, 14 Apr 1965.

has a few vacancies for players’. Other sports did not appear to promote themselves in this open sectarian manner, which is possibly why Bill O’Herlihy remembered badminton as specifically ‘Protestant’.

Little public animosity was evident, apart from a letter in the *Irish Times* on 2 September 1969. It mentioned ‘petty bigotry in the Republic’, due to an RC applicant ‘refused admission to a Church of Ireland badminton club’ (see letter, page 271). The author, Margaret Johnstone, noted a new factor, ‘ashamed’ co-religionists distancing themselves from Protestant ‘extremists’ in Northern Ireland. She mentioned in this context commentary by the ‘the Dean of Cork [Rev’d F.K. Johnston] and other non-Catholics’. In an echo of southern Protestant commentary on Ulster unionists during the War of Independence (discussed in Chapter Four), Johnston reported himself ‘ashamed to be termed a Protestant’. He remarked that southern Protestants, unlike northern Roman Catholics, had ‘no feeling of victimisation or [of] any unjust treatment’. They were, ‘first class citizens, happily integrated into the community’ (see report, page 271).44

However, on 6 September a retired rector defended the ‘shameful thing’, the not so integrated sport of badminton. He asserted (letter, page 271), it ‘is not of our doing’:

As long as the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland continues to follow the *Ne Temere* decree, thus long will the Church of Ireland do all it can to keep its young people to themselves, and exclude as much as possible contact with the young people of the [Roman Catholic] Church… Rules on keeping Protestants ‘to themselves’ were strictly enforced. In 1971 the Dartry, Monaghan, Church of Ireland Select Vestry turned down ‘12 boys and girls’ who sought to include Catholics in their Badminton club.45

As Northern Ireland descended into chaos after 1968, this southern sectarian sporting activity disappeared from view, albeit retained as a dim memory by some such as Bill O’Herlihy. Sectarian sport was considered out of place in a modernising society with a growing secular consciousness. Equally significantly, perhaps, the material basis for Protestant separatism had begun to disappear with the ending of economic protectionism. Bill O’Herlihy was not wrong, just wrong to bring up the subject. He encountered discomfort and embarrassment simply by mentioning it. This discomfort also affected, in addition to historical enquiry, social science and other investigation of southern society.

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44 ‘Ashamed to be termed Protestant’ says Dean’, *IT*, 18 Aug 1969, reproduced here.
So much so, Protestant input has been considered peripheral to the dynamics of social change in 20th Century southern Ireland. Erosion of the status and privileges of the Church of Ireland during the 19th Century has been analysed, but accounts taper off progressively thereafter. For example, Breen et al’s *Understanding Contemporary Ireland* (1990) indexed the Church of Ireland twice, once on ‘disestablishment’ and once again on ‘schools’. The ‘Catholic Church’ and ‘Catholics’ merited 14 index entries on 42 pages, 18 on ‘relationship with the state’. Protestants evaded mainstream scholarly attention that was fixated on a relationship between Irish brands of conservatism and Catholicism. Irish Times journalist Carol Coulter, from a Protestant small farming background in the west of Ireland, referred to,

… the stereotypical treatment of our longest-standing minority, the Protestant community, which has been presented as a homogenous group whose minority status somehow puts it beyond any criticism or analytical discussion.

Research into the material base of Protestant exclusivity was stymied. Sporting clubs alone were insufficient to preserve distance from potential Catholic marriage partners. Ongoing discrimination in employment, not just in the boardroom, was necessary too and that also, apart from in Kurt Bowen’s 1983 study, was largely ignored. The following section extends (and partially corrects) Bowen’s research on this aspect of southern Protestant life.

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46 Whelan, 2005; David W Miller, 2007; Moffitt 2008. See also Luddy, 1995. Maguire, 1995, 2002, 2012, is an exception. Paseta, 2003, p195, agreed with regard to a ‘scarcity of research’, post 1922, but considered the reason ‘statistical’ due to population decline. However, she asserted mistakenly (as demonstrated here) that there was a ‘corresponding collapse in the social [and] economic … power of Southern Irish Protestants’.


11.2 Protestant Shorthand and other Preoccupations

On 2 January 1960 in the Irish Times Miss Elizabeth Synnott’s employment agency advertised that ‘Protestant shorthand typists’ were ‘urgently wanted’ (above). Later, on 26 January, ‘a Protestant shorthand typist (senior)’ was available’, though on 8 February, they were again required, full or part-time. However, on 13 July 1960 a Protestant shorthand typist with ‘excellent testimonials’ was offered to firms operating religious segregation at quite junior levels. On 2 August 1964 ‘a few Protestant telephonists/typists, also shorthand typists, senior and junior’ were required. And so it continued throughout the heady 1960s. Miss Synnott, who provided ‘a better selection’ (Irish Independent, 23 September 1969), alternately enticed or proffered ‘educated’, ‘experienced’, or ‘inexperienced’ Protestant office staff. On 16 July 1970 Miss Synnott still sought Protestants as ‘telephonists, typists, switchboard operators, clerks, shorthand typists, experienced and juniors’ in the Irish Times, during a period when the newspaper was reporting civil rights movements in the US and in Ireland.

Protestants and firms seeking them advertised openly and provided some interesting contrasts (see numerous examples, above). On 26 January 1960 a ‘Protestant young lady shorthand typist’ sought a post alongside, ‘Doctor recommends companion valet,

49 3 Jan 1956, 8 Jul 1960, 29 Jul 1964, advertisements above presented together for illustrative purposes. Advertisements for teachers and medical personnel in church run institutions have been excluded from the discussion (but not a non-teaching position in Wesley College school, page 275).

50 Except where indicated, as here, examples are from the Irish Times.
Protestant’ (an actual valet rather than lifestyle advice). On 13 July the valet again advertised his doctor’s recommendation, though not, on this occasion, his religion. On 24 February 1953 in the *Irish Independent* a ‘non-union’ Protestant Automobile electrician-welder sought work. However, on 31 March ‘Barmen, Protestants’ were offered ‘full union wages and conditions’ in Bangor, Northern Ireland (left).

What was more important, identity or expertise? On 22 April 1960 in the *Irish Independent*, an ‘experienced cowman, hand and machine milker, good calf rearer, tractor driver, Protestant’, was required, while on 19 September 1968 a ‘Young Protestant man’ wanted work on a dairy farm. Firms considering spicing up their social life on 29 July 1964 were offered the services of a Presbyterian ‘entertainments manager’. The same day a ‘gardener (C[hurch of] I[reland])’ sought work, alongside a ‘quiet respectable’ Protestant ‘country girl’.

Most advertisements did not state religious preferences. In the *Irish Independent*, Protestant and ‘RC’ advertisers vied more or less equally for attention (see example, 13 June 1941, on page 276). In the *Irish Times* Protestants, overwhelmingly, were required. The term often associated with the practice, ‘Protestant preferred’, was seldom encountered in the *Irish Times*, apart from on 11 November 1968 (below right). This indicates extensive sectarian recruitment, given that Protestants constituted less than 4% of the southern population. It also indicates social class diversity, with working class Protestants advertising their existence and occupations. However, the Protestant population was more managerial than proletarian, with one third of directors and managers and only 652 of 48,000 labourers and unskilled workers in 1961.

It appears that southern Irish Protestants entered the world attended by Protestant midwives, nurses and doctors, fed by Protestant cooks. They went to a Protestant school where, in Wesley College, letters home were typed by a ‘shorthand typist (Protestant)’ (26 June 1967, below). They were fed by more Protestants, and had wounds tended by a Protestant matron. Gaelic games, mainly

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51 In one, of two, detected exceptions, 8 Feb 1966 (the other, 8 Jul 1960, for a position in Northern Ireland), an ‘educated lady, 40’s, RC’ sought a ‘hostess/ housekeeper/driver/children, appointment’, with ‘congenial surroundings more important than salary; home or abroad’.

played by Catholics, were avoided institutionally. A Church of Ireland soccer league maintained exclusivity in that sport. There were Protestant scouts and guides plus the Boys’ Brigade. At the appropriate time, Protestant employers were at hand, serviced by a Church of Ireland employment agency after 1925, from 1944 to 1972 by the Dawson Employment Bureau. A Protestants-only Dawson Badminton Club appeared also be under Church auspices (11 September 1959, above).

Social life was further facilitated by the YWCA or YMCA and the parish dance, ‘attended exclusively by Protestants’. Around the house, ‘Protestant man’ (a firm of painters and decorators), ‘will do all your painting, papering and carpentry’ (4 February 1961, below left), while food could be purchased from a ‘general grocery’ that required a ‘reliable girl assistant (Protestant)’ (Irish Independent, 30 March 1961). In addition, other household goods could be obtained from a ‘large departmental drapery’ that advertised for ‘two girls and two boys of school leaving age (Protestants)’, one of ten such ads that appeared on 8 July 1960 (see page 274, plus 6 April 1961 in the Irish Independent, below left), or from ‘high class retail establishment’ requiring an ‘experienced shorthand typist (Protestant)’ on 11 May 1959. Alternately shopping could be combined in a ‘grocery, hardware and general business’ that ‘required immediately, [a] trustworthy Protestant Man’ on 14 January 1960.

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53 Protestant participation in the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) is under-researched. Ida Milne has questioned mistaken impressions: ‘The GAA was and is part of my cultural background. The fact that we went to a different church on a Sunday in no way impinged on that. But in recent years, I have noticed that historians writing about the involvement of Protestants in the GAA have tended to focus on their otherness, rather than their sharing in the same culture. For me, the GAA was and is part of the ordinariness of life, not the difference.’ ‘Review, the GAA a People’s History’, Pue’s Occurrences, puesoccurrences.wordpress.com/2009/11/17/review-the-gaa-a-peoples-history (accessed 29 Jul 2014)

54 Bowen, 1983, pp97, 103.

For those in need of rented accommodation, an *Irish Times* scan would reveal, ‘accommodation offered, Protestant business lady’, or ‘Protestant business gentleman offered partial board’ (both 19 September 1968). A ‘gentleman (C. of I.)’ advertised his requirement for ‘comfortable lodgings with breakfast and supper’ on 30 December 1964, but not who with. To be sure, another ‘Protestant gentleman’ stipulated ‘full board’ with a ‘Protestant family’ (21 March 1967, below right). On the other hand a ‘business gentleman’ of indeterminate persuasion wanted a bed sitting room and an electric fire in a ‘Protestant house’ (28 March 1975). If ill-health should befall, more Protestant nurses and doctors were at hand, before days were concluded in a ‘First class plot, St Nessa’s Protestant Section, Dean’s Grange, unoccupied’ (20 April 1971, below right). In such circumstances, little if any significant contact with the other 95% might be contrived. This thought was expressed also by Ian d’Alton:

In Cork city one could be born in the Victoria Hospital, attend the Cork Grammar or the Rochelle School, date in church-run (and vetted) dances and socials, be employed by the Lee Garage or Lester’s, the chemists, socialise among the freemasons and the choir of St. Fin Barre’s Cathedral, play hockey with Church of Ireland Hockey Club and rugby with Cork Constitution rugby club, spend old age in the Home for Protestant Incurables, and be buried by Cross’s, the undertakers.56

*Irish Times* journalist Carol Coulter contrasted her West of Ireland rural Protestant upbringing more critically with,

… the world of the south Dublin, Protestant middle class in the 1960s, an intimate, smug and complacent world where networking assured children secure employment in the areas of finance, insurance and manufacturing where the old Protestant middle class still held sway. Its social life was almost hermetically sealed, with its scout and girl guide troops, its tennis and youth clubs. Unlike the people I grew up with, the girls I went to school with - and, indeed, their parents - passed their entire lives with practically no social interaction with their Catholic neighbours. Within its secure walls racist comments about Jews and Catholics could be, and were, heard.57

Considerations of social class were related in this context to those of social status.

Another *Irish Times* columnist, Fintan O’Toole, remarked that Catholics, with over 90% overall population density, accomplished a corresponding feat. A perhaps stereotypical example of everyday experience suggested was,

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57 Carol Coulter, ‘Not just one Protestant people’, *IT*, 16 Jan 2003. See also, Inglis, 1989, p64, on anti-Semitism prior to WWII.
to ‘be dried out in Catholic clinics for treatment of alcoholism’. O’Toole’s view was cited in a *Sociology of Ireland* commentary on religion that was fixated (much like O’Toole) on the Catholic Church. The remarkable, but again generally unremarked upon, point is that Protestant seclusion in a smaller dispersed population required considerably more effort.

In *Protestants in a Catholic state, Ireland’s Privileged Minority* (1983) Kurt Bowen reported of Protestants he interviewed that 81% worked primarily with co-religionists, rising to 90% in ‘white collar’ occupations. Protestant exclusivity existed also in the *Irish Times*. In his history of the newspaper, Terence Brown referred briefly to religious considerations accompanying senior appointments, in particular as they concerned the appointment of Fergus Pyle as editor in 1974. The subject was, noted Brown, ‘a delicate and moot point’. In 1962 *Times* reporter Brian Inglis referred to the paper as ‘relatively free from bigotry’, but that ‘some appointments … seemed hard to explain, except on the grounds of the candidates’ religion or their masonic connections’. Gene Kerrigan observed in a 1979 profile of previous editor Douglas Gageby, that Pyle’s ‘abrupt appointment caused uproar among the staff… both Catholic and Protestant’. They entertained,

… what seemed in the liberal *Irish Times*… an almost heretical suspicion. Could it be that [Deputy Editor Donal] Foley was denied the job because he was a Catholic? Despite all the changes in the paper might the old sectarianism be alive at the heart of the paper which presented itself as the champion of liberalism.

It is equally possible that as Chairman of the Irish Times Trust, set up in 1974, Major T.B. McDowell, wished to appoint an editor with a less republican sensibility. While offering his secret services to the British government in 1969 McDowell reportedly characterised Douglas Gageby (whom he effected to otherwise esteem) as ‘a renegade or white nigger’ on the subject of Northern Ireland (see Chapter Five, page 117). James Downey, who also considered himself passed over and better qualified than Pyle, asserted bluntly, ‘Pyle was selected essentially because he was a Protestant’, and, ‘it is an indisputable fact that under Pyle’s reign between 1974 and 1977 the tone of the paper’s northern coverage, and of its editorials on the subject, changed palpably’.

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58 Share *et al*, 2012, p346. O’Toole’s observation (1994, p125) was expressed in an article on religion, ‘Mixed Blessings’, in which ‘Ireland’ was conflated with the 26-Counties. Only Roman Catholicism was considered and was renamed ‘the Irish Church’, a term whose historical copyright belongs to the Church of Ireland (see page 302). See Finn, 2014, for a perceptive critique of O’Toole’s views.

Brown suggested that, ‘no overt sectarianism ruled at D’Olier Street’, on the basis that the newspaper’s general manager from 1907-41 was a Catholic. It is sufficient to note an implication that sectarianism was a covert, i.e. not advertised openly, factor in Irish Times appointments. Jean Dunne, the first Catholic employed in her grade in the 1960s, reported however that the paper ‘used to actually advertise for Protestant staff, but only for the office’. The sartorially un-suited printers were mainly Catholic. Sectarian considerations rendered them unsuited for Irish Times office work. Bowen had observed that typically such ‘segregation was an internal matter of Protestant office workers and Catholic labourers’. Possibly, the ‘large engineering firm’ and ‘large city firm’ (5 November 1964, 18 July 1968, both page 277) requiring respectively ‘an experienced Shorthand Typist (Protestant)’, ‘copy typist (Protestant)’, employed Protestants at and above that grade, Catholics mainly below it. The Irish Times may also have advertised anonymously within its own columns in this manner.

Rigid class distinctions often accompanied sectarian hierarchies, including in Dublin’s Guinness Brewery, which earned a reputation as a high-paying paternalistic employer. Brewers, a grade immediately below the board of management, were required up to 1939 to resign if they married a Catholic. 1953-69 Workers’ Union of Ireland (WUI) brewery branch secretary, Jack Carruthers, referred to a ‘socially and morally corrupt structure’ in which ‘the top management were 99% Protestant and/or Free masons’. His union did much to change a system in which ‘the humble labourer [had been treated] as dispensable industrial shit’ and required ‘to identify himself by his brewery number only’. The ‘gentlemen’ ‘staff’ ‘epitomised all that the class struggle stood for’ by their ‘intellectual stupidity’. They were, reported Carruthers,

... ably supported from beneath by the non-staff or Labouring Foremen or Chargers who, almost without exception achieved their position because of religion, usefulness to their superiors and through nepotism of the worst kind.

Another observation on brewery life noted,

Managers came to Guinness after serving in the [British] Empire and saw their commission in Dublin as just reward for their efforts. Some of them did little more than sit in front of the fire and read the paper... I can speak authoritatively on this subject as I was one of those who lit the fire, left out their pens and newspapers, and watched the life and times they had in the company. One manager had his slippers laid out for him every morning!

60 Brown, 2014, p293.
62 Hughes, 2006, p38.
In 1965 the WUI negotiated an agreement that, as Carruthers put it, ‘forc[ed] the board to recruit ‘staff’ from the once despised labour ranks’, thus diluting the firm’s sectarian employment ethos and structure. One result was the promotion of the author of the fireside observations above. Finbarr Flood joined Guinness at age fourteen as a messenger in 1953 and rose to the post of managing Director in 1989.\(^{63}\)

Bowen outlined how, in general, Protestant preferment operated. A Church of Ireland rector might inform parishioners of vacant positions in Protestant-owned firms. The *Church of Ireland Gazette* operated a bureau ‘for employers and employed members of the Church of Ireland’. The parish was therefore ‘a source of both economic security and religious commitment’. Maguire reported that the Dublin Battalion of the Boys’ Brigade also maintained an employment agency ‘for the boys and employers (many of them former members)’.\(^{64}\) In addition, as Protestants and Catholics were educated separately, Protestant firms seeking staff wrote to Protestant schools. They also, in the case of one insurance firm, ‘identif[ied] Catholic applicants by their schooling’, that were then put ‘aside’.\(^{65}\) Ads appeared with, for example, ‘Apply stating where educated’ (24 January 1969), this for a ‘Junior copy typist (Protestant)... age 16-21’, required by a ‘large city firm’ (possibly the same as mentioned earlier). Accountancy, a 35% Protestant profession in 1971, was no different.\(^{66}\) On 17 November 1958 chartered accountants required a Protestant ‘qualified assistant’ (left), and on 6 June 1960 a ‘young Protestant girl for general office duties’. On 2 August 1973, possibly with the same object, an accountancy firm wanted a ‘young man’ to supply ‘details of school attended’.

A slow Catholic ascent up the career ladder can be seen in the accountancy firm Craig Gardner, that appointed its first Catholic partner in 1944, its first Catholic senior partner in 1968.\(^{67}\) 4.5% of senior civil servants were Protestant in 1961 and an estimated 25% of senior managers and 36% of directors in banking were Protestant in 1972.\(^{68}\) It is

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\(^{63}\) Carruthers in Duffy, 2012, pp30, 188. Flood, 2006, p74. See also, Flood again: The brewery I joined in 1953 was class-ridden, dictatorial and autocratic. People like me had no rights and could not even express ourselves. On several occasions (as a messenger boy) I was fined a shilling for looking contemptuously at my superior, a man messenger. Martin Fitzpatrick, ‘Don’t shoot the messenger boy, someday he’ll be boss’, *II*, 12 Mar 2006.

\(^{64}\) Bowen, 1983, p97; Maguire 2002, p 293.

\(^{65}\) Bowen, 1983, p98.

\(^{66}\) Bowen, 1983, p85.

\(^{67}\) Farmer, 1988, pp171, 185.

\(^{68}\) Bowen, 1983, p89. Giving this 4.5% figure, though it is proportionate, White suggested that Protestants were underrepresented within in the public service, 1975,
difficult to ascertain whether Protestants suffered reciprocal discrimination in Catholic-owned businesses. Possibly, there were too few remaining unemployed to experience it. The only area indicating Catholic countermeasures was in the sector that opened this discussion, office administration. If Miss Synnott proffered a better Protestant selection, the Hynes Catholic agency on O’Connell Street, ‘over [the] Green Rooster’, offered quantity, in Dublin or for export to ‘England’ (but only in the Irish Independent, example 17 January 1969, below).

Bowen’s observation in his otherwise comprehensive study that ‘public evidence’ of discrimination ‘is understandably scarce’ was incorrect. He cited White (1975) on ‘a small number’ of discriminatory ads in the Irish Times ‘during the 1920s’ that risked ‘arousing Catholic hostility’. White reported just three from 1927. Crawford’s analysis of ‘Protestants and Irishness’, citing White, considered such activity long expired. She misdirected herself in reference to ‘the emotive hold of myths’, creating an ‘emotional legacy’. In fact sectarian advertising featured every year up to the 1970s, and appears to have aroused little overt ‘hostility’. It was out in the open and largely ignored, in the lower circulation Irish Times and circulation leading Irish Independent, that had then a conservative Catholic profile. In their histories of the Irish Times neither insider Dermot James, who at one point supervised the small ads section, or Terence Brown commented on this aspect of the paper’s output.

Once employed, working class Protestant young men arriving in Dublin might stay in the Harding Boys’ Home in Dame Street, a hostel that catered for, … apprentices in trades, clerks in insurance companies and the railways, [plus] shop assistants in Protestant establishments such as Dockrell’s [hardware or] Brown Thomas and Switzer’s [department stores].

AT HYNES CATHOLIC AGENCY, 52
Lower O’Connell Street, Dublin (over Green Rooster) — 100 girls required, Dublin, England. Fares paid.

p162. He referred similarly to lower ranks of the gardaí and, overall, to the defence forces. However, if Protestants were well catered for elsewhere, it would have left comparably fewer seeking public service appointments that were based on competitive examination. It should be noted that women, irrespective of religion, were required to resign on marriage from the civil service and the banks, until gender equality legislation appeared in the mid 1970s.

Bowen, 1983, p98. Noted also by Noel Browne’s wife, Phyllis, from a Protestant background, 2002, p35,
White, 1975, p158.
Walsh, 1992, pp218, 219. Crawford’s dismissal of the importance of preferential hiring is contradicted by her interviewees’ claims of obtaining employment through what was termed a ‘Protestant network’, 2010, p152.
James, 2008; Brown, 2014.
Griffin, 1993, p55.
Communal bonds were thus cemented that transcended objective class categories. While jobs were not guaranteed, being Protestant appears have provided an advantage, thus creating a structural incentive for caste over class solidarity.

Some advertising reflected poverty and servility. For example, ‘Wanted, orphan girl, 16-17, to help with light housework, treated as one of the family, Protestant preferred’ \((\text{Irish Independent}, 19 \text{ August 1941})\). On 16 and 23 January 1960 (below) the \textit{Irish Times} carried,

Thoroughly domesticated woman (or orphan girl would suit), Protestant, to take charge of modern home… must be good at cooking or laundry. Good home for orphan girl with chance of learning business.

Protestant poverty was apparent in the 22 March 1968 bequest of Elizabeth Gertrude Barrett, ‘nursing home proprietress and spinster’, who left parts of her estate to, amongst others, the Association for the Relief of Distressed Protestants (ARDP), the Irish Distressed Ladies Fund, Mrs Smyly’s Homes and Schools for Necessitous Children, and Miss Carr’s Homes. She left her premises to the Cheshire Foundation for the purpose of carrying on her profession.

The Archbishop of Dublin sought charity during the 1970s for ‘needy Protestants’ on behalf of the ARDP (example here, 13 March 1972). Martin Maguire described the ARDP as historically, ‘a weapon for social control’ of the Protestant segment of the working class.\(^75\)

The economic position of poorer Protestants was maintained through tight integration into parish structures. Working class Protestants were said to be fervent in their faith and in opposition to drinking and gambling, assumed to be Catholic traits. On Dublin’s north-side they engaged in bible study, sermonising and hymn singing, conducted by Plymouth Brethren and the YMCA. While preserving relative privilege, these mechanisms were also in tune with reinforcing patriarchal and conservative attitudes.\(^76\) Privilege for some encouraged a state of inequity for all.

\(^{75}\) Maguire, 2014, p27.

\(^{76}\) Bowen, 1983, pp181-183, see ch4, ‘Class Differences and Occupational Segregation’, pp78-103. See also Maguire, 2002.
11.3 Maintaining Inequality

The 1951 defeat of Health Minister Noel Browne’s attempt to implement a ‘Mother and Child Scheme’, Part Three of the 1947 Health Act (drawn up by new reforming Department of Health Chief Medical Officer, Dr James Deeny\textsuperscript{77}), has been viewed as a watershed moment confirming Roman Catholic dominance within the Irish state. Obeisance and deference proffered by political leaders, including Browne, certainly encouraged that impression. The free scheme proposed care to mothers and children before and after birth. However, it was a fear of ‘socialised’ or ‘state’ medicine, as in Britain’s new National Health Service, that was the basis of the Irish Medical Association and Roman Catholic Church’s allegedly principled opposition. Doctors did not oppose a previous non means-tested children’s allowances scheme, because, ‘while Dr Browne’s scheme affected the income of the medical profession, the children’s allowance did not’.\textsuperscript{78}

The Church of Ireland Gazette reported supportively, ‘some of the doctors who rejoiced over the defeat of Dr Browne’s proposal were Protestants’, who ‘don’t consider that the opinions expressed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy [to the government] were unwarranted or tyrannical’. Terence Brown pointed out that the Gazette commentary was in riposte to Irish Times support for Noel Browne, after Browne gave the newspaper copies of correspondence between the government and the bishops. A somewhat ignored point is that the Irish Times had opposed the free health care substance of the proposed legislative measure. It argued that free medical care ‘invades privacy in the home’ and ‘entails a threat to personal freedom’. Browne, himself a medical doctor, emphasised religious rather than secular opposition to the scheme.\textsuperscript{79}

The Irish medical profession eventually secured ‘the restrictions it wanted’ in a watered-down scheme enacted by Fianna Fáil in 1953 (that was means-tested and supported infants to six weeks rather than children up to sixteen years of age). The profession ‘was able to determine the nature of the whole Irish health service’. Instead of the ‘Department of Health [and James Deeny]’s ideal in 1945 of a free medical service for all’, the government in 1956 provided the medical profession’s ‘far more

\textsuperscript{77} Passed by the previous Fianna Fáil administration. It is often mistakenly assumed that Browne originated the proposal he failed to have implemented. See Considine, Dukelow, 2009, pp37-40 and Deeny, 1989.

\textsuperscript{78} Round Table, 43, Dec 1952, p73 (in Lee, 1989, p316).

suitable [and inequitable] alternative – [a] voluntary health insurance scheme’.  

Secular self-interest within the Irish state often hid behind a Catholic smokescreen.  

For example, the 1939-43 Minister for Local Government Seán MacEntee unacceptably opposed ‘communism for wives and children’, in the form of family allowances, that would ‘drive the unfit into marriage’. Having exhausted arguments based on secular reaction, MacEntee suggested (or perhaps threatened) potential opposition to the measure from ‘spiritual authorities’, including the Pope, and ‘Catholic sociologists’. Ironically, in 1944 MacEntee opposed a health insurance proposal from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Clonfert, Dr Dignan, who characterised the existing system - much-esteemed by MacEntee - as ‘tainted… [by] destitution, pauperism and degradation’.  

The Mother and Child episode gave rise to increasing left wing opposition to the Catholic Church, which couched its philosophy in terms of Christian anti-communism and gave the impression it was in charge. Since clergy operated coercive welfare and detention centres, as well as corporal punishment in schools, the state’s overall responsibility was submerged in popular consciousness. The Church of Ireland’s Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics acknowledged somewhat ruefully that opposition to the Catholic Church,  

… does not signify any turning to the Gospel. It may be that labour politics and a rationalistic communism have weakened priest rule.  

Protestant Fine Gael TD Maurice Dockrell, of Dockrell’s hardware business, acknowledged the point. While Dublin’s Lord Mayor in 1960-61, he was criticised by co-religionists for kneeling and kissing the ring of a visiting Roman Catholic bishop. Dockrell later explained:  

I thought it was about time an Irish Protestant paid tribute to the wonderful Catholicism of the Irish people, [...] Let’s not fool ourselves – if the majority of the Irish weren’t Catholics they wouldn’t be good little Protestants, they’d be rip roaring anti-clerical communists.  

Dockrell experienced no Catholic animosity in his representative position, as ‘the Irish Catholic has long been used to finding Protestants in positions of trust’. Socio-economic  

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80 McKee (1986, p192), in Considine, Dukelow, 2009, p40. See also Chapter Seven, page 152, note 33.
81 For example, Mennell, et al (2000, p75), ignore doctors’ role in their brief account of the Mother and Child controversy.
83 For an insight on the Catholic fixation with combating communism, Dunne, 1994.
84 Hughes, 1948, p10.
equilibrium maintained by the state was enabled with the aid of a phalanx of mainly Roman Catholic clerics in plain view and substantial numbers of Protestant employers in the background. The Catholic Church was as fixated on combating the putative ‘communists’ that so concerned Dockrell. It appeared broadly uninterested in sectarian employment issues. When asked, one moral theologian (otherwise obsessed with all manner of sexual prohibitions) suggested that, since employment should not be based on religious criteria, ‘to get a job in a Protestant factory’ a Catholic might (within limits) conceal his/her religion.\textsuperscript{86}

The state’s priority, in league with churches, was conservation of the existing state of affairs. Thus, when the fervently Roman Catholic Knights of St. Columbanus took over the Protestant-controlled Meath Hospital in Dublin in 1949, the coup was nullified after the Dáil passed a private members bill ousting the intruders. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin supported the legislative move. As Bowen put it, ‘equality meant the maintenance of separate Protestant and Catholic medical preserves’.\textsuperscript{87} Alex Findlater of Findlaters’, a large Protestant-owned grocery business, asserted that, contrary to opinion, the Knights, unlike the Freemasons, little impacted on business life. Findlater refused to join the Freemasons when asked to do so by Frank Lowe, then ‘a director of Findlaters’, chairman of the \textit{Irish Times} and Hely’s… and deputy grand master of the Masonic Order.\textsuperscript{88}

In his \textit{The Fethard on Sea Boycott} (2010) Tim Fanning cited a 26 July 1957 letter to the \textit{Catholic Standard} wondering why advertisements for ‘gardener’ or ‘typist’ should contain also the word ‘Protestant’. The writer asked if those opposing the May to September 1957 boycott of the Protestant community in Fethard, a south Wexford coastal village, objected to this discrimination. The context for this rare sighting of Catholic discontent was international notoriety surrounding an attempt by Catholic clergy to force Roman Catholic schooling on the children of a ‘mixed-marriage’ couple in Fethard, Seán and Sheila Cloney. Rather than accede to this demand Sheila, the Church of Ireland partner, secretly removed herself and her children from the village. A Catholic curate blamed the Church of Ireland community for the disappearance and encouraged withdrawal of custom. That small community of about 25 persons suffered severe difficulties.\textsuperscript{89}

However, ‘for the Catholic Church, the boycott [was] an unequivocal disaster’. Episcopal support for the boycott fed international attention that compounded the

\textsuperscript{86} As paraphrased by Farmar, 1995, p200.
\textsuperscript{87} Bowen 1983, p87; Whyte, 1979, p166. Findlater, 2001, pp465-7, noted that the new regulations ended a prohibition against appointment of mainly Roman Catholic medical graduates from the National University of Ireland. That was one reason for the Knights’ attention, as they were formed originally to counteract anti-Catholic discrimination.
\textsuperscript{88} Findlater, 2001, p467.
\textsuperscript{89} Broderick, 2009, p117.
problem. More importantly, there was significant Irish Catholic and also republican opposition. Taoiseach Eamon de Valera denounced the boycott in the Dáil. Seán Cloney opposed it in the press and at one point walked out of church. He afterwards observed,

My main support in breaking the boycott came from Old IRA men who themselves had fallen out with the clergy during the War of Independence. The Cloneyes were soon reunited and the children were afterwards home schooled, in order that neither denominational system of education could claim victory. While characterised by unionists in Northern Ireland as an example of Roman Catholic power the saga revealed the opposite. A church with over 90% adherence at the height of its apparent dominance could not command the allegiance of its flock against an isolated family in a small rural community. It was a watershed moment for the Roman Catholic Church, not so much in relations with the Protestant community, but with its own.

As with the 1949 ‘Mother and Child’ controversy, the Fethard boycott emboldened opposition to Catholic authoritarianism. Obedience was questioned, while opposition became more public. In the normal course of events Protestant economic exclusivity was ignored. Raising it in an attempt to rationalise the Fethard boycott would have had the effect of justifying the practice. If the Roman Catholic Church was attempting to create the actuality rather than the spectre of a dominant ‘Catholic nationalism’, its flock gave increasing evidence of resistance to the project.

Unlike later, the Labour Party did not play a progressive role. De Valera’s demand for an end to the boycott was on foot of a 4 July 1957 Dáil question from Noel Browne. The 1960-77 Labour Party leader, Wexford TD Brendan Corish, then intervened to ask, disingenuously, ‘whether there is, in fact, a boycott?’ He demanded also an assurance, reflective of the boycotters’ perspective, that ‘certain people will not conspire… to kidnap Catholic children’. After joining Labour, Browne perennially thereafter termed Corish - a possible candidate for Conor Cruise O’Brien’s 1966 attribution ‘dismal poltroon’ - ‘the Bastard of Fethard’. 

\[90\] Fanning, 2010, pp72-3, 145-6, 150-6, 164-9, 182, 186; on republican opposition to the boycott, pp111-14. Significantly, the previously mentioned Knights of St Columbanus opposed the boycott. On local and other Catholic opposition, O’Connor, 2008; Ryan, 2013; Whyte, 1980, p323. 

\[91\] Michael Parsons, ‘Woman at centre of infamous Fethard-on-Sea boycott dies’, *IT*, 30 Jun 2009. *Irish Times* editor, Alec Newman, expressed editorial ‘resentment’ at NI unionists attempting to make ‘political capital’ out of what ‘we hope… is the isolated extravagance of a very small part of the twenty-six county community’, *IT*, 15 Jul 1957. Newman’s experience of sectarianism in Belfast, where his family moved when he was 12, was said to have contributed to what Terence Brown in his *Irish Times* history called ‘a considered form of nationalism’ (implying that it was otherwise ill-considered), 2014, p217. Brown referred to Irish nationalism as ‘Catholic’ and therefore to Newman, an Irish Protestant, as ‘like many converts to a creed’, who professed an ‘adopted faith’.

\[92\] Fanning, 2010, p207.

\[93\] Puirséil, 2007, p213. See ‘poltroon’ discussion, page 156.
Bowen reported that during the 1960s and 70s young Protestants endeavoured to smuggle Catholic acquaintances into Protestant-only functions and were themselves enticed by the bright lights of urban discos and dance bands. Church of Ireland players abandoned the generally lower standard of sectarian soccer. Like Catholic counterparts, young Protestants rebelled in a non-sectarian direction. The steady erosion of the lynchpin of Irish economic independence, protectionism, a policy sometimes considered an expression of Catholic economic nationalism, ended protection for Protestant firms. After EEC entry, especially, many Protestant manufacturing, insurance or accountancy firms amalgamated, were bought out or expired. Professionalisation of employment practices had their effect also. New owners generally and new multinational investors, particularly, were uninterested in sectarian recruitment. Industry became more reliant on external professional training. Hiring practice became more objective with equal pay laws, public opinion, and, later, further anti-discrimination legislation. This factor and EEC entry, therefore, eradicated barriers previously confronting middle class or aspirational Catholics. Ending Protestant preferment was, equally therefore, an important, though ignored, aspect of the modernisation process. Increasingly, ability rather than religious preference and gender influenced employment opportunities.

Bowen estimated that Dublin’s Protestant working class community was eroded in the 1970s by recruitment into the middle class. Also, a larger percentage of working class Protestants were in ‘mixed marriages’ at that time than were more affluent Protestants, who retained a higher degree of communal exclusivity. Whereas on 6 December 1962 there was a typical *Irish Times* ad for ‘Matron (C. of I.)’ in an ‘elderly ladies home’, the home tended later to require a ‘Lady Superintendent’ in ‘home for elderly protestant ladies’ (17 April 1978, 24 October 1980), thus surrounding the applicant’s religion with ambiguity.

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95 Walsh, 1992, p211, outlined Tony (later Sir Anthony) O’Reilly’s ultimately less successful participation in this process, that saw the acquisition and then demise of Dockrell’s hardware and building supplies company and of Goulding’s Fertilisers. It was not exclusive to Michael Smurfit. See Bowen, 1983, pp102-3 on the end of this era.

96 For example, Share *et al.*, 2007, pp172-3, ignored this aspect of Irish modernisation.


98 Bowen 1983, p181. Maguire (1993, p49) also noted more tolerance lower down the social scale in the early 1900s of marriage to Catholics.
The old ways, recorded for posterity in the small ads rather than the news pages of the *Irish Times*, were dying out. Newspapers sometimes reflect the times better than they report them and offer insights for the social historian in overlooked places. And this area was overlooked. So much so, on 14 April 1967 the *Irish Times* reproduced a 16 April 1867 ‘situations vacant’ advertisement in which a ‘House Painters Establishment’ sought a Protestant, ‘preferred’, ‘book keeper and General Clerk’. 100-year-old discrimination, not the contemporary version, was news. On 8 November 1972 *Irish Times* reporter Denis Coghlan was dismissive of those depicting former northern premier Terence O’Neill as ‘the darling of the Catholics’. He noted O’Neill’s one-time ‘advertisement for a Protestant housemaid… in a Belfast Newspaper’ (see extract, left).

Largely unexamined facets of Protestant life in the south left those experiencing Roman Catholic authoritarianism free to imagine Protestants were victims also of Catholic rather than of their own social practices. Thus, Carol Coulter noted in 2003,  

In college I was puzzled, and sometimes irritated, by the distorted and extraordinarily benign view my Catholic friends had of the Protestant community in Ireland. In their view it was a homogenous group, made up of those uniformly economically-comfortable, diligent, hard-working, tolerant, and devoted to slightly eccentric pursuits like market gardening and home-baking. Such a view does not accommodate differences in historical origin, geography or class. It glosses over the undeniably unpleasant aspects of this history, like the disproportionately powerful grip a section of the Protestant community held, up into the 1960s, on swathes of the Irish economy, and the religious bigotry which surfaced from time to time. Nor does it accommodate the reality of the economically underprivileged in the community.

**11.4 Mothers and Children Treated Equally, Badly**

Despite efforts at encouraging Protestant procreation, late age of marriage and an increasingly elderly population meant that southern Protestant numbers declined slowly until the 1960s, a trend that stretched back to the 19th Century. Such is human frailty,

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99 By way of contrast, I failed at first to note this example’s antiquity.
100 Carol Coulter, ‘Not just one Protestant people’, *IT*, 16 Jan 2003.
101 Walsh, 1970, 15. Maguire established it as a factor prior to independence. Over one third of Protestant marriages to British soldiers up to 1920 drained the population of young women. Additionally, in Maguire’s survey of the Dublin Protestant working class from 1870 to 1926, over 40% of skilled working class Protestants in 1911 were born in
or a capacity to defy arbitrary standards, unapproved contact across the religious divide sometimes took place, resulting in ‘mixed marriages’ or worse, pregnancy out of wedlock. An unmarried pregnant Protestant woman might arrive in the Bethany Home, ‘the major facility for Protestant women in need of institutional care’. On 22 June 1957 the home advertised for an ‘Evangelical Missionary-minded’, on 16 May 1970 for an ‘Evangelical Christian’, nurse (reproduced, below). Annual meetings and ‘prayer days’ were presided over by CofI clerics and duly advertised and reported annually in the Irish Times. It observed (10 October 1964) that the Home catered for ‘those in need of moral welfare and rehabilitation’.

Unmarried Protestant women who became pregnant faced considerable community disapproval. If the human outcome was the result of a relationship with a Roman Catholic, they confronted an additional dimension of moral panic. The result of one such liaison, Derek Leinster, was born in the home in 1941. He wrote about it in two books, Hannah’s shame and Destiny Unknown, published in 2005 and 2008. Leinster depicted himself as a fostered out, ‘cast off, cast out, half-caste’, given to a dysfunctional family in 1945. His tale, as harrowing as any to come from Roman Catholic institutions, was not unique but it was ignored. He wrote in 2009, Leinster was the victim of a Protestant system of social control in which, as in the Roman Catholic community, clergy undertook a leading role.

Protestant clergy appeared as fixated as Roman Catholic counterparts in curbing and controlling sexuality, while seeming more liberal. Bishop Day of Ossary noted in 1937 Britain, another factor affecting a ‘well established and growing outflow’ in a highly mobile population, 1993, pp47, 48, 53, 57.

You don’t have to be a Catholic to be listened to as a victim of institutional abuse, but it seems to help. That is my experience as a Protestant victim of institutional neglect. Like all sufferers, I am a victim of prejudice.

102 Bowen, 1983, p 32.
103 Derek Leinster, ‘Protestant abuse victims must also be heard’, IT, 1 Jul 2009. The author was instrumental in the composition and publication of this article after encountering Derek Leinster’s story in the Guardian, ‘Private Lives, First Person’, 18 Jun 2009, and hearing from Derek about difficulty having the subject aired in Irish media. Bethany Home ‘Adoption Agreement’ between ‘Hannah Linster with Arthur J. Carway and Kathleen Carway’, constructed by Hayes & Sons Solicitors, Nassau Street, Dublin, 10 May 1945 (Appendix 29c). Leinster is further discussed on pages 328-9, 348. See one of the very few articles to mention Protestant institutions in the context of abuse allegations, Mary Raftery, ‘Redress list excludes key groups’, IT, 4 Nov 2004.
that he had given ‘qualified sanction’ to the Anglican Communion’s 1930 Lambeth Conference motion to permit married Anglicans limited access to contraception. It stipulated, ‘complete abstinence from intercourse… in a life of discipline and self-control’ as the ‘primary and obvious method’. Day added, ‘personally, I loathe and detest the idea of birth control, and would never advocate it in any circumstance’. While an exercise of individual conscience, it was also, perhaps, a case of having your cake abroad, while eating it at home.

When a limited liberalisation of the state’s 1935 contraceptive ban was proposed in 1978, the Church of Ireland wanted contraception restricted, as per the 1930 resolution and in line with a 1971 Synod resolution, to married couples only. A post-Synod Church of Ireland Mothers’ Union statement recognised ‘the government’s responsibility in protecting our young people from the dangers involved in the open sale of contraceptives’, rather than in protecting women from the dangers of unplanned pregnancy. The Mother’s Union asserted that, ‘contraceptives should be legally available with proper safeguards to those married couples whose conscience permits their use’. A 1979 law permitting contraception but on prescription only (including condoms and with the oddly redundant stipulation that they be used ‘bona fide, for family planning purposes’) failed to deliver this particular restriction. The outcome qualifies somewhat Roy Foster’s assertion that ‘the position of non-Catholic Irish people was seen as somehow irrelevant’.

Alcohol was often associated in the clerical mind with loss of inhibitions. In May 1938 the class conscious Bishop of Derry warned in Dublin of the effects of ‘tony wine’ (a ‘colonial wine with some kind of drug added’) and ‘young women in a good social position being ruined by cocktails’. In pursuit of this theme, that same year ‘young people of both sexes becoming addicted to what might be termed the “cock-tail habit”’ exercised the Dublin Presbyterian synod. Rev’d J.C. Breakey warned, ‘such selfish irresponsible empty headed pagans were preparing the way for communism’. He noted, ‘a large measure of agreement’ and ‘a certain amount of co-operation’ between Protestant and Roman Catholic churches on...

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104 Lambeth Conference resolution on contraception in *IT*, 29 Jan 1937; ‘The Church of Ireland’, 3 Feb 1937.
encouraging sobriety. 1926-27 Moderator, Rev’d RK Hanna, who sat on the Bethany Home Managing Committee, wanted to ‘give the devil his due’. ‘The government here had a censorship of films which was quite effective’. However, said another, censorship of ‘evil literature’ was undermined by cross-border smuggling (see headline, page 290).\(^{106}\)

Such attitudes persevered. Rev’d John Mercer presented the Moral Welfare Society report at the 1963 Church of Ireland Synod. He warned that female juvenile delinquents in Society’s ‘lower stratum’ promoted a ‘jungle morality’, by engaging in pre-marital sex. They were unattractive marriage partners as ‘soiled goods’. On the other hand, the advent of no-fault ‘divorce by consent’ undermined marriage in ‘respectable circles’. Rev’d Mercer also wished, like Presbyterians earlier, to campaign alongside the Roman Catholic Church against the sale of ‘cancerous’ books, such as D.H. Lawrence’s\textit{Lady Chatterley’s Lover}.\(^{107}\) This is not to say there were not others who openly disagreed with these attitudes, but that was the case also with Roman Catholics.

Persistent confusion on the point of comparative liberality was illustrated during the early 1980s. Dean Victor Griffin of St Patrick’s Cathedral Dublin criticised Church of Ireland facilitation of a 1983 amendment to the Constitution prohibiting abortion, that

\begin{quote}
For the Church of Ireland, a statement on behalf of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr McAdoo, said that the amendment seemed “just and adequate” but would need further study by the Church’s General Synod. “This procedure was indicated in a statement from the Standing Committee on September 28th, the statement said.

The Fine Gael leader, Dr FitzGerald, said he was “relieved” at the wording of the amendment and added that it was along the lines he had pressed for and that he and Fine Gael would be able to give it their total support.

“We were concerned that it should be drafted in such a way as to protect life, rather than be negative and sectarian in nature.” There was no possible disagreement with the Government there, he felt, and, given the difficulties, the wording would be as near as possible to securing the broad consensus in its present form.

CANON Jim Hartin, principal of the Church of Ireland Theological College, said yesterday he was “quite pleased” with the wording of the proposed constitutional amendment about abortion. It was better than he had expected.

He stressed he was speaking personally. The Standing Committee of the Church of Ireland would consider the draft amendment on November 16th and would probably release a statement about it.

“I believe that the outgoing Government took account of what the Protestant Churches were saying and I am encouraged by that too,” he added.

Canon Hartin admitted that he had been fearful that the amendment might have been simplistic or negative. In fact it was positive and many-sided, he said. Yet, it seemed the lawyers would be able to argue about it interminably.
\end{quote}
protected ‘the right to life of the unborn’, ‘with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother’. In 1982 the CofI Archbishop of Dublin, Henry McAdoo, described this proposed wording as ‘just and adequate’. The head of its theological college was quite pleased’ as it ‘took account of what the Protestant churches were saying, while the Church’s Standing Committee was ‘relieved’ by the formulation (reports, page 291). Griffin asserted that, as a result, ‘Liberal Catholics’ seeking forthright Protestant opposition were somewhat demoralised. They may have been further depressed by Ivan Yates, a Church of Ireland Fine Gael TD who characterised as ‘not negotiable’ Fine Gael’s willing determination to submit the wording above to referendum.

In a subsequent memoir, published in 2014, Yates revised his role. He wrote, ‘The national political leadership of all parties was hijacked into giving written commitments’ to supporters of the anti-abortion amendment. He referred to ‘the cowardice of […] senior politicians’ but not to his own. Yates commented instead on the only time in his political life he felt ‘uncomfortable as a Protestant TD’. He noted that his election required eight Catholic votes for every Protestant vote he attracted. Yates concluded, ‘Keep your head down Ivan’. Such ‘coward[ly]’ electoral opportunism was not particular to Protestant elected representatives.

This enthusiasm for curtailing women’s autonomy was facilitated initially by Fine Gael leader Garret FitzGerald. As Taoiseach in 1981, FitzGerald stated that he wanted to lead a ‘crusade, a republican crusade, to make this a genuine republic’, less partitionist and sectarian. The choice of terminology, ‘republican crusade’, summed up FitzGerald’s confusion, compounded by support for the constitutional ban on abortion. FitzGerald pledged his party’s ‘total support’ for the referendum wording in November 1982, but later changed his somewhat muddled mind. However, Fianna Fáil, plus anti-abortion Fine Gael and Labour allies, pushed the measure through the Dáil. The momentum toward victory for anti-abortion forces in the 1983 referendum was unstoppable. Afterwards, attitudes changed and reached a tipping point in 1992. A suicidal 13 year old, pregnant as a result of rape whose parents sought a termination in

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111 Bowman, 1989, pp332-4, discussed FitzGerald’s ‘crusade’, but not the first constitutional change to which FitzGerald agreed, on abortion. Bowman’s discussion also excluded the political context for FitzGerald becoming exercised about partition, the 1981 H Block hunger strikes and emerging republican electoral participation. Paul Bew was correct in 1986 to assert that FitzGerald had made the constitution more sectarian. He was overly pessimistic, however, in signalling ‘the end to any further hopes of liberalisation for some years’. Due to popular pressure, abortion became constitutional in six years and divorce in ten. ‘The sectarian divide, Ireland after the Accord’, Marxism Today, Sep 1986. See discussion following.
London, was ordered by the High Court (on foot of an action by the Attorney General) to bring her foetus to term. An appalled public swiftly voiced approval of a right to abortion in these circumstances. The Supreme Court, in considering the 13-year-old’s plight on appeal, then interpreted the Constitution to permit abortion where suicide was threatened. A subsequent referendum voted down an attempt to reverse this suicide option. Voters simultaneously supported inserting in the Constitution a right of access to abortion information, and to travel abroad to obtain one. It was a significant and sustained reversal of opinion, in conformity with the law of unintended consequences.

11.5 Ignoring Problematic Protestants

Ireland’s demarcated Christian traditions could be said, historically, to have had parallel priorities in their institutional relationship with the southern Irish state. Attitudes among the religiously committed in both communities differed mainly in how they regarded each other, little in terms of those they targeted for attention. Clergy and self-appointed volunteers set about regulating sexual activity outside marriage. Single mothers and their ‘illegitimate’ children were separated from their families and community, before being separated from each other. Rev’d H. Watson remarked at the 1928 annual meeting of the Bethany Home, ‘if they had not the home, the children would be sent out into the world with the brand of Cain’. He went on, ‘The salvation of womanhood and the redemption of the child was the object of the home’. Speaking in Christchurch in 1945, Rev’d R.C. Robb warned of the spread of venereal diseases and ‘illegitimate births’. His sources in the police, and in the Bethany and CofI Magdalen homes, reported that unwed motherhood was spreading from the ‘servant girl type’ to ‘business girls and occasionally university students’. State and quasi-state institutions, therefore, policed these ‘girls’ and, more generally, the poor (report left, see also page 315 for similar sentiments in a Bethany Home memoir).

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113 ‘A painful problem, appeal on behalf of the Bethany home’, IT, 2 Feb 1928.
James Smith suggested that a ‘containment culture’ focussed on single women and their children. It effectively criminalised childbirth while largely ignoring actual and mainly male crimes of rape, incest and paedophile assault.\textsuperscript{114} Children who came to the attention to the authorities were often sent to religious-run, state-funded, industrial schools. This was not, according to a 1940 \textit{Irish Times} editorial,

\begin{quote}
… as a punishment, it should be marked, but because the character of the boy, or girl, is more likely to develop satisfactorily in such a school.\textsuperscript{115}
\end{quote}

In 2009 \textit{The Commission to Investigate Child Abuse} (\textit{CICA}, the ‘Ryan Commission’) reported on the treatment of institutionalised children, including in ‘any… place where children are cared for other than as members of their families’. The commission reported,

\begin{quote}
Over the period from 1936 to 1970, a total of 170,000 children and young persons… entered the gates of the 50 or so industrial schools. The period for which they stayed varied widely, depending on the ground of entry; but the average was more than seven years.\textsuperscript{116}
\end{quote}

Notwithstanding the significant fact that the correct figure appears to be 25,000,\textsuperscript{117} Ryan found the institutions to be places where physical and sexual abuse and neglect took place, where the Department of Education had ‘a deferential and submissive attitude’, in which ‘demands by managers for children to be committed to Industrial Schools [were] for reasons of economic viability’. Furthermore, ‘This failure led to the institutional abuse of children where their developmental, emotional and educational needs were not met.’\textsuperscript{118} The ‘moral’ element to this robust system of ideological and coercive control was intrinsic to its operation.

State bodies did not inquire into how Protestants fared, ostensibly because the last Protestant-run industrial school closed in 1917. The Ryan Commission continued this trend. Head of research Dr. David Gwynn Morgan simply repeated observations in previous (1937 and 1970) institutional care reports, before moving swiftly along:

\begin{quote}
[Protestant] children who came before the courts were usually entrusted, through the local Gardaí, to the care of the local clergyman or minister of religion concerned and he assumed responsibility for having them placed in the care of a suitable family, school or home.\textsuperscript{119}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{114} Smith, 2004, p209.  
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{CICA}, 2009, v1, ch3, p41.  
\textsuperscript{117} O’Sullivan, 2014, p203, who argues convincingly that the Commission confused the number in and flow through of children in institutions.  
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{CICA}, 2009, ‘Executive Summary’, p19.  
\textsuperscript{119} \textit{CICA}, v4, ch3, pp217. Previously: ‘Children other than Roman Catholics who
That was that. Or so it seemed. In fact, Garda Headquarters issued a memo on 8 December 1933 advising superintendents to contact the nearest relevant clergyman if a young Protestant was apprehended. They were to appraise the clergyman, if ‘unaware of the fact’, of the ‘Meath School Funds’. This ‘Scheme’, chaired by the CofI Archbishop of Dublin, was ‘for the future regulation and government of Meath Protestant Industrial School and Destitute Protestant Boys Aid Fund’. Its goal was re-institution of a Protestant industrial school. In its absence, funding was available, … in defraying the cost of lodging, board, clothing and education of any Protestant boy or boys in the care of any relative or fit person to whose care he or they shall have been committed with the consent of the Committee under the provisions of Section 58, sub-section 7 of the Children’s Act 1908.¹²⁰

No details are available on the distribution of funds or on numbers of young Protestants affected. These young people appear lost to official oversight and to subsequent review, while their churches were expected to perform the state’s duty.

In 1969 the Law Society pointed out that perceptions of proportionately fewer problematic Protestants were unfounded, ‘in as much as no committals are made of [Protestant] children because there is no place for them to go’.¹²¹ The process was, ‘completely unconstitutional and utterly unjust’. In come before the courts are entrusted, through the local Gardaí, to the charge of the local pastor of their own denomination, who sees to it that they are placed in the care of suitable families or schools, Reformatory and Industrial Schools Systems Report, 1970, p3. The comment originated in the 1937 ‘Cusson’ report: ‘Where Protestant children have committed offences, it is usually possible to make arrangements privately for their detention in various institutions. The expense is being borne by the relatives of the children or by their parish’, in Eoin O’Sullivan, CICA public hearings, 21 Jun 2004, at childabusecommission.ie/public_hearings/transarchive.html (accessed 14 Jun 2014).

¹²⁰ Protestant ‘girls’ could also be provided for in the absence of suitable ‘boys’. ‘Committal of Protestant Children to Reformatory or Industrial Schools’, “A” Branch, Garda Síochána Headquarters, 8 Dec 1933, Appendix 34. I am grateful to Eoin O’Sullivan for a copy of the garda document. Scheme regulations (dated ‘19 Nov., 1935’) are in the Church of Ireland, RCB Library, Dublin. I am grateful to Dr Susan Hood for allowing me to see them. Other documents that might identify individuals are not available for inspection.

¹²¹ ‘Child care code long out of date’, IT, 22 Apr 1969.
1971, the Protestant Adoption Society (PAS) confirmed that bringing, … non Roman Catholic children… before the Courts [is] a completely fruitless exercise…. [S]ince there is no Institution to which a child in need of care can be committed the Courts are powerless to take any effective action in the matter. The result is that these children are permanently deprived of the right guaranteed by the Constitution to the same treatment as their peers.

These brief bursts of clarity were cited in a research essay for the Commission by Eoin O’Sullivan on ‘Residential child welfare in Ireland, 1965-2008’. He cited also a 1972 civil service memo that noted criticism of ‘a new kind’, denial of, … provision for Protestant children whose numbers are too small to warrant a special school.

It also made a self-serving though significant observation that, ‘with a religious order administering an institution’, the government could evade scrutiny.\(^\text{122}\)

It was simultaneously noted in relation to Smyly’s ‘Church of Ireland Children’s Home[s]’ (see advertisements page 295) that the, … figures show an increasing reliance on Health Boards of private Protestant orphanages, which in former years were able to manage an income from investment and private subscriptions.

In other words, the material basis for social control from within that community had depreciated, at a time when Protestant firms were fading from the scene.\(^\text{123}\) The impetus for offloading the cost of providing for offending Protestants may have been prompted by this factor. As the pre-existing arrangement was breaking down, the state’s slowly modernising welfare system was being asked to make provision within pre-existing sectarian limits. However, the state experienced no obligation to provide essential services in the absence of sectarian management. This is illustrated in

\(^\text{122}\) CICA v4 ch4, pp302, 317. 333-4.
\(^\text{123}\) See typical Smyly’s bequest, I7, 25 Nov 1971, above. £10,000 in 1971 was worth approximately €151,484.22 in 2014 (http://www.hargaden.com/enda/inflation/calculator.html, accessed 24 Aug 2015). From Smyly’s Trust ‘History’: ‘In the 1970s the government began to recognise the need to take responsibility for children and in 1972 started to subsidise the Homes on a per capita basis, as it was becoming increasingly more difficult to rely solely on charitable donations’, at http://www.smylytrust.ie/index.php?page=history (accessed, 1 Jan 2015).
a 1972 report on education for the deaf to the Minister for Education. It suggested that ‘arrangements should be made’ for Protestant parents, not wishing to avail of Roman Catholic-managed provision, to have children ‘admitted to suitable schools in Northern Ireland or Britain’.\textsuperscript{124}

O’Sullivan’s observations on these points, in his essay, formed no part of the abuse commission’s investigations, executive summary or conclusions. In fact, the child abuse commission head of research, Professor David Gwynn Morgan, followed his (previously cited) observation that the last Protestant industrial school closed in 1917 with inaccurate assertions. He suggested that problematic Protestants were maintained at home by Protestant charities, and that ‘a waiting list of would-be adopters’ meant few if any institutionalised Protestant children (which is news to those who were).\textsuperscript{125}

Furthermore, sections of the report on the social and demographic profile of witnesses and on children’s homes did not publish statistics on religious background, though the children’s homes chapter had observed,

\begin{quote}
The majority of Children’s Homes, previously known as orphanages and approved schools, were managed by Catholic religious communities or Boards of Trustees affiliated to Protestant churches. The report provided detailed comments on twenty-two institutions and three management bodies, all Roman Catholic.\textsuperscript{126}
\end{quote}

In querying this approach this thesis examined the previously mentioned Bethany Home (sometimes ‘House’) in Dublin. In doing so the author encountered an orphanage to which Bethany children were sent, that closed in 2002, and from which few were adopted. Fostered out children shunned by the wider Protestant community were encountered also. They were used as farm labour, sometimes in return for payments to the supplying institution. Some survivors made allegations of physical and of sexual abuse. These were the Westbank Orphanage, Co Wicklow, plus the Church of Ireland Magdalen Asylum, Dublin, and its associated Nursery Rescue Society. As part of a campaign for official recognition of the residents of these institutions, information was placed in the public domain.\textsuperscript{127}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{124} ‘Report of a committee appointed by the Minister for Education on the education of children who are handicapped by impaired hearing: summary of recommendations’, 1972. \\
\textsuperscript{125} CICA, v4, ch3, pp217-8. See Chapter Thirteen. \\
\textsuperscript{126} CICA, v3, ch14, p263. \\
\textsuperscript{127} See Níall Meehan, ‘Church and State Bear Responsibility for the Bethany Home’, History Ireland, v18, n5, Sep-Oct 2010b. Also, for example, Valerie Robinson, ‘Academic highlights plight of forgotten Protestant babies’, Irish News, 22 May 2010;
\end{flushleft}
Bethany Home was influenced by Plymouth Brethren, but also by the Church of Ireland’s (previously noted) Society of Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics (ICM) that (in addition to proclaiming the superiority of its Christian brand) ran a number of orphanages and was heavily associated with the proselytising Smyly’s institution.\textsuperscript{128}

It is necessary to survey the historical origins of the ICM as the largest and most influential Protestant evangelical institution in order to understand the historical origin of the development of sectarian welfare agencies in southern Ireland and their relationship to Irish politics. In this way the ethos of the Bethany Home and its role within Protestant communities north and south may be better understood.

\textsuperscript{128} Prunty, 2006, p 125. Further discussed, pages 337-45.
CHAPTER TWELVE The Irish Church Missions

The Church of Ireland in southern Ireland spent most of the 19th Century and quite a lot of the 20th adjusting with difficulty to the gradual erosion of legal, economic and political impediments affecting Catholics. It attempted initially to reverse and, failing that, to cope with a decline in status, numbers, income and influence. A futile attempt at control eventually subverted the initially multi-denominational intent of the 1832 national school system. The Irish Church Missions (to the Roman Catholics) arrived mid-century as an offshoot of the evangelical wing of the Church of England.\(^1\) It fought a spirited rear guard action aimed at reversing inexorable trends against a ‘Romanism that is not the Gospel [and] is not Christianity’.\(^2\) The ICM aggressively pursued points of theological difference, while teaching and also feeding and clothing the Irish poor. The object was,

To adopt any measure that may tend to the conversion of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland by means consistent with the principles of the Church of Ireland and England...\(^3\)

ICM schools taught, ‘twenty-four Reasons for leaving the Church of Rome’ combined with loyalty to the British Empire. An address to its founder from ICM orphans declared: ‘Welcome to the Saxon here / Whom once we learned to hate and fear / But now a happy and free band / We love and bless their noble land’. Its activity is cited as ‘sooperism’, conversion for material gain, principally alleviation of starvation during the 1845-52 Irish famine.\(^4\)

Though active from 1846, the ICM was formally constituted in 1849 and directed from London. The organisation gained impetus from moral panic in England at the prospect of post-famine Irish migrants spreading their religion. Opposition to Anglo-Catholic influences within the Church of England was also a factor. The British Government’s newfound interest in cultivating the Irish Roman Catholic Hierarchy, expressed through an 1845 Maynooth Grant (a subsidy for the production of priests)

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\(^1\) Bowen, 1983, p13; see Inglis, 1970, p190, on the CofI’s wish to use the National School system as an ‘instrument of conversion’, p190; Fanning, 2015, pp85-7, on the brutality, corruption, and sectarianism of the Church of Ireland’s Kildare Place Society school system. Also see Garret FitzGerald, ‘How religion made its way into primary school system’, IT, 13 Feb 2010.


\(^3\) Falconer, 1902, p185. The ICM name was abridged to ‘The Irish Church Missions’ in 2002. Today, the organisation states that the Church of Ireland is ‘a Protestant church without a Protestant message’. See Moffitt, 2008, 2010.

caused particular alarm. The ICM confronted the threat of emergent Roman Catholicism with a providential opportunity to convert starving and impoverished Romanists. As Miriam Moffitt put it, the ICM,

… perceived the Irish famine of 1845–47 not only as an opportunity to convert the Romanists of Ireland but also as a judgment from God on Irish Roman Catholics for having stubbornly clung to their religion: “The truth of the Scriptures was verified in the groans of the dying, and their wails for the dead,” which the ICM saw as a fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

The founder, English millenarian clergyman Alexander Dallas, explained; ‘It is a war of extermination; and so it ought to be, for the contest is between truth and error.’ How to stop the contagion: ‘the best method is to carry the war into the enemy’s country’.

Instead of illiterate and idle papists, according to Edward Bickersteth,

… an enlightened people will supply their place; and instead of demoralising the inhabitants of England, by the vices and deceptions of Romanism, and feeding the cravings of a vulture-like priesthood, [they] will disseminate (if they are educated in Ireland in the truths and doctrines of vital Christianity) peace and goodwill amongst men.

In the 1850s and 1860s the ICM made deep thrusts into the west of Ireland and later Dublin, with ‘mission stations’, schools, orphanages, and homes for ‘ragged’ boys and girls. It was in effect the second wave of what was termed The Second Reformation, the first wave having begun in the 1820s under the direction of the Irish Society (that gave Bible instruction in the Irish language and amalgamated with the ICM in 1917), the Scripture Readers’ Society and the Hibernian Bible Society (‘auxiliary’ to the CofE’s Church Missionary Society).

If the first wave failed to prevent Catholic Emancipation in 1827, the second witnessed Church of Ireland Disestablishment on 1 January 1871, accompanied by formal separation from the Church of England. After the Crimean War in 1853 and the

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7 Dallas, Bickersteth, in Moffitt, 2006, p32.
8 ‘Irish Church Missions’, ‘Scripture Readers’ and Irish Society’, IT, 18, 26 Apr 1917. Falconer, 1902, p177. The Scripture Readers’ Society amalgamated with the Irish Society in 1904. The Irish Society broke off an 1856 amalgamation proposal because the ICM considered unacceptable the Irish Society practice of allowing Roman Catholics to read the Bible to co-religionists. They must first convert, stipulated the ICM, (Desmond) Bowen, 1978, p225. The Irish Society was mentioned also in Chapter Ten discussion of Eoghan Harris’s play, Souper Sullivan, pages 245-249.
9 Wilson, 1970, p10. See also Ridden, 2007; Moffitt, 2006, 2008; and Campbell 2009, pp 242-296, on the increasingly anti-Roman Catholic rhetoric of the Church of Ireland.
1857 Indian Mutiny, English attention turned to converting ‘heathens’.\(^{10}\) The 1861 Census was a disappointment to Dallas. In 1859 he claimed that the west of Ireland Tuam diocese was 50% Protestant. His optimism was encouraged by impoverished natives displaying themselves to ICM dignitaries in exchange for food or clothing. They then, as occurred after an 1860 visit by Dallas to Roundstone Co Galway, ‘appear[ed] at mass the following Sunday’. Prior to the census the ICM forecast 2.5 million Protestants and 3.5 million Catholics. It revealed instead 4.5 million Catholics, a mere 0.7 million in the Church of Ireland and, equally upsetting, 0.53m Presbyterians. The ICM spent £300,000 between 1849 and 1861 (representing £22m in 2007 terms) and, in effect, ‘had very little to show for it’. Moffitt noted, ‘the ICM could not easily withstand the dual accusation of bribery and ineffectiveness’\(^{11}\)

Church of Ireland Disestablishment in 1871, that was ‘resisted to the hilt’\(^{12}\), brought with it lay involvement in new democratic structures, resulting in a Protestant ‘low-church’ demeanour. ‘Anglo-Catholic’ traditions diminished, in order to avoid association with the local Roman kind:

\[
\text{[N]ew canons were introduced in 1871, forbidding the use of vestments (Canon 4), instructing the celebration of the Holy Communion from the north side (Canon 5), forbidding the use of lamps or candles except when needed for light (Canon 35), forbidding the placing of a cross on or behind the communion table (Canon 36), and prohibiting the use of the mixed chalice (Canon 37).}\]

Objections to ostentation occasioned insularity.\(^{14}\) Irish Times journalist Lionel Fleming’s 1965 memoir noted that his clergyman father’s high-church preferences frustrated his ecclesiastical ambitions. Rev’d Fleming’s West Cork Timoleague

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\(^{10}\) Moffitt, 2006, p35.

\(^{11}\) Moffitt, 2006, p35. The ICM suggested, ‘the Protestants and converts from… Rome… were specially driven from their homes’, Hughes, 1948, p27. Presbyterians sought also to proselytise. Rev’d Henry McManus, first Irish Missionary of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, remarked, ‘it would be a positive sin’ for ‘one church to monopolise such a work… Let each take up a part of the moral waste for itself’. His church was ‘herself Irish and therefore free from objections naturally entertained against foreign churches’, McManus, 1863. However, since many evangelical Church of Ireland services utilised ‘Presbyterian and Cromwellian novelties’ (Nockles, 1988, p477), it would appear that this opportunism was superfluous. Nockles’ article is a highly informative discussion of the CofI during the 19th Century as a ‘Church or Protestant sect?’.

\(^{12}\) White, 1975, p50.


congregation even ‘objected to the little gold cross’ on his watch-chain. In 1965 also, Michael Viney cited advice for CofI members moving to England: ‘There are things you will see in [the Church of England] which will at first surprise you and may even upset you’.¹⁵

After separation from the Church of England and ‘transformation from a colonial appendage into an independent church’, the Church of Ireland attempted to reinvent itself. Bowen reported a tendency up to the mid 1960s to vigorously proclaim the Church of Ireland as the ‘Irish Church’, whilst emphasising anti-Roman Catholicism.¹⁶ However, in claiming to be no mere offshoot of the British state, the CofI reiterated allegiance to Britain’s constitutionally Protestant monarch. This complex message was capable of selective interpretation. It had surprising consequences during the 1940s for then Rev’d Alan Buchanan (later Archbishop of Dublin). John Graham was a member of St Mary’s Select Vestry on Belfast’s Crumlin Road. He claimed allegiance to the true Irish Church and saw Romanists as impostors. Graham asserted that Anglo Normans acting on a perfidious English Pope’s authority introduced Romanism in 1169. Graham attempted to have the St Mary’s incumbent, Buchanan, ejected for placing a symbol of ‘papish idolatry’, a portrait of Mary, the mother of Jesus, at the church entrance. Graham’s mother told her son what was happening while visiting him in Crumlin Road prison. He was one of a number of IRA members who were Protestants and specialised in intelligence work. They were known to a select few as the ‘Prod Squad’. Graham’s cellmate and

audience of one, later IRA leader Joe Cahill, reported Graham, ‘very convincing in his claims’. 17

In 1950 the Archbishop of Armagh referred to ‘our people’ in southern Ireland as partly comprising ‘ardent republicans’ and supporters of the ‘British regime’. Moffitt’s discussion of Protestant identity indicates open discussion in the late 1940s of southern Protestants having ‘gone green’. Their thoughts were expressed occasionally when challenging unionists ‘speaking politically in the name of Protestantism’ (this from an Irish Times letter in 1966, on page 302). 18

The ICM was an adherent of the British regime and originally thought Protestant enlightenment would engender loyalty to Britain. Disloyalty was another presumed defect of the form of Christianity professed by most of the Irish. The process helped to reinforce a binary opposition between Catholic and Protestant in Irish society in the modern period, which has acted as historical shorthand to explain every other sort. It is a view whose usefulness is questionable. It tends to assume a sectarian homogeneity in the outlook of most Irish Protestants and assumes that nationalist opposition to ostensibly Protestant, though in fact unionist, sectarianism, is itself sectarian. 19 This dimension gave Irish proselytism a particularly sharp political edge. Such efforts, associated with a sectarian allegiance to the British state, had consequences.

In addition to provoking Catholic welfare, medical, educational and detention counter measures, the ICM also aroused internal opposition from those they criticised as ‘Peace at any Price Protestants’: a ‘steadily increasing Protestant party [which] despise[d] this nasty business as much as any Catholic’. Cork Protestant Thomas Biggs commented that, ‘Her ministers sought the wretched hovels of the poor, and her barter in human souls’. 20 An Irish Peer observed,

In the long run, I believe it will be discovered that the Irish Church Missions Society has done irreparable damage to the Church of Ireland. 21

The terminology used by the ICM to criticise Catholicism in the mid to late 19th Century was preserved in the 20th in Northern Ireland. Its ruling Unionist Party, that excluded

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19 See, for example, Jacqueline Hill on ‘exclusive dealing’ directed at Protestant opponents of Catholic Emancipation, 2010, pp65-88.


21 In Moffitt, 2006, p35 (see also nn27, 42, p38).
Roman Catholics from membership, codified such sentiments into systems of discrimination directed at the one third Roman Catholic population.\textsuperscript{22}

The organisation had an opposite effect in the South to the one originally and confidently envisaged, a victim of the all too human and pervasive law of unintended consequences. As with previous Church of Ireland and British state attempts to overturn Roman Catholic allegiance, it ‘failed miserably’.\textsuperscript{23} However, unionist opposition to Irish Home Rule during the late 19\textsuperscript{th} Century gave the organisation its second wind.

\textbf{12.1 The ICM in the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century}

Before the 1861 census ICM annual funding declined from £40,000 to £26,000 and a gradual retreat from the West to Dublin ensued.\textsuperscript{24} This was accompanied by continuing southern Protestant population decline.\textsuperscript{25} The rescinding of legal and political handicaps affecting Roman Catholics and the demand for Irish self-rule was portrayed as a 180-degree reversal of sectarian fortune (on the false presumption that Catholics would do to Protestants what had been done to them).

At Century’s end the ICM benefited from a stream of bequests, for example in 1890, ‘£35,000 of a huge £51,000 legacy from Mrs Hopper of Clifden’, dedicated to a new ‘itinerating evangelistic fund’.\textsuperscript{26} The ICM, with other evangelicals, used negative reaction to their public denunciations of Roman Catholicism in the 1890s to indicate that Irish Home Rule would be Rome Rule. Later ICM figurehead, Rev’d T.C. Hammond, who sat on the Bethany Home Managing Committee, cut his evangelical teeth street-preaching in Cork.\textsuperscript{27} Even in the absence of the desired hostility, the ICM complained in 1914 that nationalist ‘party leaders… in order to impress English voters’ had ‘pressure brought to bear on Romanists’ to abstain from confrontation and thus

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{23} Inglis 1998, p206. Egypt was another country under British control in which similar proselytising activities had profound effects. In \emph{Orphan Scandal} (2014, p149), Beth Baron argued that missionary actions provoked the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, that ‘by World War II… recorded over half a million members, with a million more counted as supporters’. Indeed, ‘Methods adapted from the missionaries became a blueprint for building support for Islamist organizations throughout the world’. Part II of the book is entitled, unsurprisingly, ‘Unintended Consequences’.
\bibitem{25} McDowell, 1975, pp119-121.
\bibitem{26} Kelly, 2005, p.107, citing the ICM’s \emph{Banner of Truth}, 1 Apr 1890, pp54-6. Worth £3,924,375 and £5,606,250 in 2013, BoEIC.
\end{thebibliography}
appear ‘no longer intolerant’. These efforts encumbered the Church of Ireland with an anti-democratic image as democratic structures emerged. Sectarian opposition to British proposals for Irish Home Rule exacerbated the problem. It encouraged an association of ethnic and religious identity.

To an extent the ICM later became a political liability, particularly during World War One and afterwards. However, it reflected a significant and lucrative body of thought that it reinforced, which in turn sustained the ICM. The point may be illustrated by moving forward a couple of decades and back again.

In 1937 Miss Ellen Wright of Bournemouth, England, formerly of Ireland, left an estate worth £49,326. Her will distributed various sums to family members and £500 each to the ICM and to Dublin’s Adelaide Hospital. Miss Wright directed that ‘if any of these beneficiaries… become or marry, or have married a Roman Catholic’, they would ‘forfeit such benefit’. A regular newspaper column on recent wills headlined and highlighted this unmarried woman’s marital preferences.

Two years later newspapers devoted considerable space to the contestation by Mrs Olive Georgina O’Grady of her mother Mrs Marie Georgina Duckett’s last will and testament. Duckett, of Raglan Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin, formerly of Duckett’s Grove, Carlow, left her estimated £100,000 estate to various Protestant missionary societies, including the ICM. Marie implicated Olive in dancing, gambling, card playing, horse racing and employing Catholic servants. Mrs Duckett gave her own exclusively Protestant employees compulsory religious instruction. It was reported that she later encountered difficulty attracting similarly disposed staff (see headlines and testimony extract, page 306).

During the record-breaking 12-day High Court hearing it was argued in her defence that Mrs Duckett had a history of charitable giving to exclusively Protestant causes. In 1908 she donated £2,000 to the ‘Marie Duckett wing’ of the Protestant Adelaide Hospital. However, in 1914 Mrs Duckett became aware that Irish Catholic soldiers in the British Army wounded in France were treated there: ‘She became indignant and

28 ‘Irish Church Missions’, IT, 9 May 1914. Conor Cruise O’Brien would later (1974, p183) echo this propaganda by suggesting that in order to ‘appeal, in tone and form, to liberal opinion’, ‘political Catholicism in the South… generally… discreet, pervasive, sly’ had to ‘learn the liberal language’ during the 19th Century.
31 ‘Catholics excluded, woman’s bequests’, II, 23 Feb 1937.
32 Worth €6,867,132 in 2013, Irish Inflation Calculator.
Surgeon Gunn said that Mrs Duckett had built a wing to the Adelaide Hospital in Dublin, but when she discovered in 1914 that nearly all the wounded Irish soldiers in the hospital were Catholics she became indignant and ceased to take an interest in the hospital.

Duty Of Servants To Listen To Religious Discourses

P. R. BOWN'S EXTENSION: We, as country, resolve to establish for £30,000 will of Mrs. Maria G. Duckett, half of 14 Regent Road, Dublin, was on the second day of the hearing, before the President of the High Court and a jury, by counsel for Mrs. Olive C. O'Grady, Mrs. Duckett's only child, who opposes the will which gives everything to Protestant charities.

A letter which, if not objected, Mrs. Duckett had informed the evidence that she was being pursued by Catholics was read. It was from a friend and asked to leave her house to the accommodation of others during the Exclusion Congress. Evidence was given by members of Mrs. Duckett's household staff, some of whom stated that it was part of their duty to listen to religious discourses at their own expense. If their accounts were no longer used, they were faced with difficulty in contacting Mrs. Duckett, then hiding in England. Mrs. O'Grady's evidence led to a collapse of the case for the Duckett will. She settled the case for £30,000, while the somewhat embarrassed missionary societies got the rest.

Banished From Ireland Lived Under Assumed Name

Statements by the late Mrs. Maria Duckett that she had been banished from Ireland and living under an assumed name because she was afraid of the Republicans and people of that kind, were quoted by Rev. Robert MacNamara, placed: yesterday, the fourth day of the hearing, before the President of the High Court and a jury, of the £30,000 probate suit in which the executors seek to establish a will of Mrs. Duckett's leaving her estate to Protestant and Evangelical Societies.

Mrs. MacNamara said that Mrs. Duckett was in general accordance of Mrs. Duckett's views, that she made an examination of the will, and, in the evidence of her brother, the Rev. Mr. O'Grady, who was in England during the Troubles.

Letter Which Led To Priest's Arrest During The 'Troubles'

The letter, signed ‘A.D. Bown’, was received by Mrs. Duckett in 1913. The letter led to a trial in 1913, in which Mrs. Duckett was convicted of perjury, and she was sentenced to four years in prison. The trial was covered by the press, and the case was widely publicized. The letter was later found to be a forgery, and Mrs. Duckett was released from prison. The case led to a collapse of the case for the Duckett will. She settled the case for £30,000, while the somewhat embarrassed missionary societies got the rest.

Mrs. Duckett’s views on Catholics at war (and other matters) were not exceptional. In 1917 the ICM annual meeting claimed, ‘on the Society’s Roll of Honour were the

ceased to take an interest in the hospital’. The testifying Adelaide surgeon was asked if Mrs Duckett ‘object[ed] to Catholic soldiers going to France’ to obtain their wounds. He replied, ‘I don’t think so’.

Mrs Duckett was also under the impression that Catholics generally and ‘republicans’ in particular intended to kill her. During the War of Independence she fled Duckett’s Grove for England, after receiving a letter purportedly from the IRA. Mrs O’Grady and her husband considered it a fake and gave the letter to a friend, a Roman Catholic Priest, to check its authenticity. Crown forces then discovered the priest with the letter and considered him its author. He was imprisoned, his incarceration extended due to difficulty in contacting Mrs Duckett, then hiding in England. Mrs O’Grady’s evidence led to a collapse of the case for the Duckett will. She settled the case for £30,000, while the somewhat embarrassed missionary societies got the rest.

Mrs Duckett’s views on Catholics at war (and other matters) were not exceptional. In 1917 the ICM annual meeting claimed, ‘on the Society’s Roll of Honour were the

names of over 300 brave lads, the fruits of the Mission’s work, mainly in Dublin’. This view of the duty of young people in ICM care did not extend to others with a duty of pastoral care on the battlefield itself. In the House of Commons on 10 May 1917, Andrew Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer,

… denied… receipt of any official information to the effect that the presence of Catholic chaplains at the front was having a demoralising effect on soldiers of other persuasions.

He was responding to something else said at the April 1917 ICM meeting. Archdeacon Daunt of Cloyne asserted that 518 Catholic British Army chaplains at the front was too many: ‘When their true young men came home from the Front there would be a great many tinged with that religion’. The utterance gave rise to protest and ridicule. That same day in Westminster, Sinn Féin’s victory in the South Longford by-election was announced. One year afterwards, the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) withdrew permanently from Westminster in protest at conscription. In the December 1918 general election Sinn Féin won 73 of 105 Irish seats. The Demise of the IPP and rise of Sinn Féin paved the way for the Irish War of Independence and Ireland’s division into two states. The ICM’s sectarian support for the war effort, that included associating German militarism with German Roman Catholics, deflected those tasked with promoting British interests to sceptical mainly Catholic Irish subjects.

12.2 T.C. Hammond: ‘bigots for god’

After 1922 in the south ‘Protestants, mainly unionists’ were ‘left as orphans, cut off from the friends and institutions with whom they had grown up’. So noted a sympathetic biography of the ICM’s 1919-35 Superintendent, T.C. Hammond, who was responsible for actual orphanages and sat on the Bethany Home Managing Committee. Protestants in general were not necessarily at one with Hammond, however, whose lack of success at the Dublin Diocesan Synod in October 1920 was discussed in Chapter Four (on pages 97-98). Hammond’s failure to portray the south as a bastion of anti-Protestant prejudice echoed Ulster unionist propaganda. It attempted to blunt criticism of sustained anti-Catholic violence in Belfast after July 1920, that successfully split the working-class. The effort fell at the first hurdle since southern Protestants could not be persuaded to support it.

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34 ‘Irish Church Missions’, IT, 18 Apr 1917. In 1915 it was claimed that 200 had joined the colours and that ‘some’ had ‘laid down their lives’, ‘Irish Church Missions’, IT, 14 Apr 1915.


Under what appeared more politically promising circumstances in 1922 a former Unionist leader who stimulated the 1920 violence, Edward, now Lord, Carson, highlighted an attack on an ICM boys’ orphanage at Ballyconree, Co Galway. Anti-Treaty forces burned it on 22 June, just before the Irish Civil War.37 Moffitt (2008) noted that the home’s boy scouts saluted the British flag each morning. Residents ‘marched to Clifden church on Sundays behind the Union Jack’. The ICM’s Banner of Truth newspaper noted afterwards,

Thus ends a chapter of Christian work amongst boys in Ireland which has lasted for seventy years, and which made the greatest possible difference in the lives of hundreds of boys who are now worthy sons of the British Empire in different parts of the world.

Training boys for export in the service of the British Empire and its army attracted the attention from those fighting that Empire between 1919-21. But that does not appear to have been a primary motivation for the

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37 A 1922 Irish Times report of Carson’s concerns was reprinted on 27 July 2009, after which Sunday Independent columnist, Eoghan Harris restated Carson’s opinion on the plight of southern Protestants, 2 Aug 2009.
attack. British archives contain an account of the burning from the orphanage master, Chas. G. Purkiss. He reported a conversation between his daughter and the IRA ‘C.O.’ who,

… stated that Ballyconree Orphanage had been destroyed because it had been used as a training school for boys to serve in the British Army, with whom they . . . were at war and through whom they . . . were fighting the Free State Provisional Government. Further, the C.O. alleged that the irregulars were in possession of evidence which proved that the Ballyconree Boy Scouts had been guilty of espionage, and that the establishment at Ballyconree had been used for the entertainment of British forces, all of which charges were more or less true. Purkiss said the republicans searched for two ‘senior patrol leaders’, who presumably had been guilty of espionage, and someone ‘who had been heard to give military orders to the scouts’. Purkiss denied such orders were given or that the orphanage was a military ‘training school’, but asked,

… if it were a crime for an English family, living under the British flag to train their boys to be loyal to King and Empire.

A draft telegram to the Irish government from Lionel Curtis in the British colonial office originally stated that the orphanage was, ‘burnt . . . as reprisal for inmates’ loyalty, no immediate danger to lives’. The last five words (from an Admiralty report) were struck from the version transmitted. Inclusion might have led to opposition to ‘evacuation’ to Britain of 33 boys aged 7 to 18 and erosion of its propaganda value. They were moved to London initially and then to Sydney, Australia. The file contains no reference to the later removal to England of girls from another ICM orphanage three miles away. They were conjoined in propaganda on the burning and then disappeared. Ballyconree was discussed in Irish Times in 2012, after the newspaper republished Carson’s 1922 comments. The subsequent coverage included correspondence from Australian descendants of the orphans. In a letter, 24 February 2012, the author pointed out that while Barnardo’s in Britain had revealed the names of 21 transported Ballyconree boys, the fate of 12 more and of all the girls remained unknown. These forgotten female orphans are last heard from in 1923, in a Times (London) advertisement as ‘23 refugee girls from Ireland’ seeking ‘a large empty house to lend them for the time being’.

Raising the matter in the House of Lords, Carson expressed satisfaction that the ‘boys … are being settled in the colonies’ and engaged in more denunciations of Irish republicans. For the government, the Duke of Devonshire responded that £1,000 granted by the British government’s Distress Committee for the girls’ upkeep ‘had not yet been exhausted’. The Archbishop of Canterbury wanted ‘more information as to the legal

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38 PRO, CO739/3: burning of Ballyconree Orphanage, naval report signed by C.G. Purkiss, 4 July 1922.
position of the children’. Whether he received it is, like the female orphans’ fate, also unknown.  

Once partial independence was achieved, the ICM operated as a significant though occasionally contentious part of the Church of Ireland. In 1929 ‘two archbishops and ten bishops’ were ‘among [its] vice-Presidents’. The ICM noted subsequently,

Bishops and Archbishops… were constantly patrons of ICM until 1984, when the growing climate of ecumenism in Ireland made Gospel outreach to Roman Catholics ‘politically incorrect’ in the eyes of many.

Somewhat oblivious of its surroundings, the ICM was ever vigilant against high-church tendencies within the Church of Ireland. Speakers at an October 1926 ‘stormy meeting in Dublin’ on the ‘Anglo Catholic movement’, were harangued by ICM adherents. The critics concluded with ‘Three cheers for the Irish Church Mission[s]… given with great enthusiasm.’ Orange Order terminology denounced these supposed enemies within: ‘tell us about King Billy’, ‘No surrender’, ‘Not an inch across the border’. This is unsurprising given that Hammond was also an Orange enthusiast. In 1915 he denied being ‘the leader of the [Dublin Diocesan Synod’s] Orange section’ by asserting, ‘I would be proud of the privilege if I

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41 ‘Anglo Catholic Movement, Stormy Meeting in Dublin’, IT, 26 Oct 1926.

42 The association continued, Joe Humphreys, ‘Church of Ireland has let Protestants down’, IT, 25 Mar 2000. Ian Cox of the Dublin Orange Order reported ‘a church service each October in the Irish Church Missions at Bachelor's Walk’.
were.’ In a July 1916 Orange Order service in Dublin, T.C. Hammond complained, ‘the daily newspapers railed against them as bigots and as intolerant’. He therefore resolved, superfluously, ‘let them be bigots, but bigots for God’.

After Hammond emigrated to Australia in 1935 his Anti-Ritualistic Association activity, monitoring Protestant clergy engaged in ‘Romish’ practices, was carried on by fellow Bethany Home Managing Committee member, W.H. Going, an affluent Tipperary flour miller and provender. He was a member of the Diocesan Council of Waterford, Cashel, and Emily, and an Honorary Treasurer of the YWCA. In February 1935, Going successfully petitioned a Church of Ireland Court to convene and charge a vicar in Sandymount, Dublin, with ‘conducting public worship… not in accordance with the rubrics of the Church of Ireland’.

A 1902 description of ICM child welfare activity within Smyly Home institutions reported, ‘the Birds Nest is the largest of the homes of this kind in Dublin’, in which ‘the children of mixed marriages and of Roman Catholics are given the preference’. Other proselytising ‘Mission Homes and ragged Schools’ included the Elliot Home Townsend Street, ‘Our Boys’ Home Grand Canal Street, Nead na Farraige Home, Girls’ Home Townsend Street, and the Coombe Boys’ Home (see description of the latter, page 338). Education culminated in a ‘customary public examination in Scripture knowledge, and in secular subjects’, the former often examined by T.C. Hammond (1914 report, page 312).

In 1909 the ICM’s then Dublin Superintendent explained how Mrs Smyly’s Birds’ Nest orphanage, York Road, Kingstown, associated with the ICM:

… the Home Committee gathered in the children and collected funds for their support, while the Irish Church Missions provided teachers and superintended the education. The Birds’ Nest was the largest of nine kindred homes which together supported upwards of five hundred children, and which, with four free day schools giving food to all who needed it, required an expenditure of £12,000 a year.

43 ‘Dublin Diocesan Synod’, IT, 16 Nov 1915.
44 ‘Dublin rector’s views on partition’, IT, 3 Jul 1916
45 ‘Dublin Vicar charged’, IT, 9 Mar 1935. The Vicar stated that his was a trustee church coming under the rules of the Church of England. Going died Jan 1942, IT, 27 Jan 1942. See also, ‘St. John’s Church Sandymount, Church of Ireland Anti-Ritualistic Society’, IT, 26 Aug 1910; ‘Anti-Ritualistic Association, the Bishopric of Ossory, Meeting of Protest’, IT, 29 Jul 1911. Its energetic activities were referred to in the Irish Times on 2 May 1911, 15 Jul 1911, 3 Jul 1916, 15 May 1923, 10 May 1933, 9 Mar, 21 May, 5 Jun 1935, and 24 Feb 1936.
T.C. Hammond accepted into the ICM fold Roman Catholics recognising their errors who ‘denied that the only hope of humanity rested in a sacramental system developed by evil efforts’. Catholic opposition was celebrated as a badge of honour, while successes were advertised publicly, as in for example, ‘reception of converts including ex-priest’ (reproduced, pages 308, 310). After one reception Hammond observed that the ICM,

… helped the poor, comforted the sick, relieved the perplexed, and saved souls, for which they thanked God. Those who were present on Sunday night witnessed the entry of eleven converts into the Church of Ireland. The Church of Rome was tyrannous; but as a moral force it was paralysed in this country.48

However much helping, comforting and relieving was going on, Hammond’s approach was a recipe for antagonism. In 1934 an ICM-related Limerick Medical Mission faced public opposition. Hammond cited the experience so as to query Church of Ireland members who were ‘loud in their endorsements of the consideration that they got in the Free State’. His co-religionists may have considered hostile reactions to proselytism ill-considered, but perhaps also inevitable given a persistent stream of ICM insults. Exaggerated claims, a feature of the ICM since its inception, saw Hammond declaring 400 Church of Ireland converts in 1934.49 From this theological soil, the Bethany Home emerged.

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48 ‘Reception of converts, including ex-priest’ (advertisement), ‘Irish Church Missions, Secretary going to Canada’, ‘Reception of converts’ (advertisement), ‘review of the year’s work’, IT, 3 Jul 1926, 18 May 1927, 5 May 1928, 11 May 1932.

49 ‘Irish Church Missions, public meeting in Dublin’, IT, 15 May 1934.
CHAPTER THIRTEEN Bethany Home in Independent Ireland

The Bethany Home came into existence with the new Irish state in 1922 and closed 50 years later. Its outlook may be traced through personnel who ran it, reported pronouncements, associated publications, archival documents, its minute book\(^1\), and survivors’ testimony (examples below and page 314). Bethany was one of a number of institutions whose practices will be considered. Roy Foster’s thesis that southern ‘Catholics became Protestants’, which began this discussion, will, in the light of this investigation, be re-evaluated.

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As in examples reproduced here. Maria Luddy and colleagues compiled a bibliographic database on women’s history (Skehill, 2010, p5), which alerted Derek Leinster and then the author to the existence of Bethany Home minutes. I sought them in the Church of Ireland’s Representative Church Body (RCB) Library. I am grateful to Janet Maxwell of the RCB and to Raymond Refaussé and Susan Hood of the RCB Library, for facilitating my perusal of the minutes (and for their efforts in successfully recovering them, after it was reported initially that the minutes had disappeared). I would like to thank Catriona Crowe, Head of the National Archives, for agreeing to act as a source of advice on copying the minutes and on redacting confidential matter within them. Names of mothers and children were obscured. It was also decided that staff members subject to disciplinary procedures should be similarly redacted.
The Archbishop of Dublin presided at the 4 May 1922 afternoon opening in Blackhall Place, Dublin. He declared Bethany Home a ‘door of hope’ for ‘fallen’ women. It was formed from two organisations, the ‘Prison Gate’ and ‘Midnight’ missions, in an attempt to divert women from ‘evil ways’. The Prison Gate Mission was part of the Coff’s ‘charitable dimension’. The Archbishop directed that third party bequests of £498 and £300, donated through him, be invested in specific stock, the latter sum under his name and that of the treasurer.\(^2\)

The Dean of Christchurch presided at the evening meeting where he heard Chairman of the Managing Committee, Rev’d E.J. Young, report: ‘This is really the Prison Gate Mission carried on under another name – Bethany Home’.\(^3\) Fellow member, T.C. Hammond, spoke also. ICM influenced Church of Ireland clergy were always present, alongside Presbyterians and some Methodists. Plymouth Brethren appeared to be the main motivating force, as was the case later with the Westbank Orphanage in Greystones, Co Wicklow.\(^4\) Church of Ireland management influence

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\(^3\) ‘A door of hope, reopening of Prison Gate Mission’, I7, 8 May 1922.

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appeared to decline during the 1960s, as ecumenical ideas gained ground within Ireland’s mainstream Christian communities.  

Bethany was referred to internally as ‘the Mission’. Its monthly management meetings opened and closed with prayer. The home was evangelical, in that it sought to turn away from ‘sin’ the unmarried mothers who were detained there, towards the reformed faith. It was also a place of detention for Protestant women sent by the courts. Women were there on remand or after conviction for crimes ranging from petty theft to infanticide. The home had in fact a multifarious purpose, taking in ‘illegitimate’ infants, while ‘rescuing’ their mothers, female convicts and members of what the Reverend R.K. Hanna termed ‘the poor prostitute class’. It was reported in the High Court in January 1940 that Gardaí, ‘were in the habit of sending any homeless Protestant girl to Bethany’. It also functioned, from 1945, as a place of detention for offending Protestant female children and teenagers, on the nomination of the then Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Barton. He was invited to do so by the Minister for Justice. Negative attitudes toward unwed motherhood were reflected in this combined intake.

8 February 1935, Management Committee doctrinal rules

Never think that all our inmates were rough or low-class — we had an even balance most of the time. We have had some most refined and cultured girls — typists, teachers, nurses, and even a minister’s wife and a missionary. The youngest mother I remember was fourteen and the oldest forty-two. Some of the girls were most lovable, but Miss Walker always said the worse a girl is the more she needs the Home and its message.

BETHANY Matron’s view of ‘inmates’ (Pilgrim, n.d., p9), see also page 294

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5 See Meehan, 2010c, section on ‘The ICM and the Orange Order’ (p8).
6 See Meehan, 2010c.
8 See Appendix 23, ‘£1,000 for charities’, II, 23 Jan 1940 (also reported same date, ‘Suggestion in an affidavit’, IT).
9 See Appendix 30, discussed in more detail later.
In 1931, 12 of 15 ‘girls’ resident (usually termed ‘inmates’), were members of the Church of Ireland.\textsuperscript{10} The Home was officially Protestant ‘non-denominational’. Bethany was keen to facilitate Catholics but not, however, Catholicism. In 1926 a nurse Ellis was dismissed for refusing to break off her engagement to ‘a Roman Catholic man’, and was replaced by a nurse Pilgrim. The home refused during the same period to swap Roman Catholic residents for Protestants in a Roman Catholic institution. At the 1928 annual meeting, Rev’d R.K. Hanna acknowledged that Bethany Home would ‘be open to the charge of proselytism’ but, ‘if another church felt aggrieved… why did they not do the work themselves’. They did and (as we shall see) it caused problems ten years later. Hanna’s remark was reported in the\textit{Irish Independent}, 2 February 1928, but not in that day’s\textit{Irish Times} account.\textsuperscript{11} From 8 February 1935 Management Committee members were required to sign and adhere to a 100 word ‘doctrinal pledge’ expressing belief in ‘the supreme and sole authority… of the Scriptures’ and ‘the eternal punishment of the wicked’ (pledge reproduced, page 315).

Bethany’s ‘work’, Christian charity with conditions attached, continued uninterrupted as the British regime receded and an Irish one emerged. The new authorities were content to facilitate it, because they were conservative more so than Catholic.

\section*{13.1 State Regulation}

The existence of the Bethany Home, alongside other (mainly Roman Catholic) institutions, illustrated the confessional and semi-privatised nature of welfare provision in the Irish Free State and (then) Republic. Christian institutions were given control over such provision and helped to shape it according to conservative religious precepts. Gradually, from the 1930s, the state began to take responsibility, through legislation, inspection and funding. Secular welfare concerns competed with conservative-religious attitudes, in which the latter were predominant, to the detriment ultimately of the interests of those subject to that provision.\textsuperscript{12}

Bethany Home Managing Committee minutes from 1924-66 illustrate an administrated religious ethos. Unfortunately, minutes from February 1937 to April 1944

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item The only time the figure was calculated, Bethany Managing Committee Minutes (hereafter MCM), 11 Sep 1931. Pilgrim (n.d., p9) on ‘inmates’, page 305.
\item MCM, 10 Sep, 8 Oct, 11 Nov, 10 Dec 1926 (minutes reproduced, page 313). See ‘Pledge’ (MCM, 8 Feb 1935), page 305.
\item See Earner-Byrne, 2007, for a history of the development of maternal welfare services.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
are lost.\textsuperscript{13} However, a crisis in its welfare regime resulted in the home being subject to exceptional public scrutiny during 1939. The resulting turmoil is reflected in archival material and in newspaper reports. The state’s Deputy Chief Medical Adviser, Dr Winslow Sterling Berry, entered the home three times in 1939 and criticised ‘Bethany’s proselytising activities’. However, he defended its welfare practices to the point of contradicting his own inspectors and other official reports. He was responsible for imposing a policy of excluding Roman Catholic residents, in an attempt to remove public attention from the home. Consequently, ironically, in January 1940 the High Court declared Bethany Home ‘sectarian’.\textsuperscript{14}

Sterling Berry, the medical adviser, was a son of the Church of Ireland Bishop of Killaloe. His was originally a ‘patronage’ appointment, ‘nominated for his post by Lord Carson and the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin’. Sterling Berry informed the Chief Medical Officer from 1944, Dr James Deeny, that

> When he was appointed, Sir Henry Robinson, the Vice-President of the Local Government Board, our predecessor under English rule, sent for him and said, ‘Dr Sterling Berry, this is a gentleman’s service, keep it that way’.\textsuperscript{15}

There seems little evidence here of the suppressed liberal Protestant ethic implied by Roy Foster’s, ‘How the Catholics became Protestants’ essay.\textsuperscript{16} According to Deeny, Sterling Berry,

> … liked ‘doing the files’, was very good at it and was meticulous in spotting irregularities and correcting them and always observed the protocol and etiquette in pushing the files around, [so] I left him to it. Sterling Berry was so honest as to be almost naive. He liked to impress his personality on the files by always writing in green ink.\textsuperscript{17}

Sterling Berry’s ‘doing’ of Bethany Home files will now be considered.

### 13.2 Bethany Home Crisis, 1937-40

Death and neglect of children in Bethany Home from the mid 1930s to the late 1940s is a result of state officials treating the health and well-being of Bethany children as secondary to sectarian regulation. This can be illustrated by looking at recorded and seemingly ignored mortality, and at how the then Department of Local Government and

\textsuperscript{13} The Representative Church Body (RCB) Library of the Church of Ireland, which holds the minutes, reported that the individual donating the minutes discovered them in a refuse skip, but not the missing volume.

\textsuperscript{14} ‘Court divides Funds of Homeless Charity’, \textit{IP}, 23 Jan 1940 (also, same date, \textit{II}).

\textsuperscript{15} Deeny, 1989, pp71.

\textsuperscript{16} In Foster, 2007.

\textsuperscript{17} Deeny, 1989, p77.
Public Health dealt with concerns about ill-health of Bethany Children. In 1933 the home reportedly expanded the number of ‘girls’ admitted by 80%, due to additional funding, some of which was from Barnardo’s in Britain. However, a forced premises move in 1934 resulted in a debilitating £1,000 shortfall. This was partly due to Management Committee member Joseph Walker insisting on selling his Orwell Road Rathgar premises to the home for £750 more than an independent valuation. Despite this constraint, Bethany set up a parallel Emmanuel Home orphanage on the Orwell Road site, a project instigated by Management Committee member J.W. Densmore.  

Table 1 Bethany Home Burials Mount Jerome Cemetery 1922-1949

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During the 1922-49 period 223 children from the Bethany Home were buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery Dublin (see Table 1) in unmarked graves. Of these:

- 175 were aged between 4 weeks and 2 years;
- 25 were aged from a number of hours up to 4 weeks;
- 19 were stillborn.

Cemetery records indicate the following causes of death:

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19 Table 1 figures are taken from Appendix 1, Bethany Home Children, Interments in Mount Jerome Cemetery Harold’s Cross Dublin, which lists each child by name, date of death and burial, recorded cause of death and, occasionally, other information. The list was compiled from microfilmed cemetery records in the Gilbert library, Dublin. The Protestant Adoption and Counselling Trust (PACT) possess no Bethany burial records and declined to reveal the names of dead children, citing confidentiality concerns, Hazel Douglas, Principal Social Worker, PACT, by email, 14 July 2010.
• 54 from convulsions
• 41 from heart failure
• 26 from marasmus [malnutrition]
• 19 were stillborn
• 19 no cause given
• 12 from delicacy
• 7 from pneumonia
• 7 were premature
• 4 from debility or general debility

(Plus single causes, scarlatina, gastritis, gastro enteritis, cerebral haemorrhage, gland disease, etc.)

Separate figures from the Protestant Adoption and Counselling Trust (PACT)\(^2\), that holds Bethany Home records, suggest a possibility that 17 additional children may be buried elsewhere (for example, an otherwise unrecorded nursed-out child was scalded to death in 1934, report below).\(^2\)

The state began inspecting Maternity Homes under the 1934 Registration of Maternity Homes Act in 1936. The Act was designed primarily to deal with high levels of child mortality in mother and baby institutions. Under this Act,

12. (1) An authorised officer of a local authority shall be entitled at all reasonable times to enter any maternity home within the functional area of such local authority and inspect such maternity homes.

(2) An inspector shall be entitled at all reasonable times to enter any maternity home and inspect such maternity home.\(^2\)

Bethany Home was inspected after registering in November 1935. Management Committee minutes make reference to a first inspection in 1936, while a 1938 inspection report refers to a November 1937 inspection.\(^2\)

Of the pre and post inspection periods, 1925-34, and 1935-44 period respectively, taking burial records into account, three points may be made:


\(^{21}\) See Appendix 2, which compares Mount Jerome interment and PACT figures on Bethany mortality. I ignore this uncertain figure.


\(^{23}\) MCM, 9 Oct 1936. See Appendix 5, inspection ‘Under the Registration of Maternity Homes Act 1934’ (dated 30 November 1938). Also, appendices 6, 7.
a) 132, or nearly two-thirds of all interments, took place over 10 years, 1935-1944, compared to 60 children interred in the pre-inspection 1925-1934 period;

b) 88, or over one-third of all Mount Jerome interments (1922-1949), took place during five years, from 1935-1939, the highest child mortality in Bethany’s 51-year history, compared to 20 children interred in the five-year pre-inspection 1930-1934 period;

c) More deaths and (presumably) associated non-fatal illnesses took place during the 1935-44 inspection regime than at any other time in the home’s existence. Recorded Mount Jerome deaths ceased after 1949, when official funding, first promised in 1939, was made available to the home. Why was Bethany Home’s increase in mortality during these years not detected by the inspection regime set up under the 1934 Act, whose purpose was to investigate and to curtail deaths of institutionalised children born to unwed mothers?

The reason stems from the state’s bureaucratic and sectarian approach to inspection of this institution, which subverted a responsible medical and welfare intervention.

Bethany Home Managing Committee minutes for 11 September 1936 - the year with the highest number of deaths - note a first Maternity Act inspection carried out by a Mrs Crofts. It found, ‘the bedrooms were overcrowded and the medical staff inadequate’. A discussion followed, continued on 9 October, during which Bethany’s solicitor was asked if the home could be exempted from Maternity Act provisions. It was also noted that there had been further visits from ‘Dr [Winslow Sterling] Berry and Mrs Crofts’.

There was no minuted discussion in 1936 of significant mortality increases. In September committee member J.W. Densmore enquired after, ‘spiritual blessings’ among the ‘girls’, about which it was decided ‘to record thanks to God’. It was agreed, however, to limit the number of residents, to dismiss an unqualified worker and to employ qualified staff. It was resolved simultaneously to ‘make enquiry re the laundry driers’. In the 1950s, former Bethany matron Lily Pilgrim made reference to a mother attempting to dry her baby’s clothes ‘next [to] her own body’, when ‘airing facilities were not good’.

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24 Yearly mortality totals in Appendix 1.
25 PACT figures indicate some post 1949 deaths, but no burials are recorded in Mount Jerome or in nearby Dean’s Grange Cemetery, see page 328, note 49.
26 See Appendix 3.
27 See MCM, 11 Sep, 9 Oct 1936, appendices 3, 4.
Without further elaboration, the previously mentioned 1938 inspection report noted that, of 57 children ‘in the home since the last inspection’, 14 died.\textsuperscript{29} In 1939 Sterling Berry made three extraordinary visits, in January and twice in October. He was concerned about inspection reports in his department and publicity in newspapers. After each visit he composed a hand written report, signed off as ‘W.S.B.’.\textsuperscript{30}

The January 1939 visit was on foot of a critical report to his department from Moira Kennedy-O’Byrne (one of the state’s three inspectors of boarded-out children\textsuperscript{31}) on Bethany children boarded out in Monaghan.

There are two versions, in appendices 8 and 9.

Appendix 8 contains the final version, while Appendix 9 is a partial draft copy. Though each tells a disturbing story, there are significant differences.

In the final version (Appendix 8) Kennedy-O’Byrne referred to boarded-out Bethany children in one home being neglected and wearing dirty clothes ‘not… washed for weeks’. She reported, ‘there was no cause for this neglect…. I would like the children to be removed to a more suitable foster home’. Another nurse mother was reported caring for four children, which was ‘too many’. The nurse mother claimed that one child was to be sent back to Bethany ‘to be adopted by some one’.

In the third and most concerning case inspected, a child with a foster mother in Newbliss, Co Monaghan, for two weeks appeared to be,

\dots in a very low condition. It was dirty and neglected and sore and inflamed from a filthy napkin which cannot have been changed for a very long time. As I knew the baby was suffering I had the dispensary doctor telephoned to ask him to call to see the child. The foster mother [\textit{name redacted}] who has had nurse children under the Children Act 1908-34 before, knows the law well and failed to register this child. The Board of Assistance should be asked to deal drastically with the woman and to prosecute.\textsuperscript{32}

The draft version (Appendix 9) of this report contains, ‘This baby appeared to me to be in a dying condition’. However, ‘dying’ is crossed out and the phrase ‘very low’ is substituted by hand (the phraseology contained in the amended final report). In addition, a request to the dispensary doctor to ‘order’ the child’s ‘removal to the County Home’ was placed within hand-written parentheses with the word ‘omit’ beside it.

\textsuperscript{29} See Appendix 5.
\textsuperscript{30} See Appendix 6, 7.
\textsuperscript{31} Reports leaked to Derek Leinster in 2007. \textit{CICA} public hearing, transcript, Mary McLoughlin, Department of Health Principal Officer, 9 June 2006, p10. See also Moira Kennedy O’Byrne’s War of Independence testimony, WS 1029.
\textsuperscript{32} From Appendix 8. Square bracket insertions here and below by author.
In addition, an entire section is marked with the word ‘omit’. This (indistinct in parts) section stated,

I was informed by the sergeant of the Civic Guards that they had received unfavourable reports of [the nurse mother] before.

It then stated that another child from the Bethany Home,

… died within one month of being sent to her. I consider that the authorities of the Bethany Home were [indecipherable] culpable to send child in the condition of health… out to nurse.

The inspector appeared then to state that the child should be ‘sent to hospital’. 33

The draft report is signed ‘Moira Kennedy-O’Byrne’, but the script amending it appears (based on his handwritten reports) to be Sterling Berry’s.

Besides changing a description of the child’s condition from ‘dying’ to ‘low’ the final report omitted police information. The instruction to omit also deleted the inspector’s opinion that the child was ‘dying’ when sent from the Bethany Home. In other words Bethany Home was regarded as being primarily responsible.

In his 25 January 1939 handwritten report, Sterling Berry (as ‘WSB’) reported that he visited Bethany Home on that day. He commented on the nurse mother recommended for prosecution and stated that nurse mothers’ houses were, „

… either inspected by the Bethany authorities, or a reference from a reliable source about the nurse-mother is required. [The nurse mother] has acted as nurse mother for Bethany for a number of years & has up till this case, always been regarded as satisfactory. I traced up the records of six children sent to her & four of these show very good results. [The inspected child] was delicate from birth, & was put out to nurse on the recommendation of the Bethany Medical Officer who thought that country air might improve the child’s condition – [the child] is now back at Bethany & I inspected him, he is a delicate child but shows no signs of neglect or ill usage….. [The nurse mother] will not be employed by Bethany again. I inspected Bethany & find conditions much improved since my last inspection.

There are 22 expectant mothers or nursing mothers in the home + 42 children. There are 19 children boarded out. The institution is kept very well is clean & comfortable, no evidence of overcrowding. The mothers & infants are well looked after & appear happy & contented. W.S.B. 25/1/1939

This is the first occasion, of which we are aware, on which Sterling Berry contradicted a finding that the Bethany Home was responsible for child neglect. He undermined his inspector and censored police information. His assertion that the nurse mother in question was ‘always... satisfactory’ was untrue. In any case, Sterling Berry’s implied

33 See Appendix 9.
admission that two of six children in her care did not enjoy ‘very good results’, one of
whom reportedly died, contradicted his narrative.

A second and third Sterling Berry intervention came later in 1939.

Because it was regarded as seeking to convert Catholics, Bethany Home came under
pressure in 1939 from the self-styled ‘anti-Proselytising’ Catholic Protection and
Rescue Society of Ireland (CPRSI, now named Cúnamh).34 The organisation’s
particular interest in Bethany can be traced in its annual reports from 1934, after
Bethany moved to Rathgar.35 The CPRSI’s 1940 AGM reported it had removed ‘14
[children]… from a Protestant Maternity Home’. The Society entered and removed sick
Bethany children to hospital. They then notified the authorities and publicised their
activities.36 For instance, from health department archival documents, each entry
prefaced with ‘taken by [CPRSI]’:

- 20/01/39: […] discharged [from St Ultan’s Children’s Hospital] on
  30/05/1939;
- 23/02/39: He was suffering from whopping cough and purulent
  conjunctivitis;
- 04/05/39: He was admitted to the Coombe [hospital] badly scalded.37

Hospital records indicate that the children suffered a range of conditions including
purulent conjunctivitis, rickets, scalding and whooping cough.

During August 1939 the Rathdown Board of Assistance in south Dublin discussed
the condition of one such Bethany child.38 A member reportedly asked that a qualified
nurse ‘be sent to inspect conditions’ at the home. She continued, ‘they were all aware of
the object of this institution from the religious point of view.’ The Chairman, Mr P.J.
Dooge, concurred with, ‘this thing is becoming an epidemic.’ It was decided to report
matters to the Minister for Local Government and Public Health. A letter from the

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34 See Appendix 10, ‘Struggle against Proselytism, work of Society’, II, 17 Apr
1939, in which Bethany Home, referred to as ‘‘X’ Home’, is identified as ‘a maternity
home... in touch with Barnardo’s Homes [that] was another active source of
proselytising among girls.’
35 I inspected the reports at Cúnamh (successor of the CPRSI) office, 30 South Anne
Street, Dublin 2. I am indebted to Julie Kerins, Senior Social Worker, for access.
36 Reported, ‘Minister asked to inquire’, IT, 24 Aug 1939; ‘Struggle against
1939, 4 Apr 1940, appendices, 10, 11, 12, 12 a.
37 NATARCH/ARCO/402710; RM/ARC/521019; RM/ARC/O, copies in author’s
possession. These files are part of the Clandillon index system that were for a short
period in the National Archives, but were then recalled by the Department of Health,
where they remain. Examples here sent to Derek Leinster anonymously in 2007. With
interconnecting information, they enable the construction of this narrative.
38 Reported IT, II, 24 August 1939, appendices 11, 12.
Board of Assistance, 5 September 1939, was sent to the Secretary, Local Government Department.\textsuperscript{39} A 15 September 1939 reply stated, ‘the case … is at present being investigated, and the Minister will address you shortly’.

Consequently, on 6 October 1939, Sterling Berry returned to the Bethany Home. He began,

I… made inquiries re the children \textit{[names redacted]}. These children were delicate from birth \textit{[and]} backward in walking… I am satisfied from my investigations that the children were not neglected while in Bethany.

Since mortality and ill-health was documented, he rationalised it with,

\ldots it is well recognised that a large number of illegitimate children are delicate and marasmic from their birth and if removed from constant medical supervision and nursing attention often quickly deteriorate.\textsuperscript{40}

Berry then steered the discussion away from his statutory duties.

In an appended ‘Confidential, for Department’s own use’ memo, the Deputy Chief Medical Adviser commented on the presence of Roman Catholic residents and stated,

I am meeting the Bethany Committee… to get them to consent to put an end to this most objectionable feature of their work.

He reported separately that he returned to the home on 27 October 1939 for a special meeting. A resolution was passed that,

\ldots should satisfy any Roman Catholics concerned by Bethany’s proselytising activities.

On three occasions in 1939, therefore, the Medical Adviser appeared to neglect his statutory duty toward sick and dying children. He relied, instead, on a social prejudice with no basis in medical practice or knowledge. He then attempted to deflect welfare concerns by concentrating on sectarian tensions between Protestants and Roman Catholics. The Deputy Medical advisor appears to have threatened the Home’s existence if it did not pass his resolution excluding Roman Catholics.

This was confirmed in January 1940 when Bethany’s Residential Secretary, Hettie Walker, declared that the ban was effected because,

\ldots the work of the Home had been seriously interfered with for a considerable time past by persistent, unfriendly, innumerable and unnecessary requirements of public officials. Investigations had been demanded concerning non-Protestant inmates which the Home accorded every facility in meeting and rebutting.

\textsuperscript{39} See Appendix 17.
\textsuperscript{40} See Appendix 7.
The passing of the resolution, ‘was accelerated’ when the home believed,

… that if it was not adopted the recognition of the Home as an approved institution was intended to be cancelled.

The assertion was made during a case in which the High Court reversed a ruling making Bethany the beneficiary of the assets of a defunct Protestant Women’s Shelter. Its charter stipulated that residents should not be subject to religious instruction or test. Ironically, Bethany’s decision to exclude Catholics caused Mr Justice Gavan Duffy to direct that Bethany Home, ‘were debarred by the fact that they were sectarian’. 41

It can be demonstrated that official negligence played a role in Bethany Home deaths. The 14 Children reportedly removed to hospital in 1939–40 received the then accepted standard of medical attention and appear to have survived. Consequently, whereas 9 Bethany children died up to 14 April 1939, after that, until 21 April 1940, no Bethany Home death is recorded, while merely two are recorded for 1940 (figures from Appendix 1, above). The period coincides precisely with the CPRSI’s intervention (reported in the *Irish Independent* on 17 April) and revelations of Bethany Home neglect. Sterling Berry’s prediction that a relaxation of sectarian tensions in October 1939 would remove objections appears to have been correct. But it appears also, as a consequence, that children began again to die during the 1940s in significant numbers. 42

A department letter in late October 1939 to the Clerk of the Rathdown Board of Assistance stated:

I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public health to state that after investigations his inspector reports that these children were delicate from birth and [the named child] was backward in walking…. And he is satisfied that they were not neglected in any way.

No mention was made the inspector’s view that birth out of wedlock was a contributory factor. However, the Board continued to make the Department aware of neglect. On 13

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41 ‘£1,000 for charities’, *II*, 23 Jan 1940 – Appendix 13.
42 As outlined in Appendix 1, partially reproduced above.
March 1940, Board minutes note that a Children’s Act inspector removed a child from a Bethany foster mother to the Sunshine Home Stillorgan ‘suffering from rickets and debility’, and that the child ‘was in a very rickety condition when received by the foster-mother some months ago from Bethany Home’. It is interesting to note that the Board specifically requested that ‘Dr McDonald, Medical Inspector, Local Government Department’ (rather than Dr Berry) enquire into the fact that,

… several children have been sent to nurse in the district, from time to time, from this home, suffering from Rickets.

On 29 April the Department asked for the names of these children. On 17 June 1940 the Dept was notified of,

… children sent to nurse mother in the Rathdown Union area from Bethany Home suffering from rickets… Two other children [redacted] and [redacted] were sent directly into St Columcille’s Hospital from Bethany Home suffering from purulent discharge from the eyes.

The Dublin Prison Gate Mission’s Charter, which became Bethany Home’s Charter, stated that any seeking help were to be admitted, regardless of religion or creed, and as at that time there was no alternative except the Union or the streets, many Roman Catholic girls and women were glad to get the shelter of the Home. The Gospel was proclaimed daily to all, and many from time to time, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, received its message of forgiveness and salvation and became new creatures in Christ Jesus. This created opposition in the ranks of the Legion of Mary and other kindred organisations, so that we frequently had delegations from these bodies to seek to remove girls from the influence of the Home. As years went on other Homes were opened, and pressure became so acute that in 1939 the Bethany Home Committee passed a resolution not to admit Roman Catholics to the Home.

INACCURATE 1950s Pilgrim, (n.d., p8) account of 1939-40 problems. No mention of CPRSI, death, illness, or of state intervention, as factors.

In all of these official interactions, while concern was expressed about illness, none was expressed about child mortality.

Bethany sent some children to like-minded institutions in England and cited nurse mother neglect as a justification. Evidence here suggests that neglect originated within Bethany Home and that the authorities were aware of the fact. 43

43 Reported by Isaac ‘Bunny’ Doone, sent with another Bethany child to Fegan’s ‘Protestant, Evangelical, Undenominational’ home in Britain in 1932. Low standards of nurse mother care is reported also in Rough Passage (1983, pp3-4), by former Bethany resident, Tom McClean, sent to Fegan’s in 1947, email David Waller (Fegan’s), 8 June, 10 August 2010. See Niall Meehan, 2010c, section on ‘Bethany Children for export’
To sum up, in a reversal of roles, the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society regulated welfare and appeared to save children’s lives. The state, under a statutory duty to regulate welfare, instead regulated sectarian provision while children died. The Deputy Chief Medical Adviser’s actions undermined legitimate public and internal inspectorate concern in relation to Bethany children.

Was this an example of Catholics dictating to Protestants? Sterling Berry and Alice Litster (an inspector, who monitored Bethany’s path toward state recognition) were Church of Ireland members. The state appeared more concerned to evenly regulate sectarian provision than with its material content. It was a context in which, it appears, Protestants and Catholics were left to separately regulate their own populations. There is evidence of death, neglect and illness throughout the 1940s but no further evidence of controversy. The previously suspicious CPRSI declared in 1942 that proselytism was in its ‘final phase’ and redirected its attentions, under episcopal direction, to unmarried Irish mothers giving birth in England. Bethany matron Lily Pilgrim later misreported the crisis involving the CPRSI in her privately published history (extract, page 326).

13.3 Public Funding attempts

The acceptance of Sterling Berry’s admissions criteria, following his threat in late 1939 of refusal of ‘recognition of the home’ did not, however, translate into institutional funding. During 1940, in an unrepeated crisis measure, Bethany Home sold nearly £1,000 worth of securities, in order to close the year ‘with a small bank balance’. Miss Pilgrim as Matron reported ‘no serious illness’ in a year in which ‘50 girls and 61 children’ had been resident.

In 1940, there were 2 Mount Jerome interments of Bethany Children. This indicates that the additional funds made available in 1940, and continuing removals, may have reduced the death rate. However, it rose sharply again.

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See BMCM, 9 April 1948, Appendix 15. Department memo, Appendix 16. CPRSI, 29th Annual Report, 1942. See Garret, 2000. Though beyond the scope of this study, the CPRSI noted consistently (1949, 1951, 1952, 1954 reports) that (1951) women left ‘owing to the very long time [unmarried mothers] must remain’ in Irish institutions, and (1954) that ‘no other country in the world’ imposed such conditions. ‘Bethany Home, a year’s good work’, IT, 13 Mar 1941 (above), Appendix 17.
during 1941-45, in the absence of outsiders removing sick children to hospital.

Nine, ten, nine and 16 children, respectively, were interred in Mount Jerome during those four years. Attempts at private funding, including a ‘Special collection for Bethany Home’ at the 1941 City of Dublin YMCA Convention, were clearly insufficient to preserve the lives of children who were again dying in increasing numbers.\(^{47}\) It would appear that the refusal of institutional funding had a bearing on the home’s mortality rate. Bethany did achieve eventually, with difficulty, per capita payments for some mothers from Cavan and Monaghan local authorities, under Section 35 of the 1939 Public Assistance Act.\(^{48}\) Ten years of frustrating application resulted in an institutional state grant in 1949, after which no Bethany child is recorded as being interred in Mount Jerome.\(^{49}\)

Former resident Derek Leinster (pictured above), born in 1941, reported being ill in the Bethany Home, supported by testimony from the son of a Wicklow nurse mother, a Mrs Traynor, with whom Derek became well.\(^{50}\) However, he was taken back in 1944, because, reportedly, Mrs Traynor complained about the condition of children received, and/or because Derek’s natural mother was attempting to make contact. In Bethany, Derek again became extremely ill. Unlike dead children who preceded him, he was hospitalised for 135 days in Cork Street Isolation Hospital suffering from Pertussis, Bronchial Pneumonia, Diphtheria and Enteritis.\(^{51}\)

Derek was discharged back to Bethany on 7 January 1945 and was shortly afterwards irregularly ‘adopted’ by a dysfunctional family in Wicklow with one

\(^{47}\) ‘City of Dublin YMCA, Closing Meetings of Convention’ (ad.), \textit{IT}, 27 Sep 1941.
\(^{48}\) Appendices 24-27.
\(^{50}\) Appendix 29a.
\(^{51}\) HSE reference, 1578, by email to Derek Leinster, 5 January 2011.
child, who after the unexpected birth of a second, let Derek know he was unwanted. Derek was neglected and reported that he attended school from the age of 8-9 for approximately 25% of the school year. Persistent non-attendance occasioned visits by police who took the matter no further, due to perceived difficulty in placing Derek as a Protestant within the largely Roman Catholic-managed care system. Of course, Leinster might have been abused in that system, but that is not a justification for indifference toward abuse and neglect outside of it. His experience is a practical reflection of the previously cited (on pages 295-6) protests and concerns expressed by the Law Society in 1969 and by the Protestant Adoption society in 1971, on the state’s negligent attitude to the care and welfare of vulnerable young Protestants. Derek left school illiterate at 13 and permanently for England aged 18, still unable to read or write or to tell the time. With his wife Carol and their children, Derek turned his life around. He made it his life’s work to discover his origins, to claim justice for himself plus other Bethany survivors, and, since 2010, ensure public recognition of those who died. Derek requires extensive medication and regular hospitalisation. He is one of the ‘lucky’ ones in that he survived 1944, particularly as 16 children died in the home that year, more than at any other time during the 1940s.

It may be that the already ineffectual inspection regime in Bethany collapsed due to Sterling Berry’s three 1939 interventions, in which he demonstrated a lax attitude to conditions in the home. In 1944 Dr James Deeny, who later devised the doomed 1949 Mother & Child Scheme (claimed retrospectively by Noel Browne), became Chief Medical Officer of the new Department of Health. Deeny detailed in his memoir investigating an unusual degree of mortality in a Roman Catholic home for unmarried mothers in Bessborough, Co. Cork. It was,

… a beautiful institution, built on to a lovely old house just before the war, and seemed to be well-run and spotlessly clean. I… could not make out what was wrong; at last I took a notion and stripped all the babies and, unusually, for a Chief Medical Adviser, examined them. Every baby had some purulent infection of the skin and all had green diarrhoea, carefully covered up… without any legal authority I closed the place down and sacked the matron, a nun, and also got rid of the medical officer. The deaths had been going on for

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52 ‘Adoption Agreement’, Hayes & Sons, Appendix 29c.
53 Fahy, in Buckley, Skehill, O’Sullivan, eds, 1997, p6, n1, made the point that school attendance was an energetically enforced state function, that was not church-managed. But only to a point, considering Derek Leinster’s experience. See Appendix 29 a, b, c; Leinster, 2005, p110; Leinster email, 8 Dec 2014.
years. They had done nothing about it, had accepted the situation and were quite complacent about it.\textsuperscript{54}

Deeny did not remark, as had Sterling Berry in Bethany in 1939,

It is well recognised that large number of illegitimate children are delicate and marasmic from their birth.

The contrast between the two approaches is striking. It is difficult not to conclude that is why Bethany Children continued to become ill and to die.

\textbf{13.4 Babies for Export and the Irish State}

Besides a negligent inspection regime and a refusal of funding, the state turned a blind eye to Bethany children being removed to institutions abroad.

Bethany children were transferred to like-minded institutions in England: seven to Mr. Fegan’s Homes for Boys (see advertisement, above), plus an unknown number to Barnardo’s and elsewhere. Each in turn had a record of sending children ‘overseas’ to provide ‘the benefits of servitude’ to the colonies under Britain’s 1922 Empire Settlement Act.\textsuperscript{55} Fegan’s ‘Protestant, Evangelical, undenominational’ home advertised that it ‘receive[d] destitute and orphan boys to educate and train in farm work for migration to Canada’. Barnardo’s deportation of 30,000 by 1931, of a then 100,000 total, was considered ‘a most important piece of Empire building’ as well as a saving for taxpayers.\textsuperscript{56}

What of the Irish government? Was it aware that Bethany children were removed from the state? It was but appeared to do nothing. In 1940 Alice Litster as inspector of

\textsuperscript{54} Deeny, 1989, p85.

\textsuperscript{55} Email, David Waller, Fegan’s, 10 Aug 2010; Pilgrim, n.d., p14; BMCM 19 May 1929; Bean, Melville, 1990, p36. See Humphreys, 1994. Sonya Maddieson, Senior Archive & Administration Officer, Barnardo’s, email 16 Jul 2010, indicated that Barnardo’s would respond to my inquiries about Barnardo’s receiving Bethany children. After reminders, Sara Clarke, Snr. Assistant Director of Children’s Services, emailed on 2 Mar 2015, ‘We have not found information relating to Barnardo’s connection with the Bethany Home in Dublin or other institutions in southern Ireland’. This is contradicted by Lily Pilgrim’s 1950s memoir that observed (p14) about on child, ‘She afterwards went to Dr Barnardo’s in London. I often have wondered what her future was like’.

\textsuperscript{56} David C Lamb, Salvation Army, ‘Children as Settlers’; ‘Work of Dr Barnardo’s homes, Lord Lloyd on Empire building’, \textit{Times} (Lon.), 28 Apr 1928, 8 May 1931. This trade in children was the subject of \textit{Oranges and Sunshine} (2011, dir., Jim Loach), a film in which Emily Watson played Nottingham social worker Margaret Humphreys, whose \textit{Empty Cradles}, 1994, expertly described the origin and outworking of the migration schemes.
boarded-out children noted that Bethany’s Miss Walker advertised children ‘in English Protestant newspapers’. An orphanage replied in one case and received an eight-month old child on production of ‘a letter of recommendation from a clergyman’. However, in that case police in St Albans,

… informed the local NSPCC of conditions in the… home. As a result, Miss Walker was induced to remove the child.

No record has emerged of official attempts to curtail these cross-border movements, that also involved Northern Ireland mothers giving birth in Dublin, or of children being sent south, and of southern children being sent North for adoption.\textsuperscript{57} For instance, Patrick Anderson McQuoid, whose mother was from Wicklow, was born in Bethany Home. After transfer to the ICM’s Boley orphanage in Monkstown, Dublin, and then to a Smyly’s institution, an ICM-connected family in Northern Ireland irregularly adopted him.\textsuperscript{58} Despite his first name being ‘Cecil’, McQuoid was called ‘Paddy from the home’ in Dublin. The name stuck in an environment in which McQuoid always felt an outsider. He eventually ‘escaped’ to England at the age of 17.

The movement of mothers and children back and forth across the border appears to have been in particular a feature of Protestant ethos institutions. Eileen Macken (born 1937), who was in the Bethany Home, was then sent to the Church of Ireland Female Orphan House (aka Kirwan House) on Dublin’s North Circular Road. In 2014, she showed the author a much later get-together photograph of herself with four other women who were also resident in the institution. I asked how many of their mothers were, like hers, born in Northern Ireland. She replied, ‘All of them’ (See more on this subject, page 339).

During the 1950s, Bethany sent children to the US for adoption, a lucrative scheme (in that US adopters donated money) facilitated by the Irish government. In his pioneering book on the subject, \textit{Banished Babies} (1997, 2012), Mike Milotte concentrated, like Michael Viney earlier, on Roman Catholic experiences. The book’s ‘Prologue’ introduced four children sent to the US in 1949, two from Braemar House Cork in July, two from Castlepollard Mother & Baby Home in November. While Milotte named Castlepollard as a Catholic institution, Braemar House (also known as the Braemar Rescue Home for Protestant Girls) was not disclosed as Protestant. Victor Stevenson, who later was sent to the Protestant evangelical Westbank Orphanage and is

\textsuperscript{57} See Appendix 14.
\textsuperscript{58} See Anderson-McQuoid’s Mrs Smiley’s Homes admission form on page 337, as ‘Cecil Corrigan’. Also note stated ICM ‘connexion’.
a campaign co-ordinator for Protestant survivors, was born in Braemar in 1959. However, Braemar House was not included in the terms of reference of the Irish government’s mother and baby homes inquiry announced in January 2015. Therefore, at the time of writing, the Commission is precluded from addressing Stevenson’s individual experience and from examining the institutions in which he was detained.\(^{59}\)

Milotte described at length Catholic contortions over facilitating US divorcees. Not so Bethany that summarily rejected a Mr & Mrs Watt in March 1952: ‘We [do] not give babies to persons who have been divorced’. Milotte correctly noted a racist element to Irish children’s popularity. They were guaranteed ‘white’. In February 1950 Miss Walker appeared to inform her Managing Committee on this very point using ‘letters and newspaper extracts’.\(^{60}\)

Aside from negative attitudes toward divorcees, Bethany’s standards were lax. In 1951 a US couple who ‘contributed liberally’, were reported as unsuitable by a relative. However, they were given a pre-selected infant after a cursory observation of interaction with their desired child. Perhaps unsurprisingly, but also disturbingly, in 1953 Bethany’s Management Committee objected to Protestant Adoption Society rules requiring approval of would-be adopters before they came in contact with children.\(^{61}\)


\(^{61}\) MCM, 10 Feb 1950, 9 Feb, 9 Mar, 13 Apr 1951, 12 Jun 1953.
13.5 Other Institutions

Some Bethany Home residents were sent on to a similarly evangelical institution, the Westbank Orphanage, Wicklow. Westbank children as young as five were sent to Northern Ireland as farm labour in return for payment and were paraded as poor southern Protestant orphans in Orange and church halls in Northern Ireland. Their pictures were published for fund raising purposes. Relationships between siblings were denied. Most children were refused adoption, though some illegal adoptions by similarly fundamentalist

IRISH Times 13 March 1959, profile, Adeline Mathers

particular, to our dear sister, Miss Adeline Mathers, (Auntie) whose life is dedicated to the Lord in this work. For all these merites, and His great love, we give Him our humble thanks.

As the present time, 1969, we have a family of over 40 boys and girls. Some of these are living away from Westbank, either at boarding school or in some other educational establishment. The remainder are domiciled on the premises.

In this connection, may we say that all who have grown up under Miss Mathers' care regard Westbank as home and come back there for holidays, bringing their friends with them, as children do in normal families. "Institutionalisn" has been abolished; Westbank is home and Auntie is the mother many of these little ones have never known.

It is the aim of everyone connected with this work that every child should come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. Four girls who were saved are now baptized believers and in happy fellowship in the little church which meets in the Gospel Hall, Bray. All the children of suitable age attend the Sunday School there and are brought, as observers, to the meeting for the remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ in the breaking of bread.

The generosity of the Lord's people has enabled us to carry out many improvements in the organisation and running of

Protestants were approved. Residents went hungry. Physical and sexual abuse was alleged. Residents stayed on sometimes until their twenties (1970 Westbank report extract and 1959 Adeline Mathers Irish Times profile, page 333).

Westbank, described as a ‘cult-like’ home with ‘over 50’ children and ‘no staff’, was run by the unqualified Adeline Mathers. She gave most children her surname plus an ‘anglicised’ first name. For example, 1967-1981 resident Colm Begley became ‘Robin Mathers’. No evidence of regulation and inspection of this institution, that closed in 2002, has been traced, though the severe beating of one child was reported to the Eastern Health Board in 1980. In addition, in 1978 an inspector of boarded-out children, Ms Clandillon, brought to the attention of Joseph

Robbins, Principal Officer of the Department of Health, a Westbank boy who had fallen from a train and suffered brain damage. Robbins sent a letter in reference to the home, curiously described as catering for ‘abandoned or unwanted’ children, to the National Rehabilitation Board, resulting in the boy receiving rehabilitative care. Neither interaction set off official alarm bells, it appears.

In another institution, the Church of Ireland Magdalen Asylum (in existence since 1765, reports, page 334; brief history, below), a speaker at its annual meeting in 1945 complained of ‘the promiscuity of the slums [that] causes a lot of trouble’. Like Bethany Home, the home ‘sav[ed] the children’ by taking in ‘fallen’ women (but, unlike Bethany, only after a ‘first fall’). Those running the Asylum suffered from a superiority complex vis-à-vis other institutions, a condition which examination of its care regime would not justify. The Asylum’s affiliated Nursery Rescue Society (NRS), fostered out Magdalen children. It claimed in 1945, in a letter to the Irish Times, ‘a certain confusion in the minds of readers’ over ‘methods used by public authorities’, compared to a more vigorous inspection regime utilised ‘by private societies’ such as the NRS. This was in response to an Irish Times editorial referring to ‘orphaned or illegitimate’ children used as:

... merely a source of profit; the more money that can be saved out of the seven or eight shillings a week that are paid for his keep and the more work that can be extracted from his wretched frame.

The society asserted again in 1946 that its ‘voluntary’ approach to welfare guaranteed ‘a happy and healthy home life’. This was in response to the Irish Times editor, Bertie Smylie, making similar comments at the 1946 NRS

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64 See Appendix 34, for Robbins letter and reply, 4, 22 Dec 1978. Exceptionally, having attended Newpark Comprehensive School in South County Dublin alongside Westbank orphans, Examiner journalist Victoria White commented consistently on this issue and others surrounding Bethany Home and Westbank Orphanage. See, for example: ‘We shouldn’t turn our backs on Protestant survivors of abuse’, 13 Sep 2012; ‘We need to fight for the truth about Bethany survivors’, 27 Mar 2014; ‘Abused by the Westbank Home and abandoned by the state, 27 Nov 2014.
annual meeting, and that ‘the state will have to take cognisance of the problem’ of neglect of fostered children (1946 reports illustrated, above).65

The society’s claims were refuted by John Hill, who was born in the Magdalen Asylum in 1946, and was found to have rickets after three years residence in 1949. He was dispatched to farm families by the NRS, where he worked for free ‘as a source of profit’ from age five until 16. Despite NRS claims, participation in family, community and school activities was shunned. Hill and other foster children were not permitted as teenagers to participate in school games in Wilson’s Hospital school, where they were beaten regularly. They were required instead to work on the school farm. Whereas most

teenage borders returned to parents at the weekend, Hill and the other foster children remained in school on their own. This denial of ‘a happy and healthy home life’ was compounded when, at age 58, Hill discovered a separated twin sister who was adopted into a Northern Ireland family (see birth report, page 334). Hill survived to marry and to raise a family of his own, but the lives of others he knew as ‘foster children’, treated similarly, fell apart through drink and drugs. Hill felt himself destined for a life of servitude within the Protestant community and took steps eventually to extricate himself.  

This aspect of Protestant welfare was touched upon in the _Irish Times_ in 2003. Carol Coulter commented on a neighbour’s child sent to a Dublin orphanage, due to her mother being unable to manage financially on a small farm after her husband’s death:

… this girl was now the beneficiary of Protestant ‘charity’, and would be trapped in this exclusive environment at the lowest level of its rigid hierarchy, destined to work at the bottom of the service industry, often run by prosperous members of the same religion.  

Whereas in the Roman Catholic community, religious orders administered services, within the Protestant community lay members of the relatively affluent elite, assisted by female evangelical Christians - who appeared, in the main, to be unmarried - were involved.

The once extensive Smyly system of orphanages, where Coulter’s neighbour was sent, was founded in the late 19th Century. Smyly’s engaged in proselytism in association with the ICM, on the basis,
they argued, that Irish poverty and degradation resulted from Roman Catholicism (see Smyly’s admission form, page 337).\footnote{Luddy, 1995, pp81-2. See also 1960 advertisement, page 337.}

Smyly’s also opened a home in Canada in 1905 that was taken into public ownership in 1917. Irish children sent there, worked ‘long hard hours [on farms], what today we would describe as “slave labour”’ (1907 arrivals, plus description of Irish Coombe home, above, below). Smyly’s in Canada stipulated (as in Ireland), ‘In no case do we place children with Roman Catholic families’.\footnote{Langan, 2000, pp3, 7.}

Due to counter-measures in Ireland, the supply of Catholic orphans was gradually curtailed. Former Irish soccer international Paul McGrath grew up in Smyly’s orphanages in Dun Laoghaire, Dublin. He was born to a Nigerian father who disappeared and an Irish Catholic mother who gave Paul to a Protestant fostering agency. Sent to the orphanage from age five, McGrath was humiliated daily and beaten ‘vicious[ly]’ for bed-wetting until he was twelve.\footnote{McGrath, (Dervan), 1994, pp21-22; McGrath (Hogan), 2007, pp50, 53-4.} His bestselling Autobiography, Back from the Brink (2006) alleged sexual and other forms of abuse, including from some ‘nice people’ permitted to
take Smyly’s children for periods of time. McGrath observed that it was ‘drummed into you’ that ‘you were in a pretty superior minority being brought up in the Protestant [Church of Ireland] tradition’. He continued:

The board of trustees was made up of stockbrokers, solicitors, that type of professional person. Even the deputy governor of the Central Bank lent his name to the charity.  

Dun Laoghaire local government councillor Victor Boyhan was a Smyly’s resident alongside McGrath. He has no memory of the trustees being present in the school, apart from at the annual Christmas concert, when children sang hymns and recited religious texts to invited guests. As with the Westbank Orphanage, according to Boyhan Northern Ireland unionists who were targeted for donations visited the home regularly. Given the numbers of Northern Ireland children in the institution, this was perhaps unsurprising. A Presbyterian minister, the Rev’d T. Byers wrote to Mrs Smyly (a relative of the founder) on 19 March 1948 and asserted,

I frequently have been appealed to from the North to find a haven of location for needy children in Dublin… Indeed I have often wondered what ministers would do if it were not for the Smyly homes – homes as I know run so economically and in such a kindly and Christian atmosphere.

It is not conclusively clear why Northern Ireland Protestants, unionists in the main, would find the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic south of Ireland so congenial a setting for ‘needy’ northern Protestant children. It may be that the south’s sectarian system suited them more so than greater accountability and secularly-inspired measures emerging within Britain’s post-war welfare state (though, it should be noted that sending children north or south was not a new phenomenon). It may also have been, as Bethany Matron Kathleen Glover put it in 1965 (see page 269), somewhere to ‘hide’ from disapproving relations or neighbours, as well as from social services.

In Smyly’s, as with Westbank, the names of some children, considered insufficiently ‘Anglican’, were altered. Reviewers of McGrath’s book, touching on his being black and Irish, were reluctant to incorporate his Protestant Irish experience. The Irish Times review suggested that McGrath’s ‘record of pain’ resulted from ‘the strict ideals of de

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71 Number one hardback non-fiction, IT, 23 Dec 2006. McGrath (Hogan), 2007, pp64, 65.
72 I am indebted to former Westbank resident Sydney Herdman for the contents of this letter (personal communication, 12 Oct 2015).
73 Victor Boyhan, author interview, 16 Jan 2015.
Valera’s Ireland’. No such presumed ideals permeated Smyly’s institutions, whose pro-British and generally anti-Roman Catholic ethos pre-dated state formation.  

Smyly’s children were, according to Boyhan, given second-class status within the Church of Ireland community. He instanced parents who objected when parentless Smyly’s children first attended Monkstown National School in the mid 1960s. Prior to this the ICM conducted classes in the home, mainly consisting of religious instruction. Due to the gross inadequacy of this provision, 8-9 year old Smyly children were placed initially in the Monkstown school’s infant class. Boyhan reports that ICM teachers had a reputation for physical brutality and that one, Rev’d E.M. Neill, also a trustee, interested himself in ‘one-to-one’ sex education sessions.

More disturbingly, Boyhan reported that a Smyly staff member was responsible for physical and sexual abuse of boys during the early 1970s, while in charge of Smyly’s Glensilva Home. Boys entered Glensilva at age 11 from the feeder Bird’s Nest orphanage. Boyhan reported being a victim on his first day, suffering while naked a brutal beating with sexual overtones. Some hours afterwards the abuser asked Boyhan to keep quiet, on the basis that the abuse would not recur. This threat, masked as a contrite request, was accepted by the 11-year-old. Boyhan assumed he was not again attacked because he had brothers in Smyly’s, a fact the institution withheld from Boyhan until entry to Glensilva. However, Boyhan reported that one of his brothers was physically and sexually abused by a foster family to which Smyly’s consigned him. He speculated as to whether his own abuser, who was convicted of a less serious though related offence many years later, may have known his brother’s tormentor.

In 2008 the Rev’d Joseph Condell, who ‘held an eminent position and was looked up to by his community’, was convicted of possession of still and moving images of child sexual abuse. Condell was ordained in 1973 and was nominated as a possible Bishop of Limerick in 2000. His rectory was searched by Gardaí in January 2002, on foot of a US Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) tipoff that targeted paedophiles using credit cards to trade in child pornography. In May, premises belonging to a further 110 people in southern Ireland were raided. A circuit court judge, Brian Curtin, ‘well known chef Tim Allen’, a state solicitor, the owner of a funfair and a former priest were arrested also. In 2003, a district justice banned publication of Condell’s name. The High Court overturned the ban in 2006 (report, page 341). In 2007 Condell pleaded guilty and, in 2008, received a suspended three-year prison sentence, was placed on the sex-offender’s

75 Victor Boyhan, author interview, 16 Jan 2015.
76 Victor Boyhan, author interview, 16 Jan 2015.
register, and put under supervision for four years. In 2006, Tim Allen was sentenced to 240 hours community service and ordered to pay €24,000 to a children’s charity. The case against Judge Curtin collapsed in 2004 due to a defective search warrant. Allen and Curtin were associated in media reports, but not Condell who, though he was arrested earlier, appeared in court later. The ban on naming him was a factor diminishing his relative notoriety.

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**Judge lifts gag on identifying clergyman in child porn case**

Move came after media groups sought court order to quash ban

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**Ann O’Loughlin**

A RESTRICTION on the publication of the identity of a child pornography accused clergyman charged with possession of child pornography ended yesterday.

On Wednesday, Mr Justice Curtin ruled that a clerical judge’s order restricting publication of Joseph Condell’s name was unenforceable.

However, the judge continued an earlier order that the name of the accused clergyman not be revealed until the next hearing in the case during this year. The ban on naming him was a factor diminishing his relative notoriety.

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78 John Breslin, ‘He courted a schoolgirl and caused outrage in handling of child abuse’, *Daily Mail*, 14 Nov 2006. The article also contained, ‘a Church of Ireland rector, has yet to appear before a court’.  

Condell’s defence was that a parishioner had voiced concerns about child pornography, leading Condell to become curious, followed by computer viruses infecting his computer with child pornography. An expert for the prosecution testified that there was no evidence of the latter. Furthermore,

Technical experts found 170 images of child pornography and three short video clips on the laptop in the same ‘folder’ as homilies and sermons prepared by Condell. A password-protected floppy disk contained 40 pornographic images and three documents, two of which related to the admissions policy and the ethos code for St Cronan’s Church of Ireland primary school.

The court heard images showed children as young as one being abused by adults. In one picture a child is crying while being subjected to an attack. Detective Garda James Madden told the court that Condell had not co-operated with the investigation and had to be arrested and conveyed to Thurles Garda Station in November 2002. He was questioned for 12 hours but exercised his right to silence.

Det Gda Madden also told the court it was his opinion that Condell was still in denial about his actions even though he attended Probation Services and the Granada Institute in Dublin for rehabilitation. The officer said: ‘In my dealings with Canon Condell I have known him to be anything but helpful. I have seen the Granada report and I don’t agree with a lot of it with regard to how he met the case. My opinion is that he is a huge, huge way away from dealing with this matter’.  

The authorities and the media do not appear to have successfully probed Condell’s past. The Irish Times court report was accompanied by another article in which Condell’s bishop expressed ‘sadness’. In 1977, the paper had reported Condell driving Church of Ireland children on a daily 32-mile round-trip to school.

According to Victor Boyhan, Joseph Condell entered Smyly’s Glensilva home on placement as a Church of Ireland divinity student in the early 1970s. Reportedly, he returned voluntarily on night duty afterwards. It is not suggested here that he was involved in any abuse.

There are allegations of systematic sexual and physical abuse of children in Smyly’s institutions. There has been little public attention devoted to their abuse claims during this period, however. It is all the more surprising since Irish international soccer player

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83 Smyly’s Trust refuse to state if there was contact with the authorities in relation to Condell between 2002-8, on the basis that ‘We do not give out information to third parties’, Ken Gillanders, Secretary, by email, 22 Apr 2015.
Paul McGrath’s bestselling memoir, that included allegations of sexual abuse in Smyly’s homes, was published in 2007.

The failure to investigate Condell’s past institutional involvement with children, after reporting his arrest in 2002 and court appearance in 2003 (when his identity would have been known to journalists), is perhaps a consequence of the fixation on abuse as a largely Roman Catholic issue.\(^8^4\)

In 2001, before Condell was arrested, the *Irish Times* reported, once, allegations of abuse against an ‘on leave’ and unidentified Smyly’s Home staff member (not Condell), dating to 1986. The Eastern Health Board reportedly investigated the 15-year-old allegations, though the outcome appears unknown.\(^8^5\)

During the late 1990s, early 2000s, southern Irish society was convulsed by stories of child abuse, often perpetrated by Roman Catholic clergy. *Irish Times* journalist Liam Reid reported on 5 July 2005, ‘Sex abuse indemnity ruled out for CofI homes’ and noted, again, the 2001 ‘serious allegations’ about Smyly’s homes, plus that ‘nobody has been convicted’. The story explained that Smyly’s Trust Church of Ireland homes had been refused a state indemnity against allegations of institutional abuse, because Smyly’s proffered contribution of £100,000 was considered wholly inadequate. Roman Catholic organisations pledged £128m to the much-criticised indemnity scheme, of which £40m was in cash. Smyly’s Residents were, nevertheless, paid compensation through the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB). Their abuse allegations were accepted as a state responsibility. These included 1960s vaccine trials involving Smyly’s children, which Victor Boyhan had raised originally and consistently. The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse was prevented by a November 2003 Supreme Court judgement from investigating the vaccine allegations that affected a number of...

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\(^8^4\) I wrote (23 Jan 2015) to the RIRB to enquire if they had communicated any allegations against a Smyly’s employee or volunteer to the Gardaí, something they are legally entitled to do. On 10 Feb, the RIRB solicitor replied and implied that the Board had not done so, but asserted that the RIRB was not empowered to tell me in any case. I asked Smyly’s Trust (by email, 16 Apr) if they had told the authorities they employed Condell and was told they do not give information to ‘third parties’ (22 Apr). I then wrote to the Health Service Executive (HSE, 24 Apr) to ask if Smyly’s informed them. On 12 May, the HSE informed me that they had passed my correspondence to TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, who communicated (5, 15 June) that they would be in touch. On 31 May I asked the RIRB for clarification of their original response, which was refused.

\(^8^5\) Carol Coulter, ‘Claim of abuse at children’s home being investigated by health board’, *IT*, 9 Feb 2001.
mainly Roman Catholic, institutions. These detailed allegations tended to concentrate on Roman Catholic experiences of the trials. On 27 May 2009 in the *Irish Times*, Patsy McGarry reported identically (to Reid in 2001) with regard to Smyly’s, that there were ‘serious allegations’ and that ‘nobody has been convicted’. However, as the headline, ‘Christian Brothers’ statement welcomed’, indicated, the information was incorporated at the end of a report on contributions by Roman Catholic Christian Brothers to funding abuse victims. This was the case also one day earlier where, under the headline, ‘Religious groups defy bishops’ call to pay more over abuse’, McGarry reported, in the third last paragraph,

The indemnity [for Catholic religious orders] ran until the end of 2005, while such indemnity was refused to Protestant homes where there were also allegations of abuse.

In the absence of explaining why there was a refusal, this was potentially misleading. The print version of the front-page story excluded the following concluding paragraph, that was in the web edition. It was, again, almost identical to Reid’s 2005 article (merely the tenses were changed),

The State refused to provide a Church of Ireland charity with an indemnity for child abuse compensation claims over a group of children's homes it operated. However, all four homes run by the Smyly Trust were covered under the State redress scheme, in light of allegations of serious physical and sexual abuse dating back to the 1960s and 1970s.

The detail of this alleged abuse was not reported, nor was the conclusion, if any, of the original health board investigation. The context for refusal of a state indemnity to Smyly’s, an insufficient offer of money, was also again ignored.

In all, on 26 May fifteen articles on two full inside pages, the front page and on the op-ed page were devoted to abuse within Roman Catholic institutions that had been acting on behalf of the state. In addition, fifteen letters were published on the subject. One correspondent objected to a reduction in funding for Protestant schools, on the basis that Protestants were, ‘having their pockets raided to fund a corrupt and disgraced church’. The following day, fifty-two letters taking up two pages were accompanied by three more full pages with eleven opinion and report pieces. In addition, the front page, most of the page devoted to Dáil reports (with five more separate reports), and an editorial on the first letters page commented on the abuse issue. An editorial protested

that the state was paying 90% of redress claims, estimated at €1.3 billion, and demanded more Catholic money. It did not occur to note that the state was paying 100% of Protestant victims’ claims. No Protestant institution contributed funds to the redress scheme at any stage, a news item not treated as a news story in its own right.\textsuperscript{88} The ignored Smyly’s institution and its nameless victims appears to have been, in these circumstances, somewhat under-reported. Possibly, the paper’s religious affairs correspondent and his colleagues were operating within a mindset expressed by McGarry in 1998, that

Another factor influencing […] Catholics these days is the rather remarkable fact that, whereas child sex abuse has involved so many Catholic religious, the incidence of such abuse among Protestant clergy seems entirely absent.\textsuperscript{89}

Perhaps such beliefs were reflective of a groupthink that inhibited investigation of abuse within Protestant ethos institutions, irrespective of whether clergy were involved.

The context for the 26-27 May 2009 \textit{Irish Times} reporting was the publication a week earlier of the Ryan Commission report into child abuse. Since, as previously noted in Chapter Eleven (pages 294-296), Ryan did not investigate any Protestant ethos institutions, the cycle of media, official, and therefore general, ignorance of abuse in such institutions becomes explicable if not excusable.

The general reader might easily, in these circumstances, be unaware of the specificity of Protestant experience. Carol Coulter, author of the original 2001 article on allegations affecting Smyly’s, noted in 2003:

While the backgrounds and situations of the children in the industrial schools received widespread public discussion, no one thought to inquire about the children in Protestant orphanages.

Where did these children come from? Why were they there? If these children did have living family members, why were they in institutions? None of these questions were asked, as if they fell outside the known boundaries of public discourse about Catholic and non-Catholic, rich and poor, privileged and marginalised, into which the other discussion of the children’s institutions fell.\textsuperscript{90}

Coulter’s prescient questions were not pursued by her media colleagues and not in the \textit{Irish Times}, a product historically of the community from which Smyly’s and similar orphanage systems emerged.

\textsuperscript{88} Another McGarry article in 2011, ‘Groups refuse to contribute towards State redress costs’, 1 Aug 2011, noted eighteen mainly Roman Catholic organisations refusing subsequently to contribute to the indemnity scheme. Though it was not stated, three of those listed were Protestant: Smyly’s Trust, Cottage Home Child and Family Services, and Miss Carr’s Children’s Service.

\textsuperscript{89} Patsy McGarry, ‘Healing process central to real peace, says Dr Eames’, \textit{IT}, 12 May 1998.

\textsuperscript{90} Carol Coulter, ‘Not just one Protestant people’, \textit{IT}, 16 Jan 2003.
13.6 Regulating Protestants

In the Bethany Home, the *Irish Times* legal representatives, Hayes and Sons solicitors, were involved in drawing up irregular ‘Adoption Agreement[s]’ before adoption became legal in 1952 (and operational in 1953).¹¹ 1959-74 *Irish Times* Chairman Ralph Walker was a Hayes senior partner. He was the nephew of Bethany Residential Secretary Hettie Walker. As previously noted, his father Joseph, a Managing Committee member to 1935, sold his property to Bethany on advantageous terms in 1934.¹² Ralph was named in a December 1951 Hayes ‘adoption agreement’ as Bethany resident Emily Sheppey’s ‘attorney’, in the event that adoption became legal. This was intended to

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¹¹ Beatrice Odlum, ‘Protestant Adoption Society’, *IT*, 28 May 1957. 230 Protestant children reportedly had been adopted at that stage.

facilitate a future legal adoption without consulting Emily. She was threatened with severe financial penalties, should she attempt to contact her child. It also stated,

  It is hereby mutually agreed that nothing shall prevent the adopters transferring the custody and management and guardianship of the infant to any other fit relative or other proper person or persons.93

In 1954 Bethany undermined a stipulation under the recently operational 1952 Adoption Act to contact Emily to regularise her daughter’s adoption. The home produced a letter received in 1954 from a Rector Love, Keady, Armagh, where Emily, a parishioner, was resident with her sister. The Rector reported, inexplicably (in that Emily reportedly resided in Keady), that Emily was not contactable and that he did not expect to hear from her ‘again in this life’.94 Emily’s daughter, Joyce McSharry, was told later her mother had died before Joyce arrived in the Bethany Home. Joyce’s adoptive parents, who co-signed the 1951 ‘agreement’ with Emily, embellished the lie as Joyce grew. She was taken each year to Bethany Home and Westbank Orphanage prayer and open days, where her ‘rescue’ and alternate fate (had she not been adopted), were respectively impressed upon McSharry. The thought of residing with her mother was excluded since McSharry thought she was dead. In 2001 Joyce McSharry discovered that Emily Sheppey died alone in 1976 in Weston-super-Mare in the UK. Her few possessions partly consisted of 12 baby photographs that Joyce first saw in 2013 (see Joyce McSharry, ‘My Story’, Appendix 32; newspaper report, page 346).95

The son of the last Bethany matron, Kathleen Glover, become a senior partner in Hayes & Sons. However, in 2010 and subsequently the firm, including the now retired Adrian Glover, claimed no knowledge of dealings, or records of interactions, with Bethany Home. Neither does the firm possess knowledge of, nor a record of dealings with, an orphanage spun off from Bethany in 1938, Ovoca Manor in Wicklow. This is even though letters concerning that institution (with a reference ‘AG’, Adrian Glover) dated 25 October 1979, 20 March, 10 April 1981, from Hayes & Sons (plus two letters in reply), were notified to the firm.96

Such charitable activity should not be considered entirely disinterested. It was an

93 Hayes and sons were involved also in the adoption of Bethany resident Lorraine Jackson. Copy of invoice dated 1 March 1955 for payment of £8/18/0 to Hayes in author’s possession. I am grateful to Lorraine Jackson for a copy of this document.

94 Letter, 29 Apr 1954, in author’s possession. Rev’d Love’s identity redacted in letter, but revealed in an 11 Jul 1955 Adoption Order (in author’s possession) revealing, ‘See letter from Rev. Love’, in disingenuous response to ‘Is the child an orphan …?’ and ‘Have you obtained the mother’s consent to the adoption?’. I am indebted to Emily Sheppey’s daughter, Joyce McSharry, for this and other documentation, and to Miriam Moffitt for confirming Rev’s Love’s position in Keady in 1954 from the CofI Directory.


exercise of control over adult and child residents in particular, and over the Protestant population generally. It complimented, in its own way, what happened within the Roman Catholic community. However, it masked affluence at one end of the socio economic spectrum, plus marginalisation and deprivation at the other. The wider community, including its media, generally obsessed by a negative experience of Catholic control, was disinclined to integrate such Protestant experiences into its understanding. To do so would be to detail the role of the state in facilitating sectarian social control in Irish society, and in delaying or preventing the emergence of equitable rights-based welfare provision. Criticism of the Roman Catholic Church, often justified, and of sectarian anti-Protestant attitudes during the 1919-23 independence struggle, largely unjustified, have combined to obscure the role of the state in making use of sectarian institutions, Catholic and Protestant, to hinder and blunt social advance. Marginalised Protestants, who did not fit the preferred narrative, were largely ignored.

In April 2014 Derek Leinster presided over a well-attended ecumenical service preceding the erection of a memorial stone, whose design, planning, and construction he organised, so as to remember Bethany children who died (photograph, left). It fulfilled Leinster’s long-standing determination that these discarded children be remembered appropriately, not forgotten in perpetuity. Thanks to his efforts, against great odds, the children achieved something in death, denied during their short lives: recognition of their existence.

The ecumenical service and subsequent meeting attracted representatives from the main Christian denominations, plus Oisin Quinn, the Labour Party Lord Mayor of Dublin, Carrie Smyth, the Labour Party Chairperson of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Council, Danny

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Kennedy MLA, a Unionist Party Minister from the Northern Ireland Executive, Mary Lou McDonald TD, the Deputy President of Sinn Féin, Pamela Dooley, the Head of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, plus Rachel Doyle from the National Women’s Council of Ireland, all of whom spoke movingly. The proceedings were not reported in the Irish Times on 3 April, though the newspaper did publish on an inside page a colour photograph of the memorial stone unveiling.  

After publicity surrounding the discovery of 800 graves attached to a Roman Catholic mother and baby home in Tuam later in 2014 the Irish state announced that it would inquire into named mother and baby homes, including Bethany Home (whose over 220 graves were reported in 2010) and the Church of Ireland Magdalen Home. Terms of reference were published in January 2015. These excluded the Westbank Orphanage and other institutions to which children in mother and baby homes were sent. Former Bethany and Magdalen residents could refer to Westbank and the Nursery Rescue Society as ‘exit pathways’, but the Commission had no power to investigate them. In addition former residents who arrived at these institutions from other routes, for example the previously mentioned Victor Stevenson, were precluded from presenting testimony to the Commission (see pages 331-2, plus photo page 346).

13.7 Sectarian Regulation

Though the southern state had a Catholic sectarian character, therefore, it preserved a social structure in which Protestants retained a relatively superior socio-economic status. Many Protestants were controlled by co-religionists in much the same way as were Catholics.

As noted earlier, left-wing and liberal ideas, augmented by republican activists, socialists, women and young people who found Irish society increasingly stultifying, did begin to win through during the 1960s. It was a period of flux when Catholic Church influence on society and Protestant elite influence over the economy was

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100 In his appreciation of the rise and importance of the Irish Women’s movement and other secular movements during the 1960s and 1970s Foster adopted a neo-Weberian argument to suggest that this was a reflection of the Reformation arriving in Ireland after ‘four hundred and fifty years’, 2007, p66. Martin Luther and King Henry VIII were not noted proto-feminists.
weakening. Part of the opening out of the *Irish Times* at that time reflected not merely a continuing decline of Protestant numbers, but a corresponding emergence also of Catholic decision-makers: ‘The *Irish Times* had fewer [Protestant] friends in the boardrooms where advertising budgets were decided’.  

Due to the evolution of liberal social attitudes toward unwed motherhood, the advent of the contraceptive pill and access to the 1967 British Abortion Act, Bethany Home closed its doors in 1972, a year with two admissions. This organic development was a response as much against Protestant as Catholic control over their respective populations. There is little evidence of Foster’s liberal Protestant ethic playing a role in this process. In so far as liberal Catholics have come to consider Protestantism generally to be a more liberal form of Christianity, the experience of ‘carrying on a Protestant Government for a Protestant people’ in Northern Ireland might temper it (though censorship of the conflict there from 1971-94 inhibited this perception). Consideration of the lived experience of southern Protestants might lead observers to consider similarities more so than differences between Catholics and Protestants.

Such consideration might reframe this discussion to include the state that facilitated sectarian welfare services, that was quite adept at sucking religious bodies into provision more properly the remit of the state itself. This can be illustrated in a letter in 1945 from the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Barton, to the Minister for Justice, Gerry Boland. A Protestant female on remand and detained in an establishment run by nuns was brought to the minister’s attention. She alleged that the nuns suggested ‘she should become a Catholic’. Rather than investigate the allegation, Boland asked Barton to ‘arrange for some suitable Protestant institution to accept girls committed on remand or on short sentences’. Dr Barton replied on 9 April 1945:

> I have delayed replying pending certain enquiries which I wished to make. I now give you a suitable Institution for this purpose:–
> Bethany Home, Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin.
> This Institution is already under Government inspection, and is already recognised by the Court as a place to which such girls can be sent, and receives a number of them.

While the churches may have believed themselves to be gaining control, it was more a case of the state abdicating responsibility.

13.8 Conclusion: Protestants Becoming Catholics?

To sum up, Roy Foster’s survey of Catholic opinions assumed falsely an ‘ideal type’ link between liberal Catholics and southern Irish Protestantism. He cited Inglis, additionally, on Roman Catholics achieving the contradictory feat of becoming more

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101 Brady, 2005, p23.
102 Bethany trustee, Matthew Taylor, affidavit 1974 (obtained by Derek Leinster).
103 The phrase uttered by Prime Minister James Craig, Stormont, 21 November 1934.
Protestant and secular. Foster assumed homogeneity in the general outlook of southern Protestants. He failed in this to appreciate similarities of institutional interest between the churches.

Foster’s survey of changing Catholic attitudes noted, by way of illustration, the first lay-led multi-denominational primary school, the 1978 Dalkey School Project. But this was a story of some Protestant and Roman Catholic parents attempting initially to change the ethos of Dalkey’s Church of Ireland National School. Foster failed to note this or strenuous Church of Ireland opposition to the proposal. While recording civil service resistance to the initiative, Foster failed to detail general Church of Ireland opposition to the growing multi-denominational school movement. The CofI cited, amongst other fears, primary school pupils forming attachments leading (eventually) to mixed marriages. Foster wrote Instead of the ‘vigorous opposition of the [Roman Catholic] Church’. He cited its Episcopal Commission on Education that warned on ‘building “the bricks of a secularist agenda”’.

In 2011 Paul Colton, Bishop of Cork, echoed the sentiment. He observed that those who pursue ‘an aggressive secularist agenda’ were mischievously caricaturing ‘our schools and their excellent work’. However, Colton’s was not the ‘Church’ Foster capitalised. As Church of Ireland Anglican bishop, from which tradition Foster emerged into academia, Colton was addressing his diocesan synod. Was he becoming more Roman Catholic? Hardly. The Roman Catholic Church cleverly hitched its anti-secularist campaign to that of the Anglicans. Foster’s observations form part of the overall mixed message confusing the southern liberal intelligentsia. It is a message sociology students received also from *A Sociology of Ireland* (3rd ed.), whose reference to the Dalkey School Project referred only to ‘Catholic Church and state opposition … to … inter-denominational schools’.

The real inequalities in Irish society, experienced separately in both communities historically by marginalised women and children, based on class and reinforced by caste, are thereby obscured, north and south, in the past and in the present. It is an aspect of the segregated schools controversy noted astutely by West Cork Protestant

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106 ‘Diocesan Synod, Bishop’s Presidential Address’, *Diocesan Magazine, United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross*, July/August 2011, p12. Foster pits Protestants against one another only in his strenuous assertion of southern opposition to the Orange Order’s ‘escalating… demonstrations’ during the 1990s in Portadown and Drumcree, 2008, pp58-9 (see esp. n67, Pilkington criticism). Faster’s argument on north-south, differences is well made. However, they were afterwards managed by the Church’s ‘Hard Gospel’ project. See Meehan, 2010a. ‘Roy Foster (1949- )’, http://www.ricorso.net/tx/az-data/authors/f/Foster_RF/life.htm, accessed, 19 Mar 2015.
Jack White in 1975. While ‘growing anticlericalism among educated Catholics’ might be a reason for sending children to a Church of Ireland school,

    The real reason is simply social. Protestants are fewer in number so their schools are smaller. Protestants are mainly middle class, so they are not likely to infect their classmates with a ‘gutty’ accent. In a backhanded way, the Protestants had acquired a position of privilege; religious segregation gave them the right to class segregation within a state system. It is hardly surprising that some Catholics in the same bracket of affluence want to share the privilege of being a minority.\(^\text{108}\)

The residue of privileges that Protestants enjoyed attracted well-to-do Roman Catholics who thought that attending and helping fund a local Church of Ireland school secured also a ‘say in school management’.\(^\text{109}\) The Church of Ireland Select Vestry and Rector were sufficiently alarmed to repulse the intruders. The Catholics and disaffected Anglican parents then set up their own multi-denominational primary school. Was anyone becoming more Protestant? It was, in the end, a question of property and status, not of Protestantism or Popery. While the Dalkey controversy led to the small but significant multi-denominational Educate Together system of provision, it is unlikely to become the dominant form. A secular non-denominational system of provision will possibly only be developed by a state prepared to take full responsibility for its legal obligation to educate, as well as to care equally for, its citizens.

More importantly, in the context of the argument presented here, in Section Three, the ignoring of Protestant participation in important aspects of southern Irish social and economic life is part of an ideological pattern. It is a process replete with examples of absences in media reporting and in academic analysis. The ubiquity of the ‘Catholic nationalism’ thesis promoted by revisionist historiography largely explains this absence. The taboo against consideration of Protestant and Catholic differences, which affected Bill O’Herlihy’s observation that Badminton was once considered ‘Protestant’, is thus part of a larger phenomenon. It is part of a pattern obscuring both similarities and differences, in which the maintenance of comparative privilege during a process of largely secular modernisation masked also the reproduction of inequalities within and between two socially separated populations. As a consequence, those marginalised by discriminatory practices within Protestant communities were marginal also in the exposure of abuse within southern Ireland’s welfare and detention system.

    Overall, the concentration on Catholicism obscured that of class. Class tensions, within which religious differences played an important part, were smoothed over by, to paraphrase Bates, ‘muting [them] sufficiently’ to allow Irish society to function.\(^\text{110}\) Within this process of the maintenance of hegemony, many southern Irish intellectuals who thought they were challenging the establishment enabled it instead to persevere.

\(^{108}\) White, 1975, pp4, 143.


\(^{110}\) Bates, 1975, p351.
CHAPTER FOURTEEN Conclusion

This thesis has critiqued a view that the impetus for nationalist or republican activity and ideology in Irish history was a pursuit of Roman Catholic power or supremacy. It therefore challenged a central assertion of revisionist historiography that consistently has made that claim. The thesis reviewed a classic statement of that view, Peter Hart’s *The IRA and its Enemies*, and demonstrated its evidential inadequacy.

The privileging of notions of nationalist sectarianism by historians such as Roy Foster helped to create a climate favourable to an uncritical reception for Hart’s research in academia, in sections of media and in politics. The thesis traces the origin of a republican sectarianism thesis to its repetitive articulation by Conor Cruise O’Brien during the 1970s. It was accompanied by a robust system of broadcasting censorship, attempted press censorship and increasing repression that O’Brien perfected and supported.

The imperative for reimagining overriding features of Irish history was the outbreak of armed conflict in Northern Ireland after 1968. The research examined how, in order to distance the sectarianism of the northern state from southern consciousness, responsibility for sectarianism became inverted. The minority population, particularly working class and rural small farming areas from which the IRA drew most of its support, were portrayed as sectarian aggressors. Their alleged culpability in this regard was written backwards into Irish history. Nationalist anti-imperialism was re-cast in a manner that emphasised instead sectarian-based ethnic difference on an island wide basis. The project focused on allegedly sectarian elements within the fight for independence in 1919-21 and substituted their discovery for an anti-imperialist or anti-colonial narrative, while virtually ignoring actual sectarian attacks on Catholics in various parts of the emerging Northern Ireland state.

Southern nationalists, in particular the middle class, were encouraged to alienate themselves from their own history and, if they were in the teaching profession, to similarly condition their charges.¹ Reimagining Irish history enabled the Northern Ireland conflict to be contained or partitioned. This conceptual framework left significant sections of the intelligentsia bereft of a capacity to question inadequacies in Peter Hart’s research. It left them ill-equipped also to adequately conceptualise social controls aimed at poor and marginalised southern Irish Catholics and Protestants. Major revelations concerning clerical sexual abuse and the marginalisation of unmarried

¹ See Milne’s *New Approaches to the Teaching of Irish History*, 1979, discussed in chapters Four and Five.
mothers and their ‘illegitimate’ children came to be understood as Catholic issues that were integrated into the critique of Catholic nationalism.

The research here demonstrates the manner in which republican and anti-imperialist politics became convincingly portrayed as a sectarian endeavour. Former Irish President Mary McAleese’s commentary on her broadcasting colleagues, unable to objectively cover the story of the republican hunger strikers in 1980-81, is surely apt in this context. She noted that ‘RTÉ liberals were the most righteous self-styled bigots’. Gramsci has written eloquently on the interaction of force and consent in order to engineer the reproduction of capitalist hegemony within civil society and the state. The imposition of censorship in southern Ireland created a silence in which misinformation encouraged the consent or acquiescence of the mass of the population. It also encouraged from out of the ranks of one-time opponents, the emergence of able lieutenants in Conor Cruise O’Brien’s quest to extirpate republican influence from Irish society. Kevin Myers and Eoghan Harris’s subsequent further transformation, in newspapers that gave them ample space to set forth their views, into relentless champions of Peter Hart’s research was a logical consequence of acceptance of O’Brien’s perspective.

Media censorship and self-censorship of the type McAleese experienced encouraged an intellectual climate conducive to creating an anti-nationalist written history that migrated backwards from 1968 to the 1919-1921 Irish War of Independence, and then forwards again to re-frame understanding of events in Northern Ireland after 1968. This project was contested and took place in public. Thus the thesis argues that an ideological but never settled transition took place. Academics and theorists sought fault lines in southern Irish society in a sectarian nexus between Roman Catholicism and Irish nationalism. That approach has in turn promoted a perspective in which a nationalist revolt against sectarianism was characterised as in itself sectarian, or as tending towards sectarianism. Within this thought process, imagined rather than actual Protestant experience substituted in revisionist historical investigations of the War of Independence.

On the other hand, Protestant experience in southern Irish society was effectively unimaginable, whether in private industry or within the privatised care system. Protestant testimony was largely ignored because it did not suit a pre-existing agenda originally pursued by O’Brien, which required the unlearning and reimagining of Irish history. The largely anti-sectarian but somewhat naive character of Irish nationalism, and of Irish republicanism, was used against it. The elite, in transition between two modes of rule pre and post the 1960s, largely accepted O’Brien’s liberal authoritarian agenda that replaced the previous conservative authoritarian kind. It ascribed a

conservative and sectarian basis to Irish nationalism attractive to, and therefore that could divert, an emerging left-leaning liberal intelligentsia. It helped also to drive a wedge between northern and southern nationalists. Socio-economic inequality and capitalist hegemony in Ireland was thereby preserved. Revisionist explanations appeared plausible, academically, socially and politically. Ultimately, they are unsatisfactory and inadequate having regard to the complexity and totality of evidence outlined within these pages.

As demonstrated, the imperative for these ideological transformations was connected also to the southern Irish modernisation process. Left-wing currents within the southern intelligentsia were persuaded to transform a critique of Irish capitalism into a critique of Irish Catholicism. Criticism of republicanism for being too Catholic and of Catholicism for being too authoritarian, and also ideologically and socially dominant within in the southern Irish state, became interrelated. The incorporation of these ideas by the Workers’ Party and by the Irish Labour Party, basing themselves initially on a distortion of working class and republican anti-clericalism, helped to incorporate them into the modernisation project of the elite. It also steadily denuded them of working class and republican support as they adapted to the socio-economic imperatives of more affluent sectors of the population. They fused as agents of the idea that nationalism and sectarianism were conjoined at the political hip.

The formerly dominant capitalist party, Fianna Fáil (‘The Republican Party’), also increasingly abandoned nationalist political instincts within the working class, as it attempted to shut the Southern Ireland off from the subversive consequences of radicalised northern nationalism. Fianna Fáil attempted also to rely instead on reactionary social ideas, as when the party became the driving force behind the 1983 abortion referendum. Fianna Fáil has attempted latterly to sign up for liberal reform but was too late into an already crowded political market. This breaking up of traditional party support, exacerbated by economic crisis, has freed up large sections of the population seeking out left-wing republican representation. This prospect is currently of major concern to supporters of the southern status quo, who are eager to preserve a two capitalist (and an appendage) party system of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour.

As demonstrated in Section Three of the thesis, the process of collapsing Irish nationalism into Catholicism has distorted and marginalised the significant socio-economic position of southern Irish Protestants. They disappeared from view, emerging sometimes as footnotes within analyses of the Irish social structure. In fact, as I have demonstrated, affluent southern Protestants were central, alongside other sections of the elite, to the maintenance of a conservative and unequal society. Protestant institutions in education, welfare and detention were at least as significant as institutions for social
control of target populations, as were their Roman Catholic counterparts. They were also significant in industry and the professions in maintaining the material basis of sectarian separation and therefore inequality within southern Irish society. However, ironically, the fact that this process involved widespread largely uncontested discrimination against Roman Catholics (as outlined in Chapter Eleven) demonstrates conclusively, as no other example could, that anti-Protestantism was almost entirely absent from the political imperatives of ‘Catholic nationalist’ southern Irish society. The elite was interested in limiting in practice the anti-imperialist instincts of the majority inherited from the War of Independence. They invested in parallel Catholic and Protestant institutions in order to do so.

Finally, the academic conceit advanced by Roy Foster of Protestant Liberal and of Catholic Reactionary has distorted the impetus toward equality in Irish history and society. In Irish politics most Protestants were constrained by a heritage of privilege imposed by colonial and then imperial administration. The only force that could free that section of the population’s adherence to the perceived advantages of inequality was an anti-sectarian republicanism and, more latterly, a republican socialism.

The barriers to effecting change have been robust structures that gave sectarian inequality a material basis. The formation of the Northern Ireland state, designed to preserve and enhance sectarian privilege, based on the rhetoric and reality of anti-Catholicism, and the inability of the southern state to create equality in the provision of services in health, education and welfare, by relying instead on parallel private provision, helped to preserve capitalist hegemony on an island-wide basis.

Conor Cruise O’Brien was correct to observe in December 1968 that the apparently antagonistic rhetoric of rulers of both Irish states in fact upheld a mutually shared interest in the status quo. Within two years, not only did he stop saying it but, instead of subverting the inadequacies of the two societies he formerly opposed, he began to support them, largely by inverting what he said was wrong with them. The social and economic forces ranged against his largely middle-class personality forced changes in his outlook in support of the interests of those very forces.

In this manner, revision became instead reaction and played itself out in southern Irish society over an extended period.
Appendices
Section One Appendix - pages 357-370
----- Original Message -----  
From: Niall Meehan  
To: c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk  
Sent: Friday, January 04, 2008 5:44 PM  
Subject: Examiner  

Dear Professor Townshend,  

I would be very much obliged if you can confirm that you were the External Examiner for Peter Hart's 1993 PhD thesis, 'The IRA and its Enemies'? Also, if you can remember, was there any other examiner involved (internal or external)?  

With best wishes,  
Niall Meehan  

from Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>  
to Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>  
date 7 January 2008 10:19  
subject Re: Examiner  

Dear Mr Meehan  

I have never been asked to examine a history thesis in any Irish university. I have no idea who examined this one.  

------------------------  
Charles Townshend  

from Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>  
to Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>  
date 7 January 2008 13:08  
subject Re: Examiner  

Dear Professor Townshend,  
My apologies. I was misinformed.  
With best wishes,  
Niall Meehan  

from Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>  
to Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>  
date 10 April 2008 09:15  
subject Re: Examiner  

Dear Professor Townshend,  
My apologies for intruding on your time again.  
As far as I am aware, you were the examiner for Thomas Hennessy's PhD thesis at
Queens University Belfast in 1994. Does that information qualify your previous email [above]?
Niall Meehan

from Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>
to Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
date 10 April 2008 09:42
subject Re: Examiner

Well, I've also examined at UU - but both that and QUB are UK Universities. I suppose you were thinking geographically rather than politically.
------------------------
Charles Townshend
c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk

from Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
to Charles Townshend
< c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>
date 10 April 2008 10:28
subject Re: Examiner

Well, the UK consists of Great Britain and NI, so there is a smidgen of Ireland in there. Would there have been such a thing as an Irish university post 1801 and prior to 1920?

Thanks for the clarification, which I take to mean that you have never examined a thesis in any university in Ireland south QUB or UofU. Would that be accurate?

Regards,
NM

from Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>
to Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
date 10 April 2008 12:31
subject Re: Examiner

I should perhaps have said 'within the Irish University System' - and I did say 'history thesis', since I examined a law thesis in Trinity College many years ago (how long, you'll grasp from the fact that Mary Robinson was internal examiner). I suppose the fact that I have never been invited to examine a history thesis in the aforementioned system strikes me as odd, and this may have been why I made the point which was not really relevant to your original inquiry.

But what was the point of that inquiry?
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Charles Townshend
Dear Professor Townshend,

The letter I mentioned in our telephone conversation this morning is attached [*], as is a recent article mentioned in the letter (both in PDF format).

If you have any questions, you can get me at […].

Yours sincerely,
Niall Meehan

[* Content of attached letters:]

Page 1 of 4

Professor Charles Townshend
Professor of International History
Department of History
Keele University
April 18, 2008

Dear Professor Townshend,

In answer to your recent email about the point of my enquiry: let me explain why I originally wrote to you about the possibility of your being the external examiner of Peter Hart's doctoral thesis, The IRA and its Enemies (TCD, 1992). My apologies for not replying earlier. However, I wished first to clarify something that was puzzling.

I was interested in finding out whether other academics had queried Hart's use of interview materials. I wrote originally because a doctoral colleague of Hart's reported to me that, in conversation, Hart named you as his external examiner.

I thought I should confirm with you whether I had misinterpreted what you had originally reported to me, though it seemed pretty clear at the time. Hence, my emails to you last week, which you may have considered a little perplexing.

When you asked me the point of my enquiry last Friday, I felt that you had a right to a reply from me on the subject. However, I wished to be sure that the information I received from Trinity...
College Library, that they had received from Professor Fitzpatrick, was accurately conveyed to, and understood correctly by, me. I therefore asked the library to furnish me with a letter, which I received on Monday last. It stated:

Page 2 of 4

'Trinity College Library Dublin
The University of Dublin
14/04/08
Dear Mr Meehan,

In answer to your query, we have been informed by Professor David Fitzpatrick, thesis supervisor of the 1992 Trinity College Dublin Ph.D thesis, 'The IRA and Its Enemies: Violence and Community in Cork, 1916-1923', by Peter Hart, that the thesis was externally examined by Charles Townshend. Charles Townshend is therefore recorded as far we know as the external examiner of the above work.
Yours sincerely,
Martin Whelan
Information Services TCD.'

Obviously, Professor Fitzpatrick's memory on this point is faulty.

I am attempting to contact the examiner of the thesis for a specific reason. I am engaged in doctoral research, part of which consists of a comparative analysis of Peter Hart's thesis (1992) and book (1998) of the same name, The IRA and its Enemies. I am interested in Hart's use of anonymous interviewees. I have noticed anomalies as a result of the comparative study of his book and thesis, that builds on concerns expressed by Meda Ryan (2003, 2007), Brian P Murphy (2006) and John Borgonovo (2007). Ryan (2003) noted that an interviewee, claimed by Hart to have participated in the Kilmichael ambush of November 28 1920, gave Hart the benefit of his views six days after the last recorded veteran, aged 97, died. This interview was dated November 19, 1989 by Hart. The same interviewee was described as a veteran of the ambush in the 1992 work, whereas in 1998, in Hart's book, this veteran interviewee's role was qualified, in that he became described as an unarmed scout. In 1992, in the thesis, it was claimed that he gave Hart a tour of the ambush site. The information that he took Hart on a tour of the ambush site was not in the 1998 book.

Hart's use of what appear to be the real initials of his interviewees in his 1992 thesis has enabled me to name some interviewees (in the 1998 book they were AA, AB, AC, etc.). Hart's 1998 interviewee, AA, was EY or, I deduce, Edward (Ned) Young in 1992. Young was the last recorded surviving veteran of the Kilmichael ambush. He died on November 13 1989. Young was ill for some years before he died. Access to Ned Young was strictly supervised by his son, John. John Young denies that Hart had access to his father. CD in 1992 was, I believe, Dan Cahalane, a member of Tom Barry's flying column. 1992’s CD became AE in the 1998 book.

AE-CD, is swapped with AA-EY in one Kilmichael Ambush interview citation, in circumstances where no new interviews have been conducted during the 1992-1998 period with these individuals. AE-CD, though cited on the ambush, did not participate in it.

1998's AF was 1992's HJ, who Hart claimed to have interviewed on November 19 1989. As I pointed out in the attached recently published article, it is difficult to put a name on this AF-HJ individual, as he appears to have been interviewed after he died.

Also, in Hart's chapter on the killing of Protestant civilians in April 1922, IRA interviewees cited specifically in 1992 as confirming IRA involvement, were obscured in the 1998 book. Other intriguing information presented in 1992 is withdrawn from the 1998 work. Unfortunately, the
withdrawal of the information did not temper some of Hart's rather sweeping, though influential and extensively publicised, conclusions.

There are other anomalies, but I think this suffices for now.

I had hoped to ask the thesis examiner if there had been any discussion on the use of anonymous sources and whether their names were given in confidence to the examiner. That task still awaits completion.

My apologies if this comes as a shock to you. However, it is probably due to a mistaken recollection on the part of Peter Hart's then doctoral colleague and of his supervisor, Professor Fitzpatrick.

If your name is indeed officially recorded as that of the Examiner of the thesis in question and yet you played no such role then I am sure that you will want to correct the record. I am sure, also, that Professor Fitzpatrick will wish to check his records and to refresh his memory on the subject.

I intend to send the letter below to Professor Ciaran Brady, Head of the Department of Modern History in Trinity College Dublin.

Yours sincerely,
Niall Meehan,

Works referenced:
John Borgonovo (2007), Spies, Informers and the 'Anti-Sinn Fein Society'.
Meda Ryan (2003), Tom Barry, IRA Freedom Fighter.

Copy letter to Professor Ciaran Brady
Head of Department of Modern History

Professor Ciaran Brady
Head of Department of Modern History
Trinity College Dublin, Dublin 1

April 18, 2008

c.c. Professor Charles Townshend, Keele University
The Provost, Trinity College Dublin

Dear Professor Brady,

I have been engaged in a comparative study of the 1992 PhD thesis (TCD) and 1998 book (OUP) of the same name, The IRA and its Enemies, by Peter Hart.

While I have encountered anomalies, some of which are already in the public domain, which I consider to be serious, and which may be explained in the course of publication and response, there is one I think you may be able to resolve before I publish my work. I asked TCD Library for the name of the External Examiner of Peter Hart's 1992 thesis. I was informed that the examiner was Professor Charles Townshend. I was very surprised
to hear this information, as I had already heard directly from Professor Townshend by email that he was not the examiner, and furthermore, from him, that he has never been asked to examine a history thesis within the Irish university system.

In a letter to me dated April 14 2008, Trinity College Library state that the information they received, naming Professor Townshend as the thesis examiner, came from Professor David Fitzpatrick, Peter Hart's thesis supervisor.

I would be obliged if this matter could be resolved and the name of the external examiner confirmed to me as soon as possible. I expect that Professor Townshend, who I have informed of this mistake, will wish you to remove his name from any record Trinity College may have in association with Peter Hart's thesis. Professor Fitzpatrick may wish to check his records and to refresh his memory on the subject.

Yours sincerely,
Niall Meehan

On 18/04/2008, Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk> wrote:

I'm even more puzzled by this now. It's possible that I have had a catastrophic memory lapse, but PhD vivas are the kind of thing one never usually forgets. My own recollection is that the first I saw of the Hart thesis was when OUP asked me to advise about publication. It's surprising that, in his Acknowledgements, amongst the barrage of names of those who helped him (mine included), he does not thank his examiners. Two further inquiries you might make: who was the internal examiner? and is there any record of TCD paying me a fee?

-------------------------
Charles Townshend

-------- Forwarded message --------
From: Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
Date: 18 April 2008 12:27
Subject: Re: Letter from Niall Meehan to Professor Charles Townshend (2 x PDFs attached)
To: Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>

More than puzzling? I thought so when I was told. But I was also told that it happens occasionally if a student is from overseas and has gone home, in Hart's case to Newfoundland. A colleague of Hart's told me that things are more rigorous on the Continent, but not in Trinity, which he said was more "masonic" (whatever that means).

----- Original Message -----
From: Niall Meehan
To: Charles Townshend
Sent: Friday, April 18, 2008 11:12 AM
Subject: Re: Letter from Niall Meehan to Professor Charles Townshend (2 x PDFs attached)

It may be that a catastrophic memory lapse has been suffered, but not, necessarily, by you. On the point of the viva, apparently, there was none.
NM
On 18/04/2008, Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk> wrote:

No viva? - now that really is more than puzzling.

Charles Townshend

2008/4/23 Ciaran Brady <cbrady@tcd.ie>

Dear Mr Meehan,

Many thanks for your mail of 18th April.

I have made a thorough investigation of the matter in the files of the Graduate Studies Office and the office of the College Secretary. On this basis I can now confirm that according to our official records the external examiner was indeed the one already reported to you.

Sincerely,
Ciaran Brady

Date: 24 April 2008 09:49
subject: Ph.D thesis - one more question

(I wish to add one more question, d), below, to those submitted yesterday [not included here]. NM)

Dear Professor Brady,

Thank you for your email of earlier today and for the clarity of your reply. Professor Townshend is aware of your reply as I thought I should sent it to him.

As you can appreciate, the situation is very odd. You have a record of an examinership for the highest distinction a university can award a student. But the external examiner in question denies in the clearest possible terms that he took part in the process leading to that distinction. When I set out to discover the identity of the examiner, it was merely in order to enquire into discussion of guidelines, if any, with regard to the use of anonymous informants in the PhD thesis in question. But this, as they say, is a whole different ball game. I am thinking seriously of raising this matter outside of academia, as we appear to be at a point where further discussion is superfluous, or so it appears to me presently. Am I missing something?

However, if it is possible, I wonder if I might be informed of the following:

a) Do you have a signature on a document from Professor Fitzpatrick, confirming Professor Townshend as the external examiner. Pointedly, who confirmed Professor Townshend as the examiner, according to your records;
b) Is a copy of the examiner's report extant, does it bear any names and/or signature(s), if so, whose?;
c) Is there a record of a fee being paid to Professor Townshend?
d) Do the records disclose the exact date of the examination?. If so what was it?

If it is not possible for you to provide answers these questions I would be obliged if you
might let me know at your earliest convenience. If it is possible to answer them I would appreciate a time frame within which the questions might be answered.

Thank you again for your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan

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From: Niall Meehan  
To: Charles Townshend  
Sent: Tuesday, May 06, 2008 11:28 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Peter Hart thesis examination

For information.
Have you heard anything?
NM

Charles Townshend  c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk  08/05/2008

It appears that Trinity cannot retrieve the records of the examination. Not a very satisfactory situation, I think. I still can't find out the date of the examination, or the name of my supposed co-examiner. Apparently, however, David Fitzpatrick has a copy of my report, which he will fax to me next week. The possibility remains that I have had an extraordinary memory lapse; we shall see.

------------------------

Charles Townshend

from Ciaran Brady <cbrady@tcd.ie>  
to Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>  
date 16 May 2008 15:19  
subject external examiner

Dear Niall,

I can now confirm that the external examiner's report has been located and has been sent to Prof Townshend.

The internal examiner for the thesis was, as was the practice at that time, the former supervisor, Prof Fitzpatrick.

Thanks for the recent mail.

I hope this is of help.

Ciaran
From: "Niall Meehan" <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
To: "Charles Townshend" <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>
Sent: Friday, May 16, 2008 4:40 PM
Subject: Fwd: external examiner

> Dear Professor Townshend,
> Have you received something from Trinity, as per Brady email to me
> [above]? If so, what do you make of it?
> Regards,
> Niall

---

Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>
Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
19 May 2008 09:10
Re: external examiner

It turns out that I have indeed had a memory lapse on this - I did agree to act as External examiner in 1992. I think the unusual fact that there were no meetings involved (I was in the USA, the internal examiner was in Australia, the candidate I think in Canada) might be the explanation for my faulty belief that I had never examined a history thesis in an Irish university. (As for the fee, it turns out that they sent the cheque to my American address after I had returned to the UK, so I never received it.) I have kept the MSS of all the theses I have examined, but not, for some reason, this one.

I must apologise for giving you a misleading response to your original inquiry, which has has led you to a great deal of unnecessary trouble in getting it answered.

------------------------

> Charles Townshend

> From: "Niall Meehan" <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
> To: "Charles Townshend" <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>
> Sent: Monday, May 19, 2008 9:11 AM
> Subject: Telephone call?

>> Dear Professor Townshend,
>> Would it be convenient for me to ring you at some point this morning?
>> Regards,
>> Niall Meehan

2008/5/19 Charles Townshend <c.j.n.townshend@his.keele.ac.uk>:

> No, I'm afraid I've got two meetings this morning and papers to read for them.
> ___________________________
> Charles Townshend
November 11, 2008

Dear Professor Brady,

I have put the attached letters in the post today for the attention of Professor Fitzpatrick and Professor Townshend, internal supervisor/examiner and external examiner, respectively, of Peter Hart’s PhD thesis, *The Irish Republican Army and its Enemies*.

If you have any contribution you would like to make on the questions put, I would be very grateful to receive them. In particular, can you please tell me whether the Department now has procedures for handling anonymous sources for doctoral or masters theses? And if so, what are they? I ask in the light of commentary on Peter Hart’s research, as summarised in my essay in the enclosed pamphlet, *Troubled History, a 10th anniversary critique of Peter Hart’s The IRA and its Enemies* (Aubane, 2008).

I would also be interested to know if you believe there are lessons to be learned from this episode.

My email address is below, should you prefer to reply by that method.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan
72 Offaly Road
Cabra
Dublin 7
Meehan@ireland.com
Professor David Fitzpatrick,
History Department,
Trinity College Dublin
Dublin 2

Professor Charles Townshend
History
Keele University
Staffordshire ST5 5BG
England

November 11, 2008

Dear Professor Fitzpatrick and Professor Townshend,

As Professor Townshend knows I have been conducting a study of Peter Hart's *The IRA and its Enemies* (OUP, 1998), as part of a wider analysis of recent trends in Irish historiography. I have published some of my research in a pamphlet, that also contains an essay by Brian P Murphy, entitled, *Troubled History, a 10th anniversary Critique of The IRA and its Enemies* (Aubane, 2008), copy enclosed.

I am particularly interested in the use of anonymous interviewees by Professor Hart. I write to you as the internal supervisor and examiner, and the external examiner, respectively, of the work in question when it was submitted for a PhD in Trinity College Dublin in 1992. I would be very pleased if you could answer these questions - I realise that it is sixteen years on so I do not expect perfect recall. Some of the questions ask for the benefit of your observations in the light of experience. I would be most appreciative if you might consider answering these questions also.

a) Do you know at what point in Peter Hart's research it decided to make all republican veteran interviewees anonymous? And what was the reason? I would be obliged if you could recall any discussion or concerns you might have had on this point, or if there was consultation with colleagues.

b) Have any other Irish historians systematically anonymised War of Independence IRA veterans? Please advise if you know of examples.

c) Were you at any point given in confidence, or did you ask for, the names of the anonymous interviewees? Are they deposited in the TCD library under an embargo? I know that some universities embargo anonymous sources so they can be checked by subsequent generations of researchers.

d) Have you any comment you would like to make on the problematic status of the veteran Kilmichael interviewees, HJ (1992)/AF (1998) and EY (1992)/AA (1998) - these details are summarised in my essay in *Troubled History*.

e) May I ask what would you have done differently as examiners, had you been made aware of the problems indicated, when supervising or examining Peter Hart's dissertation?

f) In your opinion, has Professor Hart an obligation to you to answer the questions posed by critics, and have you any responsibility at this stage in asking him to provide...
precise answers – given that possibly problematic aspects of the research were present at PhD stage and for the most part reproduced, in some cases reinforced, in the subsequent book?

g) In the light of public criticism of Professor Hart's book, what advice would you give a PhD student intending to interview anonymously today. What would you do differently, if anything?

h) Finally, a general question, do you think extraneous factors may have played a role in creating expectations or pressures with regard to the framing of Peter Hart’s research methodology and/or his conclusions? Your views, if any, on this point would be of interest.

I would be very much obliged if you could indicate if you are in a position, either independently or jointly, to answer any or all of these questions. My email address is below, should you prefer to reply by that method.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan
72 Offaly Road
Cabra
Dublin 7
Meehan@ireland.com
Dear Mr Meehan,

Thank you for sending me your tract on Peter Hart’s work, and Brian Murphy’s piece. I shall read them with interest. I hope that, on reflection, you will understand that, as supervisor and examiner, I cannot make any response to your queries. To do so would involve a gross breach of confidentiality.

Sincerely yours,

David Fitzpatrick
Professor David Fitzpatrick  
Department of Modern History  
Trinity College Dublin  
Dublin 2

February 9, 2009

Dear Professor Fitzpatrick,

Thank you for your letter of 17 November 2008. I took some time in replying to the point you put to me in that letter, in order to give you the opportunity to consider the contents of Troubled History.

I have reflected, as you suggested, on the questions addressed to you and to Professor Townshend, as internal and external examiners of Peter Hart's PhD thesis. I consider that question a) could be construed as breaking academic confidence. However, answers to questions b) through h) do not require a breach of confidentiality. Question c), which asks if you were given, or if you required, the names of the anonymous interviewees, comes closest. Since I do not ask you to name them, however, I don't believe it to be a question of confidentiality. In relation to question e), which asks if you would have done things differently had you been aware of problems that emerged subsequently, an answer to question g) will suffice in its stead.

I hope that this reply answers your concerns

I attach the questions again and ask whether on reflection, in the context of the material in the Troubled History, and of the above, you may have changed your mind.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
Date: 2009/5/11
Subject: Observation in 'The Two Irelands'
To: david.fitzpatrick@tcd.ie

Dear Professor Fitzpatrick,

In 1998, in 'The Two Irelands' (Opus, p. 95), you wrote,

‘Adulterers, homosexuals, tinkers, beggars, ex-servicemen, Protestants: these were the many dangerous and potentially dangerous lethal labels for Ireland’s inhabitants in the revolutionary period’.
Section Three Appendices – pages 371-454
## Bethany Home Children

### Interments in Mount Jerome Cemetery Harold’s Cross Dublin

SB = stillborn, NC = No cause indicated, Heart F = Heart Failure, B = burial date

Children usually buried day following death, except where otherwise stated in remarks

Compiled by Niall Meehan, Griffith College Dublin, 29 Jun – 6 July 2010 (corrected 16 April 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Died – Date</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Cemetery Plot</th>
<th>Attestant Sig, Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knight, Stillborn male of Sarah</td>
<td>16 Sep 22</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A8 253</td>
<td>Wm E Farlick, c/o I. C. Nicholls, Lombard Ct, Dublin. B 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payne, Rita Evelyn</td>
<td>22 Dec 22</td>
<td>2 mts</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A6 254</td>
<td>Lydia M Griffin (Matron), Bethany Home, 23 Blackhall pl, Dublin</td>
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**1922 12 month total:** 2

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<tr>
<td>Knott, Frederick</td>
<td>15 Jul 23</td>
<td>6 mts</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A778 254</td>
<td>Lydia M Griffin, Matron, etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nelson, Stillborn female of Maria (DG. Mann)</td>
<td>35 Jul 23</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A [missing]</td>
<td>B same day</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCutcheon, Sylvia</td>
<td>39 Jul 23</td>
<td>5 mts</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>B 10A79 254</td>
<td>Lydia M Griffin, Matron, etc. B 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason, William</td>
<td>6 Nov 23</td>
<td>10 mts</td>
<td>Cardiac F</td>
<td>A1 256</td>
<td>Lydia M Griffin, Matron, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digan, Henry</td>
<td>9 Nov 23</td>
<td>3 mts</td>
<td>Convulsions, Marasmus</td>
<td>A10 256</td>
<td>Mrs Ely L Digan, Bethany Home, Blackhall Place, Mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holt, Violet</td>
<td>11 Nov 23</td>
<td>5 wks</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A10 256</td>
<td>B 14</td>
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**1923 12 month total:** 6

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<tr>
<td>Rountree, Norah,</td>
<td>21 Jan 24</td>
<td>14 mts</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A3 257</td>
<td>Grant In Perp 16640. Miss Mary Jane Rountree, Bailboro, Co Cavan, Mother. B 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birney, Patricia</td>
<td>12 Aug 24</td>
<td>4½ mts</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A1 260</td>
<td>Charlotte E[?], Bethany Home, etc, friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McWilliams, George</td>
<td>14 Aug 24</td>
<td>4 mts</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>A1 260</td>
<td>Georga McWilliams, Dumore, Durrow, Mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Owens, Ronald</td>
<td>1 Sep 24</td>
<td>4 mts</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A15 260</td>
<td>Charlotte E Luther, Bethany Home, assistant. B 3</td>
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**1924 12 month total:** 4

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<tr>
<td>BUNOUGHS, Douglas</td>
<td>7 Mar 25</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A61 260</td>
<td>B 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robinson, Rebecca</td>
<td>13 Mar 25</td>
<td>6 wks</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>A66 260</td>
<td>B 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitzpatrick, John</td>
<td>29 Mar 25</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Miningitis</td>
<td>A94 420</td>
<td>25 Blackhall Street, T Fitzpatrick, (Father)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victory, Stillborn male of Anna</td>
<td>19 Apr 25</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A48 306</td>
<td>B 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McBride, Olive</td>
<td>16 May 25</td>
<td>19 mts</td>
<td>German Measles</td>
<td>A19 261</td>
<td>B 19</td>
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<td>HEFERNAN, Charles</td>
<td>17 May 25</td>
<td>18 mts</td>
<td>German Measles</td>
<td>A19 261</td>
<td>B 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEKES, William</td>
<td>23 May 25</td>
<td>1½ yrs</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A19 261</td>
<td>B 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathstone, Herbert</td>
<td>20 May 25</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Scarlatina</td>
<td>A19 261</td>
<td>NB – 6 days. B 26</td>
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**1925 12 month total:** 9

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<tr>
<td>Pollard, Eleanor</td>
<td>10 Jan 26</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A86 261</td>
<td>21 Blackhall Place. Agnes Turner, 7 Pembroke Cottages, Dundrum. B 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass, Patricia</td>
<td>15 Feb 26</td>
<td>4 mts</td>
<td>General Debility</td>
<td>A13 326</td>
<td>B 16</td>
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<td>Allen, Eleanor</td>
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<td>5 wks</td>
<td>General Debility</td>
<td>A13 326</td>
<td>B 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>McKEOGH, Mary</td>
<td>19 Apr 26</td>
<td>3½ mts</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A20 263</td>
<td>B 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bingham, Nannie</td>
<td>23 May 26</td>
<td>10 mts</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>A26 263</td>
<td>B 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waugh, Mabel</td>
<td>2 Oct 26</td>
<td>5 mts</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A13 264</td>
<td>B 5</td>
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<td>Dixon, Evelyn</td>
<td>3 Oct 26</td>
<td>6 wks</td>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>A13 264</td>
<td>B 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walker, Violet</td>
<td>6 Oct 26</td>
<td>5 mts</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A11 264</td>
<td>B 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addison, Stillborn female of Julia</td>
<td>4 Dec 26</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A40 264</td>
<td>B 6</td>
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**1926 12 month total:** 10
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<tr>
<td>Grattan, Mary Patricia</td>
<td>4 Feb 27</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
<td>Scarletina</td>
<td>A71 264</td>
<td>B 7</td>
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<td>Conway (male of Bridie)</td>
<td>15 Feb 27</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A76 309</td>
<td>B 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Griffith, Lucy</td>
<td>12 Mar 27</td>
<td>3 mths</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A26 265</td>
<td>B 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll, Stillborn female of Mary Josephine</td>
<td>17 Apr 27</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A11 267</td>
<td>B 19 Reel 910614, end 17 May 1927.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russell (stillborn of Margaret)</td>
<td>29 Oct 27</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A32 268</td>
<td>B 31</td>
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**1927 12 month total:** 5

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<th>Cause</th>
<th>Cemetery Plot</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lambert (male twin)</td>
<td>7 Jan 28</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A44 298</td>
<td>B 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambert Sarah Jane (twin)</td>
<td>7 Jan 28</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A44 298</td>
<td>B 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healy, William</td>
<td>14 Mar 28</td>
<td>1 mth</td>
<td>Gastritis</td>
<td>A20 295</td>
<td>B 16 Annie Healy, 23 Blackhall Pl, Mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kennington, David</td>
<td>22 Aug 28</td>
<td>4 mths</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A63 296</td>
<td>B 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>COBIE, Edward</td>
<td>1 Sep 28</td>
<td>3 wks</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A63 296</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkins, Ruth</td>
<td>1 Oct 28</td>
<td>3 mths</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A62 296</td>
<td></td>
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**1928 12 month total:** 6

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<td>Warren, Annie</td>
<td>3 Jan 29</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A69 291</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hynes, Cecil</td>
<td>28 Feb 29</td>
<td>5 mths</td>
<td>Bronchitis</td>
<td>A37 290</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott, Herbert</td>
<td>12 Mar 29</td>
<td>1½ mths</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A43 290</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dempsey, Michael</td>
<td>20 Mar 29</td>
<td>17 days</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A43 290</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly, Violet</td>
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<td>5½ mths</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A43 290</td>
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<td>Middleton, Sedgewick, Frederick</td>
<td>25 Mar 29</td>
<td>7 wks</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A43 290</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hogan, Charles</td>
<td>3 Apr 29</td>
<td>5 mths</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A67 290</td>
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<td>Myler, Marion</td>
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<td>3 mths</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A66 290</td>
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<td>Behan, Michael</td>
<td>14 Apr 29</td>
<td>9 wks</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A66 290</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryan, Gordon</td>
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<td>Bronchitis</td>
<td>A46 289</td>
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**1929 12 month total:** 10

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<th>Cause</th>
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<th>Attestant Sig. Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Miller, John</td>
<td>8 Aug 30</td>
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<td>Sweeney, Rhoda</td>
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<td>Wall, Alexander</td>
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<td>Convulsions</td>
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<td>FERRESSON, Stewart</td>
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<td>Hynes, Violet</td>
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<td>4 mths</td>
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**1930 12 month total:** 6

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stenson, John</td>
<td>8 Mar 32</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
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<td>B 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>KINGSTON, Philip</td>
<td>16 Jul 32</td>
<td>3 wks</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gilbert, Arthur</td>
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**1932 12 month total:** 3

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<tr>
<td>Moffatt, Peter</td>
<td>24 Mar 33</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thompson (Infant)</td>
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<td>A99 278</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collins [illegible]</td>
<td>14 Oct 33</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>A48 277</td>
<td>B 7</td>
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<td>Kearney (&quot;Infant male of [?]&quot;)</td>
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<td>Smith, James</td>
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**1933 12 month total:** 5

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<tr>
<td>Flanagan, David</td>
<td>1 Feb 34</td>
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<td>McCaffrey, Trevor</td>
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<td>Pneumonia</td>
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<td>Eakins, Evelyn</td>
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<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A46 276</td>
<td>B same day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hargrove, Joseph</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donnelly Evelyn</td>
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**1934 12 month total:** 5
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<td>Graham, Isabella</td>
<td>15 Mar 35</td>
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<td>NC</td>
<td>A104 276</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nathan (female)</td>
<td>22 Apr 35</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A96 276</td>
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<td>McKenna, Lily</td>
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<td>5 wks</td>
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<td>A104 276</td>
<td>Death Reg, Dub Sth, Vol 2, p 335</td>
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<td>Hannon, William</td>
<td>20 Jun 35</td>
<td>3 mts</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A19 275</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webster, Samuel George</td>
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<td>A19 275</td>
<td>Death Reg, Dub Sth, Vol 2, p 296</td>
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<td>Vinamond, Norman</td>
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<td>Heart F</td>
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<td>Armstrong, William</td>
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<td>A55 275</td>
<td>Death Reg, Dub Sth, Vol 2, p 301</td>
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<td>Jones, Derek</td>
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<td>A55 275</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’Neill, Joseph</td>
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<td>9 mts</td>
<td>Meningitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott, Mary</td>
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<td>A64 275</td>
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<td>A63 275</td>
<td>Death Reg, Dub Sth, Vol 2, p 324</td>
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<td>A63 275</td>
<td>Death Reg, Dub Sth, Vol 2, p 324</td>
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<td>Cummins, Elizabeth</td>
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<td>A63 275</td>
<td>Reel 910616 end 4 Nov 36</td>
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<td>Hendy, Reginald</td>
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<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A64 275</td>
<td>B 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>McKnight Margaret</td>
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<td>3 mts</td>
<td>Stomach Trble</td>
<td>A50 275</td>
<td>“Emmanuel Home, Beth Home”</td>
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<td>Parker, Helen</td>
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<td>Stomach Trble</td>
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<td>MacMillan, Ernest</td>
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<td>Maguire Patrick</td>
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<td>6 mts</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A50 275</td>
<td>Added by Mount Jerome</td>
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1935 nine month total: 19

| Gill, Noel            | 17 Jan 36   | SB  | SB            | A95 275       | “(stillborn)”? + “Prem Birth” |
| Gantley, Michael      | 26 Feb 36   | 5 mts | NC           | A3 274        |                       |
| Tracy, George Albert  | 9 Mar 36    | 4 mts | NC           | A44 304       |                       |
| Meridith, Ethel       | 13 Apr 36   | 4½ mts | NC          | A25 398       |                       |
| Kennedy, Mary         | 15 Apr 36   | 3 mts | Bronchitis   | A25 398       | B 17                  |
| Morrow Robert         | 16 Apr 36   | 3½ mts | Pneumonia   | A25 398       |                       |
| Fraser, Ian           | 26 Apr 36   | 2 Yrs | Delicacy     | A25 398       | B 28                  |
| Williamson, Perl      | 1 May 36    | 2 mts | Marasmus     | A25 398       |                       |
| Williams, Herbert     | 14 May 36   | 3 mts | NC           | A94 604       | B same day            |
| Sargent, Charles      | 16 May 36   | 2 mts | Convulsions  | A28 274       | B same day            |
| Knox, Michael         | 21 May 36   | 9½ mts | Cardiac failure | A28 274   | B same day            |
| Kearney, Patrick      | 26 May 36   | 3 mts | Cardiac failure | A28 274   |                        |
| Killeen, James        | 6 Jun 36    | 6½ mts | NC          | A33 274       |                       |
| Gardiner INFANT       | 18 Jun 36   | S/B  | NC           | A90 604       |                       |
| Spence, June          | 10 Aug 36   | 6½ wks | Marasmus    | A50 274       | B same day            |
| Abraham, Samuel       | 4 Sep 36    | 7 wks | Heart F      | A59 274       | B same day            |
| Graham, Sybil         | 6 Sep 36    | 1 Yr | Heart F      | A58 274       |                       |
| McKILLOP, James       | 14 Sep 36   | 3 mts | Heart F      | A53 274       | Twin of John, below. B same day |
| Brodie, David         | 17 Sep 36   | 1 mt | Heart F      | A63 274       |                       |
| McKILLOP, John        | 20 Sep 36   | 3½ mts | Heart F    | A63 274       | Twin of James, above  |
| TAAFFE, Eugene        | 19 Sep 36   | 2 mts | Premature    | A63 274       |                       |
| Exley, DOMINICK       | 21 Sep 36   | 6 wks | Convulsions  | A63 274       |                       |
| Smith, Audrey         | 10 Oct 36   | 2 mts | Heart F      | A49 274       |                       |
| Gettings, Hilda       | 14 Oct 36   | 4½ mts | Heart F    | A49 274       |                       |
| Feeney, John          | 21 Oct 36   | 7 wks | Convulsions  | A67 274       |                       |
| ELLIOFT, Dorothy      | 20 Nov 36   | 6 mts | Marasmus     | A78 274       | B same day            |
| Lewis MALE INFANT     | 24 Nov 36   | 10 days | Premature  | A78 274       |                       |
| Smith MALE INFANT     | 14 Dec 36   | SB  | SB           | A78 274       |                       |

1936 12 month total: 29
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<th>Cause</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ayers</td>
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<td>8 mts</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A79 274</td>
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<td>Kilgadder, Alice</td>
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<td>Convulsions</td>
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<td>Winslow, Norman</td>
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<td>McGowan, Rebecca</td>
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<td>Davenport, Isabella</td>
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<td>Channey, Albert</td>
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**1937 12 month total:** 14

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<td>Hurley, Lillian</td>
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<td>Shortt, Peter</td>
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<td>Neill, Stuart</td>
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<td>Moran, Ann</td>
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<td>Manning, Mary, Kathleen</td>
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<tr>
<td>McGowan, Ann</td>
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<td>Heart F</td>
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<td>O’Leary, Raymond</td>
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<td>Cooper Margaret</td>
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**1938 12 month total:** 17

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<td>Whooping Cough</td>
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<td>Scanlon (male)</td>
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<td>SB</td>
<td>A2 397</td>
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<td>Cullen, Paul</td>
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<td>Cerebral Haemorrhage</td>
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<td>Kavanagh, Anna</td>
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<td>Kavanagh, Philip</td>
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<td>Whooping Cough</td>
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<td>Farrelly, Marjorie</td>
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<td>Convulsions</td>
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<td>Ainslie</td>
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<td>3 hr</td>
<td>Premature</td>
<td>A84 398</td>
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<td>Taylor, Elizabeth, Margaret</td>
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<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A77 398</td>
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<td>EAGER, George</td>
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**1939 12 month total:** 9

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<td>SB</td>
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<td>A12 315</td>
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<td>McDonald, Mary, Kathleen</td>
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<td>A19 314</td>
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**1940 12 month total:** 2

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<th>Cause</th>
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<tr>
<td>Butler, JOHN</td>
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<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A21 314</td>
<td>B 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARHEW, Eric</td>
<td>30 Mar 41</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A15 313</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Roche, Dorothy</td>
<td>12 Jun 41</td>
<td>3 mts</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A35 313</td>
<td>B 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARTER (infant of Esther)</td>
<td>20 Jul 41</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>A49 313</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carty, Lilian</td>
<td>3 Aug 41</td>
<td>2½ mts</td>
<td>Heart F</td>
<td>A49 313</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lechy, John</td>
<td>17 Aug 41</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>Premature</td>
<td>A58 313</td>
<td>B 5</td>
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<td>Carroll, Muriel</td>
<td>18 Aug 41</td>
<td>6 wks</td>
<td>Meningitis</td>
<td>A58 313</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carroll, James</td>
<td>5 Oct 41</td>
<td>½ days</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A48 313</td>
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<td>LUCAS</td>
<td>12 Nov 41</td>
<td>SB</td>
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**1941 12 month total:** 9
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kerris Kathleen</td>
<td>16 Jan 42</td>
<td>5 mts</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A65 313</td>
<td>B 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farran, Agnes</td>
<td>16 Mar 42</td>
<td>6 wks</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A37 321</td>
<td>B 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith, Noel Edward</td>
<td>23 Mar 42</td>
<td>3½ mts</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A37 324</td>
<td>B 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newland, Rosa Bella</td>
<td>7 Apr 42</td>
<td>8½ mts</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A37 324</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whittle, Phyllis</td>
<td>27 Jul 42</td>
<td>2 mts</td>
<td>Heart Failure</td>
<td>A11 323</td>
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<tr>
<td>Murphy, Elizabeth</td>
<td>28 Aug 42</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Convulsions</td>
<td>A15 323</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hendy, Margaret</td>
<td>25 Sep 42</td>
<td>2 mts</td>
<td>Infantile Paralyses</td>
<td>A33 323</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preston, James</td>
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<td>6 wks</td>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>A15 323</td>
<td>B 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armstrong, Daphne</td>
<td>14 Nov 42</td>
<td>6 days</td>
<td>Congenital Heart Disease</td>
<td>A41 323</td>
<td>B 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knight, Louisa</td>
<td>16 Nov 42</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
<td>Premature</td>
<td>A41 323</td>
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1942 12 month total: 10

Abercrombie, Edna          | 21 Jan 43  | 6 hrs | Marasmus                | A62 323       |                        |
Jennings, Edwin            | 17 Feb 43  | 2½ mts | Bronchial Pneumonia    | A73 323       | B same day             |
Knight, Noel               | 23 Feb 43  | 3½ mts | Marasmus                | A63 323       | B 25                   |
Franklin, Elizabeth        | 15 Apr 43  | 1 wk  | Marasmus                | A7 322        | End reel May 43, B 17  |
Macbeth, Franklin          | 11 May 43  | 2 mts | Convulsions             | A7 322        | Beginning reel 1943-46, B 13 |
Upton, Annie               | 6 Jun 43   | 15 days | Convulsions           | A7 322        |                        |
Overton, Valerie           | 21 Jun 43  | 11 wks | Convulsions             | A12 322       |                        |
Symes [Syns?], Isabel      | 31 Oct 43  | 7 mts | Gastro Enteritis        | A44 322       |                        |
Eyre, Patricia Iris        | 20 Nov 43  | 3 mts | Cardiac Failure         | A50 322       | B 23                   |

1943 12 month total: 9

Minnock, Ronald            | 20 Jan 44  | 6 mts | Convulsions             | A65 322       |                        |
Burnett, Eileen            | 3 Feb 44   | 4 mts | Paralysis               | A6 321        | B 5                    |
O’Malleys, Henry           | 4 Feb 44   | 4 mts | Convulsions             | A6 321        |                        |
Donaldson, Mary            | 4 Feb 44   | 19 days | Marasmus               | A6 321        |                        |
Hunt, Rhona                | 7 Feb 44   | 2 mts | Convulsions             | A7 321        |                        |
Grey, Kevin                | 8 Feb 44   | 2 mts | General Debility        | A7 321        | B 11                   |
Flynn, Rose Mary           | 10 Feb 44  | 6wks  | Heart Failure           | A7 321        |                        |
Cully, James               | 20 Feb 44  | 5 wks | Meningitis              | A10 321       | B 22                   |
Wynne, Desmond             | 27 Feb 44  | 3 mts | Marasmus                | A12 321       | B 1                    |
Finlay                     | 12 Mar 44  | SB    | SB                      | A12 321       | B 14                   |
Cunningham, John           | 25 Mar 44  | 4 wks | Marasmus                | A12 321       | B 28                   |
Crampton, Derek            | 4 Apr 44   | 1 wk  | Marasmus                | A21 321       | B 6                    |
Norris, Marjorie           | 31 May 44  | 2 wks | Septicemia              | A37 321       |                        |
Hunter, Mervyn             | 6 Aug 44   | 3 wks | Gastritis               | A32 321       |                        |
Patterson, John            | 27 Aug 44  | 4 wks | Convulsions             | A33 321       | B 29                   |
Furney, Herbert            | 24 Dec 44  | 6 wks | Convulsions             | A77 321       | B 28                   |

1944 12 month total: 16

Linton, Stephen            | 22 Jan 45  | 1 wk  | Debility                | A49 321       | B 24                   |
Lang, Jean                 | 22 Jun 45  | 6 mts | Convulsions             | A35 320       |                        |
Gibson, George             | 11 Oct 45  | 5 wks | Marasmus                | A59 320       |                        |
McGovern, Ronnie           | 25 Nov 45  | 6 wks | Marasmus                | A61 320       |                        |

1945 12 month total: 4

Martin, Cecil              | 26 Jan 46  | 3 mts | Marasmus                | A37 337       | B 29                   |
Bough, Denis                | 28 Jan 46  | 4 wks | Congenital Syphilis     | A37 331       | B 30                   |
Eager, Josephine           | 4 Feb 46   | 3 wks | Septicemia              | A47 331       | B 6                    |
Flower, Charles            | 13 Feb 46  | 1 wk  | Gland Disease           | A71 500       | B 15                   |
Gunning, David              | 30 Dec 46  | 6 wks | Convulsions             | A38 498       |                        |

1946 12 month total: 5

Hayes, Muriel              | 24 Jan 47  | 5 wks | Pneumonia               | A7 584        | B 19                   |
Hanna Kathleen             | 16 Feb 47  | 10 wks | Marasmus                | A31 329       | Check sp. B 3           |
Gerty, Muriel              | 1 Mar 47   | 4 wks | Heart F                 | A43 329       |                        |
Greer, (SB female of John) | 2 Aug 47   | SB    | SB                      | A80 329       | “S/born female of John” |
Stevenson, Robert          | 21 Aug 47  | 12 days | Heart F               | A6 328        |                        |
Patterson, Robert          | 28 Oct 47  | 7 mts | Heart F                 | A3 328        |                        |

1947 12 month total: 6

Bates                      | 9 Oct 48   | 20 hrs | Premature              | A45 335       | "Female infant of Gladys (illegitimate)" |

1948 12 month total: 1

McClure, Joan              | 16 Nov 49  | 4 mts | Heart F                | A33 334       | NB: Beth Min 9Dec49, 2x died, no record Deans Grange, NovDec 49 |

1949 12 month total: 1

Plus, David Morgan, died July 1934 Monaghan (Anglo Celt, 21 July 1934)
Bethany Home Dublin – child deaths
Cumulative Totals 1922-49
PACT compared to Mt Jerome Cemetery figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PACT</th>
<th>Not accounted for</th>
<th>Mt Jerome</th>
<th>Buried Elsewhere</th>
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<tr>
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PACT TOTAL = 210  MT JEROME TOTAL = 219  28  17

Not counted in PACT figures: three deaths with no date
Minutes of Meeting of Managing Committee held in the Home on Friday 11th Sept 1936 at 4.00pm

Present: Canon Hill (in Chair), Mrs. Beasley, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Collie, Miss Maudieville, Mrs. Nicholl, Mrs. Wein, Miss Walker, W. Denman, W. McDonald.

Apologies from Mrs. Drummond and Pastor Warke.

Minutes of last meeting were read, confirmed & signed.

Matron's Report showed since last meeting 5 girls were admitted, 4 left and 25 were now in the Home. That 4 babies were born, 3 admitted, 1 died, 4 left, as 27 were now in the Home.

Health good.

Registration of Maternity Homes Act, 1934. Miss Walker reported a visit by W's. Crofts, Inspector appointed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, who said the bedrooms were overcrowded and the medical staff inadequate. After discussion W. McDonald was asked to see W. Coulter, Solicitor, on the subject.
The income for August was £20-19-0 and the expenses £53-3-9 and the OPD at date was £1,034-2-0. Mr. McDonald explained the position and said that while the maximum OPD was exceeded by £34-3/- a legacy of £50 left by the late Miss M. H. Fitzgerald had been received today and this, with subscriptions received since the commencement of the meeting, would enable meet the current expenses.

Corporation Demand for Rates. A letter from Mr. Coulton, Solicitor, dated 9th inst was read and as no funds are available to meet the demand no further steps were taken.

Sale of Work. On reconsideration of this matter it was decided to hold a sale of work in November and arrangements were made for the workers to meet and fix the date.

Miss Archer. It was decided to provide
in the Home
accommodation for Miss Archer and Miss
Walker was asked to write her on the subject
visiting committee Mrs. Bollinry and Mrs. Colles
kindly undertook to act as visiting
committee until the next meeting.

Dr. DeNomore mentioned spiritual blessing
among the girls during the last three months
and Miss Walker gave some details. It
was decided to record thanks to God
for this encouragement in the Work of the
Home.

The meeting was opened and closed with prayer.

R. Wash

9/10/36
Minutes of Meeting of Managing Committee held
in the Home at 4 pm on Friday, 9th Oct. 1936

Present: Pastor Warke (in Chair), Mrs. Bowley, Mr. Collis,
Mr. Collie, Mr. Drummond, Mr. Weir, Miss Walker,
Canon Hill, Mr. Dennis, and Mr. McDonald.
Apology from Miss Maudville.

Letter was read from Mrs. Nicholl resigning owing
to inability to attend meetings. Miss Walker
was asked to request Mrs. Nicholl to reconsider
the matter in the probability of her being
able to again come to the meetings after
some months.

Matrons report showed 2 girls admitted, 2 re-
admitted and 5 left since last meeting.
and 23 now in the Home; that 4 babies
were born, 3 left, 5 died, and 21 now
in the Home, and that the health of all
was good except for one delicate baby.

The income for last month was £91.11.8 which
included Miss Fitzgerald's bequest of £50. The expenditure was £68 16s 7d, and the Bank of D on 1st inst. was £1,004 15s 1d.

Maternity Act, 1934. Miss Walker reported visits of Dr. B. Berry and Mrs. Crofts and recommendations they made re staff: number of girls, workers for night duty and laundry. Mrs. McDonald read letter from Mr. Coulter dated 9th Oct., on the subject. After careful consideration it was decided to employ a C.M.B. Nurse at a salary of £1 per week and to give Miss Gaily a month's notice as from today. It was proposed by Mrs. Bewley and seconded by Mrs. Collins and unanimously decided that the number of girls in the Home should not exceed twenty except that urgent cases may be admitted until the next meeting of the Committee. The employment of a Night Worker was left with
Miss Walker, Mrs. Drummond kindly promised to make enquiry re the laundry dryers.

Miss Archer. Miss Walker was asked to inform Miss Archer that under the altered circumstances it would be impossible to provide accommodation for her in the Home.

The question of applying for exemption from the Act as suggested by Mr. Foulter was deferred for further consideration.

The sale of work was fixed for Tuesday and Wednesday 10th and 11th November.

Visiting Committee. Mrs. Bewley and Mrs. Collins kindly undertook to act until the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting was opened and closed with prayer.

Mary Collin

End Appendix Four
WORK DONE IN HOME

1. Number of confinements in Home since date of last inspection? ........................................... 67

2. Number of miscarriages in Home since date of last inspection? ...........................................

3. Number of deaths in Home since date of last inspection? ..................................................... 14 infants

4. Was anything unusual recorded in relation to any of the births, miscarriages or deaths? .......... 40

If so, give particulars ...........................................

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

1. Are records kept in the Home as prescribed in the Maternity Homes Regulations? ................. 29

2. Are the records fully and properly posted? .................................................................................

3. Are the records available when required for inspection by the authorised officer or the inspector? ...........................................................................................................................

4. Is cleanliness duly observed in all parts of the Home? ............................................................... 79

5. Is any other business carried on in the same premises? ............................................................ Children's home up to 3.70

6. If so, give particulars ....................................................................................................................

7. Is there any objection to the association of a maternity home with this business? ................

General observations:— ............................
Visited Bethany Home on 23/1/39 & investigated re the case of

I am informed that before a child is sent to a "nurse mother" from Bethany, the "nurse mother's" house is either inspected by the Bethany authorities or a reference from a reliable source about the Nurse Mother is required. My own has acted as Nurse Mother for Bethany for a number of years & has always been regarded as satisfactory.

I traced up the records of six children sent to her & four of these show very good results.

One was delicate from birth & was put out to nurse on the recommendation of the Bethany Medical Officer who thought that Country Air might improve the child's condition is now back at Bethany & I suspected him, he is a delicate child but shows no signs of neglect or ill usage.

Nurse Mothers receive £1-10-0 a month for each child & an outfit consisting of six napkins & three of all other clothes is given to each child when it leaves Bethany.

Those will not be employed by Bethany again.

Suspected Bethany Home & found conditions much improved since my last inspection.

There are 22 expectant or nursing mothers in the Home & 19 children - there are 19 children boarded out.

The Institution is kept very well is clean & comfortable. No evidence of overcrowding. The mothers & infants are well looked after & all appear happy & contented.

W.H.A.

25/1/39
Section Three Appendix 7 Page 385


Apt from B &P H.P.A on 21st February 1939.

P. Inspector's Report on boarded-out children

Read letter from the Ministry No.P.393/39 Muineachan, dated 13th January, 1939, enclosing copy of report received from his Inspector consequent on her recent inspection of Boarded-out Children and Children at Nurse under the Children Acts, 1908-34, in the County of Monaghan.

Copy of Report referred to: -

Co. Monaghan.

I have inspected all the boarded-out children and nurse children under the Children Act, 1908-34 in Co. Monaghan.

On the whole the foster homes are comfortable and good and the Children well cared.

1. Muineachan.

Boared-out with

Although otherwise apparently well looked after these children were insufficiently clad. It would be well that the Assistance Officer would insist that warm knickers be purchased by the foster parent for the children when she receives the next clothing allowance.

2. Annagallia, Broadhead, Drumcloger. I found these children untidy and their clothes dirty. Their chemises appeared to me not to have been washed for weeks. There was no cause for this neglect as the foster parent receives 15/- per week for these children. It would like to have these children removed to a more suitable foster home.


There are four children placed at nurse with

In my opinion this is too many but was assured me that one of the children is being returned to Bethany Home early in January to be adopted by some one.

4. This baby appeared to me to be in a very low condition. It was dirty and neglected and sore and inflamed from a filthy napkin which cannot have been changed for a very long time.

As I knew the baby was suffering I had the Dalmahoy Doctor telephoned to to ask him to call to see the child.

The foster mother who has had nurse children under the Children Act 1908-34 before, knew the law well failed to register this child. The Board of Assistance should be asked to deal drastically with this woman and to prosecute.
Read letter from the Ministry No.P.393/39 Ulmeachun, dated 13th January, 1939, enclosing copy of report received from his Inspector consequent on her recent inspection of boarded-out Children and Children at Nurse under the Children Acts, 1908-34, in the County of Monaghan.

Copy of Report referred to:

I have inspected all the boarded-out children and nurses children under the Children Act, 1908-34 in Co. Monaghan.

On the whole the foster homes are comfortable and good and the children well cared.

1. Minagillia. Boarded-out

*Although otherwise a generally well looked after these children were insufficiently clad. It would be well that the Assistance Officer would insist that warm knickers be purchased by for the children when she receives the next clothing allowance.*

2. with , Drumloster. I found these children untidy and their clothes dirty. Their clothes appeared to me not to have been washed for weeks. There was no case for this neglect as the foster parent received 15/- per week for these children. I would like to have these children removed to a more suitable foster home.

NURSE CHILDREN.

There are four children placed at nurse with .

3. In my opinion this is too many but assured me that one of the children is being returned to Bethany Home early in January to be adopted by some one.

4. This baby appeared to me to be in a very low condition. It was dirty and neglected and sore and inflamed from a filthy napkin which cannot have been changed for a very long time.

As I knew the baby was suffering had the Dispensary Doctor telephoned to ask him to call to see the child.

The foster mother Mrs. , who has had nurse children under the Children Act 1908-34 before, knew the law well failed to register this child. The Board of Assistance should be asked to deal drastically with this woman and to prosecute.

ORDER: 1. Assistance Officer to insist on purchasing warm clothing for the children. 2. Children to be removed as soon as a suitable foster home can be obtained. 3. One of the
There are four children placed at nurse with [redacted]. In my opinion this is too many but [redacted] assured me that none of the children is being returned to Bethany Home early in January to be adopted by some one.

[redacted] placed at nurse about two weeks ago by the Bethany Home with Glenbrook, Newbliss.

This baby appeared to me to be in a dying condition. It was dirty and neglected and sore and inflamed from a filthy nappy which cannot have been changed for a very long time.

As I knew the baby was suffering I had the Dispensary Doctor telephoned to to ask him to call to see the child (nd order its removal to the County Home.)

The foster mother [redacted] who has had nurse children under the Children Act 1908-34 before and knows the law well failed to register this child. The Board of Assistance should be glad to deal drastically with this woman without court process.

I was informed by the present of the Civic Guards that they had received unverifiable reports of [redacted] before, not only by altering maiden who was placed at nurse with her some time ago also by the Bethany Home stated to and died within month of being sent to her.

I consider that the authorities of the Bethany Home were very culpable to send this child in the condition of health of which I have to speak. We should be forewarned of such cases.

[Signature]
STRUGGLE AGAINST PROSELYTISM

WORK OF SOCIETY

Since its foundation in 1913, the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society of Ireland had rescued over 7,200 cases from proselytism, and had at present 362 children in its care, according to the report of the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society of Ireland (anti-Proselytising) for the year ended December 31, 1938.

Most of the "Mission" work of the "Society for the Irish Church Missions to Roman Catholics," the report states, was now done in Dublin, especially among those unmarried mothers who were driven to find hiding places for themselves and any secret means of disposing of their infants.

"X" HOME.

"X" Home, a maternity institution maintained independently of the "Church Missions Society," but in touch with Barnado's Homes, was another active source of proselytising among girls. Though Protestant girls must pay their fees at this Home, Catholic girls were maintained there free of charge on condition that they joined in services at which their Faith was blasphemed.

Their infants were reared free of charge on condition that they handed them over to be brought up as Protestants.

The receipts for the year of the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society of Ireland amounted to £7,456, and disbursements over receipts amounted to £520.
MINISTER ASKED TO INQUIRE

BOARD CRITICISMS OF DUBLIN HOME

At Rathdown Board of Assistance yesterday the question of the reception of children at the Bethany Home, Orwell road, was mentioned by Mrs. P. J. Mulvey, who said that a child had been taken from the Home by the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society. The child at the time was very ill, and was admitted to Loughlinstown Hospital. From there the child was sent to St. Kevin’s, Dublin Union, where he was at present. She wished to know if this child had become a charge on the rates, and that a qualified nurse be sent to inspect conditions at the Bethany Home. They were all aware of the object of this institution from the religious point of view.

Mr. W. Rollins said that the Board should send its own supervisory officer to inspect the institution, and should bring a representative of the Home before this Board to discover where the children came from, and why they should be thrown on the rates.

The Chairman said this thing was becoming an epidemic. The best thing to do would be to report the whole matter to the Local Government Department, and have an inquiry into the matter.

This was agreed to.
Bethany Home Child

Rathdown Board Order

"This thing is becoming an epidemic," said Mr. P. J. Dooge (Chairman) at a meeting of the Rathdown Board of Assistance, when Mrs. Mulvey asked to have the facts relating to a child from the Bethany Home, Orwell Road, reported to Dr. McDonnell, of the Department of Local Government and Public Health. It was decided to report the matter to Dr. McDonnell.

Mrs. Mulvey said that the child had been rescued from the Bethany Home by the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society. It was at the time very ill, and was admitted to Loughlinstown Hospital. From there it was sent to St. Kevin’s, Dublin Union, where it was at present. She wished to know if this child had become a charge on the rates, and that a qualified nurse be sent to inspect conditions at the Bethany Home. They were all aware of the object of this institution from the religious point of view.

Chairman—Indeed we are.

Origin of Children.

Mr. W. Rollins said that the Board should send its own supervising officer to inspect the institution, and should bring a representative of the Home before the Board to discover where these children came from, and why it was that they should be thrown on the rates.

The Chairman said that the best thing to do would be to report the whole matter to the Local Government Department and have an inquiry into the matter.
Noble Record of Work
Irish Independent 4 April 1940

In the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society the unmarried mother finds true friends to save her from temptation and to preserve her child from those who would rob it of its birthright of Faith, states the 20th annual report of the Society, in which an appeal is made to Catholics for help to carry on the work.

The number of children on the books for 1939 was 350, including 14 taken from a Protestant maternity home. Expenditure was £7,889. The Society expressed indebtedness to the Dublin hospitals which charged no fee for the treatment of children sent by them.

Over 7,200 children have been rescued by the Society since its foundation in 1913, the report continues. Only cases in danger of proselytism are accepted.
**NAME DOCUMENT**

Section Reference: 
Folder Reference: INACT/NA/0/474129
Public Title: UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN.

*Fields marked with an asterisk are compulsory*

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Name of Carer:
(1) Bethany Home Ornewell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6.

Carer (Personal/Agency etc) Details
(2) [Redacted], Saint Alban's, England.

Date in Care

Type of Care
(1) Home (2) Adoption (3) Adoption.

---

File Page
E 4.
Comment
The child in question is mentioned in a letter dated 16/04/1940. The letter is concerned with the ease with which children can be moved out of the country. The author of the letter, A.H. Litster, claims the following, by way of illustrating his point - that Miss Walker of The Bethany Home placed advertisements in English Protestant newspapers requesting foster parents for her charges. [Redacted] responded and was sent an 8 month old child, the only requirement being that she produce a letter of recommendation from a clergyman. On 09/01/1940 the Police in Saint Alban's informed the Local N.S.P.C.C of conditions in the Sandford home. As a result of which Miss Walker was induced to remove the child which, the author informs us, was in the process of being legally adopted to another family through an adoption agency. There is no information concerning the gender or name of the child. There might be some implication that he/she did not spend very long in England, but nowhere is this stated. The exact legal status of the adoption to [Redacted] is not clear.

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Collins spoke to Mr. of Bethany on the need of financial support from the Government and was directed to see Mr. Leslie of the Local Board. Mr. Collins saw Mr. Leslie and put Bethany's case before him and was told to write a letter to him from the...
Bethany Home, Rathgar. - Increase in maintenance charges.

Miss O'Brien

For obs. R. Recommendation

P. Scho.

No objection.

31. 7. 46

1. Note:


2a. Note.

3. Miss O'Brien

10.30

4. File away

20.9. 46
23781/2/39

HÓRÓ CONGANTA RÁT A' DÚIN
(RATHDOWN BOARD OF ASSISTANCE).

ÓIFIG AN CLÉIREÁCH
(CLERK'S OFFICE).

CEARNÓG PARNELL H., D.16
(11 PARNELL SQUARE, C.16).

DÁILE ÁRA CLÉIREÁCH
(DUBLIN).

5th September 1939.

A Chaoi,

I have to refer to my letter of the 15th ulto., re children in Bethany Home, and have to request a reply thereto if possible in time for the meeting of the Board on the 13th, inst.

A question arose at the last meeting, regarding the child referred to in communication from Catholic Protection & Rescue Society, dated 29th, July, 1939, a copy of which accompanied my letter.

Is mise, le meas,

[signature]

Clerk to the Board.

The Secretary;
Local Government Department,
Custom House,
DUBLIN.
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC HEALTH
CUSTOM HOUSE,
DUBLIN.

15th December, 1942.

A Chara,

I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to refer to your letter of 2nd instant regarding the proposed recognition of the Bethany Home for the purposes of recoupment from the National Maternity and Child Welfare Grant and I am to state that he would be glad if you would be good enough to furnish a return showing:

(a) The name and former address of all women who were in the Home on the 1st January, 1942, or who were admitted since that date. It might be indicated whether each is married, widowed, or unmarried, and if married whether she is deserted.

(b) The name and date of birth of each child who was in the Home on the 1st January 1942, or who was born in the Home or admitted thereto since that date.

(c) The name and address of the mother of each child under (b) above and whether she is married, widowed or unmarried and if married whether she is deserted.

(d) In the case of any women or children who were discharged from the Home since the 1st January, 1942, the date of such discharge and where they were discharged to.

Mise, le meas,

(Sgd) M. Ó Laínn.

Th. c. an Rúnaithe.

G.F.W. Godden, Esq.,
Bethany Home,
112/116 Orwell Road,
Rathgar, DUBLIN.
A Chara,

With reference to previous correspondence relative to the proposal to have Bethany Home recognised for the purpose of recoupment from the National Maternity and Child Welfare Grant, I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to state that the financial position of the Home as disclosed in the accounts submitted does not appear to warrant State Subvention.

Mise, le meas,

(Sgd) M. Ó Lainn.

t.c. an Rúnaí.

G.F.W. Godden, Esq.,
Bethany Home,
112/116, Orwell Road,
Rathgar,
DUBLIN.
9th June 1944.

A meeting of the managing committee was held in the home on Friday, 9th June, 1944, at 4.45 p.m.

Present: Chancellor Hill (in chair), Mrs. Bolton, Mrs. Barwell, Mrs. T. Walker, Mrs. T. Walker, Mrs. V. Walker, and Mrs. Downey.

Apologies from Miss E. Bentley, Miss V. Bentley, Miss A. Walker.

Minutes. The minutes of the last meeting were read, confirmed, and signed.

State of the Home. Mrs. Barwell reported that Mrs. Downey and Mr. O'Brien had been informed by the Department of Local Government and Public Health that the question of State aid was for the Dublin Corporation. They had accordingly had an interview with the City Manager and had found that they may write to him a letter making final application for a grant as and when necessary.

Matron'swards. Mrs. Barwell, the letter he had written to Miss Pilgrim as directed at the last meeting and his reply expressing thanks for the consideration shown. Miss Walker reported that Miss Clovis was rendering very useful service as temporary Matron and that there was a prospect of her being willing to stay on in a permanent capacity if it could be arranged. Miss Pilgrim should not be able to resume duty. Miss Walker mentioned that it would probably be desirable for Miss Clovis to have her youngest child with her in the home.

Mrs. Downey reported that the local volunteers' army, Captain had informed her that it would be no use approaching the Divisional Commander on this matter, which was one for headquarters. It appeared, however, that there would be no precedent of anything being done till after the war at any rate.

Finance. The income for May was £1,791.0s. and the expenditure for May amounted to £1,077.11.10, the payment of which the adverse balance would amount to £521.14.8.

Invoices for March showed the number of girls in the home to be 98. £100 was received during the month.
A Meeting of the Managing Committee was held in the
home on Friday 8th September 1944 at 8am.

Present

Miss Chancellor (in chair), Mr. Landers, Mrs. Hassell, Miss Matthews, Miss Smith, and Miss Godden.

Agenda

1. Minutes from previous meeting.
   - The minutes of the last meeting were read, confirmed, and signed.

2. MD reported that Miss Donnelly had been informed by the City Manager's Office that he had given great consideration to the application for state aid, but in consequence of the state of the City's finances at present, and the economic situation, it was not possible to make any grant at present; later on, the application could be re-looked at if it was agreed that Miss Donnelly and Dodson should make further application in due course.

3. The matter of cracks in the boundary wall was postponed pending the obtaining of an estimate from Mr. Czerny.

4. Miss Walker reported that Miss Pelham would not be returning work owing to continued ill health. It was agreed that sick leave in her case be extended to 18th October, 1944, from which date she would resign her resignation to take effect. It was also agreed that Miss Walker should make a collection among the Committee and other close friends of Miss Pelham and make a presentation to her without prior announcement on the occasion of the 9th Day: this fund to be quite distinct from Anthony Home funds.

5. It was arranged that Gift Day be held on Wednesday 25th October, the speakers to be Miss Walker and voluntary workers. Miss Pette to be asked to take the chair at the afternoon meeting.

Gift Day

Staff changes - Miss Walker reported that Miss Allen had resigned from the Gift and Sales Committee.
Meeting of the Management Committee was held on the Friday 10th November 1944 at 8.30 am in the home of Miss Warde (Chairman), Rev. Burley, Rev. Russell, Mrs. Parton, Mrs. Walker, Dr. Donnay, Mr. H. Brown, and Mr. Redden.

Apologies: There were no apologies.

Minute: The minutes of the last meeting were read confirmed and signed.

Miss Walker mentioned that Dr. M. May had been in touch with Mr. Burley of the Department of Local Government Health on the subject of a State grant. Dr. Donnay stated that Dr. M. May was to arrange an interview with Mr. Russell, Medical Officer of Health for the City. Dr. Donnay promised to get in touch again with Dr. M. May relative to this matter.

Boundary Wall: Dr. Donnay promised to contact Mr. Congdon, Barrister, on the question of the liability of the Committee or the Corporation for replacing the dangerous part of the boundary wall. Mr. Conner’s estimate for rebuilding the wall was £200.

Staff Changes: Miss Walker reported that Miss Warde had resumed duty on 11th September and that Miss Owen had been appointed from 11th October 1944. Miss Pilgrim’s resignation took effect from 31st October, 1944, and Mrs. Flower’s appointment as her successor dated from 1st November, 1944.

Miss Walker reported that the collection for Miss Pilgrim had amounted to £100 and that a cheque for this sum had been presented to her by Mrs. Coleman at the afternoon meeting on 12th October. A letter of thanks from Miss Pilgrim was read to the meeting. On the proposal of Mr. Burley, seconded by Mr. Russell, it was unanimously decided to ask Miss Pilgrim to join the Committee.

Mrs. Parton: Mrs. Parton was welcomed by the Chairman who introduced her as a new member of the Committee. Mrs. Parton stated that her husband had written expressing regret that he could not join as she would be unable...
A Meeting of the Managing Committee was held in the Room on Tuesday 8th December, 1944, at 8:00 p.m.
Present: Mr. Warke (Chair), Mrs. Bentley, Mrs. Gollins, Mrs. Thawley, Mrs. Pettit, Miss Aizlewood, Miss Walker and Mr. Godden.

Apologies from Mrs. Mathieson and Mr. Downey.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed signed.

Mr. Godden read a letter addressed to the City Manager's Office on 5th November 1944 from Dr. McKinlay in reply to a letter addressed to Dr. Bland. This reply stated that due to the considerable commitments of the Corporation, the fact that there was no provision in the Scheme, it was regretted that it was not possible at this stage to accede to the request for a grant toward the Bethany Home. It was resolved that Mr. Godden should write to the City Manager, asking him to have the matter considered again as soon as possible and stating the amount of overdraft.

Boundary Wall: Miss Walker reported that Mr. Copland had advised Dr. Conway that there was no way to make the Corporation liable for the cost of repairing the boundary wall. As the Corporation had been forewarning to have the work done Messrs. Crone's tender of £7 had been accepted and the job was to begin on 11th December. This action was approved.

The Treasurer welcomed Miss Pilgrim as a member of the Committee.

Finance:

The balance for November amounted to £58 5s. 6d., after payment of which the Debt Balance for the month was £10 19s. 5d. 4d.

12th January 1945

A meeting of the Managing Committee was held at the Home
on Monday, 12th January 1945, at 4 p.m.

Present: Mr. Beasley, Miss Russell, Mr. Action, Miss Agnew, Miss Walker, Mr. Godden.

Apologies from Miss Collett, Dr. Anson, Chancellor, Woll and
Rev. Mr. Parsons.

The minutes of the last meeting were read confirmed and signed.

Dr. Godden read the letter addressed to him by the City Manager on 8th December, as directed at the
meeting on that date asking that the application for
a grant in aid be considered against as soon as possible.

Income for December was £67 18s. 5d. Billings due for December amounted to £3 6s. 7d. Adverse
Bank Balance at 26th December, 1944, was £47 7s. 3d
which would be increased by the payment of
December bills to £590 13s. 10d. Receipts since 31st
December amounted to £102 9s. 10d.

Honorary Miss
Dr. Godden

It was agreed that the usual honorary of
Visiting Nurse be sent to Dr. McColley, together with a
letter of thanks for his service.

Indoor Report for December showed the number of girls in the
Home to be 17. 2 were admitted in December and
1 discharged. The number of children was 29.
1 was born in December and 1 died. 1 was
admitted and 3 left (1 boarded out & 2 adopted).
There was 1 out & 2 among children and girls.

Mrs. Beasley and Miss Russell kindly consented to act as Visiting Committee pending next Meeting.

It was agreed to invite Miss Cool and Miss
Thomson Beck to join the Committee of Management.

Mr. Walker reported that Nurse Mayce had
left on 30th December, 1944, and that efforts to
get a successor as much needed, had been so
far without success.

The meeting was preceded by a season of general prayer, and
was concluded with prayer.
COPY
Your ref. P.H. 26714/42.
Ilgh. (Ab)

Secretary,
Department of Local Government and
Public Health.

Bethany Home,
Orwell Road,
Rathgar, DUBLIN.
1st July, 1946.

On 2nd December, 1942, I wrote to you relative to the question of this Home being approved for the purposes of the National Grant for Maternity and Child Welfare.

Upon your request for certain particulars I supplied the required information and on 31st March 1943, you wrote saying that the financial position of the Home as disclosed in the accounts submitted did not appear to warrant State subvention. (Although we had in 1940 realised investments to the extent of £999:10:10 to clear off our overdraft at Bank).

Dr. Downey and I interviewed Mr. Laing, of your Department, on 17th May, 1944, to renew our claim. He informed us that it was now a matter for the Dublin Corporation.

For the past two years we have been trying to get financial help from the Dublin Corporation but without success.

Someone suggested to us that we might get help from the Dublin Board of Assistance and Miss Walker and I had an interview with the Chairman and Commissioner Mrs. McKeen recently. They listened sympathetically to our case but said that the Board had no power to give us any grant. They suggested that we should report back to you.

The number of girls at present in the Home is 22 and the number of children 44.

The income is still insufficient to meet the expenses. Our overdraft at Bank is over £800.

The Home is regularly visited by officials of the different authorities concerned and they express appreciation of the work done and helpful advice. The Managing Committee do not understand why financial assistance cannot also be given to an institution which performs such useful public service.

Will you kindly grant an interview to Miss Walker and myself (the Honorary Secretaries) so that we may explain our case and seek the favour of your advice as to how to get financial aid for the Home.

I enclose a copy of the Report for 1945.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) GEORGE F.W. GODDEN.
Bethany Home,
ORWELL ROAD, RATHGAR,
DUBLIN.

PH 15/11/1945
(Sec.)

Dear Sir,

I had before the Managing Committee to-day your letter of the 2nd instant relative to the question of obtaining financial assistance for the Bethany Home.

They instructed me to write again to you, pointing out that the procedure indicated in your letter would involve a very considerable amount of correspondence, and asking that you would be so good as to recognise the Bethany Home as suitable for the reception of Protestant unmarried mothers and their babies for the purposes of the Public Assistance Act, 1939.

Yours faithfully,

G. F. W. Godden
Hon. Sec.
2 Manitoba, 1946.

Mr. Smith,

I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to refer to your letter of the 1st ultimo and to state that your representations on the subject of financial aid for Bethesda Home have been considered. It would appear that the appropriate procedure for obtaining such aid would be to approach particular public assistance authorities with a view to the recognition of the Home under Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1930. The public assistance authorities to be so approached would presumably be those from

Local Government and Public Health to refer to your letter of the 1st ultimo and to state that your representations on the subject of financial aid for Bethesda Home have been considered. It would appear that the appropriate procedure for obtaining such aid would be to approach particular public assistance authorities with a view to the recognition of the Home under Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1930. The public assistance authorities to be so approached would presumably be those from whose district inmates are admitted to the Home in circumstances which would appear to suggest that they could be deemed entitled for public assistance.
A Chara,

With reference to your letter of the 9th ultimo with regard to the question of the approval of Bethany Home as suitable for the reception of unmarried mothers and their babies, I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to inform you that the matter of recognition of the Home for the purposes of Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1939 is one for the Public Assistance authorities concerned in the first instance. The Minister does not give his consent in this connection without application for such consent having first been received from individual local authorities.

Mise, le meas,

Th. e. an Rúnaí.

C.F.W. Godden, Esq.,
Hon. Secretary,
Bethany Home,
Orwell Road, Rathgar,
Dublin.
A Chara,

I wish to append hereunder copy of an Order made by the County Manager concerning application for payment of increased charge of 15/- per week for maintenance of each patient in Bethany Home, Rathgar, and I am to request the sanction of the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to the terms of the Manager's Order.

A copy of application of Matron, Bethany Home, is enclosed for your information.

The consent of the Local Government Department to the sending of persons eligible for public assistance, to Bethany Home was conveyed in letter No. P. 2005/44, dated 28th January, 1944.

Mise, le meas,

[signature]

Secretary,
Department of Local Government
and Public Health,
Custom House, Dublin.

Copy of Order above referred to:

ORDER NO. 4711

Subject: LETTER DATED 19TH JUNE, FROM BETHANY HOME, RATHGAR, DUBLIN, APPLYING FOR PAYMENT OF INCREASED CHARGE OF 15/- PER WEEK FOR MAINTENANCE OF EACH PATIENT IN THE INSTITUTION.

ORDER: "Payment of increased charge of 15/- per week for maintenance of patients in Bethany Home, Rathgar, Dublin, approved subject to the sanction of the Minister for Local Government and Public Health".

Dated this 26th day of June, 1946.

(Sgd.) P. MacGeough,
County Manager.
A Chára,

I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to refer to the County Manager's Order (No. 4711) and to state that he will not object to payment being made at the rate of 15/- per week in respect of patients maintained in Bethany Home, Rathgar, in pursuance of Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1939.

Mise, le mara,

Th. o. an Rúnaí.

Secretary,
Monaghan County Council.
From
The Department of Local Government
and Public Health,
Custom House, Dublin.

To
Secretary,
Cavan County Council.

21 Oct 1946

Query
P.20361/46

(Date) 18 Deire Fómhair, 1946, Cavan (Ab)

Subject: Request for payment to Bethany Home,
Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin,
of contribution towards the cost of maintenance of an
unmarried mother, and child.

I am to enquire as to the authority
under which the local authority proposes
to contribute to the upkeep of the
mother and child at the above institution.
I am to add that this institution is
not approved in respect of County
Cavan in pursuance of Section 35 of
the Public Assistance Act, 1939.

The girl in question, being a member of
the Church of Ireland, could not be sent
to Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, or the
Manor House, Castlepollard, which are
the only institutions approved for the
admission of unmarried mothers. It
has now been ascertained however, that
the girl has left the Bethany Home
and does not intend to return there
and approval is not required in this
instance.

I shall be obliged if you will
kindly let me know what arrangements
should be made for such cases in
future.

Public Assistance Section

Cavan County Council
(Public Health and Assistance Section)
With reference to your letter of the 4th instant, I am to enclose herewith, for approval, copy of an order made by the County Manager, requesting sanction, under Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1939, to the payment by the Council of the cost of unmarried mothers who are members of the Church of Ireland, in the Bethany Home, Orwell Road, Rathgar.

Mise, le meas,

Rínaí.

The Secretary,
Department of Local Government and Public Health,
Custom House,
Dublin.
Subject: Extern Institutions.

ORDER: Application to be made to the Minister for Local Government and Public Health for approval under Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1939, to payment by the Cavan County Council of maintenance of Council of the cost of unmarried mothers who are members of the Church of Ireland and their children in the Bethany Home, Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin.

Signed this 16th day of December, 1946

(Sgd) D. McCarthy CAVAN COUNTY MANAGER
A Chara,

With reference to my letter of the 16th December last, I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me have approval to the inclusion under Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1939, of the Bethany Home, Orwell Road, Rathgar, in respect of the maintenance of unmarried mothers, who are members of the Church of Ireland.

Mise, le meas.

RÓNAF IONADACH.

The Secretary,
Department of Local Government,
Custom House,
Dublin.

M. O'D/MD
APPROVAL OF HOMES, HOSPITALS AND OTHER EXTERN INSTITUTIONS IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 35 OF THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ACT, 1939.

The Minister for Health hereby consents to the making of provision by the Cavan Public Assistance Authority for the assistance in Bethany Home, Orwell Road, Rathgar, of persons eligible for public assistance who are members of the Church of Ireland.

Given under the Official Seal of the Minister for Health this day of March, 1947.

[Signature]

Assistant Secretary to the Department of Health authorised by the Minister for Health to authenticate the Seal of the said Minister.
A Chara,

I am directed by the Minister for Health to refer to your letter of the 16th instant concerning financial aid for Bethany Home and I am to ask you to furnish this Department with a detailed statement of the results of the suggestion contained in this Department's letter (P.H.15118/46) of 2 Lúnasa, 1946, that the particular Public Assistance authorities should be approached with a view to the recognition of the Home under Section 35 of the Public Assistance Act, 1939.

Mise, le meas,

G. O SINDHCHAÍN

G.F.W. Godden, Esq.,
Honorary Secretary,
Bethany Home,
O'Connell Road,
Rathgar,
DUBLIN.
Page 417

In January 1949, the

Management Committee was held in the

Assembly Hall on January 10th and 11th.

Present

W. D. Jones (Chairman), R. H. Roberts, E. W. 

Wilson, J. H. Thomas, M. King, J. Jones, J. 

Rees, J. Williams, J. Lewis, J. Owen.

The minutes of the last meeting were read, confirmed, and signed.

The Secretary reported that the Department of

Health had told them that they had decided

to increase the grant to £1,000 per annum for the

maternity and

child welfare service, and that it was

decided to grant this sum.

The accounts

were then

considered.

Mr. Jones

reported the

accounts for the

year ended 30th June 1948.

The accounts were adopted as presented.

The next meeting was fixed for

April 1949.

The rates

were

approved.

The number of girls in the Home

was 24, and 21 were admitted since the last meeting.

There were 25 children

in the Home.

Children were discharged from the Home.

The Committee gave a very good

recommendation for two children (Mr. Collins and Mr. 

Jones).

Charges were made for electricity on their

returns to the Home. The Committee

recommended that the charges be

made.

The Committee recorded

their appreciation of the work of the

Committee.

The report of the Home was received.

It was decided to grant a

onus to E. McKay.
Mr. T. Traynor  
Sea View  
Sea View Road  
Kilcoole  
Greystones  
Co. Wicklow  
Eire

Mr. To Whom It May Concern

I, Thomas Traynor, of Bally Nolan, Newcastle,  
son of Mrs. Alice Charlotte Traynor, was reared with Derek Leinster. He came from the  
Bethany Home, Dublin at the age of three.  
to our home, with scars on his head and  
I am the one that treated the scars on  
his head with antiflagement cream, as were the  
other children neglected that my mother cared for from  
that home.

Yours Sincerely,
To Whom It May Concern,

14 November 1998

Subject: Mr Derek Linster DOB: 03/07/1941
42 Southey Road, Rugby, Warwickshire

I certify that Mr Linster suffers from a myeloproliferative disorder, which requires regular treatment in the haematology department at the Hospital of St Cross.

Signed:

J C A Derrick MB ChB FRCS (Ed)
Dated the 10th day of May 1945.

HANNAH DEINSTER

with

ARTHUR J. CARWAY
and
KATHLEEN C. CARWAY

ADOPTION AGREEMENT

Hayes & Sons, Solrs.,
41 & 42, Nassau Street,
Dublin.
2nd March, 1945.

Dear Dr. Barton,

I have made inquiries about the case of [redacted], the Protestant girl who was committed on remand to the place of detention at Whitehall, Dublin.

Places of detention are established under the Children Act, 1908, for the detention of persons under 17 years of age while on remand or while serving short sentences. The Act provides that a person under 17 years may not be sent to prison unless the Court certify that he is too unruly to be kept in a place of detention.

A number of Industrial Schools, including the school at Whitehall, have been registered as places of detention, and one institution, Marlboro House at Glasnevin, has been set up specially for the purpose.

Marlboro House, which is available only for boys, is managed by the Department of Education on non-denominational lines; all the other places of detention are managed by Catholic religious orders.

The regulations relating to places of detention, which were made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1910 and which are still in force, do not prohibit the commitment of a child to a place of detention which is managed by persons of a different religion from the child's religion; but they provide that no child may be required to attend any worship or service or to receive any religious instruction to which his parents or the clergy of the religious persuasion to which he belongs objects.

I understand that in [redacted] case the Justice formed a very unfavourable impression of her character and her attitude towards the criminal proceedings. She seemed to be under the impression that as there is no industrial school or reformatory for Protestant girls, the Court had no power to punish her. The Justice thought that the girl required a sharp warning, and that a short period of detention was advisable, and he, accordingly, committed her while on remand to the place of detention.

I haven't made any inquiry into the girl's allegation that the nuns at Whitehall contravened the regulations by suggesting to her that she should become a Catholic. The girl may be telling the truth, but on the other hand, if the Justice estimate of her character is correct, she may be merely trying to arouse sympathy by representing herself as a victim of religious intolerance. I think you will agree that more harm than good might be done by going into her allegation at this stage.

 Personally, I think that it is undesirable that any child should be committed to an institution managed by persons of a
religion different from the child's religion; but a problem exists in regard to non-Catholic children, in view of the fact that all the industrial schools and reformatories, and all the places of detention, except the boys place of detention at Marlboro House, are managed by Catholic religious orders. I am sure that the number of Protestant children who appear before the Courts would not justify the establishment of Industrial Schools and reformatories for Protestants, but I suggest that it would be worth while to have a place of detention available for Protestant girls. If you could arrange for some suitable Protestant institution to accept girls committed on remand or on short sentences (the maximum period is one month), I should be glad to register the institution as a place of detention.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) G. Boland

His Grace The Most Rev. Arthur W. Barton, D.D.,
Archbishop of Dublin,
The Palace,
18, Shrewsbury Road,
Dublin.
Dear Mr. Boland,

I have to thank you for two letters, one with regard to the "separation of juries". I am grateful for what you are doing in the matter, and hope that your efforts to find a solution will be successful.

With regard to [redacted], as you will remember, I was never anxious that any action should be taken save that some arrangement should be made with regard to the future. I am making enquiries as to the best place which can be nominated to you as suitable for the detention of Protestant girls in cases of remand. I shall write to you before long on the subject, and hope I shall be able to suggest a suitable place.

Thanking you for your interest in these matters.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Archbishop of Dublin.
THE PALACE.
18. SHREWSBURY ROAD,
DUBLIN.
9th April, 1945.

Ref. 93/31.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of March 2nd, with regard to my naming a suitable Home to which Protestant girls on remand might be committed by Magistrates, I have delayed replying pending certain enquiries which I wished to make. I now give as a suitable Institution for this purpose:

Bethany House, Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin.

This Institution is already under Government inspection, and is already recognised by the Court as a place to which such girls can be sent, and receives a number of them.

Thanking you for your care in the matter, and hoping that this arrangement will prove satisfactory,

I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

Archbishop of Dublin.

Note: I have ascertained from the Mother of Bethany House that all Protestant girls are represented on the committee of management and that efficiency of any Protestant staff will be accepted in the institution. There is accommodation for 30.
I, GERALD BOLAND, Minister for Justice, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by Section 108 of the Children Act, 1908, and of every and any other power me in this behalf enabling, do hereby register the premises described hereunder as a place of detention for the purposes of Part V. of the Children Act, 1908.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Premises.</th>
<th>Occupier</th>
<th>Class of Children or young persons who may be detained</th>
<th>Number of children or young persons who may be detained</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bethany House, Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin.</td>
<td>The Resident Matron.</td>
<td>Female children and young persons under 17 years of age other than Catholic children and young persons</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GIVEN under my Official Seal this 17th day of April, 1945.

Gerald Boland
MINISTER FOR JUSTICE.
Bethany Home Survivors welcome inquiry

BETHANY HOME SURVIVORS Media statement and Information Pack Press Conference 4pm, Buswells Hotel, 11 June 2014

Survivors call for immediate redress and inclusion of other previously excluded Protestant homes

- **Church of Ireland Magdalen Home** (Leeson Street, Eglington Road, Dublin, later Denny House, Church of Ireland)
- **Westbank Orphanage**, Greystones (previously Protestant Home for Boys, Mayil Home, Bray, Protestant evangelical, Plymouth Brethren)
- **Ovoca House Orphanage**, Wicklow (Protestant evangelical, Plymouth Brethren)

Bethany Survivors Chairperson Derek Leinster today welcomed the setting up of an inquiry that will include Bethany Home.

‘It has been a long wait for Protestant survivors’, he said, ‘but the devil will be in the terms of reference. The terms must be based on inclusion, not exclusion. The last thing we want is that other survivors are locked out of the inquiry. We also want a swift inquiry and redress. None of us are getting any younger and most of us, myself included, suffer serious ailments with their origin in Bethany Home’.

Niall Meehan of Griffith College Dublin, who discovered over 220 Bethany Home graves in 2010, said, ‘After years of exclusion and rejection, it is good to be finally included. That said, those of us involved in the Bethany campaign have a special duty to ensure that there is no more exclusion’.

‘Westbank Orphanage’, Greystones, Co Wicklow, that closed in 2002, was an invisible organisation as far as the Irish state was concerned. Residents allege sexual and physical abuse, illegal adoptions, cross border adoptions and also refusal of adoption to the majority of residents. Bethany served as a feeder home for Westbank. It took in babies as young as a few weeks and kept some residents into their twenties. It would be a scandal if Westbank was excluded. The first thing that needs to be done is to take back residents’ files from Bray Gospel Hall. The gospel hall Westbank trustees removed the files from the PACT counselling service (formerly the Protestant Adoption Society), after a critical RTE Would You Believe documentary in 2011’, said Mr Meehan.

Bethany Survivors campaigner, Victor Stevenson, from Mayil, that became Westbank, listed a number of claims with regard to Westbank, that he said, ‘cry out for official explanation’ (included as part of this information pack).

IN INFORMATION PACK

- **Victor Stevenson Statement** (Mayil, Westbank) – abuse, illegal cross border adoption, refusal of adoption
- **Colleen Anderson Statement** (Mayil Westbank) – abuse, illegal cross border adoption
- **John Hill Statement** (CofI Magdalen Home) – abuse, child labour, exploitation, separation from unknown twin sister.
- **Paul Graham** (aka Maurice Johnston) Statement (Bethany Home) – abuse, illegal cross border adoption

INFO: Niall Meehan (Head of Journalism & Media Faculty Griffith College), Bethany Survivors Campaign, 087 642 8671
Victor Stevenson Statement
Westbank/Mayil Orphanage
(Bray, Greystones, Protestant Evangelical, Plymouth Brethren)

As we debate the horrifying events which took place in mother and baby homes in the State, it is important that we do not forget all other homes that came under their ‘umbrella’.

In the case of the Bethany Home in Dublin, it was served by the Church of Ireland Magdalen Home (later Denny House). Bethany was also itself a feeder home for the Mayil and Westbank homes in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. It served also the small Ovoca House orphanage in Wicklow, that closed in the mid 1950s. These institutions operated under the auspices of a small evangelical Protestant group, the Plymouth Brethren. They were supported by all of the main Protestant denominations in Ireland, which sent vulnerable members of their flock there from north and south of the island.

The Mayil orphanage that became Westbank took in children at a very young age, some just a few weeks old. It functioned by both organising illegal adoptions for like-minded religious fundamentalists outside the state and also by refusing adoption to the majority of its residents. Their function was to be paraded to potential charitable givers mainly in Northern Ireland - from an orphanage that refused the prospect of normal family life to most of its residents. The children were revenue generators.

Colm Begley, known as ‘Robin Mathers’ in Mayil/Westbank, came there from Bethany Home at under a year old in 1967. All residents had their names changed by often the only adult on the premises, the Matron, Miss Adeline Mathers. The children were all given the surname Mathers and had to call her ‘Auntie’. Never was such a term of endearment so undeserved. Like Colm, they discovered their real names when they left. Colm stayed until he could escape as a teenager.

Colm did not know until much later that he had a half brother, Andrew, born in the home in 1960. Andrew escaped by being forcibly extracted by his adoptive parents from Northern Ireland. They threatened legal action before Andrew was thrust at them through a half-open front door in 1964. This adoption, though illegal in southern law, was a form of liberation for Andrew. It was regularised in the North over two years. The proposed commission of inquiry needs to investigate incidents such as this. Colleen Anderson was illegally adopted to Scotland, to like minded Protestant fundamentalists (see her statement in this information pack).

The commission of inquiry must examine this, as well as allegations of sexual and physical abuse in Mayil-Westbank. Helen Fitzpatrick entered the home as a few weeks old baby in 1972. She alleged on RTE One Television’s Would You Believe programme that she was sexually abused in Westbank. This is not the only such allegation about a home that only finally closed in 2002. It was officially invisible. This official sectarian blindness must stop now.

In one case, Miss Mathers was forced to seek emergency medical help for a young boy’s wounds, which he sustained after being stripped and beaten severely with a piece of flex. Survivors relate ferocious attacks like this by Miss Mathers. Another young boy was beaten so badly, that he had to stay in bed in a filthy outhouse, sleeping quarters for many of the children. The order was issued to all of the residents that, under no circumstances, was the boy to be fed. To this day, former residents break down when they relate how, under great fear, they squirreled scraps of food to the unfortunate boy. It is a fear they feel to this day.

A Northern Ireland Free Presbyterian clergyman also visited the home, to ‘save’ unruly children, who were denied food until a suitably religious declaration of remorse was delivered to the preacher.

Other children were given painful injections as a crack-brained ‘cure’ for bed-wetting.

These are the merest sample of events, which took place in Mayil/Westbank, an institution in which the State allowed only one adult, Miss Mathers, to be in charge of
35 to 40 babies and children at any one time: therefore allowing her to operate a regime of terror on many of the residents.

Social services and medical authorities turned a blind eye to the plight of these babies and children. The institution the state ignored finally closed in 2002.

I urge that such institutions as Mayil/Westbank are also included in the proposed inquiry, so that the State can finally give recognition to all survivors. Survivors should not be left outside the door in the way in which Bethany survivors and survivors' of Mother and baby homes disgracefully have been

In debate on the Ryan report on June 11, 2009, the Taoiseach stated:

“We cannot rewrite those stories, nor can we write a happy ending to them. But it is our clear and inescapable duty to reach out and rescue, to listen, and to learn and to create something out of this catalogue of cruelty in which, as a nation, we can take some pride.”

There is still a chapter to be 'created' within this narrative (pride notwithstanding), and it concerns all of the excluded babies, children and teenagers from all of the homes in Ireland. The Taoiseach now has the opportunity to write this chapter.

**Victor Stevenson 11 June 2014**

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**John Hill - My Story**

**Church of Ireland Magdalen Home**

*(Leeson Street, Eglinton Road, Baldoyle, Dublin, later Denny House, incorporating Nurses Rescue Society)*

I was born in the Church of Ireland Magdalen Home in Leeson Street Dublin, later Eglinton Road, in 1946. I remained under the control of that organisation until I was about 16 years age, but they were in my life for a good few years after that.

I was fostered out as free labour to farmers from a very young age. I was always treated differently from the families and communities into which I was sent.

When I was 58 I found out by accident when applying for a passport that I had twin sister who was adopted into a family in Northern Ireland. Her existence was kept from me and vice versa. Though I made contact, time apart destroyed the possibility of a relationship between us. My mother sought me out when I was 21. I was told to go to Dublin at age 21, to the Wicklow Hotel, and then told, ‘this is your mother, get on with it’.

This is my story.

I was in the Leeson Street home until I was about 1 year old. Then I was sent to the Baldoyle unit of the organisation for two years. In 1949 I was found to be badly malnourished with rickets. I could not walk. I was then sent to a family in Carlow until I was aged 10. I was required to do manual labour from about the age of five or six. I worked before I walked five miles to school each morning to the local Roman Catholic school, with another foster child taken in by the family, though we were brought up Church of Ireland. The natural children of the family went to the Church of Ireland primary school.

We milked cows, collected sheep, fed poultry and generally worked as free child labour on the farm. We were slave labour I suppose. At the same time the family received money for us from public funds. We were isolated from other members of the family. At house parties we were sent off to bed. When the gentry called we were fed separately.

At age ten we were separated when sent to nearby farms in Templederry, near Nenagh, Tipperary. The work got heavier and heavier. I had to pulp turnips after school before being fed. I had to clean out cow sheds and bring in the hey.
At the local Church of Ireland school in Tipperary I was often physically abused. My clothes were taken off me and I was left out in the cold. I was called names I can't repeat by the other pupils. I was told I did not deserve to be there and taunted with the fact that I had no parents. They had no scruples. The teachers tolerated it. I would be locked outside in the middle of winter to stand outside. There were one or two good families. A small contractor took me under his wing and sometimes brought me in to town to be fed. I remember he gave me hints that I might have a sister. But the hints were vague and they did not mean anything to me at the time. I don't know how he knew this.

At age 13 I was sent to Wilson's Hospital School as a border. I was treated no better. And neither were the seven or so other foster children. There were lots of unpleasant things. I was beaten twice or three times a week by the principal. He used a bamboo cane that wrapped it self around your hand and cut you with its strands as it broke up. I would get 10-12 lashes at a time for being behind at lessons or for nothing at all. I was always a target. We had no one to speak up for us, no parents. There were a few good teachers who might try to reason with the others. But they told us they had to toe the line or they would be targeted. Us foster children were put out of lessons on to the farm on the school grounds. More free labour, but the farm manager disagreed with this and he used to feed us in his house.

When I went back to Tipperary for the summer holidays at age 13, I was switched to another family, this time in Thurles. It was the same old routine of endless work. From bad to worse. I was treated appallingly and had to work all day until dark. I was on that farm for three years until age 16. Then I was sent to work as a farm labourer for a nearby relation of this last family. It was from bad to worse again. I was very badly paid, barely enough to go to the pictures once a week. Food was at the farmer's discretion. Sometimes the maid would sneak out food to us.

I was always under the control of the Church of Ireland's Magdalen institution, that became Denny House. I think the offshoot that was in charge of us was the 'Nurses Rescue Society' but I was never able to find out much about it. At no stage was I given a normal family life, except where someone took pity on me and the others. Those were the only places I saw kindness.

I was a slave all my young life. My mother was a slave to prejudice, forced to give birth in secret. She kept her twin children secret from all her family for most of her life, and kept her twin children secret from each other. Her family found out about me at her funeral. This badly affected relations. I was out in the cold again. I am 68 years old. I married my wife Sheila in 1971. We have twin girls and a boy.

The Irish state and the church of Ireland were my parents. They let me down, badly. I think they should admit to their sins against children like me and the foster children who grew up with me. I tried to keep contact with the other foster children, but most fell apart and took to drink and to drugs.

Would you blame them? I don't.

I want my files that are now held by PACT (formerly the Protestant Adoption Society), and the Rotunda, taken over by the government. I want access to my mother's files, that are denied to me. I want to know how the Magdalen Home operated. I want to know why they split up brothers and sisters, twin children. I want to know why my files were transferred to the Nurses Rescue Society and then to PACT. I want answers. I can handle the truth. Can the government give it to me? I want justice.

John Hill, 11 June 2014
Colleen Anderson Statement

Mayil/Westbank Orphanage – illegal adoption to Scotland via Northern Ireland

Although I was born in the Republic of an Irish mother who was married, I managed to be spirited out of the country through the mediation of Adeline Mathers and taken to Scotland. My adoption went against the 1952 Adoption Act where it is stated that no child of a marriage could be put up for adoption, nor an Irish baby be taken out of the country without the necessary permissions. I was taken cross-border to NI in the middle of the night, very secret going on.

My adoptive parents had my identity changed and at no point were Irish authorities informed of the intention to adopt. I had to have my adoption formally recognized in Dublin just a few years ago to obtain a passport!

Also I had 5 older siblings of whom I knew nothing, but Adeline Mathers [who ran Westbank] later admitted she knew my mother and my family and that there had been a meeting of my mother and the couple who took me away from Mayil (later moved to Westbank) as I was handed over. The shock of all these discoveries has been almost too much to bear in recent years. I have done fairly well in life, so I have people to fall back on, but all the concealment and illegalities have touched me badly. Miss Mathers seems to have moved with impunity, arranging all sorts of things and usually for a sum of money. My adoptive parents were personal friends of Miss Mathers and I was taken back and forth to the home in Greystones often on holiday where I got to know many of the children under her care, and observed many goings on.

How did she manage to operate illegally cross-border? Why were identities changed and private arrangements sought? Why were families split at a whim? Why were laws and statutes flouted?

Colleen Anderson July 2013

Paul Graham (aka Maurice Johnston) Statement

Bethany Home (Protestant Evangelical, Plymouth Brethren)

‘Adopted’ into a wealthy family in Belfast. Paul reported,

They abused me on daily basis. I left their home at the tender age of 14 never to return.

I got married and had three children, but I was a drunk. Life was terrible and I was in hospital many times. We came to Australia hoping for a better life, however I continued drinking.

I was to meet an Irishman who convinced me that I could get better. I have not had a drink for over 30 years and thankfully, I have a wonderful life. I served as Deputy Mayor here and also assisted the Irish Olympic Team during the Sydney Games.

[I]t was suggested to me that I should look into my background as this was one of the many problems I had. I contacted a solicitor in Ireland and instructed him to find my mother and what had happened.

I never knew I was born in Dublin as the papers I had showed that I was born in Belfast. I found my mother, but regretfully she had died just months before. […]

One of the strange problems involves my passport. I applied for a visa to visit USA, but the passport office came back and told me that there was no record of a Paul Graham being born in Dublin nor was there any record of a Paul Graham being born in Belfast.

Eventually, we finally got the visa… [T]he Irish embassy… said that as I had an Irish birth certificate it was legally possible to issue me a passport under my birth name name of Maurice Johnston. However, they said it could cause a lot of legal problems.

I often wished that my childhood could have been different; I would love to have been normal and become perhaps a doctor, however this was not to be. I am now 74 and I have the beginnings of dementia.

Paul Graham (Maurice Johnston) July 2013

INFO: Niall Meehan (Head of Journalism & Media Faculty Griffith College), Bethany Survivors Campaign, 087 642 8671
Submission on Terms of Reference by

Bethany Survivors’ Campaign
and
Survivors of Protestant Children’s Institutions

To Charlie Flanagan TD Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
On Proposed Inquiry into ‘Mother and Baby’ homes

- three pages following with (seven pages) appendices -

30 June 2014
Introduction

The Minister has an opportunity to establish a definitive narrative of this dark aspect of our history and establish, finally, the centrality of victims to that narrative whilst offering, on behalf of the whole nation, a gesture of compensation and reconciliation to them.

The proposed inquiry must consider the experiences of all victims equally. To do that it is necessary to understand how they were treated differently.

The system of sectarian separation and regulation of women and children, which the state inherited, but also facilitated and encouraged, has rendered Protestant experience invisible. The proposed inquiry should reject the approach to members of the Protestant community adopted by the 1937 Cussen Report, the 1970 Kennedy Report and the more recent Ryan Commission Report.

Following Cussen (1937), Kennedy (1970), page 3, section 1.5, stated:

'There is now no Certified School under Protestant management... the last closed in 1917. Children other than Roman Catholics who come before the courts are entrusted, through the local Gardaí, to the charge of the local pastor of their own denomination, who sees to it that they are placed in the care of suitable families or schools'.

The Ryan Commission (childabusecommission.ie/rpt/04-03.php), asserted:

3.56 The last Protestant Industrial School closed in 1917 so the only institution to which a child could be committed was Marlborough House. Children who came before the courts were usually entrusted, through the local Gardaí, to the care of the local clergyman or minister of religion concerned and he assumed responsibility for having them placed in the care of a suitable family, school or home.

3.57 In regard to children who were not committed by the courts but needed to be in care, many of the Protestant homes situated in the State were closed or amalgamated. Although the numbers of children for which the remaining homes had to provide was greatly reduced, so, were the sources of their finance. Sometimes, the closing of a home or sale of a redundant building resulted in the creation of a fund which was applied for the support of children in the remaining homes or in ordinary boarding schools. Money from these and other charities was used to assist needy parents to keep their children at home, each diocese having its Protestant Orphan Society, which made such grants. Dr Barnardo’s Homes also provide grants for Protestant orphans living in Ireland. Another relevant factor is that there was a waiting list of would-be adopters.

That is all these three reports state about vulnerable Protestant children within a sectarian system. Where Ryan elaborates, above, the report is inaccurate. There is no evidence that ‘needy’ children born out of wedlock, were kept ‘at home’. They were institutionalised like Roman Catholic children, for instance in the Bethany Home or in the Church of Ireland Magdalen Home. Barnardo’s in fact gave money to Bethany Home. It also took Bethany Children out of the state (but have so far refused to declare how many or what became of them). ‘Would-be [Protestant] adopters’ were prevented from adopting children in the Westbank Home, Greystones.

Protestant children were institutionalised, but state institutions ignored the abuse that accompanied their institutional treatment.

The narrative with regard to institutional abuse has tended to focus exclusively on the Roman Catholic Church, to the exclusion of state responsibility for a sectarian system of regulating women and the poor,
affecting both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Many Protestant institutions were (some still are), for this reason, invisible.

This sectarian system of regulation, in which marginalized Protestants were invisible within the larger community and also within their own, left them with no voice, official, academic or popular. Their narrative has emerged from the margins, from Derek Leinster’s two-volume auto-biography *(Hannah’s Shame and Destiny Unknown)* and follow-on research and testimony his pioneering efforts encouraged.

There is an all-island dimension to this issue, which must not be ignored. There should be cooperation with the Northern Ireland inquiry into institutional abuse, by examining extensive systemic cross border movements of women and children, for the purpose of adoption, confinement, giving birth, and fund raising. The experience of many survivors cannot be adequately understood if this is not done.

**Proposals**

In order to accommodate a just outcome the 2002 Redress Act scheme should be re-opened to admit excluded institutions.

A new model of inclusion should be put in place.

It should adopt the methodology of the Northern Ireland inquiry into institutional abuse. A survivor of institutional abuse, or their representative, may independently contact that inquiry and ask that their evidence be considered. Bethany survivors, locked out of consideration for many years, assert that the culture of exclusion must end here.

The redress scheme should remain open for survivors whose claims are dependent on recovery of documents during the necessary historical investigation phase of the proposed inquiry. Survivors could then document their allegations of abuse, illness, neglect, plus forced and international adoptions.

The group therefore calls for:

- Re-opening the 2002 Redress Act scheme and admission of all excluded institutions;
- Separation of necessary historical investigations from survivors' (their families and representatives) documented claim for redress, which must be given priority;
- A time limited inquiry into:
  1. sectarian regulation of Roman Catholic and Protestant communities,
  2. inspection regimes,
  3. mortality and associated illness,
  4. abuse, neglect,
  5. forced and illegal adoptions,
  6. cross border movements of children and pregnant women, involving structured co-operation with the inquiry into institutional abuse in Northern Ireland,
  7. movements of children to Britain, the US and elsewhere.
8. The possibility that the children in these homes were used for medical experiments.
   - A properly resourced modular or divisional type inquiry in which the various elements may be investigated simultaneously and therefore in both an efficient and timely manner;
   - Creating a statutory basis for handing over of all records of affected institutions to a public body with a scheme of access for survivors, their families, and bona fide researchers (with adequate safeguards).

This submission reflects the experience of survivors of,
   - The Bethany Home,
   - The Church of Ireland Magdalen Home (Denny House),
   - The Nurse Rescue Society,
   - Westbank (Mayil) orphanage

Additional homes of which survivors are aware: Avoca House Orphanage (Wicklow); Havergal Home (Limerick). There are others. Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Charlie Flanagan TD, stated that he was ‘anxious to include’, additional (to Bethany) homes, at our meeting on 25 June 2014. We attach here personal testimonies from survivors of those homes, reinforcing testimony given at that meeting, from:

   - Andrew Yates
   - Colm Begley
   - John Hill
   - Colleen Anderson

Contact Persons:
   - Derek Leinster, Chairperson, Bethany Survivors - 00 44 1 788 817311, derek.linster@talktalk.net.
   - Niall Meehan, Secretary, Bethany Survivors, Griffith College Dublin – 087 6428671, niall.meehan@gmail.com
   - Victor Stevenson, Co-ordinator, Protestant Survivors – 048 9147 7165, victor-stevenson@outlook.com
APPENDICES

Statements from:

• Andrew Yates
• Colm Begley
• John Hill
• Colleen Anderson
A submission related to terms of reference to Minister for Children and Youth Affairs by:

Andrew Yates

Dear Minister,

My life history following, as it affects and has been affected by Westbank ‘Orphanage’, illustrates why the institution should come within the terms of reference of your proposed inquiry. It has been compiled by my brother Colm (Begley’s) partner Helena O’Riordan. It is accurate.

Andrew Begley (Andrew’s original family name) was born in 1960 and first lived in the Bethany home. As a baby he was transferred to Mayil (later Westbank) ‘orphanage’. Andrew remained under its ‘care’ until approx 5/6 yrs old. He was one of the ‘lucky’ ones. Andrew remembers his time as being sad, hungry, cold and being ill treated until he was put into bed. This was the best part of his day. Andrew recalls being brought to Northern Ireland to work on a farm owned by a family called Robinson. They had 10 children themselves but took in children from Westbank to work. It was while working on the farm as a child that his adoptive father (an insurance salesman) spotted Andrew. Andrew remained on his mind, as he was in ill health, extremely thin, frail, weak and suffering from rickets.

Mr. Yates visited the farm and took Andrew on trips to his home to meet his family. On a subsequent visit Mr. Yates saw Andrew walking along the road with the other children, wearing no shoes, looking even less healthy. He took Andrew home and when he returned him later that night to the Robinson Farm he was met by Westbank owner Ms Adeline Mathers. She afterwards removed Andrew and bought him back to Westbank. Andrew then remained at the 'home' while other children traveled back and forth to Northern Ireland working on farms and in shops, etc. Andrew’s father told him that Mr. Robinson would pay Ms Mathers £150 for the children to come stay and work on the farm.

Mr. Yates was haunted by Andrew’s deteriorating condition. He approached a judge, a family friend Tom Burgess, whose son was a solicitor and also a social worker. Mr. Yates then went to Westbank Co Wicklow and demanded Ms Mathers give him Andrew. It took 2 years to finalise the adoption in Northern Ireland. Throughout this time Andrew remained in the Yates family home, having been forcibly extracted from Westbank.

In 1978 Andrew returned to Westbank looking for answers and his brother Colm (‘Robin’) Begley. He was given no information, but Ms Mathers arranged for all of the children in the home to put on a performance for Andrew. It was not until the year 2000 that the brothers met for the first time. Colm had also returned to Westbank looking for family, to be told that his mother was dead and they knew nothing about any siblings. Andrew found his mother, alive, in 1998. Both brothers and mother are in touch. They regularly visit each other and have enjoyed family outings and holidays. Colm Begley’s experience, from Bethany to Westbank, was more typical of most children successfully denied the opportunity of adoption. Colm remained until he was able to escape, at 18 years of age. Colm is submitting his own separate life story.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Yates

30 June 2014
A submission related to terms of reference to Minister for Children and Youth Affairs by:

Colm Begley (‘Robin Mathers’)

Dear Minister,

Westbank ‘Orphanage’ was a Protestant home in Greystones, Co Wicklow, which closed in 2002. Its overarching ethos was Plymouth Brethren, allied to small Protestant churches in Northern Ireland. However, the institution was also supported by the main Protestant denominations. It appeared to receive minimal attention from the authorities; it appears because it was a Protestant institution.

It should be included in your proposed inquiry into ‘mother and baby’ homes, though it contained only babies, often transferred from the Bethany Home, who were denied the right to a normal family life. Children grew up in Westbank to be used mainly as cross-border revenue generators for the home that confined them.

I was born in the Bethany Home Dublin in 1966 and was transferred as a baby to Westbank. The institution was run principally by Adeline Mathers (now deceased) and a woman still living who was a former resident. The institution was overseen by a committee made up of members of the public from the Bray/Greystones area and Bray Gospel Hall.

The people who came through Westbank including myself were treated horrifically - we were beaten, starved, neglected educationally and emotionally and abused. I also got injections regularly, as did 5 other boys in the ‘home’. We were told we were in a home. It was far from it. We were told we were a family and again it was anything but for most of us. We were told to call the two women who ran the home ‘Aunty’. We were told this because it would never otherwise have occurred to us that Westbank was a ‘family’ ‘home’.

We all had our first names changed and were told to use the Mathers surname until secondary school. It seems the local primary school was willing to accept this arrangement, but the secondary school, Newpark Comprehensive, Blackrock, insisted on our correct surnames. But the school accepted our incorrect newly given first names. It was only then that some children found out they were related to each other as sisters/brothers, etc. They would have found out as they entered the exam hall on the day to sit the entrance exam. Children were just told, write this new name on the top of the paper. It was a complete shock to the system. If it was possible children were never told, as Ms Mathers used many schools outside Greystones, including private ones, which reportedly (though it is as yet unconfirmed) waived fees.

While Ms Mathers did not generally allow people to be adopted, there were a few under the counter illegal adoptions arranged for a select few, held in high esteem in the associated Plymouth Brethren church. These were mainly from Britain and Northern Ireland, though also from elsewhere (see Colleen Anderson statement).

We were regularly taken out the state to Northern Ireland to work in Ms Mather’s sisters’ shops or to work in farms. In return, these people would arrange to visit the home in coaches with money they collected in churches and prisons (direct testimony is available), plus shopping centers. They would bring food, clothes, toys etc, though the children would never receive the new toys or clothes. We never saw much of the food as this was reserved for the two women guests and a chosen few. We lived mainly on Heinz baby food, that was donated by Heinz, and similarly donated Bolands’ bread, that Ms Mathers said was for her dogs. Ironically, we were often so hungry we eat dog biscuits.

Children were roared and shouted at, hit with clothes hangers and electrical cables. Religious people came and went unchecked and children were abused. Boys and girls were mainly kept until 18 (when most made a break for freedom and got out), but others stayed until their late 20s. These then sometimes preyed on the younger children, and sexually abused them.

To add insult to injury, the overseeing ‘committee’ members will not release our records or give them to a state agency for safe keeping. The records are reportedly being kept in one man’s home. I often wonder who sees them who has access to them. What if they get stolen...
or there is a fire? Who will inherit them after this man passes? Too many unanswered questions. They did at one stage give the records to PACT (http://www.pact.ie/) but removed them after the airing of an RTE Would You Believe documentary in 2011, in which myself and others spoke of the horrors of Westbank ‘home’.

I have struggled all my life to gain the information I now have (like most in the home my reading and writing skills are limited). On returning to the home the 'Aunty' told me, when I enquired, that my mother was dead. I have since found my mother who is very much alive, a brother, Andrew, who was also in the home but who I was never told of. He also came and visited the home and looked for me. But he was told I was not there. He was looking and trying to find out more by visiting, as he knew Ms Mathers was lying. This is where the name changes suited her, as my brother was looking for Colm the name my mum gave me, but the home called me Robin. Even to this day I struggle with something everyone takes for granted. People I grew up with call me Robin, while new friends and my family call me Colm.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story, which I have told to my partner Helena. Thank you also for meeting with me on Wednesday June 25 with people representing other Protestant institutions.

Colm Begley
(as told to Helena O Riordan)

30 June 2014
A submission related to terms of reference to Minister for Children and Youth Affairs by:

John Hill

Church of Ireland Magdalen Home
(Leeson Street, Eglinton Road, Baldoyle, Dublin, later Denny House, incorporating Nurse Rescue Society)

I was born in the Church of Ireland Magdalen Home in Leeson Street Dublin, later Eglinton Road, in 1946. I remained under the control of that organisation until I was about 16 years age, but they were in my life for a good few years after that.

I was fostered out as free labour to farmers from a very young age. I was always treated differently from the families and communities into which I was sent.

When I was 58 I found out by accident when applying for a passport that I had twin sister who was adopted into a family in Northern Ireland. Her existence was kept from me and vice versa. Though I made contact, time apart destroyed the possibility of a relationship between us. My mother sought me out when I was 21. I was told to go to Dublin at age 21, to the Wicklow Hotel, and then told, 'this is your mother, get on with it'.

This is my story.

I was in the Leeson Street home until I was about 1 year old. Then I was sent to the Baldoyle unit of the organisation for two years. In 1949 I was found to be badly malnourished with rickets. I could not walk. I was then sent to a family in Carlow until I was aged 10. I was required to do manual labour from about the age of five or six. I worked before I walked five miles each morning with another foster child taken in by the family to the local Roman Catholic school, though we were brought up Church of Ireland. The natural children of the family had gone to the Church of Ireland primary school.

We milked cows, collected sheep, fed poultry and generally worked as free child labour on the farm. We were slave labour I suppose. At the same time the family received money for us from public funds. We were isolated from other members of the family. At house parties we were sent off to bed. When the gentry called we were fed separately.

At age ten we two foster children were separated when sent to nearby farms in Templederry, near Nenagh, Tipperary. The work got heavier and heavier. I had to pulp turnips after school before being fed. I had to clean out cowsheds and bring in the hey.

At the local Church of Ireland school in Tipperary I was often physically abused. My clothes were taken off me and I was left out in the cold. I was called names I can't repeat by the other pupils. I was told I did not deserve to be there and taunted with the fact that I had no parents. They had no scruples. The teachers tolerated it. I would be locked outside in the middle of winter to stand outside. There were one or two good families. A small contractor took me under his wing and sometimes brought me in to town to be fed. I remember he gave me hints that I might have a sister. But the hints were vague and they did not mean anything to me at the time. I don't know how he knew this.

At age 13 I was sent to Wilson's Hospital School as a border. I was treated no better. And neither were the seven or so other foster children. There were lots of unpleasant things. I was beaten twice or three times a week by the principal. He used a bamboo cane that wrapped it self around your hand and cut you with its strands as it broke up. I would get 10-12 lashes at a time for being ahead of lessons or for nothing at all. I was always a target. We had no one to speak up for us, no parents. There were a few good teachers who might try to reason with the others. But they told us they had to toe the line or they would be targeted. Us foster children were put out of lessons on to the farm on the school grounds. More free labour, but the farm manager disagreed with this and he used to feed us in his house.

When I went back to Tipperary for the summer holidays at age 13, I was switched to another family, this time in Thurles. It was the same old routine of endless work. From bad to worse. I was treated appallingly and had to work all day until dark. I was on that farm for three years
until age 16. Then I was sent to work as a farm labourer for a nearby relation of this last family. It was from bad to worse again. I was very badly paid, barely enough to go to the pictures once a week. Food was at the farmer's discretion. Sometimes the maid would sneak out food to us.

I was always under the control of the Church of Ireland's Magdalen institution, that became Denny House. I think the offshoot that was in charge of us was the 'Nurses Rescue Society' but I was never able to find out much about it. At no stage was I given a normal family life, except where someone took pity on the others and me. Those were the only places I saw kindness.

I was a slave all my young life. My mother was a slave to prejudice, forced to give birth in secret. She kept her twin children secret from all her family for most of her life, and kept her twin children secret from each other. Her family found out about me at her funeral. This badly affected relations. I was out in the cold again. I am 68 years old. I married my wife Sheila in 1971. We have twin girls and a boy.

The Irish state and the church of Ireland were my parents. They let me down, badly. I think they should admit to their sins against children like me and the foster children who grew up with me. I tried to keep contact with the other foster children, but most fell apart and took to drink and to drugs.

Would you blame them? I don't.

I want my files that are now held by PACT (formerly the Protestant Adoption Society), and the Rotunda, taken over by the government. I want access to my mother's files, that are denied to me. I want to know how the Magdalen Home operated. I want to know why they split up brothers and sisters, twin children. I want to know why my files were transferred to the Nurses Rescue Society and then to PACT. I want answers. I can handle the truth. Can the government give it to me? I want justice.

**John Hill, 11 June 2014**
A submission related to terms of reference to Minister for Children and Youth Affairs by:

**Colleen Anderson**

Although I was born in the Republic of an Irish mother, I managed to be spirited out of the country through the mediation of Adeline Mathers [owner of Mayil/Westbank Orphanage] and taken to Scotland. My adoption went against the 1952 Adoption Act where it is stated that no child of a marriage could be put up for adoption, nor an Irish baby be taken out of the country without the necessary permissions. I was taken cross-border to NI in the middle of the night, very secret going on.

My adoptive parents had my identity changed and at no point were Irish authorities informed of the intention to adopt. I had to have my adoption formally recognized in Dublin just a few years ago to obtain a passport!

Also I had 5 older siblings of whom I knew nothing, but Adeline Mathers later admitted she knew my mother and my family and that there had been a meeting of my mother and the couple who took me away from Mayil (later moved to Westbank) as I was handed over. The shock of all these discoveries has been almost too much to bear in recent years. I have done fairly well in life, so I have people to fall back on, but all the concealment and illegalities have touched me badly. Miss Mathers seems to have moved with impunity, arranging all sorts of things and usually for a sum of money. My adoptive parents were personal friends of Miss Mathers and I was taken back and forth to the home in Greystones often on holiday where I got to know many of the children under her care, and observed many goings on.

How did she manage to operate illegally cross-border? Why were identities changed and private arrangements sought? Why were families split at a whim? Why were laws and statutes flouted?

**Colleen Anderson**, 22 July 2013
Joyce McSharry – My Story (as told to Niall Meehan)

April 2015

My birth mother Emily Sheppey was born in Islington London in 1928. She was a member of the Church of England.

She gave birth to me in 1951 in the Protestant evangelical Bethany Home, Dublin, Ireland. She arrived in Dublin via her sister Eadie who lived in Keady, Armagh, Northern Ireland.

I was born 20 May 1951 and remained in Bethany Home with my mother until the following December, at which time I underwent a peculiar irregular adoption.

Over the last twelve years I pieced together my roots with some success. I have two life stories, one told to me, one I discovered.

MY LIFE PART ONE
I am unable to obtain a long version of my birth certificate, as the state has only an irregular version of my details.

I was baptised twice and renamed once. I was baptised first, ‘privately’ (according to the baptismal certificate), on 5 June 1951 in the Church of Ireland Zion Parish, as Jacqueline Anne Sheppey. I was re-baptised on 16 December 1951 in Sandymount Presbyterian Church, as Heather Joyce Dawson (which became my name). This theologically unnecessary act was one of a number designed to erase my other life.

Adoption became legal in southern Ireland after passage of the 1952 Adoption Act. I possess two adoption documents: one drawn up in 1951 by a Dublin firm of solicitors, Hayes & Sons, the another one for the Irish state in 1955. There are serious question marks over the legality of both.

My adoptive parents always informed me that my mother died in 1951. They said that a social worker visited a flat in which a woman was found dead in her bed from TB. I was reportedly discovered in the bed beside her. I was brought to St Ultan’s hospital and then to the Bethany Home. These details were elaborated upon as I grew.

The story is a lie. I was shocked to discover in 2013 that my Parents always knew it to be a lie.

My mother Emily did die in a flat, but aged 48, lonely and alone, apart from her pet dog, a poodle, in Weston Super Mare, UK, in August 1976.

In 2013 and 2014 I obtained adoption documents from PACT (formerly the Protestant Adoption Society, now Here-to-Help). One was a so-called ‘Adoption Agreement’, dated 1 December 1951. I also was also given separate documentation in 1954-55, issued under the 1952 Adoption Act.

Another former Bethany resident Tom McClean, who was never adopted, was similarly informed, in his case that his parents burned to death in a house fire. Like Joyce, he discovered the truth many years later, after they died of natural causes. McClean was sent to England to Mr. Fegan’s Home for Boys aged 3 in 1946, where he underwent ‘almost twelve years of constant battle for survival’. Rough Passage, Hutchinson/Stanley Paul, 1983, pp3-4.
The 1951 ‘agreement’ was drawn up by Hayes & Sons solicitors, 15 St Stephen’s Green Dublin. Its content is deeply upsetting. It indicates that my mother was probably pressured into giving me up. My adoptive parents participated in this charade and were therefore aware that my mother was alive. I may have been told the ‘death-of-TB-in-a-flat’ story in an effort to prevent me from searching for my mother, and the document may have been designed to frighten my mother into not seeking me out.

Besides stipulating that I was to be brought up Protestant, the penniless Emily was threatened in the ‘agreement’ that should she attempt to contact her daughter, she would be liable retrospectively for £26 minimum per annum (valued at €913.25 in 2013), plus educational, medical, clothing and other costs. The document appointed Ralph Walker, an owner of Hayes and Sons, as my mother’s ‘attorney’, but not to represent Emily’s interests. It was designed so as to avoid contacting Emily under anticipated Adoption Act legislation. This was explicitly stated. Ralph Walker was a nephew of Bethany Home Residential Secretary, Hettie Walker, who also signed the ‘agreement’. He was additionally an owner of the Irish Times newspaper. Hayes and Sons are the Irish Times legal representatives to this day. A retired senior partner is a son of another signatory, then Bethany Matron Katherine F. Glover. Ralph Walker and my adoptive father were free masons, who are required to provide assistance to one another. Perhaps they did so on this occasion. My father became a Free Mason not long before I was handed over to them by the Bethany Home.

Emily Sheppey’s rights were not safeguarded or protected. Despite what the ‘agreement’ asserts, it can be doubted if giving up her child was a free choice in the normal sense, on Emily’s part. I have a specific reason for saying this, which comes later.

When adoption under the 1952 Act became operational in 1953, my legal adoption was sought. My mother had to be traced to give her consent. That legal requirement was flouted.

In 2014 PACT gave me a short letter dated 29 April 1954 from the Church of Ireland rector of the parish of Keady Co Armagh, whose name was blanked out. In 1951 Emily, who had arrived from Keady, left Bethany to go back there. Janet Passley of PACT confirmed this to me in 2002. The letter was addressed to Bethany Matron Katherine Glover. The letter writer testified that Emily Sheppey was an Anglican (from CofE to CofI). The rector stated that he

2 Hayes & Sons also drew up a 1945 ‘agreement’ for then Bethany resident Derek Leinster’s mother, Hannah. In email correspondence with Niall Meehan in 2010 and 2011 a company representative, Joe O’Malley, could find no Bethany Home documentation. A reported conversation he had with retired partner Adrian Glover, son of last Bethany Matron Katherine Glover (who was involved in both of Joyce McSharry’s ‘adoptions), elicited a denial of knowledge of such documentation. Adrian’s wife Audrey is custodian of the records of the Ovoca House Orphanage Wicklow. It was set up in the Bethany Home in the mid-1930s, by Audrey’s parents, Bethany Managing Committee member, J.W. (Jack) Densmore and his wife Mary. The orphanage moved to Wicklow in 1939. One of the trustees was Bethany Home Residential Secretary Hettie Walker. Hayes & Sons was involved in winding up the trust in the early 1980s.

3 I keep a detailed diary and that is why I am sure of this information. While Janet Passley did not tell me how she knew this, it is clear that this address was known to Bethany Home. Why otherwise be in contact with a Church of Ireland clergyman there in 1954.
had no knowledge of Emily’s whereabouts since she ‘left here’ (Keady) and added, ‘nor do I expect ever to hear from her again in this life’. This odd form of words and the declaration that Emily was Protestant is what made a legal adoption possible by the Presbyterian couple who became my adoptive parents.

Had Bethany Home written to Eadie, Emily’s sister, in Keady, Armagh, they would have discovered that Emily still lived there, across the road from the rectory.

The rector lied.

It may be concluded that discovery was not a desired outcome from this charade. There is good reason to believe, therefore, that my adoption was illegal.

Surprisingly, the rector’s name was blanked out by PACT on the letter, written on plain, not headed, paper. However, a separate official adoption document revealed his surname, ‘Love’.

In Adoption Act documentation I was provided there is a questionnaire. In answer to, ‘Is the child an orphan (both parent’s dead)?’, the response is, ‘See letter from Rev. Love’. This vitally important question was, in other words, not answered. This impression is reinforced by the answer to, ‘Have you obtained the mother’s consent to the adoption’. The response is, ‘see letter attached’. In answer to obtaining consent from ‘guardians’ the answer is ‘yes’, presumably meaning my adoptive parents, who were never my guardians in the ordinary sense.

Then, in answer to the adoption board asking if obtaining Emily’s consent should be ignored, there is the clearly inaccurate response, ‘Mother cannot be traced’. Hayes and Sons were involved also in this process. They oversaw a 10 May 1954 declaration by Bethany matron, Katherine Glover, to the effect that Emily Sheppey gave up her child of the own free will. There is every indication of not wishing to hear from Emily.

MY LIFE PART TWO

I had a very strict religiously based upbringing in which lying was especially frowned upon. Since obtaining the 1951 so-called ‘Adoption Agreement’ in 2013, I have felt unable to visit my adoptive parent’s graves.

I had a difficult time in the Diocesan School on Adelaide Road Dublin. The headmistress was an ignorant woman who did not appear to like adopted children. Because of this I was switched to a Church of Ireland boarding school in Celbridge, Co Kildare, though there are countless schools in Dublin where I could have been sent. On occasion, I ran away from boarding school.

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4 Rev’d Love’s forenames, Hector, William, are to be found in the Church of Ireland Directory. He was indeed rector in Keady at that time. Thank you Miriam Moffitt, for looking this up.
5 PACT sent the letter again in July 2014, after I queried censorship of the rector’s name.
My adoptive mother brought me to the Bethany home ‘Prayer Day’ every year. She never tired of showing me a room with cots. This was the place from which I was removed, she said. I found the experience frightening and the repetition unnerving. She also brought me to annual Mayil/Westbank orphanage open days in Wicklow, that received Bethany children. According to survivors, few were ever adopted. Perhaps I was supposed to be thankful I was not left in Bethany or sent to Westbank. A third option, being taken by my mother, could not then have occurred to me as a possible option.

I later became a nurse and currently live on an invalidity pension. I am married with an adopted daughter.

My LIFE PART THREE

Twelve years ago, In January 2002, I began attempting to trace my roots by contacting PACT (which holds Bethany Home records). For a €100 fee, they first gave me a copy of a single line in a register and, in May 2003, my first cousin Pam’s UK telephone number. This was the only information about me PACT’s Janet Passley said existed.

Before I made contact in May 2003, Janet Passley rang and spoke to Pam’s husband John In 2002. She established with John that Pam had an aunt, Emily Sheppey, told him about Emily’s child and asked John if Pam would mind a call from Emily’s daughter.

In a professional approach, these questions would have been communicated directly to Pam.

I therefore rang Pam cold. She was astonished to hear this strange Irishwoman, about whom she had recently learned. What astonished me was that Pam knew my mother, who was alive for the first 25 years of my life. I did not know in 2002 that my (by now deceased) adoptive parents also knew. Finding out in this way made me start to question all I thought I knew.

Pam knew her aunt Emily (my mother), because Emily visited William, Pam’s father and Emily’s brother, during the 1970s. In 1975, a year before her death, Emily informed her sister Eadie’s children (cousins whose contact details PACT did not originally communicate to me), that she was due to undergo major surgery.

I broke off contact with Pam at the time as we both became ill, and because I found the information that my mother Emily was alive until 1976 emotionally draining.

Here is a curious question? How was it possible in 2002 to do what appeared impossible (but was in fact much easier) in 1954, contact Emily Sheppey or, in this latter case, her family? I intend to get to the bottom of this with PACT.

I contacted Pam again in 2013. We spent months talking on the phone getting to know each other. It was decided I would go over to London to meet her and the family. My husband Kevin and I arrived in Heathrow. At this stage I was terrified. Pam and her husband John were to meet us and everything was going through my mind, ‘They are not going to be there’, etc. They were there ok and gave me such a welcome, bringing us to their home, making tea and talking. When Kevin and I walked into Pam and John's house, Kevin said,
‘This is a home and I feel so welcome’. That says it all. That night we went out for a meal and to our hotel locally. They brought us everywhere.

I had also contacted my mother’s other brother, Fran, who lived in Shrewsbury. I told him I was coming over and would like to meet him. He didn’t commit one way or the other. Nearer the day Fran said he couldn’t make it. I suggested we meet in a hotel, as he wanted to know who else would be there. He had not met the rest of the family for years. My cousin had wanted us to stay with them but I decided not to on this occasion.

The next day Uncle Fran rang my mobile and said, ‘I am on my way to see you. It will take a few hours’. Such excitement. I had now met Pam’s two sons and their children, and was about to meet my mum’s brother.

In he walked hugs and kisses and he just said to me, ‘You are Emmy’. Photos taken. Uncle Fran was always aware of my existence. I had actually brought a family back together again.

Fran gave me a very special and to this day treasured gift from my mother, 12 photographs of me from my Christening to six months old. It was the first time I had seen photographs from this part of my life. Fran kept them perfectly preserved after my mother died nearly forty years earlier in 1976. She kept them all of her life.

Uncle Fran died suddenly in January 2014 aged 77. How lucky I was that I had met him and we talked on the phone. He even sent me a Christmas card for a special niece. He looked after my baby photos all those years. Maybe he knew more than I did that he would one day pass them on.

I stayed with Pam and John and the three of us went to Shrewsbury for the funeral. At the funeral I met more cousins. We get on so well. Pam and John looked after me as if I was royalty. Unbelievable. Pam and I have so much in common down to a rare blood group. Our medical history is a disaster. Pam says now I am the family she never had and we can say anything to each other, which we do. Our phone calls last approximately 3 hours.

I obtained my mother’s death certificate in July 2013. I discovered she was buried in 1976 in a cemetery in Weston Super Mare. I also discovered, after initial difficulty, her final resting place in an un-purchased grave. Luckily, I was allowed to buy her grave for £1,000 and to erect a plaque and verse as a tribute for her.

I visited Emily my mum’s grave on my birthday for the first time in May 2014, when everything was complete. She had spent a very short period herself in an orphanage, had never married and seemingly had quite a lonely life, dying at 48 years of age. She disappeared from her family from the mid 1950s until the early 1970s, keeping by her side at all times the photographs of the baby she gave up.

Emily may have lived and died of a broken heart. Maybe my pictures brought her both happiness and sadness. I don’t believe she was in a position to exercise free will when she gave me up. The pictures show a happy mother and a happy baby. They are not photographs of a mother anticipating separation.
In July 2014 PACT gave me the telephone number of my cousin Kathy, Eadie’s daughter. When I Rang, Kathy told me that in August 2013 she gave PACT permission for her details to be given to me. When she heard nothing, because I was not given them, she assumed I was not interested. I was told originally by PACT that Cathy and her brother were not interested in talking to me. This is one of many discrepancies in my encounters with PACT.

I also have first cousins in Shrewsbury, England, Tammy and her husband Rodney and their four girls. Uncle Fran’s daughter Russell and his wife Deborah Uncle Fran’s Son. We keep in regular contact via the Internet.

My Mother Emily’s sister, my late Aunt Eadie, had 6 children and they live in Northampton. I communicate by phone on a regular basis with Mick and partner Norma, Liam and Kath, and Kathleen and Pete. We also email and use the Internet. They have been so good to me since I made contact with them and we will be meeting up in July 2015.

I can’t forget my very special cousin Pam my forever-friend, who has done so much for me. I Feel I know her all my life, and of course her husband John.

Kevin my hubby is a man in a million. Had to live through all this for 13 years even though he didn’t know half of what was going on. He put up with all my serious illnesses - ‘but you too love what I have found’.

Louise my beautiful daughter cried for me when she read the early version of my story. She could not believe what my life had been or that I hadn’t said anything to anyone. Louise loves dogs and I found out my mum Emily’s little dog was called Mitzy.

**PACT QUESTIONS**

One final point on PACT, which holds my details. When I first approached them twelve years ago, Janet Passley, told me that the only information in PACT’s possession was a single line in a register and later my cousin Pam’s telephone number. Through persistence, I obtained more information in 2013-14, the 1954 rector Love letter, for example, and the 1951 ‘Adoption Agreement’. PACT’s Anne O’Connor gave them to me.

In addition to asking how PACT got Pam’s details, my further questions are:

• If this information was in PACT all along, why was I lied to?

• If it has been obtained subsequently from another source, what is this source and what other valuable information does it contain?

I would like the state to take over my confidential details, and to hold all such information in the public interest. I want everything concerning my mother and me that is currently in PACT’s knowledge or possession. I want any other holders of confidential information to hand it over.

**FINALLY**

I would love to contact any other mothers present in Bethany between April and November 1951. It may help me to better understand the awful circumstances my mother endured there.
Email Correspondence, Niall Meehan and Hayes & Sons, 2011 – 2014

From: David Phelan <dphelan@hayes-solicitors.ie>
Date: 28 July 2014 09:50
Subject: RE: Hayes & Sons and the Bethany Home
To: Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>

Mr Meehan

I can only reiterate that we do not have records in relation to the Bethany Nursing Home or any of the other institutions that you mentioned. We therefore do not have a copy of the adoption agreements from 1945 and 1951 to which you have referred.

By necessity, that greatly limits the assistance which I can give to you, to Mr Leinster and to Ms McSharry. That is not an unwillingness to assist on our part, it is the fact that we are simply not in a position to be able to provide assistance.

You have stated that I have not contested the authenticity of the documents. In fact, I am not in a position to comment either way on the authenticity of the documents, given that we do not hold any records here or any copies of the documents here. It is not in fact correct to say that I have a duty to you to explain the position that the firm now holds no documents. I can only repeat however what I have said to you before, that it is not usual for a firm to retain documents going back 60 or 70 years. In an effort to see if we can assist Mr Leinster and Ms McSharry, we have however gone further than that in terms of internal enquiries with members of staff to see if anyone can shed light on these issues, and enquiries with retired former partners, but unfortunately to no avail.

You have made reference to letters from 1979 and 1981 which it appears from your email relate to the Avoca Manor Orphanage, Co Wicklow. We have no similar records or documents here. You have asked if I know who “LIA” was. I understand from a colleague that there was a member of secretarial staff employed in the office at around the time you have referenced with those initials. I am informed that she has since passed away.

I confirm that I did previously ask others in this office if they could assist in shedding any light on the issues you have raised, including a request to the longest serving member of staff. As I stated to you previously, and repeat now, none of us are familiar with the Bethany Home or other institutions you mentioned.

I do not intend to enquire again of Adrian Glover in relation to these matters. As you know, my colleague Joe O’Malley already made an enquiry with him a number of years ago now. Similarly, I do not at this stage intend to contact the family of Ralph Walker, given that he died in 1980 which is 34 years ago.

It is entirely a matter for you if you want to share with me a copy of the documentation you mention. On the basis of the information you have chosen to share with me to date, I have taken active steps to see if I can assist in shedding any light on the matters you raise, but for the reasons I have outlined to you on a number of occasions now, it is proving not possible for us to assist.

Yours sincerely

David Phelan

From: Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>
Date: 15 July 2014 17:06
Subject: Re: Hayes & Sons and the Bethany Home
To: David Phelan <dphelan@hayes-solicitors.ie>

Mr Phelan,

Thank you for again replying (14 July). I do not want to prolong this correspondence any more than you presumably do. Please bear with me as I explain and outline what I think is a reasonable position on behalf of Derek Leinster and Joyce McSharry.

What precisely 'follow[s]' from what you have written about the 'Adoption Agreement[s]' dated 1945 and 1951, barring your firm’s name and then address, that so profoundly affected the lives of Derek and Joyce? Does it follow, for instance, that you possess no material from the era in question? If you do, how is it that this material is, it would seem, missing?

You have not contested the authenticity of the documents. I take it therefore that you agree that at one time your firm undertook the work of drawing them up. In the case of Emily Sheppey (Joyce’s mother), then senior partner (and proprietor I believe) Ralph Walker also undertook to give consent on Emily’s behalf if legalised adoption arrived on the statute book. Is any of this contested?

In the absence of contrary evidence, it can be agreed that these are genuine Hayes and Sons originating documents, that affect still living human beings. They presumably therefore existed at some point in the offices of your firm. The documents then permanently left your firm. Somebody removed or destroyed them. This was done with authority, or without it. If either the former or the latter then you have a duty to explain who, when, why and how. If there is anything here you have difficulty with, perhaps you might indicate.

I asked about institutions related to the Bethany Home.

Ovoca Manor originated in the Bethany Home in 1935 (originally named the Emmanuel Home) and departed for Wicklow in 1939. Bethany Managing Committee member J.W. Densmore ran it alongside his wife Mary. He was on the Bethany Home Managing Committee. Two members of that committee, including Hettie Walker (Ralph’s Aunt), joined J.W. Densmore as Trustees of Ovoca Manor.

You state that Hayes & Sons posses no records relating to the Ovoca Manor Orphanage Avoca, Co Wicklow (aka, the Emmanuel Home Charity).

I have copies of letters on Hayes and Sons headed notepaper on that very subject. They contain, ‘Our Ref AG/LIA’ and are dated 25 October 1979, 20 March, 10 April 1981, together with two letters in reply to Hayes and Sons on the same subject, dated 24 March, 30 April 1981, one containing ‘your Ref: AG/LIA’ (the other, probably in error, ‘AG/UA’).

The ‘AG’ reference is possibly to then Senior partner Adrian Glover, son of Bethany Home matron, Katherine F Glover. In addition, who was ‘LIA’, if you know? Possibly someone in a personal assistant or secretarial position? Is s/he contactable now? Have you asked others with the firm in administrative or legal capacities, currently or previously, if they can shed any light on this? Some remnant of corporate memory surely resides somewhere inside the firm or among its retired employees/partners, in relation to the Bethany Home and/or related institutions.
Dear Mr Phelan,

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you with regard to your July 4th email and my initial response.

I am informed that an important document like an 'Adoption Agreement' should not be destroyed. I am also informed that where important documents are destroyed, a record would normally be kept.

In the absence of such a record or of the documents themselves, in this case it appears as if the documents have been removed from your firm. That is a logical deduction, is it not? You appear unduly complacent if this context.

Should you not consider calling in the authorities if indeed important legal documents are no longer in your possession? Does your firm, or did your firm, allow the permanent removal of documents by firm personnel without notice? Please explain.

Three additional questions, if I may:

• Why, in particular, was retired partner, Adrian Glover, asked for his state of knowledge with regard to Bethany Home documentation by Joe O'Malley in January 2011?
• Do you have documents relating to the Emmanuel Home Orphanage, that became the Avoca (or 'Ovoca') House (or 'Manor') Orphanage in Wicklow? The orphanage began operations in the Bethany Home in 1935 and moved out in 1939.
• Did your firm have any dealings with the Westbank Orphanage in Wicklow (previously 'Mayil', previously 'Burnaby', previously the 'Protestant Home for Orphan Destitute Girls', Harold's Cross). Children were sent directly from Bethany to this institution.

Perhaps you could let me have your further considered thoughts and proposals for resolving this matter. I will pass them on to Derek Leinster and to Joyce McSharry, whose separation from their mothers was facilitated by documents drawn up by your firm.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan

On 10 July 2014 09:11, Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com> wrote:

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David Phelan.

From: Niall Meehan [mailto:niall.meehan@gmail.com]
Sent: 10 July 2014 09:17
To: David Phelan

Subject: Re: Hayes & Sons and the Bethany Home

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Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan

From: Niall Meehan <mailto:niall.meehan@gmail.com>
Date: 4 July 2014 22:23
Subject: Re: Hayes & Sons and the Bethany Home
To: David Phelan <dphelan@hayes-solicitors.ie>

Dear Mr Phelan,

Thank you for your reply late on Friday evening.

If the documents have been removed from your firm you are unlikely to find them in it. You should call in the authorities to investigate the possible theft of the documents. Or is it your position that company files relating to living persons were removed at the whim of employees and that you do not care? If so, I find that surprising and irresponsible.

This is an initial response. I may return to it on Monday.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan

On Friday, 4 July 2014, David Phelan <dphelan@hayes-solicitors.ie> wrote:

Mr Meehan

Joe O'Malley has passed your email to me as I am Managing Partner of the firm.

As Joe indicated in his emails to you, searches were carried out and we have been unable to locate any records relating to Bethany Home. Furthermore, none of us working in the firm now were in the firm back during the periods mentioned in your emails and we do not have any knowledge of the Bethany Home.

In those circumstances I do not see any way, unfortunately, in which we can further assist. It is not that we are unwilling to assist if there was a way we could do so, it is that in the absence of locating any relevant documents there is nothing more we can do

I hope you can accept that we have tried to see if we can assist, but that we are not in a position to do so.

Yours sincerely.

David Phelan

From: Niall Meehan <mailto:niall.meehan@gmail.com>
Sent: 03 July 2014 13:35
To: Joe O'Malley; Justine McCarthy; Joyce McSharry
Subject: Re: Hayes & Sons and the Bethany Home

Dear Joe O'Malley,

Thank you for the prompt reply.

However, your firm appears to have had an ongoing relationship with the Bethany Home, augmented by familial ties to persons running the home and perhaps to its religious ethos, in important matters relating to the care and upbringing of children, and including separation of children from their natural mothers.

It is your responsibility as a firm to seek recovery of the documents in question at the earliest opportunity, particularly as they relate to persons who are still alive, who are seeking information on the circumstances of separation from their natural mothers.

I would be obliged if you could refer this matter to those who run your firm, who might consider this issue and respond.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Meehan

On 3 July 2014 13:08, Joe O'Malley <jomalley@hayes-solicitors.ie> wrote:

Dear Mr. Meehan,

Thank you for your email today which I have noted. Unfortunately, I cannot see how I can be of any further assistance to you having carried out a search for any files or records within the control of the firm in 2010/2011 and having raised this issue with Adrian Glover at that time. You might also note that Mr. Glover retired from this firm approximately 14 years ago. I have no further ideas on how I could provide any additional assistance to you.

Best wishes,

Joe.

Joe O’Malley
Partner
Hayes Solicitors \ Lavery House \ Earlsfort Terrace \ Dublin 2 \ Ireland
T: +353 (0)1 6624747 (office) \ F: +353 (0)1 6612163 \ E: jomalley@hayes-solicitors.ie
www.hayes-solicitors.ie

From: Niall Meehan <mailto:niall.meehan@gmail.com>
Sent: 03 July 2014 12:23
To: Joe O'Malley
Subject: Hayes & Sons and the Bethany Home

Dear Joe O’Malley,

We corresponded by email in 2010-11 in relation to records Hayes & Sons might have relating to the Bethany Home. This was on foot of a reference on by the PACT counselling service and a 1945 adoption document concerning then Bethany resident Derek Leinster.

You mentioned (see below) speaking to retired partner Adrian Glover and his being “not aware of the existence of any records relating to Bethany Home”.

Yours sincerely.

David Phelan
It may interest you to know that in the past two weeks I have come into possession of a Hayes & Sons 'Adoption Agreement' dated 1 December 1951, concerning the adoption of a Bethany Home Child named Jacqueline Sheppey. The document appoints as the 'attorney' of Emily Sheppey (the child's mother) Mr Ralph Walker of Hayes & Sons (nephew of Bethany Home Residential Secretary, Hettie Walker). It also contains the signature 'K. F. Glover', Matron of the Bethany Home, the mother I believe of Adrian Glover.

I write on behalf of the person named Jacqueline Sheppey in the document.

Is it possible that Mr Glover is mistaken or that his memory may have failed him. Is it possible that there are records of your company stored outside of its control?

Please let me know how this matter may be progressed.

Regards,

Niall Meehan
087 6428671

From: Joe O'Malley <jomalley@hayes-solicitors.ie>
Date: 19 January 2011 15:45
Subject: RE: From Niall Meehan (Re:From Bethany Home Rathgar former resident - request for information)
To: Niall Meehan <niall.meehan@gmail.com>

Dear Mr. Meehan,

Thank you for bearing with me since your last email. I have caused a further search to be made of our records (both on site and in storage) and I regret to inform you that I cannot locate any records whatsoever relating to Bethany Home, Rathgar. I have also discussed the matter with a former partner with the firm, namely Mr. Adrian Glover and he has informed me that he is not aware of the existence of any records relating to Bethany Home. I'm sorry that I cannot be of any assistance to you.

Best wishes,

Joe.

Joe O'Malley
jomalley@hayes-solicitors.ie
Hayes solicitors
Incorporating Fawcitt solicitors and Eugene Davy Solicitors
Lavery House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland.
Tel +353 1 6624747 Fax +353 1 6612163
December, 1978

Miss Anne Lyons
Senior Youth Employment Adviser
National Rehabilitation Board
25 Clyde Road
Dublin

Dear Miss Lyons,

I would be very grateful if you would take an interest in a particular case which has been brought to my notice.

There is a home in Greystones for children who are abandoned or unwanted. It is Miss Mather's Children's Home, Westbank, Greystones. Miss Mather is the person in charge. There is a child there named Samuel O'Connor who is about 14 years of age. I understand that he was intellectually very bright but sometime ago he fell off a train and has suffered brain damage which restricts both his speech and the power of one of his arms. I understand that Miss Mather is worried about his future as at the moment he is not undergoing any education or training. It occurred to me that perhaps it would be appropriate for your service to take an interest in him at this stage and to guide him towards some vocational career.

I am sorry for adding to your work but I would be grateful if you would let me know the outcome of any consideration you may give to Samuel's problems.

Yours sincerely,

signed

Blanche King
Albert
Miss Cleary
I.R.
Dr. J.A. Robins  
Principal Officer  
Department of Health  
Hawkins House  
Dublin 2

Re: Samuel O' Connor, c/o Miss Mather's Childrens Home,  

Dear Dr. Robins,

Further to your referral letter, dated 4.12.78, concerning the above boy. I recently visited Samuel and Miss Mathers at the Childrens Home in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. Samuel is at present attending Sunbeam House School, Bray. His placement, there was arranged by the psychologist and social worker attached to the National Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Dun Laoire. After Christmas I will visit the teaching staff at Sunbeam House School. I will monitor Samuel's progress at Sunbeam House, in the short term, and in the long term, advise regarding placement either in a community workshop or in open employment.

I will keep you informed concerning future developments in this case.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

TONY LEE  
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ADVISER

25 Clyde Road - Dublin 4 - Ireland
"A" BRANCH,
GARDA SIÓCHÁNA HEADQUARTERS,
KILMAINHAM.

8th December, 1933.

To Each Superintendent.

Committal of Protestant Children to
Reformatory or Industrial Schools.

Children Act, 1908. School Attendance Act, 1926.
Children Act, 1929.

As you are aware there are no Reformatory or
Industrial Schools in the Free State to which Protestant
children may be committed under the above Acts as a
result of which difficulty is sometimes experienced by
Garda Officers in dealing with such children whose
circumstances or conduct render them liable to committal.

As a means of partially overcoming this
difficulty it has been decided that, in the event of any
such cases arising in your District, you should
communicate the facts to the local Clergyman of the
child's religious denomination (Church of Ireland, Presbyterians, etc., as the case may be), thus giving
him an opportunity of consulting the Trustees of the
Meath School Funds with a view to having the child dealt
with under Section 58(7) of the Children Act, 1908.

For the information of Clergymen who may be
unaware of the fact you will please note that the
Secretary to the Trustees of the Meath School Funds is
Mr. Samuel Gordon, 15, Molesworth Street, Dublin.

Care should be exercised to ensure that in
future all cases coming within the scope of this
instruction are dealt with as indicated above.

Please acknowledge receipt.

LIAM O MURCHÁDA.
[Signature]

7/12.
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