

Ceasefire: The Impact of Republican Culture on the Ceasefire Process in Northern Ireland

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INTRODUCTION

On 31 August 1994, the Provisional IRA (PIRA) declared a cessation of military operations. "Recognizing the potential of the current situation and in order to enhance the democratic peace process and underline our definitive commitment to its success, the leadership of Óglaigh na hÉireann [Youth of Ireland] have decided that as of midnight Wednesday, 31 August there will be a complete cessation of military operations. All our units have been instructed accordingly."¹ For the past 30 years, the conflict in Northern Ireland had been raging almost without pause. British security forces had attempted to control the violence by establishing roadblocks, conducting house searches, altering the judicial system to allow conviction on informant testimony, instituting internment without trial for paramilitary suspects, garrisoning over 30,000 British soldiers in Northern Ireland, instituting broadcasting bans of Sinn Féin and conducting intensive interrogation of suspects. Despite the best attempts of the British government over the past few decades to thwart PIRA, the conflict persisted. To sustain a low-intensity war under these conditions requires more than guns and ammunition; it requires the support of a political community, extensive organization of economic resources and cultural values that give meaning to the conflict.

The duration of the conflict in Northern Ireland cannot be understood without reference to Irish Republican culture and history. Similarly, the ceasefire itself must be viewed in light of the history and culture of Irish Republicanism. PIRA's refusal, for example, to decommission weapons or to declare a "permanent" ceasefire as a precondition to entering into negotiations is generally seen by observers as a purely utilitarian strategic decision. After all, handing over guns with no guarantee that what is negotiated will actually be forthcoming creates unnecessary vulnerability. But behind the refusal to decommission weapons are not just a utilitarian political strategy but a set of cultural values.

This article begins with a discussion of the forces that sustained the conflict, including Republican culture, British security policy and the antithetical political positions of the major players in the conflict. This article describes how the low-intensity, military sustainability and cultural entrenchment of the conflict resulted in a stalemate between PIRA and the British Army. Noting that the ambivalence of a military stalemate has consequences for a ceasefire process, the article reviews some of the political and military events during the ceasefire and then argues that the major stumbling blocks during the ceasefire process were not simply logistical, but deeply connected to the culture of Irish Republicanism. In this regard, it also discusses the constitutional and organizational structure of Sinn Féin and the Provisional Irish Republican Army in order to demonstrate how the history and culture of Republicanism affected the ceasefire and prospects for peace.

Sustaining Perpetual Low-Intensity Conflict

The conflict in Northern Ireland is one of the longest running low-intensity conflicts of the twentieth century. The continuity of the violence has confounded academic commentators and military analysts alike. In the thousands of books that have been published concerning the conflict in Northern Ireland, explanations ranging from religious hatred to material gain have been advanced to account for the longevity of the conflict and the intractability of the parties in negotiating a settlement.² But the key to the continuity of the conflict is neither economic nor sectarian, but cultural. Ephemeral cultural values have allowed the Republican community to continue fighting for British withdrawal and the reunification of Ireland against one of the most sophisticated military organizations in the world for 30 years.³

At the heart of Republican culture is a particular interpretation of Irish history, which is used to confer legitimacy on their present political and military actions and beliefs. The core political belief of Republicans in Northern Ireland, including Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA, is that the 1920 partition of Ireland and continued British rule in Northern Ireland are illegitimate.⁴ Republicans view the British government as the source of the conflict in Northern Ireland. According to Gerry Adams, President of Sinn Féin, "violence in Ireland has its roots in the conquest of Ireland by Britain."⁵ Republicans do not see their own violence as the cause of continued British military presence in Northern Ireland, but as a reaction to it. They believe they are engaged in armed opposition against British colonialism. Therefore, any settlement that does not guarantee the withdrawal of the British from Ireland is de facto inadequate.

The political history of Ireland provides adequate evidence of the effectiveness of armed struggle as a means of creating political change. Without the historic efforts of the IRA and their forebearers against the British colonization of Ireland, the Republic of Ireland would not exist today. It is an impossible task to convince Republicans that change is possible through the democratic process alone - their history instructs otherwise. This history is a living fact that is, for Republicans, constantly present. Indeed, the historical deeds of grandfathers and great-grandfathers who fought against British occupation during the 1916 Uprising and the Anglo-Irish war are often recounted with pride.

Another core belief of Republicans that helped to sustain their will to continue fighting was that armed struggle against British military occupation is unquestionably necessary, effective and legitimate. The social environment in which Republicans in Northern Ireland live only reinforces their perception of the British as the enemy and their armed struggle as necessary and just. The poverty, discrimination, social isolation and unemployment which Catholics in Northern Ireland experienced as a minority in a Protestant-majority state reinforced their perception of themselves as victims of a repressive colonial regime. In the Republican communities of Northern Ireland, most families have relatives or friends who have been killed by security forces or imprisoned for paramilitary activity. The impression of Republicans that the British were determined to destroy the Irish culture and deny them self-determination was confirmed by the constant, hostile presence of British armored vehicles and patrolling soldiers. For

Republicans, these conditions amounted to a state of social and psychological siege.⁶ An indication of the unchallenged legitimacy of armed struggle within the Republican community is that the IRA has rarely suffered from a paucity of volunteers. While it may seem incomprehensible that Provisional IRA volunteers chose to engage in military activities likely to result in death or imprisonment, to them the choice appears not only necessary but also desirable. Many volunteers are attracted to the organization because of the mythology and anti-British sentiment of the organization, but they also join because of the high unemployment for Catholics in the North and the lack of other opportunities elsewhere in the province. Status in this community is correlated with military competence. Bearing arms in the pursuit of Irish autonomy is considered to be the core expression of Republicanism.⁷

The community's ability to cope with death has also allowed the continuation of the conflict. Like most cultures where violence is a fact of daily life, Republicans in Northern Ireland have successfully adapted to the misfortune by transforming the tragedy of violent death into communal benefit. The spectacular funerals of slain IRA volunteers, the treatment of the 1981 hunger strikers as martyrs and the murals glorifying the Republican dead all testify to the capacity of Republicans to derive cultural value from politically motivated deaths. Violent death is seen not just as a necessity of the armed struggle against the British but as a sacrifice which only serves to make the culture stronger. Although Republican culture could be negatively described as "necrophilic," the sanctification of violent death is a highly adaptive cultural practice within a militarized environment.⁸

In addition to cultural factors that perpetuated the conflict, British political and military policy have, perhaps inadvertently, contributed to its longevity. The British Army substantially reinforced the Northern Ireland garrisons in 1969 in order to conduct peacekeeping operations.⁹ Although the British Army was initially deployed to put a stop to Loyalist rioting in which the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) was colluding, the violence quickly escalated. Under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Tuzo, the Army conducted a number of large-scale military operations, such as the internment of suspects, and the re-taking of urban territory (Operation Motorman), with the occasional use of unnecessary force (e.g., "Bloody Sunday" in 1972).¹⁰ The situation in Northern Ireland certainly looked like war; IRA prisoners were even accorded a *de facto* POW status by the British government.

Because this military approach to dealing with the IRA unintentionally legitimated PIRA as a belligerent, security policy was reevaluated in the 1970s. Alternative methods of containing the violence were sought. New British security policy emphasized normalization, Ulsterization and criminalization in order to limit the overall level of violence. During this period, attempts were made to contain the conflict geographically within Northern Ireland through exclusion orders, roadblocks and extradition. The conflict was "normalized" by creating a cordon sanitaire around Belfast City Center, by instituting police primacy and by undertaking sophisticated public relations campaigns. Convicted PIRA members, as well as Loyalist paramilitaries, were treated as criminals ("terrorists") rather than as political prisoners. PIRA's attempts during the late 1970s to

escalate the war by attacking "big targets" (helicopters, NATO bases, Mountbatten's yacht) and the 1981 hunger strike, which sought to regain prisoner-of-war status for paramilitary prisoners, have been interpreted as responses to the criminalization program. Other historians of Northern Ireland believe that this step-up in armed activities was the result of British Special Forces covert involvement in and infiltration of PIRA. Although British security policy prevented escalation of the violence, it ironically also prevented any purely military solution. British commanders often asserted that, if law and public policy allowed them to do so, they could defeat PIRA militarily. However, legal restrictions on the use of force (e.g., rules of engagement, emergency legislation and international instruments) prevented the British Army from taking aggressive military actions that would have routed the IRA.¹¹ The British Army essentially tied its own hands with the security policy it adopted. As Paul Pillar points out,

[t]his combination of restraints - the inability to avoid entering a war and the inability to make full use of military capabilities once in it - means that wars which formerly would either never have been fought in the first place, or fought to a swift and decisive conclusion, are now fought in a restrained and carefully controlled way. This encourages deadlock and compromise and reduces the likelihood of capitulation.¹²

The PIRA effectively exploited the British Army's hesitancy to use force and concern with legality to engage in a protracted campaign of paramilitary violence. Thus, although violence was not eradicated, losses were kept at an "acceptable" level (in the words of Northern Ireland Secretary of State Merlyn Rees) and the war dragged on and on. The delicate process of preventing escalation and avoiding international disapproval forced the war underground. By the late 1980s the conflict centered on undercover operations, informants and a mutual, informal shoot-to-kill code of combat between PIRA and British Army Special Forces.¹³

In addition to the cultural values of Republicanism and British security policy, the divergent interests of the major players in the Northern Ireland conflict have also prevented any easy resolution of the political and military issues underlying the violence. Each group has been fundamentally opposed to the interests and views propounded by the other groups, and generally unwilling to accept compromise of any sort. In brief, the Unionists disliked the Republicans on political and social grounds and viewed any involvement of the Republic of Ireland in northern Irish politics with suspicion. The Republicans rejected the British presence in Ireland and saw the Unionists as sectarian and politically misguided. The British mistrusted the involvement of the Republic of Ireland but needed the vote of the Ulster Unionists. The Republic of Ireland wanted to distance itself from the problems of the province altogether and yet retained a sentimental feeling toward the history of the IRA.¹⁴

The Unionists generally dislike the power-sharing arrangement preferred by the British and view Northern Ireland as an integral part of the United Kingdom. Although they form a majority in Northern Ireland, they would be a minority if the island was unified. Loyalists fear that if Ireland is united, the 900,000 Protestants in the north would become a minority among the three million Catholics in the Republic of Ireland. Unionists, not

surprisingly, reject any political arrangement that would entail being governed by the Republic of Ireland and thereby losing their economic and political status. Since Unionists have traditionally occupied positions of political power and have controlled the domestic economy, they have much to lose if the distribution of power were altered. Power-sharing with Nationalists and increased involvement by the Irish Republic are often seen by Unionists as concessions by Britain to the Nationalists. Although concessions by the British government toward the Republican community have sometimes resulted in a backlash by Unionists against the British government,¹⁵ the major target of Loyalist paramilitaries has always been the Catholic community.

Despite a 1937 constitutional claim to jurisdiction over the territory of Northern Ireland, the Irish government currently has little interest in laying claim to the North. Unification is not a popular solution and would likely create innumerable problems for Dublin. Not only would the Republic be required to absorb the Unionists (and cope with any violence which might be directed at the Irish government), they would also assume the considerable financial burden of underwriting the depressed economy of Northern Ireland. Rather, the Irish government has opted to assume a larger role in the internal affairs of Northern Ireland. The Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 gave the Irish Republic the right to put forward views and proposals on matters relating to the administration of Northern Ireland, including security, in return for improved security coordination on their side of the border.¹⁶

Nor are Northern Republicans particularly keen on being absorbed by the Irish government. The Republic of Ireland has a complex historical relationship with Republicans. On one hand, Sinn Féin has not been treated as a legitimate political entity. Sinn Féin, like the IRA and Loyalist paramilitary groups, was censored from speaking on television or radio under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act (not renewed in 1994). Yet, Sinn Féin and the original IRA are responsible for the existence of the Irish Republic, having fought a war against the British in 1916 for independence. On the other hand, the government of the Republic of Ireland (and the Fianna Fail party in particular) has been sympathetic to the northern Republican cause. The Republic of Ireland has sometimes refused to extradite Republicans convicted of political offenses, although for many years they had a different legal definition of a political offense, and has occasionally turned a blind eye to the use of the border as a "fall back" for paramilitaries during operations. The arrest of Charles Haughey, minister for the Gaelteacht under Jack Lynch's Fianna Fail party, also raised suspicions about the Irish government's toleration of IRA activities. Although never convicted, Haughey and four other members of the Fianna Fail government were arrested for conspiracy to import arms that were to be sent to the IRA. "Whether the Cabinet either knew or implicitly approved of Haughey's activities remains to this day a less than satisfactorily answered question." Since then, from the perspective of Sinn Féin, the Irish government has abandoned the principle of Irish self-determination and has basically ratified the British claim to Northern Ireland. The Anglo-Irish Agreement, European Union membership and the ratification of the Single Europe Act are seen as an erosion of Irish sovereignty and control of resources, and a movement towards a "NATO view of international affairs." While Nationalists and Republicans have welcomed a greater role for Dublin in the ceasefire process, they are not seeking a

simple end to partition resulting in reunification. Rather, their long-term goal is to establish a democratic socialist republic based on the 1916 Proclamation, which would include decentralized economic and political structures in a pluralist, bilingual, non-sexist and non-aligned Ireland.¹⁷

Breaking the Stalemate

The geographical containment of the conflict, the prevention of escalation through legal structures and the unwillingness to incur international approbation all served to turn the conflict in Northern Ireland into a "stalemate." A stalemate is a condition of conflict where neither belligerent party can achieve a decisive military victory and which both parties can almost indefinitely sustain. In stalemated wars neither belligerent party is able to achieve a decisive victory, nor are they able to exhaust their opponent to a state of financial or military collapse. This has consequences for the ceasefire negotiation process. Negotiating a ceasefire after a stalemate tends to be much more laborious and intricate since the "winner" may be unclear and the belligerents may overestimate their own bargaining power.¹⁸

Counter-insurgency operations or low-intensity conflicts that end in stalemate, such as that in Northern Ireland, appear even less amenable to negotiated settlement.¹⁹ In these conflicts the very identity of the belligerents and the legal status of the conflict is often unclear. In Northern Ireland, for example, the "belligerents" might include the British Army, PIRA, Ulster Defence Association (UDA), Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLO), Red Hand Commandos, Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) or any number of other armed groups. PIRA declared a cessation of all military operations, but did not specify against whom. The Loyalist paramilitaries made a similarly ambivalent statement.²⁰ Moreover, the legal status of the conflict in Northern Ireland is indeterminate. There is disagreement on whether the conflict ought to be called an "internal disturbance," as the British government would have it, or whether it ought to be called a "war," as the Republican movement would claim.²¹

Clausewitz postulated two ways in which adversaries could be induced to end a war despite their ability to continue it: to make success improbable or to make it excessively costly.²² Limited conflict between equally matched opponents, such as that in Northern Ireland, is almost indefinitely sustainable. Although more than 3,000 people have been killed since the latest period of conflict began 30 years ago, the conflict was not excessively costly in human terms. Similarly, the financial costs to Britain of prolonged low-level violence were negligible as a portion of the total economy. Neither the British Army nor PIRA were short on weapons, ammunition or manpower. Both would have been able to continue the war almost indefinitely.

In light of the military sustainability and cultural entrenchment of the conflict, the question arises: why didn't the conflict continue indefinitely? The ceasefire in Northern Ireland challenges a fundamental assumption of conflict resolution theory: that wars end because they cannot be sustained. This idea emerges out of the military history of pre-nineteenth-century Europe, when most wars ended with a decisive military victory or

when victory became militarily or financially inconceivable. Statistical data suggests that modern wars, with the exception of the Gulf War and the Falklands War, have not ended in a decisive military victory. Rather, they tend to result in a stalemate with an ambivalent relationship between the belligerents.²³ British willingness to enter into negotiations with the Provisional IRA resulted partially from the end of the Cold War, which changed the strategic map of Europe. During the Cold War, the Republic of Ireland was not a member of NATO and disallowed any NATO bases or operations. Northern Ireland, being a British possession, was NATO friendly soil. Once NATO defense of the North Atlantic became unnecessary, Northern Ireland declined in strategic importance. The conflict in Northern Ireland, despite the excellent training benefits it provided for British Army regiments and the convenient "proving ground" it provided for British defense, had become enormously expensive.²⁴

The Provisional IRA's willingness to enter into negotiations also resulted from a confluence of factors. Since Gerry Adams and the other members of the northern leadership contingent (Tom Hartley, Danny Morrison and Mitchel McLaughlin) have risen to power in the Republican movement, Republican ideology has shifted from the primacy of the armed struggle to an increased focus on political process. According to Gerry Adams, "armed struggle itself is a tactic and one cannot shoot or bomb an independent Ireland into existence The tactic of armed struggle is of primary importance because it provides a vital cutting edge. Without it, the issue of Ireland would not even be an issue." "At the same time," according to Adams, "there is a realization in Republican circles that armed struggle on its own is inadequate and that non-armed forms of political struggle are at least as important."²⁵ This political refocus has led to a certain type of (what Republicans refer to as) constitutionalization. "In the past, the republican movement was a separatist movement with radical tendencies. In its current embodiment, the radical tendency is for the first time in control"²⁶

In addition to the political and economic reasons for the ceasefire, recognition of a military stalemate also led to the ceasefire. British policy since the late 1970s has assumed that PIRA cannot be defeated militarily. Likewise, PIRA is aware that they will never be able to amass enough military force to compel Britain to withdraw. Belligerent recognition that the war is stalemated and is likely to remain so (or that one party has decisively more power than the other does) is, according to James Smith, the first precondition for a ceasefire. Belligerents must also believe, as the British did, that this power balance is unlikely to shift either in their favor through military action, or against them through a ceasefire.²⁷

In Northern Ireland, the acknowledgment of a military stalemate made political resolution possible. Because a military victory was impossible, the solution to the problem had to be a political one. The ceasefire in Northern Ireland did not result from defeat or military necessity.²⁸ Rather, the ceasefire process was driven by an acknowledgment that the war was unwinnable.

Talking It Out

The current ceasefire and talks about the future of Northern Ireland are the result of a long process of political reevaluation by Sinn Féin. Since 1987, Sinn Féin has been developing a strategy for peace, including a discussion paper called *A Scenario for Peace*.²⁹ In 1990, Sinn Féin re-established contact with the British government through secret diplomatic channels that had been used extensively during the prior ceasefires in 1972 and 1974-76 and the 1981 hunger strike. In 1992, Sinn Féin circulated *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland*, a discussion paper that explained their view of what was needed to achieve a peaceful resolution.³⁰

Attempts to develop a joint nationalist strategy led to talks between Adams and John Hume the leader of the Social and Democratic Labour Party (SDLP), the largest constitutional nationalist party in Northern Ireland. In April 1993, Hume and Adams issued a joint statement, declaring the right of "the Irish people as a whole . . . to national self-determination."³¹ The Hume-Adams initiative, which was eventually endorsed by the Irish government, was the snowball that launched the peace avalanche.

The ongoing secret talks between British government and Sinn Féin were made public in November 1993. Following a series of rumors and leaks, Sir Patrick Mayhew made an announcement in Parliament. Mayhew claimed that PIRA had initiated the dialogue with this message allegedly sent by Martin McGuinness, Sinn Féin's Vice President:

The conflict is over but we need your advice on how to bring it to a close. We wish to have an unannounced cease-fire in order to hold dialogue leading to peace. We cannot announce such a move as it will lead to confusion for the volunteers because press will misinterpret it as a surrender. We cannot meet Secretary of State's public renunciation of violence, but it would be given privately as long as we were sure that we were not being tricked.³²

This announcement caused public uproar in the Republican community, Parliament and the British press. Because the British government had phrased the announcement in such a way that it appeared that Sinn Féin was the initiating party, Sinn Féin nearly backed out of any negotiations with the British. According to Adams, the admission by Mayhew "breach[ed] the confidentiality which we had at all times respected and . . . misrepresent[ed] the content of our exchanges. The bad faith and double dealing involved clearly presented us with serious difficulties in assessing the sincerity of the British government . . ."³³ As the message makes clear, PIRA was unwilling to be seen by its membership as the party who had asked for peace.³⁴

Stumbling Blocks in the Ceasefire Process

Selling Out

Beginning with this 1993 leak of Sinn Féin's correspondence with the British government, Sinn Féin has had to struggle to retain its legitimacy in the eyes of fellow Republicans. Historically, disputes over political legitimacy and who represents the "authentic" spirit of Republicanism have caused significant splits in the Republican

movement. All of these splits resulted in considerable bloodshed and were (for Republicans) presumably worth fighting for. Perhaps the most well-known split in the movement is that which resulted in the Irish Civil War, 1921-23. Similarly, disagreements over participation in the political process led to the 1970 division of the organization into the Official and Provisional IRA. The Provisional IRA rejected any political recognition of Stormont, Dublin or Westminster parliaments and thereby became the inheritor of the armed struggle tradition. Although it never came to pass, a feud between the Provisional IRA and "Real IRA" (RIRA) did not seem unlikely following the RIRA bombing in Omagh.³⁵

Disputes concerning the legitimacy of political mandate lie at the heart of the culture of Republicanism. These issues, which have consequences for the present ceasefire, must be understood in their historical context. At the beginning of the 1916 Easter Rising against the British occupation of Ireland, the leaders of the rebellion authored a Proclamation of the Irish Republic. This was essentially an aspirational, constitutional charter document, as the actual Republic of Ireland only came into being following the Anglo-Irish War. As part of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, a parliament of the Irish Republic, known as the *Dáil Éireann*, was established. The Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), a secret military organization, was renamed by the *Dáil* to the IRA. They took oaths to "support and defend the Irish Republic and the Government of the Irish Republic, which is *Dáil Éireann*, against all enemies, foreign and domestic." They then entered into a war of independence against the British government. While the southern 26 counties of Ireland were liberated, the victory was incomplete.

In December 1921, the *Dáil Éireann* signed a treaty with England which gave them the status as a nation-state within the dominion of the British Empire and which ended the Anglo-Irish War. Northern Ireland was then partitioned from the rest of the island and became a British protectorate. Sinn Féin split into two factions in the *Dáil*: those favoring the treaty and those opposed. In 1922, when the *Dáil* accepted the treaty, the IRA withdrew its allegiance and fell back on its own convention for authority. The anti-treaty faction believed that the Anglo-Irish War had been fought in order to found an independent republic, outside of any political influence of England. The Irish Free State came into existence in 1922, and the Republican anti-treaty forces began a guerrilla war against it, known as the Irish Civil War. The anti-treaty forces refused to participate in any way in the political process and vowed to continue the armed struggle against the British occupation of Ireland. At the end of the Anglo-Irish War, Michael Collins took a pragmatic pro-treaty view, believing that the treaty was the only concession that the British could offer in 1921. Nevertheless, Collins was determined to protect the Republicans in the north from Loyalist anti-Nationalists. Although he had become a minister in the new government of the Republic of Ireland, Collins organized and possibly carried out military operations against British forces along the border. At this time, a series of pogroms were being carried out in the North, and these were widely considered to be the work of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, ex-Chief of the Imperial General Staff and current military advisor of the Unionist government in Belfast. Wilson, a vehement anti-Nationalist, was killed in London by the IRB. Wilson's "killing was the

pretext that finally tumbled the two Sinn Féin factions into Civil War." Collins was assassinated in 1922.³⁶

These historical facts that have informed Republican political thinking for over 70 years still influence the organization. As the organizational descendant of the anti-treaty Republicans, PIRA claims a historical mandate as the legitimate government of the Irish Republic. No other political organization holds this authority - it is the prerogative of the Army Council itself. Every Republican owes allegiance to the Army Council, of which Sinn Féin is merely the proxy. The training manual of the Provisionals, *The Green Book*, states that "The leadership of the IRA is the lawful government of the Irish Republic." Essentially, PIRA views itself as the legal successor of the Second Dáil, and therefore as the legitimate government of the Irish Republic. Sinn Féin, therefore, has no power of its own, but can only act under the political will of the Provisional IRA.³⁷

The Military Structure of the Provisional Irish Republican Army

This relationship between Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA had implications for the ceasefire negotiation process in a number of significant ways. First, Sinn Féin's inability to negotiate or speak on behalf of the Provisional IRA delayed or otherwise complicated the peace process in Northern Ireland. While many present leaders of Sinn Féin are former members of the Army Council (the governing body of the Provisional IRA) Sinn Féin does not control the Army Council and could not demand that the Army Council accept their political negotiations. The "armalite and the ballot box" strategy of PIRA, which accorded equal primacy to electoral politics and military action, had to satisfy the Army Council or risk splitting the movement. For example, Sinn Féin requested clarification by the British government of the Downing Street Declaration before they would bring the proposal to the Army Council. Republicans had a mixed response to the Declaration. Although the Joint Declaration attempted to bring Sinn Féin (historically marginalized in preference to the more moderate SDLP) into the constitutional talks, the Declaration also specified that Sinn Féin would be welcomed at the negotiating table only after renouncing violence.³⁸ Without the Army Council's full support for the ceasefire, Sinn Féin could not implement it. According to Adams: "It was up to the IRA to hold their own consultations and come to their own decision. I would have respected whatever decision they took."³⁹

The organizational structure of the Provisional IRA also had an impact on the ceasefire process since "at a pure logistical level, a belligerent may actually be unable to cease fire because it cannot control the military forces which purport to fight for it." The Provisional IRA is organized into active service units (ASUs), which are a cell structure rather than a traditional military hierarchy. While this structure protects PIRA from infiltration and prevents any one person from knowing too much, it also limits the control that the Army Council actually has over the members. Infringements since the ceasefire point to the unauthorized use of violence by volunteers dissatisfied with the negotiation strategy.⁴⁰

Republican Factionalism

Sinn Féin's willingness to participate in the political process made negotiation possible, but also created a crisis of legitimacy within the Republican movement. Historically, the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin have refused any political participation in British institutions, as they see the British government in Northern Ireland as illegitimate. As a force of occupation, the British government lacks any political mandate. Participation by Republicans would therefore, legitimize an unacceptable political situation. Recent Republican willingness to engage in political process has been couched as "tactical" or "provisional" so it does not confer unearned legitimacy on the British political machine.

On 10 May 1998, Sinn Féin decided, at a second *Árd Fheis* in Dublin, to support the Belfast Agreement. Sinn Féin's decision was made possible, in part, by a change in the IRA's constitution allowing Sinn Féin to take up seats in the new Northern Ireland Assembly. Most speakers at the *Árd Fheis* emphasized that Sinn Féin's acceptance of the Belfast Agreement was no more than a tactical "extension of the armed struggle." The Provisional IRA would retain its arms and, as Gerry Kelly put it, the decision to participate in a Northern Ireland Assembly was taken in the knowledge that "in six months we can revisit it."⁴¹

Sinn Féin's willingness to participate in the political process and to negotiate with the British government has not been greeted with enthusiasm by all Republicans. In many paramilitary organizations, hard-line military factions are likely to be skeptical about the political process, and to view negotiation as capitulation. At the 1986 Sinn Féin *Árd Fheis*, for example, a debate erupted over Sinn Féin's decision to participate in electoral politics in the Republic of Ireland after decades of abstention. A number of delegates resigned in protest, led by Ruairí Ó Braídaigh, former President of Sinn Féin, and Dáithí Ó Conaill, former Chief of Staff of the Irish Republican Army. Vowing to uphold the goal of a united Republic, and an end to British rule, they formed an organization called Republican Sinn Féin. Since that time Republican Sinn Féin has been consistently critical of Sinn Féin's political direction and the scaling down of the armed struggle by the Provisional IRA. They saw the ceasefire declaration as a betrayal of the Republican movement. Ruairí Ó Braídaigh, IRA chief during the 1960s, claimed that the leadership had been "constitutionalized," meaning that political process has replaced armed struggle to an unacceptable degree. But in the nature of the long struggle, he said, another group would rise up to take its place.⁴²

Another group did, in fact, rise up to take the place of PIRA. On 15 August 1998, the Real IRA came to the attention of the general public when it detonated a car bomb in Omagh, Northern Ireland killing 28 and injuring more than 200 people. RIRA is a "fundamentalist" Republican group that objected to the 1997 PIRA ceasefire and to the peace process. The story of their split from Sinn Féin sheds light on the issues of sovereignty, legitimacy and violence within the Republican movement.

The split, in part, was caused by disagreement about accepting the recommendations made in the Report of the International Body on Arms Decommissioning on 22 January 1996, also known as the Mitchell Principles. The Mitchell Principles, drafted by US Senator George J. Mitchell, John de Chastelain and Harri Holkeri, called for all parties to

agree to a democratic, non-violent political resolution.⁴³ As a pre-condition for entering into the multi-party talks being held in summer 1997, Sinn Féin was required to sign and adhere to the principles. At that time Sinn Féin was excluded from the talks, the Provisional IRA having ended the first ceasefire on 9 February 1996 by detonating a bomb at Canary Wharf in London. The 1,500-pound fertilizer bomb killed two people and injured hundreds. Despite the end of the ceasefire, the British government carried on with its pre-Canary Wharf Plan. Elections took place on 30 May 1996 and seated a 110 member forum, to "advise" teams engaged in promised multi-party negotiations. Following the election, multi-party talks began on 10 June. Sinn Féin was barred from the talks on the grounds that the Provisional IRA had not resumed its ceasefire. Following Sinn Féin's exclusion, the Provisional IRA exploded a van bomb in downtown Manchester on 15 June. On 1 May 1997, the Labour Party was elected to power in the British General Election. Tony Blair, then leader of the Labour Party became Prime Minister while Marjorie (Mo) Mowlam was appointed as Secretary of State of Northern Ireland. The new Labour government expressed a desire to include Sinn Féin in talks if the Provisional IRA would renew the ceasefire. According to a statement of the Provisional IRA, "having assessed the current political situation, the leadership of the *Óglaigh na hÉireann* are announcing a complete cessation of military operations from 12 midday on Sunday 20 July 1997."⁴⁴

Because they called for a non-violent resolution to the conflict, the Mitchell Principles contravened the IRA's constitution. Nevertheless, the Army Council gave Sinn Féin a special dispensation to accept the Mitchell Principles. Normally, no PIRA volunteer can sign any agreement that would refrain from the use of weapons to get rid of British rule in Ireland.⁴⁵

Not everyone within the Provisional leadership was happy with this decision. Cork Sinn Féin, for example, wanted to have a special *Árd Fheis* to overthrow this decision. In the words of one Republican commentator, Sinn Féin's decision on the Mitchell Principles, ". . . made the use of armed struggle illegitimate, null and void, as well as allowing the party of Mr. Adams . . . to take seats . . . in the soon to be new British Stormont Government in Ireland."⁴⁶

To discuss the unpopular decision that allowed Sinn Féin to sign the principles, a convention of senior PIRA figures was held at Gweedore, County Donegal, in October 1997. Despite strenuous debate, the Army Council refused to rescind its decision. The former Chief of Staff and Quarter Master General Mickey McKevitt, who controlled weapons, ammunition and explosives, resigned from the PIRA Executive in protest. Twelve members of Sinn Féin, mostly officials of Sinn Féin in County Louth also resigned. RIRA also absorbed elements of the PIRA's Southern Command and recruited some of PIRA's top bomb-makers giving them the capability to make home-made explosives, to prepare bombs and to assemble a range of mortars. In addition to certain members of the Dublin Brigade, an entire PIRA unit in Tipperary was said to have gone over to RIRA with its arms. RIRA was responsible for a number of bomb and mortar attacks during 1997 and 1998 prior to the Omagh bomb, including a mortar attack on the RUC station in Armagh, County Armagh on 10 March 1998 and a car bomb in

Newtownhamilton, County Armagh on 24 June 1998. In addition to receiving covert support from PIRA members dissatisfied with the peace process, RIRA has worked with the two other Republican groups opposed to the peace process: the Continuity IRA (CIRA) and the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), which called a ceasefire after the Omagh massacre.⁴⁷

Many Republicans interpreted Sinn Féin's acceptance of the Mitchell Principles as a betrayal of the values of the movement. Perhaps even more damaging to Sinn Féin and the authority of the Army Council was the manner in which the second convention was held. This second convention was organized in secrecy; PIRA volunteers were not told about the convention until after it happened. Normally PIRA volunteers would have elected delegates to the convention, and debated all issues that were going to be on the agenda. In this case, the senior leadership effectively prevented any debate of Sinn Féin's acceptance of the Mitchell Principles by holding the meeting in secret and eschewing the normal democratic process within the organization. Even more shocking to PIRA volunteers, they were not told that these senior figures had resigned from the organization but learned it from reading a newspaper story.⁴⁸

The appeal of a group like RIRA may, from the outside, seem incomprehensible. They engaged without apology in the slaughter of civilians and seemed determined to destroy all the gains made during the ceasefire process. Yet, RIRA did appeal to many Republicans. To Republicans, the appeal of the Real IRA was not based on a gruesome appreciation of the atrocities committed by gung-ho, blood-crazed Provo gunmen. Rather, the Real IRA touched a nerve in the Republican body politic. The Real IRA claimed that they, in fact, were the "real" IRA. They claimed that their historical mandate and political legitimacy were derived from the 1919 Dáil. In their view, by participating in the political process and by giving up the armed struggle, the Provisional IRA had betrayed the fundamental values of the Republican movement.

Decommissioning of Weapons

In the face of these very plausible claims that Sinn Féin has "sold out" and no longer represents the spirit of Republicanism, Sinn Féin has felt the need to conserve its political legitimacy by refusing to back down on certain issues which are to Republicans central to their political philosophy. The single major issue which neither Sinn Féin nor PIRA have refused to negotiate is decommissioning of the Provisional IRA's arsenal.

Despite demands from all sides,⁴⁹ the Provisional IRA has consistently refused to decommission its weapons. For the Provisional IRA, decommissioning amounted to a form of military surrender that it was unprepared to undertake. According to Gerry Adams, "The British government is not simply interested in a gesture. It is, in reality, demanding the start of a surrender process as a precondition to all-party talks."⁵⁰

PIRA's refusal to decommission weapons or to declare a "permanent" ceasefire as a precondition to entering into negotiations is generally seen by observers as a purely utilitarian strategic decision. After all, handing over guns with no guarantee that what is

negotiated will actually be given creates unnecessary vulnerability. But behind the refusal to decommission weapons is not just a utilitarian political strategy, but a set of cultural values. PIRA's unwillingness to decommission weapons is related not only to the armed struggle against the British Army, but to the defensive role which weapons have played in nationalist communities. According to Gerry Adams, "the circumstances which shaped the recent support for the IRA are, above all, the experience of the barricade days from 1969-1972." During the Loyalists rioting in Belfast in August 1969, the IRA rearmed and reorganized in order to defend the community from attack.⁵¹ The current expectation that PIRA will abandon its weapons runs counter to the fundamental worldview of Republicans - that their communities are besieged by hostile British and Loyalist forces and that the only defense they can expect is what they themselves provide. Following the approval of the Good Friday Agreement, the Provisional IRA issued a statement refusing to give up any of its weapons. "Let us make it clear that there will be no decommissioning by the IRA. This issue, as with any other matter affecting the IRA, its functions and objectives, is a matter only for the IRA, to be decided upon and pronounced upon by us."⁵²

Despite their apparent intractability on the issue of decommissioning, the Provisional IRA apparently changed its rules on the decommissioning of weapons at a convention in County Cavan in December 1998. The constitutional position of PIRA up to this time had been that any decommissioning of weapons could only take place if an Army Convention voted in favor of it. In an attempt to consolidate the power of the Army Council, Adams has been trying to change the Provisional IRA's constitution to give the Army Council control over the organization's resources, including weaponry and explosives. In effect, this constitutional change takes the decision-making powers away from the Executive and the membership.⁵³

Many Republicans interpreted this change as an "officially sanctioned start to SURRENDER the So-called 'Army's' weapons. If the story is true then it means the Provos have been guilty yet again of LYING to everyone."⁵⁴ For many, decommissioning would strip all legitimacy from Sinn Féin and the present leadership of the Provisional IRA. The possibility of decommissioning raised by changes in the structure of the Army Council,

means now the 'A' will soon be dropped from the Provo's initials as the usage of "Army" can no longer be applied to their 'organization' because they will no longer have any 'arms' with which to 'arm' anybody Once the full SURRENDER takes place the Provos will no longer have an IRA, because there will be no 'army' and secondly they will cease to have any means with which to defend or uphold the 32 county Irish Republic, as was proclaimed in 1916 to which the I.R.A. was first born from to perform as its sole duty and reason for legitimately existing.⁵⁵

Republican suspicions of "perfidious Albion"

Another major issue that caused disruption of the ceasefire process was the Republican belief that the perfidious and double-dealing government of Britain was intending to use

the ceasefire as a military tactic. Their view is based on a reasonable interpretation of history: the present ceasefire is the most recent in a long series of failed ceasefires. In addition to the three-day Christmas ceasefires declared annually since 1990, bilateral ceasefires occurred in 1972 and 1974-75. During the 1981 hunger strike, PIRA declared a ceasefire so that the deaths of the hunger strikers would not be overshadowed by other military actions. Most recently, PIRA had called a brief halt to hostilities in April 1993.

From a Republican perspective, the British were responsible for breaking these ceasefires. For example, the 1972 ceasefire was allegedly broken when the British Army and UDA attacked civilians in West Belfast. Loyalist violence directed against the Nationalist community drew PIRA into armed engagement. According to one PIRA Army Council member, "If our units had been ordered to stand aside, . . . the IRA would have lost the defense initiative and all credibility with the people."⁵⁶

The settlement negotiations following these ceasefires all involved the same basic Republican demands: public recognition of the right of the Irish people to decide the future of Ireland, a declaration of intention to withdraw British troops and the grant of a general amnesty for political prisoners. Not surprisingly, the British were unwillingness to grant the IRA's demands in 1972 or 1974-75. In the 1970s, the British Army had no intention of withdrawing, believing that the war could be won on the ground. The expectation of eventual victory almost certainly inhibited the British desire for ceasefire.⁵⁷

PIRA's experiences with these prior ceasefires led them to suspect that the British would use the current ceasefire as an opportunity to regroup and develop new strategies. According to Adams,

The British government has also used bilateral truces with the IRA to gain the upper hand, to cause confusion in republican ranks and to introduce new strategies. It has never engaged in a truce with the serious intention of considering or conceding the republican demands. In particular, the lengthy bilateral truce of 1974-5 was used to push ahead with the 'Ulsterisation'/ 'normalisation'/ 'criminalisation' policy.⁵⁸

The Provisional IRA, like many belligerents considering ceasefires, were concerned that a ceasefire would put them in a worse position and the British in a better position if fighting resumed. It is not unusual for belligerents to take advantage of ceasefires to regroup and rearm. In international law, this is generally viewed as a legitimate practice. According to Oppenheim's International Law, "belligerents during an armistice may, outside the line where the forces face each other, do everything and anything they like regarding defence and preparation of offence . . ."⁵⁹ A ceasefire, in this sense, allows for a continuation of war by other means. Since wars are *legally* ended only by formal peace treaties, this continuation of war by other means is, in a sense, legitimate as ceasefires "may simply fix the conditions under which the fighting will be resumed, at a later date, and with a new intensity."⁶⁰

Having experienced the British "continuation of the war" under the guise of prior ceasefires, the Republican movement was wary of British intentions in the 1990s no matter how eloquent the assurances. Martin McGuinness, who was instrumental in negotiating the 1972 truce and the most recent ceasefire, resolved after the 1972 breach that "from [then] on there could be no question of an end to the violence until the ink on the treaty of withdrawal was dry."⁶¹

Ironically, dissident Republicans currently take the view that the most recent ceasefire is merely another attempt by the British to take advantage of a disarmed Provisional IRA. According to one Republican dissenter, "it is plain to see, that the 'peace process' was in essence just another attempt to impose control of the situation by the British, not to bring about a British withdrawal or a 32 county independent United Ireland."⁶²

Permanence

Although the Provisional IRA declared a "complete cessation of military operations," they did not affirm that it would be permanent. The Downing Street Declaration, which spelled out terms for peace talks, allowed Sinn Féin to join the negotiations three months after PIRA called a "permanent" end to violence. Following the announcement of the ceasefire, Major requested an assurance that it was, indeed, permanent. Neither Adams nor deputy Sinn Féin leader Martin McGuinness were willing to describe the ceasefire as "permanent." "I think you have to take the statement at face value," McGuinness stated. A number of cultural and historical factors underlie PIRA's unwillingness to declare a "permanent" ceasefire. First, from the perspective of Sinn Féin, asking PIRA to declare a permanent ceasefire before the withdrawal of British troops would place all the military obligations on PIRA. Declaring a permanent ceasefire would give the British exactly what they had long wished for (a "de-clawed" and powerless Provisional IRA), while the British themselves remained fully armed. Following the Loyalist ceasefire, Gerry Adams pointed out that "[t]he British government is now the only agency with armed forces under its control which has not ceased its military activity."⁶³ By declaring a permanent ceasefire, the Republican movement would receive nothing but further assurances.

The second factor militating against declaring a permanent ceasefire concerns the basic political philosophy of the Republican movement. The Republican philosophy of armed struggle is based on the notion that only force will compel Britain to leave Ireland. There is the implication that since Britain has not withdrawn its troops, "by giving up force . . . blood has been shed in vain." James Dunnigan refers to this problem as entrapment: belligerents locked into a confrontation belief that they have invested too much labor in establishing an international support network, the acquiring and hiding of arms shipments, organizing the required military training and political education of its members. The PIRA's ceasefire announcement attempted to deal with the problem of entrapment by commending the volunteers who had died in the cause of Irish freedom: "We remember all those who have died for Irish freedom and we reiterate our commitment to our republican objectives."⁶⁴

On 22 October 1994, Prime Minister John Major announced that he would accept the current ceasefire and that the ceasefire now being observed by both sides is "intended to be permanent." As Pillar points out, "The fundamental diplomatic act in an international negotiation is a change in one's offer - a change in what a negotiator says he will accept as an agreement." Apparently in response to pressure from Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds and American leaders, Major accepted the terms of the ceasefire. According to Major: "I am now prepared to make a working assumption that the ceasefire is intended to be permanent If we can continue reasonably to assume that Sinn Féin is establishing a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods, if the IRA continues to show that it has ended terrorism, then we shall be ready to convene exploratory talks before this year is out." Major said the Provisional IRA's adherence to the ceasefire was "more compelling than their words."⁶⁵

Articles 2 and 3

Another stumbling block to an enduring peace settlement was the dual claim of the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain to the territory of Northern Ireland. The modification of the Irish Constitution became the cause of a deadlock in drafting a framework document for talks. While this issue does not involve the Provisional IRA directly, it is bound up with the political history of Ireland and with concepts of cultural and national sovereignty.

The Irish Constitution and the British Government of Ireland Act both claimed territorial sovereignty of Northern Ireland. Article 2 of the Irish Constitution declares that "the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the territorial seas." The phrase "national territory" implicitly makes a claim that the territory of Northern Ireland belongs to the Republic of Ireland. Article 3 states that "pending the re-integration of the national territory" the laws enacted by Parliament shall pertain to Northern Ireland. Article 3 effectively claims the right to exercise legal jurisdiction over the whole island. In *McGimpsey v. Ireland*, the Irish Supreme Court declined to "abandon [. . .] the claim to the re-integration of national territory," essentially reaffirming Irish territorial claims to Northern Ireland.⁶⁶

For many years the British government did not object to these claims of sovereignty although they conflicted with the Government of Ireland Act 1920. Article 75 of the Government of Ireland Act (1920) provides that "Notwithstanding the establishment of the Parliament of Northern Ireland . . . the supreme authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall remain unaffected and undiminished over all persons, matters and things in Northern Ireland and every part thereof."

Negotiating these contradictory claims to sovereignty has been rather thorny. Earlier in the talks process, the British government proposed that if the Irish government would amend the territorial claims in Article 2 and Article 3, the British government was willing to modify the terms of the 1920 Government of Ireland Act (and the subsequent 1973 Amendment). Nobody was happy with this arrangement. Although the original wording of Articles 2 and 3 was perceived as a threat by Unionists who do not consider

themselves to be part of the Irish nation, the modification of the Government of Ireland Act (1920) was even worse. Because the wording excludes Unionists, it is totally counter-productive to the very objective that the articles purportedly sought to advance. Irish nationalists saw alteration of Articles 2 and 3 as a compromise. By renouncing the claim over the territory of Northern Ireland, the partition of Ireland was legitimated. For Sinn Féin, the revocation of Articles 2 and 3 would "have the effect of leaving Britain's assertion of, and claim to, sovereignty over six Irish counties uncontested, while withdrawing Ireland's rightful claim to sovereignty."⁶⁷

The Good Friday Agreement seems to have provided some solution. Under the agreement, the Irish Constitution will be amended, abandoning the Republic's territorial claim on Northern Ireland and offering formal recognition that Northern Ireland is legitimately part of the United Kingdom. This will please the British government and assure the Unionists that they will not become "Irish" without their consent. The British government agreed to repeal the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, thereby disavowing their sovereignty claim, and to introduce legislation to create a united Ireland should that become the wish of a majority in Northern Ireland. This arrangement will please Nationalists by removing Britain's claim upon Irish soil and mollify the Unionists by guaranteeing Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom unless a majority want to change that status. Additionally, this arrangement will probably meet with international approval; Adrian Guelke argues that the international community perceives the island as an integral political unit.⁶⁸

CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to show how the cultural values that helped sustain the war also had a direct impact on the ceasefire process. PIRA's refusal to decommission weapons or to declare a "permanent" ceasefire as a precondition to entering into negotiations reflects not only a utilitarian strategic decision but also reflects a set of cultural values. In a culture that reveres military competence and sees the Anglo-Irish war as historical proof of the efficacy of arms, the decommissioning of weapons threatens to negate the foundation upon which Irish Republican culture is based. This article has also addressed the constitutional and organizational structure of Sinn Féin and the Provisional Irish Republican Army in order to demonstrate how the history and culture of Republicanism effected the ceasefire and prospects for peace.

In light of these values and attitudes, what is the prospect for permanent peace? The current leadership of PIRA appears willing to bargain during negotiations, to accept a staged withdrawal of British troops and to accept the principle of democratic consent to political change. Yet this flexibility only extends so far. Because they are not simply an organization but the military expression of a complex culture, PIRA will not back down on certain issues. In the interests of self-protection and cultural militarism, PIRA will probably resist decommissioning of weapons unless the British government withdraws troops. Their unwillingness to declare a permanent ceasefire indicates that the ceasefire is a tactic in much the same way that armed struggle was a tactic. But if they fail to get what they seek through negotiations, they may begin the military campaign again. If they do

agree to decommissioning, or in any other way further erode the political legitimacy of the Republican movement, it is probable that another group will continue the armed struggle in the name of Republicanism.

Endnotes

1. Provisional Irish Republican Army, "Statement," (31 August, 1994). Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira31894.htm>. Ceasefires represent an indeterminate state between peace and war. The difficulty in defining the stages of transition between peace and war is reflected in disagreements within international law regarding the definition of "ceasefire." For the purpose of this article, James Smith's definition has been adopted: "A cease-fire is an implemented agreement between belligerents (either explicit or implicit), involving all or the greater part of their military forces to, at a minimum, abjure the use of violent force with regard to each other, for a period of time (not necessarily specified) regardless of the intention for doing so, and regardless of the eventual outcome of such agreement." James D.D. Smith, *Stopping Wars: Defining the Obstacles to Cease-fire* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), p. 266.
2. For an example of the material gain theory, see Paul Gordon, "The Killing Machine: Britain and the International Repression Trade," *Race and Class* 24, no. 2 (1987), pp. 1-23. However, this seems particularly unlikely considering the poverty of Northern Ireland. The British government derived no obvious economic benefit from its ties with Northern Ireland. Similarly, the Republican community derived no material benefits from the war that would encourage its continuation. According to Gerry Adams: "If the life of an IRA volunteer was a career, one might be able to talk about people who wanted to keep the war going rather than lose their livelihoods, but there is not even that mercenary element." Gerry Adams, *Free Ireland: Towards a Lasting Peace* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 65.
3. Commentators, such as Sean Byrne and Neal Carter, "Social Cubism: Six Social Forces of Ethnoterritorial Conflict in Northern Ireland and Quebec," *Peace and Conflict Studies* 3, no. 2 (1996), pp. 52-71; and Sean Byrne "Conflict Regulation or Conflict Resolution: Third Party Intervention in the Northern Ireland Conflict - Prospects for Peace," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7, no. 2 (1995), pp. 1-24, have argued that we need to take note of the role of ethnic identity in the competing attachment of two opposing ethnic communities to the same territory. The point of this article is somewhat different: that cultures contain internal mechanisms or social values that may, under the right circumstances, serve to sustain or produce conflict.
4. Irish Republicanism is a very complex phenomenon, and by no means monolithic or static. A history of Republicanism in Ireland is beyond the scope of this article. For a history of Irish Republicanism, see (among numerous others) Sean Cronin, *Irish Nationalism: A History and its Roots and Ideology* (Dublin: The Academy Press, 1980); Frank Burton, *The Politics of Legitimacy* (London: Routledge, 1978); Paul Johnson, *Ireland: A Concise History from the Twelfth Century to the Present Day* (London: Panther Books, 1981). Republicanism is just one subtype of nationalism in Northern

Ireland. The Social Democratic Labor Party (SDLP), the largest nationalist group in Northern Ireland, has views that are dissimilar to those of Republicans. While Republicans see British occupation as the bar to unification, leftist social democrats pinpoint the problematic relationship of unionists and nationalists as a bar to reunification. Adrian Guelke, *Northern Ireland: the International Perspective* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988) makes the point that the international community views the partitioned territory of Northern Ireland as illegitimate.

5. Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 61.

6. Cynthia Irvin, *Militant Nationalism: Between Movement and Party in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country* (Duluth, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

7. During its history, the number of IRA volunteers has fluctuated although it has never been entirely defunct. Following World War II and before the beginning of the 1956 border campaign, for example, "the situation was vague and confused, almost like that after the end of the Civil War. Organization was practically non-existent . . ." Tim Pat Coogan, *The IRA: A History* (Niwt: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1994), p. 190. Nevertheless, the IRA did begin reorganization after a meeting in Bodenstown in 1945 and volunteers again began to join the organization. While bearing arms in the interest of political autonomy is a key issue for Republicans, Republican philosophy is more broad than this alone. See Cronin, *Irish Nationalism*.

8. "Necrophilic" in this context can be taken to mean a strong, abiding fascination with death and with the political martyrdom of Republican figures like Pádraig Pearse and Bobby Sands. Commentators such as John Feehan, *Bobby Sands and the Tragedy of Northern Ireland* (Dublin: The Permanent Press, 1986) have noticed that bloodletting in the Republican tradition has a redemptive quality. For background on the hunger strike, see Bob Beresford, *10 Men Dead: The Story of the 1981 Hunger Strikes* (London: Grafton Books, 1987).

9. The British Army had maintained a military garrison in Northern Ireland since 1921. As of April 1969, the 2,500 British troops from the 1st Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire and the 1st Light Infantry were in Northern Ireland, half of them guarding public utilities. In August 1969, the Grenadier Guards, 1st Queen's Regiment, 2nd Queen's Regiment, 1st Royal Regiment of Wales, 1st Royal Hampshire, 2nd and 3rd Light Infantry, 1st Royal Green Jackets and 41st Commando were deployed to Northern Ireland. Michael Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1985), pp. 32, 260.

10. The events on Bloody Sunday were the subject of an official British inquiry, *Report of the Tribunal Appointed to Inquire into the Events of Sunday, 30 January 1972, Which Led to Loss of Life in Connection with the Procession on Londonderry on that Day* (Widgery Report), H.L. 101/H.C. 220 (April 1972, London). It found that soldiers had been fired on first, although none of the dead were armed. In part, the shift to police primacy in British security policy was due to the public outcry concerning the use of

force by the Parachute Regiment in dealing with protestors. The events on Bloody Sunday have recently been the subject of a new inquiry announced in a statement by the Prime Minister on 29 January 1998 in order to "To inquire into the events of Sunday, 30 January 1972 which led to loss of life in connection with the procession in Londonderry on that day, taking account of any new information relevant to events on that day." The chairman of the new tribunal is Lord Saville of Newdigate and the other two members are Sir Edward Somers and Justice Hoyt. "The Prime Minister's Oral Statement and Terms of Reference," *House of Commons Official Report, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, 29 January 1998, Columns 501-503. Available at http://www.bloody-sunday-inquiry.org.uk/pm_statement.htm. On the history of British military operations in Northern Ireland, see Dewar, *British Army*.

11. Paul Bew and Henry Patterson, *The British State and the Ulster Crisis: From Wilson to Thatcher* (London: Verso, 1985); Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: the Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991). Mark Urban, *Big Boys' Rules: The SAS and the Secret Struggle Against the IRA* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992). A case could be made that such British Special Forces activity have also had the effect of sustaining the conflict. The status of the armed conflict as an emergency action with troop deployment authorized under the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions Act) as military aid to the civil power rather than under a war powers act, imposed a doctrine of minimum force. Soldiers issued with a yellow card containing the rules of engagement were allowed to fire only in life-threatening circumstances. Dewar, *British Army*, pp. 58-59. Furthermore, as the ostensible upholders of law and order, they could not be seen to act outside of the law.

12. Paul Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 28.

13. Urban, *Big Boys'*

14. Successive British governments have proposed various unworkable solutions to the political problems of Northern Ireland. From 1921 until the mid-1970s Northern Ireland was ruled through the Unionist controlled Stormont Parliament. Majority home rule reduced Northern Ireland to the status of a dependent colony, allowed Unionist domination of the security apparatus, effectively removed Catholics from political life and led to the increased deployment of British troops in 1969. As a result of Stormont and the events of 1969, the British government outlined new principles in the 1973 *Northern Ireland Constitutional Proposals*. See Northern Ireland Office, "Northern Ireland Constitutional Proposals," March/Cmnd. No. 5259, (London: HMSO, 1973). Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/hmsocmd5259.htm>. This paper made it clear that Unionists should be prevented from exercising total domination and that any political arrangements require the involvement of the Irish Republic if they are to satisfy northern Nationalists. This power-sharing assembly combined with an all-Ireland council has remained the model for British political initiative since that time. See also John Whyte, *Interpreting Northern Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

15. For example, when in May 1974 the British labour government proposed a Council of Ireland, the (Protestant) Ulster Workers Council began a strike that shut down all activity in Ulster. As a result of the strike, the Northern Ireland Parliament at Stormont collapsed and London assumed governance of the province. Padraig O'Malley, *The Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990), p. 228. Unionists, it has been said, have been willing to kill British soldiers in order to defend their right to remain British. Dewar, *British Army*, p. 99. Prior to their own declared ceasefire, Loyalists were also willing to take on the Republic of Ireland. "Loyalists are not going to allow their country to be taken away from them," said Ray Smallwoods, the chief political strategist of loyalist paramilitaries. "We've seen what the IRA has gotten by bombing and killing. Our war is not just with the IRA. It's with Dublin. And we're prepared to fight to the death." Kevin Cullen, "Cease-fire Hopes Grow in Northern Ireland," *Boston Globe*, 14 August 1994, p. 1.

16. Article 2 of the Irish Constitution, declares that "the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the territorial seas." In 1990, this claim was reaffirmed by the Irish Supreme Court in *McGimpsey v. Ireland* which claimed that the "re-integration of the national territory" was a "constitutional imperative." *McGimpsey v. Ireland*, (1990) IR 110, (1990) ILRM 441. Since the drafting of the Constitution, and even the McGimpsey ruling in 1990, Ireland has changed beyond recognition. Economic prosperity, dwindling support for the Catholic Church and modernization of the infrastructure has certainly had an impact on the Irish government's position regarding the North. See also Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, *Ulster*, p. 19.

17. O'Malley, "The Uncivil Wars," 22 fn; Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, *Ulster*, pp. 83, 150. Republicans view the current incarnation of Ireland as being little more than a dependent of Great Britain, since over 50 percent of its "foreign" trade is with the UK.

18. Allan E. Goodman and Sandra Clemens Bogart, *Making Peace: The United States and Conflict Resolution* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992), p. 1; Smith, "Stopping Wars," p. 5.

19. Goodman and Clemens Bogart, *Making Peace*, p. 1.

20. On 13 October 1994, six weeks after PIRA declared a ceasefire, the Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Freedom Fighters also declared a ceasefire. The statement issued by the Combined Loyalist Military Command said: "In the belief that the democratically expressed wishes of the greater number of people in Northern Ireland will be respected and upheld, the Combined Loyalist Military Command will universally cease all operational hostilities as from 12 midnight, Thursday Oct. 13, 1994." Combined Loyalist Military Command, "Ceasefire Statement," 13 October, 1994. Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/clmc131094.htm>.

21. Wars are typically defined by authors in the field as those with more than 1,000 combat deaths per year. Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Resort to Arms* (Beverly

Hills, CA: Sage, 1982), p. 12. Northern Ireland and other such low-intensity conflicts thus fall outside of the parameters of these studies.

22. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (London: Penguin Books, 1988), p. 125.

23. Pillar, "Negotiating Peace," pp. 16-21; James F. Dunnigan and William Martel, *How to Stop a War: The Lessons of Two Hundred Years of War and Peace* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), pp. 207-62. Dunnigan and Martel's data indicate that in 85.7 percent of wars between 1975-1983 stalemate was considered to be the decisive factor in ending the war.

24. Deployment of 19,000 troops has cost over £1 billion per annum, compensation to victims of violence by the Northern Ireland Office cost £30-50 million per annum and the Exchequer grant to Northern Ireland cost over £3 billion. Furthermore, the concerns of insurance companies regarding the costs of bombs in London in 1992 and 1993 influenced the willingness of various ministers to support negotiations with PIRA. Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, *Ulster*, p. 14.

25. Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 63.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 163. Additionally, rumors that the US would increase its aid package to Northern Ireland from \$19.6 million to \$120-200 million in order to restore the infrastructure and boost employment may have encouraged the Republican ceasefire. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

27. Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, *Ulster*, p. 12; Smith, "Stopping Wars," p. 8.

28. Quantitative studies have attempted to determine the relationship between casualties, force ratios and the duration of wars in order to predict when wars end. Small and Singer, "Resort to Arms." The data do not associate any threshold level of combat deaths with cessation of war, and there may in fact be a negative correlation between length of wars and battle deaths per capita per month. Donald Wittman, "How Wars End: A Rational Actor Model," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23 (December, 1979), pp. 743-63. In other words, the fewer the deaths, the longer the war.

29. Sinn Féin, *Freedom* (Dublin: Sinn Féin Education Publication, 1991). Available at <http://www.sinnFéin.ie/documents/freedom.html>.

30. Sinn Féin, *Towards A Lasting Peace In Ireland: A Summary Guide To The Sinn Féin Peace Proposal* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 1994). Available at <http://sinnFéin.ie/documents/tlpsumm.html>. Key sections of the document included the recognition by the British of an Irish right to self-determination, the end of partition and a transfer of sovereignty to an all-Ireland government who would be democratically selected by the people, the use of British authority to influence Unionist opinion and consultation between London and Dublin to set policy objectives of ending partition.

31. John Hume and Gerry Adams, "Joint Statement," 23 April 1993. Available at <http://www.utexas.edu/students/iig/archive/sinnFéin/documents/humeadams042393.html>.

32. Great Britain. Northern Ireland Office, "Documents Exchanged Between the IRA and the Government," 29 November 1993.

33. Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 205.

34. PIRA denied ever sending this message. This may, in fact, be true since the messages were transmitted orally, rather than in written form. Sinn Féin, *Setting the Record Straight: A Record of Communications Between Sinn Féin and the British Government, October 1990-November 1993* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 1994); M.L.R. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland: The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 201. According to Pillar, the pervasive notion that an initial offer to negotiate is "suing for peace" leads governments to resist making such offers for fear of being considered the defeated party. Pillar, "Negotiating Peace," p. 67.

35. Sabine Wichert, *Northern Ireland Since 1945* (London and New York: Longman, 1991), p. 121. The Omagh atrocity, which seemed to be designed to frustrate the peaceful aims of PIRA and Sinn Féin, could have easily provoked a feud between PIRA and the Real IRA. In the past, this type of unauthorized military action often resulted in bloodshed. Another sensitive issue was the theft of PIRA arms and war material by the Real IRA. Misappropriation of weapons is considered to be a capital offense by PIRA. The fact that there was not a feud indicates that the northern leadership of Sinn Féin and the Army Council successfully restrained the more militant factions in PIRA. See also James Dingley and Michael Kirk-Smith, "How Could They Do It? The Bombing of Omagh, 1998," *Journal of Conflict Studies* 20, no. 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 105-26.

36. Cronin, *Irish Nationalism*, pp. 51, 132.

37. Liam Clarke, *Broadening the Battlefield: the H-Blocks and the Rise of Sinn Féin* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1987), p. 2. This is almost identical to Clause 20 of the Constitution of the Irish Republican Brotherhood: "The Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood is hereby declared in fact, as well as by right, the sole Government of the Irish Republic." It should be noted that the "Irish Republic," which is a nation waiting to be born, is not the "Republic of Ireland," which is a nation born following the Anglo-Irish war. Believing themselves the legitimate government of Ireland, the Provisionals claim a mandate to declare war against Great Britain. Cronin, *Irish Nationalism*, p. 208.

38. Wichert, "Northern Ireland," p. 121. In 1993, the Joint Declaration on Northern Ireland ("The Downing Street Declaration") was signed by British and Irish governments. The Declaration articulated principles of negotiation, framed the broad issues crucial for a negotiated settlement and offered concessions to both Unionists and Nationalists. David McKittrick, *Endgame: the Search for Peace in Northern Ireland* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1994), p. 321. "The British government agrees that it is for the people of Ireland

alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, north and south, to bring about a United Ireland, if that is their wish." Great Britain and Republic of Ireland, "Joint Declaration on Peace (The Downing Street Declaration)," (Belfast: Northern Ireland Office, 15 December 1993). Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/dsd151293.htm>. This statement pleased Unionists by including the concept of consent (often referred to as "the Unionist veto"), meaning that political or constitutional status of Northern Ireland will not be altered without their agreement. The British government's statement in the Declaration that it had no "selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland" marked a fundamental shift in British policy toward Northern Ireland. Britain was apparently backing down from its promise to the Unionists to keep Ulster British. The abdication of Britain from any political responsibility for Northern Ireland prompted conservative critics of the Declaration to argue that, "Crucially, the Declaration puts the future of Ulster in an exclusively Irish - and not British - context." Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, "Ulster," p. 12.

39. Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 221.

40. Smith, "Stopping Wars," p. 123. Neither Sinn Féin nor PIRA have much influence with other hard-line paramilitary groups, such as the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) or the IPLO. These organizations operate independently, and thus far have been cooperating with the ceasefire. The INLA declared a "tactical rather than permanent" ceasefire on 5 May 1995. During an armed robbery of a post office in Newry on 11 November 1994, a postal worker named Frank Kerr was killed. After denying that it has authorized any use of weapons since the ceasefire, PIRA acknowledged ten days later that its members were responsible, although the robbery had not been "sanctioned" by PIRA leaders. Martin Melaugh, "The Irish Peace Process - Chronology of Key Events (April 1993 - April 1998)," *CAIN Web Service*. Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/pp9398.htm>

41. British Information Service, "Northern Ireland Review of Recent Events," 15 May 1998. Available at <http://britain-info.org/bis/nireland/rup15may.htm>.

42. RSF has been linked to the Continuity IRA, a hard-line military faction opposed to the Good Friday Agreement. After RIRA declared a ceasefire in 1998 following the Omagh bomb, a number of members who were disappointed with the "constitutionalization" of the organization joined CIRA. Unlike other groups, CIRA has not declared a ceasefire and is committed to the traditional armed struggle. Its first serious terrorist attack was in July 1996, when it blew up the Killyhevlin Hotel, outside Enniskillen. CIRA may also have some links with the INLA. William Tuohy, "Major Accepts IRA Cease-fire, Opens Borders," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 October 1994, p. A1.

43. To review the issues concerning disarmament, an independent commission chaired by former US Senator George Mitchell was established by the Republic of Ireland, which is accorded a consultative role in the governance of Northern Ireland under the 1985 Anglo-

Irish Agreement. The Mitchell Commission recommended in a report released on 24 January 1996 that the British government drop its demand that the Provisional IRA disarm before Sinn Féin be allowed to take part in the peace talks. The report did suggest that Sinn Féin should be required to declare the ceasefire permanent and to agree to disarmament simultaneously with talks. Editors, "International Panel Asks Britain to Ease Terms on IRA at Talks," *New York Times*, 24 January 1996, p. A5.

44. Following the British government's demand for a political assembly and the rejection of the Mitchell Commission's proposal, on 9 February 1996 PIRA issued a statement declaring that a resumption of the "armed struggle" was taking place: "The cessation presented an historic challenge for everyone and the IRA commends the leaderships of nationalist Ireland at home and abroad. They rose to the challenge. The British Prime Minister did not." Provisional Irish Republican Army, "Statement," 9 February 1996, paragraph 4. Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira9296.htm>. Provisional Irish Republican Army, "Statement," 20 July 1997, paragraph 4. Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira200797.htm>. After eschewing all paramilitary activity for six weeks, Sinn Féin signed the Mitchell Principles and was admitted into the talks.

45. Ed Maloney, Radio Free Eieann interview, 26 October 1997. Available at <http://www.wbaifree.org/radiofreeeireann/maloney.html>).

46. Editors, "How Quickly Things Change," *The Dissenter* (On-Line), 6-11 December 1998. Available at <http://www.freespeech.org/IRWAC/Newspaper/how%20quickly%20things%20change.htm>.

47. For an excellent summary, see Sean Boyne, "The Real IRA: After Omagh, What Now?" *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 24 August, 1998. Available at <http://www.janes.com/geopol/editors/rira/rira.html>.

48. Maloney, interview, 26 October 1997.

49. The position of the British government is that the decommissioning of the weapons must occur before all-party peace talks. Michael Ancram, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, stated that "peace without fundamental solutions is not a permanent peace. So we ask those with arms, 'If you are committed to peace permanently, why do you need a vast arsenal?'" William D. Montalbano, "Reborn Belfast Has High Hopes For Clinton Visit; Northern Ireland: A Fragile Cease-Fire Brings Economic Boom. The President Will Hear Partisan Visions Of Peace," *Los Angeles Times*, 28 November 1995, p. A1. Loyalists have also consistently refused to negotiate with PIRA without prior weapons decommissioning. According to Michael Empey, a member of the Ulster Unionists: "Laying down arms is a test that the IRA is truly committed to peace. As long as they can turn on terror, we are not playing on a level field." Montalbano, "Reborn Belfast," p. A1.

50. Paul Bew and Gordon Gillespie, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process: 1993-1996* (London: Serif, 1996), p. 105.

51. Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 50; Ciaran deBaroid, *Ballymurphy and the Irish War* (London: Pluto Press, 1990).

52. The Good Friday Agreement was reached on 10 April 1998. Under the terms of the Agreement, a new Northern Ireland Assembly would be elected by proportional representation, with executive and legislative powers and safeguards to ensure its operation on the basis of cross-community support. In terms of security matters, the Agreement essentially creates a quid pro quo: if the Republicans (and other parties) will declare a complete and unequivocal ceasefire, stop all procurement of weapons, dismantle paramilitary structures actively directing and promoting violence, cooperate fully with the Independent Commission on decommissioning and abjure from using other organizations as proxies for violence, the British government will de-escalate security, withdraw troops, release paramilitary prisoners and amend the legal system. The Good Friday Agreement sets a two-year target for full decommissioning of paramilitary arms and explosives and provides two methods of decommissioning: the provision of information to the Commission, leading to the collection and destruction of arms; and the destruction of arms by those who are in possession of them. Great Britain, Northern Ireland Office, "The Agreement, Text of the Agreement reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations on Northern Ireland," Cmnd. No. 3883 (Belfast: HMSO, 10 April, 1998). Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/agreement.htm>. Provisional Irish Republican Army, "Statement," 30 April, 1998. Available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira30498.htm>.

53. Liam Clarke, "IRA raises hopes on arms," *The London Sunday Times*, 20 December 1998. Available at <http://www.sunday-times.co.uk/cgi-bin/BackIssue?999>. Maloney interview, 26 October 1997. Available at <http://www.wbaifree.org/radiofreeireann/maloney.html>).

54. Editors, "Provos 'Army' Convention May Have Changed Constitution," *The Dissenter* (On-Line), 21 December 1998. Available at http://www.freespeech.org/IRWAC/Newspaper/provos_convention_changes_consit.htm.

55. Ibid.

56. Sean MacStiofain, *Revolutionary in Ireland*, (Letchworth: The Garden City Press, 1975), pp. 260, 289.

57. John E. Finn, *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 80; Wichert, "Northern Ireland," p. 171; Smith, *Stopping Wars*, p. 21.

58. Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 103.

59. Smith, "Stopping Wars," p. 16. Another school of thought views ceasefire as a status quo in which belligerents are not allowed to take advantage of the calm for military gain. During the conflict in Palestine, the UN Security Council resolved on 19 August 1948

that "no party is entitled to gain military or political advantage through violation of the truce." Smith, "Stopping Wars," p. 18. Robert Jennings and Arthur Watts, *Oppenheim's International Law* (Harlow, Essex, England: Longman, 1952), p. 551.

60. Paul Seabury, "Provisionality and Finality," *How Wars End* (Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 392, 1970), p. 102; Smith, "Stopping Wars," p. 17; Sydney D. Bailey, *How Wars End: The United Nations and the Termination of Armed Conflict, 1946-1964* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 3.

61. Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie, *The Provisional IRA* (London: Corgi, 1987), p. 230.

62. Editors, "Republican Rejectionists," *The Dissenter* (On-Line), 6-11 December, 6 February 1999. Available at http://www.freespeech.org/IRWAC/Newspaper/Wolfe_Tone_a_Rejectionist.htm.

63. Louise Kiernan, "IRA Truce Lights Flicker of Hope; Violent Protestant Backlash Feared," *Chicago Tribune*, 1 September 1994, p. 1; Pillar notes that ceasefires are generally unsuccessful if "each side proposed placing all the military obligations on the enemy while assuming none itself." Pillar, "Negotiating Peace," p. 111; Editors, "Ulster Loyalists Declare Cease-fire," *U.P.I. Newswire*, 13 October 1994.

64. Dunnigan and Martel, "How to Stop a War," p. 41; Provisional Irish Republican Army, "Statement."

65. Pillar, "Negotiating Peace," p. 91; Tuohy, "Major Accepts," p. A1.

66. In *McGimpsey v. Ireland*, constitutional questions were raised regarding the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Article 1(a) affirms "that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland." The plaintiffs argued that because the Anglo-Irish Agreement effectively recognized the legitimacy of the present constitutional arrangements in Northern Ireland, it violated Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution, which exert a claim over Northern Ireland as part of the "national territory." Furthermore, the "consent clause" of the Agreement was challenged, insofar as it was argued that Ireland had entered into a Treaty whereby it committed itself to obtaining the consent of one section of the Irish nation, while disregarding the interests of the majority (e.g., the population of the Irish Republic). The Irish Supreme Court held that the Anglo-Irish Agreement was not inconsistent with Article 2 and 3 of the Constitution, but merely "constitutes a recognition of the de facto situation in Northern Ireland . . . without abandoning the claim to the re-integration of national territory."

67. Garret Fitzgerald, "Republic Of Ireland: Amendment Of Articles 2 And 3 Highly Desirable," *Irish Times*, 23 July 1994, p. 10; Adams, *Free Ireland*, p. 206.

68. Guelke, "Northern Ireland."