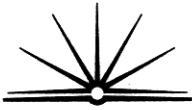


26b) The consequences of British government policies on the ~~provo~~ and loyalist forces changed gradually between 1972 and 1998, as the aims and perspectives of the paramilitaries ~~changed~~ generally became less radical, more willing to compromise. The British often alienated them.

Bloody Sunday began the year of 1972. A group of peaceful marches were fired on, resulting in the 14 deaths. The march had been against internment, arrest and imprisonment without trial, and the shootings increased the alienation of nationalist communities, in turn increasing the support of the Provos. Nationalists came to rely more and more on the Provos for the protection they did not gain from the corrupt police in Northern Ireland. The Widgeny - Report cover-up recommended not imprisoning the soldiers who fired.

In response to Bloody Sunday, the British government came to believe that Stormont

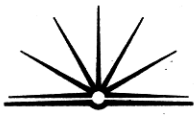


was not able to maintain order, and suspended it. This move was only meant to be temporary, with an aim to allow moderates to take control of governing in Northern Ireland (NI). The British, however, didn't take into account the extent of the fragmentation of society, although many nationalists had removed themselves from public life with the aim of showing nationalist lack of support of Stormont, the IRA saw British rule as even worse, beginning furthering their campaign of violence in an attempt to remove the British. Loyalists also were angered by the ~~dis~~ dissolution of Stormont, as they had seen it as a buffer institution against the republicans. Therefore, Britain's policy resulted in an increase in recruitments and violence, although arguably arguably this would have occurred anyway due to the increase in size and organisation of the paramilitaries.

Britain's next move was Sunningdale, a

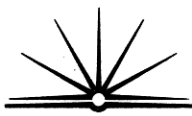


governing body which was meant to begin its rule in 1974. It introduced the idea of power-sharing, bringing the Republic into NI affairs, and this move resulted in fear and anger on part of the Loyalists who feared the Republic gaining a foothold in NI. Furthermore, the inclusion of Republicans in government was abhorred by the Loyalists. Even the Republicans were unhappy, because they didn't gain their aim of having the ~~the~~ council ~~over take~~ ensuring policing matters would be dealt with, to ensure no discrimination, and this furthered the IRA's image of being nationalists' protector. Loyalists were angered that Sunningdale refused to allow extradition of terrorists in the Republic, and they aided the many unionists and politicians who did not agree with the agreement, which did not have majority support outside the council itself. This can be seen in the collapse of the Agreement due to the Unionists Workers' council strike of 1974, which created



economic problems, but refused to agree only to a suspension of Sunningdale.

The British policies regarding the Hunger Strikes in the 1980s, due to the removal of the Special Category Status, resulted in a broadening of IRA and Republican support. Even those who regarded the IRA with disgust, came to see the hunger strikers as a humanitarian issue, which can be seen in the 100,000 mourners present at Bobby Sands' death. The British image of IRA terrorists was undermined, and Britain's policies called on international condemnation, and strengthened the public's opinion, as ~~Britain~~ agreeing with the Provo views. As Father Des Wilson pointed out, "it was now possible to speak well of the IRA." Many demanded that the IRA revenge the hunger strikers, resulting in increased support of the IRA, which previously had been faltering. The IRA stepped up its campaign against security forces, and Britain, culminating in the 1984 bombing of



the Grand Hotel, Brighton, where Thatcher and her cabinet were holding the conservative party conference.

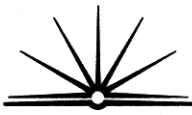
Furthermore, the IRA gained more influence on the political scene, with the rise in power of Sinn Féin, which could be seen in ~~the~~ Sands' election to Westminster ~~that~~ in the by-election of Fermanagh-South Tyrone. From 1983, onwards (especially due to Adams' influence), Sinn Féin came to be seen as furthering the Republican cause, and they advocated the use of violence openly, Adams believing it to be central to the Republican struggle. Thus, the IRA made links with Sinn Féin, and enjoyed further popularity and recruitment, resulting in further sectarian divisions.

In response to the rise of Sinn Féin, Thatcher ~~as~~ created the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, with the Republic. This allowed the Republic say in legal, security and political affairs. Loyalists were outraged that an outside force should be allowed



a ray in NI affairs, <sup>especially</sup> without consulting Unionist ministers first. ~~From~~ The Loyalists began an active campaign to abolish the Agreement, which was reflected politically in Paisley's and Mulneaux's speeches and rallies, often ending in violent clashes with the police, where Loyalist forces were present. Furthermore, Loyalists felt threatened by the agreement that unification of Ireland could be achieved by majority consent. The Republicans, however, found it difficult to view this move in an imperialist light. The British were still in Ireland however, and unification had not occurred, so the IRA were not satisfied.

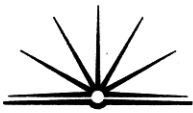
The Downing St Declaration of 1993, can be seen as a turning point in the impact of British policies on the paramilitary groups. It was the culmination of the Hume-Adams talks, talks between the Republic, Britain and Nationalists. Adams represented Sinn Féin, and thus the IRA to some extent, therefore providing IRA demands and



sentiments. When The IRA agreed to a ceasefire, with an increasing demand for peace. This was reflected in the Shankill bomb, which killed civilians, but did not result in resentment, but rather in an increase in determination for peace.

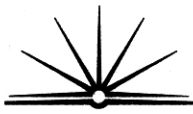
Although <sup>the ceasefire</sup> it was regarded apprehensively, <sup>with</sup> as an aim to <sup>lower</sup> decrease British guard, it appeared genuine. Adams did not agree with parts of the document, but instead of completely revisiting it, he called for clarification. Britain dropped its objections to this with the Roax bomb at Heathrow airport. The IRA had wanted a timetable for British withdrawal and unification. Loyalists also appeared to agree to the declaration, but hopes for the declaration were shattered with the bombing of Canary Wharf in London, with IRA disagreement with sections, such as Britain's refusal to discuss paramilitary prisoners.

Blair came into office, and claimed that talks would begin in September, with Sinn Féin



being allowed in 6 weeks after a ceasefire. It was a gamble that worked, and Trimble of the UUP agreed to remain in talks. Extremists such as Paisley refused to take any part, and although the major paramilitary had agreed to cease-fire, break-away groups such as Continuity IRA attempted to sabotage talks. Loyalist prisoners of the UDA also refused to support any talks, but after a discussion with Mowlam, they agreed to. The IRA and nationalists were pleased with the resulting Good Friday Agreement of 1998. Its complexity ensured that there would be no ~~was~~ backwards steps towards Unionist dominated politics, and the North-South Council, consisting of the Republic and NI to some extent satisfied their feelings of dishonour. The 108 member assembly was fair, based on proportional representation, and all major decisions would include both Unionists and Nationalists. They were convinced by Brooke's statement that Britain had no selfish strategic political interests in Ireland, and the possibility of





unity by majority consent abated the IRA. The  
Loopholes were not as satisfied, although the  
Republic had removed articles 2 and 3 from its  
constitution, which had laid claim. Generally,  
though, it was assumed that the violence was  
finished, and the parags had finally agreed to  
British policy.

In conclusion, British policy often angered the  
parags, increasing recruitment, violence, and  
sectarian division. Eventually, though, the British  
came to an agreement which the parags supported.